

Note to Facilitators:

We've heard your concerns about the format and content of the support material page for small groups. We want to give you the kind of support and resources that you need so that you can nourish and grow your small group. This week, we are providing you with a suggested agenda for the evening, information that extends from the sermon on Sunday, as well as support documents you can print and use with your group. Our goal is to better equip you to do the work of God. We value you and want to give you the support and resources you need to thrive in your ministry! Thank you for your continued feedback each week.

Suggested Agenda

We wanted to give you different options that you can use in facilitating your small group. Some of these activities will not take as long as estimated; some may take much longer. You do not need feel that you must “get through” each component. Let your group dig in and linger where there is an interest or a need. Conversely, don't draw something out that isn't working for your group. Pick and choose, you know your groups needs – don't feel like you need to do everything!

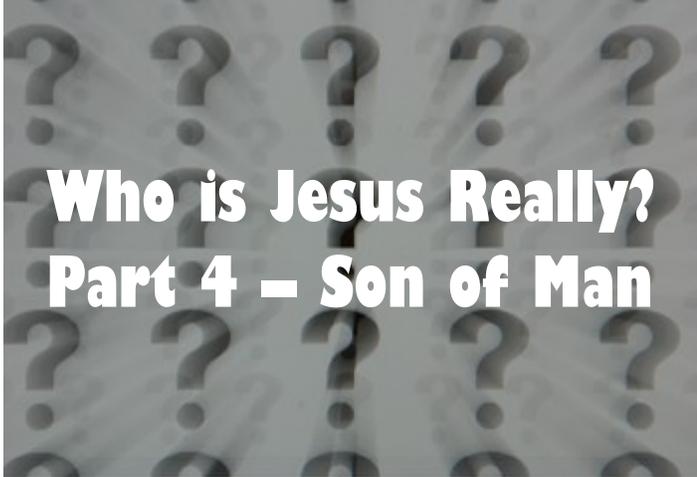
- Opening/Social Time
- Prayer/Worship (estimated time: 20 minutes)
- Small Group Questions (estimated time: 10 minutes)
- Challenge from Pastor Miles (estimated time: 20 - 25 minutes)
- Witnessing Tool activity (estimated time: 20 – 25 minutes)
- Personal Application activity (estimated time: 20 – 25 minutes)
- Closing/Prayer (15 – 20 minutes)

Resource pages:

<http://www.allaboutjesuschrist.org/is-jesus-god-c.htm>

<http://www.christiananswers.net/q-eden/edn-t006.html>

<http://www.allaboutjesuschrist.org/is-jesus-god-c.htm>



ANNOUNCEMENTS

Are you Ready for Battle? Can you stand against the schemes of the devil? Join us for a six week study with Pastor John Leeder. Study begins this Wednesday, April 27. Register at www.therockuniversity.org

Leadership Development: Sunday, May 29, 1 – 3 PM in the Sanctuary. New Small Group Training information as well as *Biblical Guidance* and *How to Grow Your Group* breakout sessions. Lunch will be served at 1 PM. R.S.V.P. melissak@therocksandiego.org

Rancho San Juan Bosco Orphanage: If your group would like to donate new toys or books in Spanish for this boys orphanage in Mexico, contact rebeccahaddock1@yahoo.com

S M A L L G R O U P Q E S T I O N S

1. True / False – We can know God in His entirety.
2. Jesus claimed deity by exercising supernatural power through the working of _____ . (miracles)
3. Jesus performed miracles in the following areas:
 - a. Weather
 - b. Disease
 - c. Demonic exorcism
 - d. All of the above
4. True / False – Jesus claimed authority over the Law of Moses.
5. In the gospels Jesus says ... “You heard it said ... but ____ _____ unto you ...” (I say)
6. True / False – Jesus stated that only the Father could forgive sin.
7. Jesus actually referred to himself as
 - a. I AM
 - b. One of the created sons of God
 - c. The highest of all angels
 - d. All of the above
8. What is blasphemy? It is speaking _____ of God.
9. True / False – Like the angels, Jesus makes it a point never to receive worship.
10. Jesus claimed that
 - a. The Prophets in the Old Testament spoke of Him
 - b. The volume of the book was written of Him
 - c. Both a and b
 - d. None of the above

Sermon Extension

While we can be certain of Jesus deity by evaluating the many different “categories” through which Jesus demonstrated He was God, there are other arguments that support His claim as well. Read on to find Biblically sound, logical arguments to support the fact that Jesus was God.

Some may say...

Jesus was just a good teacher

C.S. Lewis wrote the following in Mere Christianity:

"I am trying here to prevent anyone from saying the really foolish thing that people often say about Him [Jesus Christ]: "I'm ready to accept Jesus as a great moral teacher, but I don't accept his claim to be God." That is the one thing we must not say. A man who was merely a man and said the sort of things Jesus said would not be a great moral teacher. He would either be a lunatic – on a level with a man who says he is a poached egg – or else he would be the Devil of Hell. You must make your choice. Either this man was, and is, the Son of God, or else a madman or something worse You can shut him up for fool, you can spit at him and kill him as a demon; or you can fall at his feet and call him Lord and God. But let us not come up with any patronizing nonsense about his being a great human teacher. He has not left that option open to us. He did not intend to."

If Jesus is not God, he must have been a fantastic liar or a deluded lunatic.

- No one doubts the “historical” Jesus. There is consensus that Jesus did exist.
- The controversy is in who He was and who He claimed to be.
- Since Jesus claimed to be God, His claims are either true or false. If false, He must have been a liar, deliberately misleading the multitudes. Or, He was a lunatic, sincerely believing Himself to be God, when in reality He was just a man.
- However, if Jesus was a "good man," as most people now agree, how then could He be both good and crazy, or good and a liar? There is only one logically consistent alternative - He must have been telling the truth.
- Jesus Christ's teaching, for example, reveals an astonishing depth, and His moral principles showed an abhorrence of all forms of dishonesty. Unanimously, people regarded Jesus of Nazareth as a person of extraordinary character. His appeal has reached across every social class and culture. There is not a hint in the New Testament that Jesus was a less-than-level person. Rather, he exemplified strength and virtue.

Jesus could have just been a myth or a legend

- Because the Gospels were written 30 to 50 years after the crucifixion of Jesus, there wasn't enough time for legend to form.
- Some of the early Christian creeds, proclaiming the life, death and resurrection of Jesus, are dated 3 to 10 years after His crucifixion. This includes Paul's letters to the Corinthians, Romans and Galatians.
- If Jesus' claim of deity was a myth, the early Jewish opponents of Christianity would surely have presented the fact that these claims never happened. Unlike modern skeptics, the Jewish rabbis never denied that Jesus made the claim that He was God. Instead, they called Him a liar, and tried Him for blasphemy.

The Bible doesn't support the fact that Jesus was God

Jesus Christ alone has fulfilled 300 Old Testament prophecies concerning the Messiah!! No religious leader has come close to making the claims that Jesus Christ made, much less proving that they have power over death, Hell and the keys to eternal life.

- His deity was seen in His name, Immanuel, (Matt.1:23), His witness to Himself, when He said He was equal with God (John 5:17-19), He said, "I and the Father are One" and by the writings of the Apostles. He was with God before the creation of the earth and made all things. (John 1)
- He was born of a human mother, the Virgin Mary, (Luke 2:40) was conceived of the Holy Spirit of God. (Matt.1:18:23-25, Luke 1:26-36) and was born in Bethlehem. (Matt. 2:1-6)
- He alone lived life, enduring every temptation and trial that we have to endure, but without sin. (Matt.4, Heb. 4:15, 2 Cor. 5:21)
- He commonly performed miracles: healed the sick, the lame, restored sight to the blind, made the deaf to hear, raised the dead, turned water into wine, calmed the sea, walked on water, fed the 5,000 and the 4,000 etc. etc. (Read Luke)
- He purposed to come and die by crucifixion, in our place, for the forgiveness of our sins "that we might become the righteousness of God in Him." (2 Cor. 5:21)
- Even the exact amount paid for His betrayal was specified in Old Testament prophecies. Zechariah 11:12.
- In other Old Testament prophecies, Isaiah said that He would be scourged and spit upon in Isaiah 50:6.
- He would be given gall and vinegar to drink. (Psalm 69:21)
- Just as the Old Testament prophecies said, He died, was buried and arose again on the third day. He appeared many times to His disciples and to as many as 500 people at once. (Matt. 28, 1 Cor. 15)

Jesus Never claimed to be God

- He taught that He was the Son of God. (Matt. 11:27, Luke 10:22, Matt.21:33-46)
- Jesus repeatedly spoke of God as His Father. Matt. 7, 10, 11, 12, 15, 16, 18, 20, etc.)
- Jesus claimed deity and to have all authority on Heaven and earth. (Matt. 28:18)
- Jesus claimed to have power to forgive sins. (Matt. 9:6)
- Jesus allowed Himself to be worshipped as God. (Matt. 14:33 and John 20:25-28)
- Jesus said that He was from Heaven. (John 5:17-18)
- Jesus claimed that He should have the same reverence that God has. (John 5:23)
- He said He would raise all humans from the grave and judge them. (John 5:27-28)
- He promised to give eternal life to all who would trust in Him. (John 6:47)
- Jesus alone never failed to please Father God and never sinned. (John 8:46)
- He said He would also come to earth a second time. (John 14:1-3)
- Many witnesses verified that Jesus actually claimed to be the Christ the Son of God, such as John the Baptist, Peter, Thomas, Philip, Nathaniel, Martha and the Centurion.

Challenge

During the services Pastor Miles challenged the congregation to find examples of instances when Jesus claimed to be God. Below are the categories that Pastor Miles presented. In your group, take some time to go through the gospels and record the Book, chapter, and verse where you found an example that fit the category. You may choose to break into smaller groups, divide up the categories, and share out when you are done.

Category	Verses
Exercising <u>supernatural power</u> through miracles	
Claiming <u>authority</u> over the LAW	
Exercising <u>spiritual</u> authority only assigned to God	
Jesus gave Himself <u>titles</u> that made Him equal to God.	
Jesus claimed to have <u>authority</u> over things in heaven	
Jesus accepted <u>worship</u> which was only assigned to God	
Jesus made <u>after life</u> promises that only God can keep	

Witnessing Tool

Below are four common objections that people make concerning the Deity of Jesus. Use the verse provided, the text support, and your sermon notes to construct a strong response to each objection.

Objection	Verses	Response
If Jesus really was God, he should have come right out and said so.		
It's not really important to believe that Jesus is God.		
I believe that Jesus is a good teacher or a prophet, but not God.		
There is not enough evidence for me to believe that Jesus is God.		

Personal Application

So what does all this mean for me? How does the belief that Jesus is God impact my life on a daily basis? Take some time in quiet meditation, small group discussion, or whole group discussion to “make it real” and consider how the deity of Jesus changes our lives.

Moments of	Verses	Significance in my life
Successes		
Struggles		
Confusion		
Worries		
Contentment		
Fear		

SMALL GROUP QUESTIONS

(answer key)

1. True / **False** – We can know God in His entirety.
2. Jesus claimed deity by exercising supernatural power through the working of _____ . (miracles)
3. Jesus performed miracles in the following areas:
 - e. Weather
 - f. Disease
 - g. Demonic exorcism
 - h. All of the above**
4. **True** / False – Jesus claimed authority over the Law of Moses.
5. In the gospels Jesus says ... “You heard it said ... but ____ _____ unto you ...” (I say)
6. True / **False** – Jesus stated that only the Father could forgive sin.
7. Jesus actually referred to himself as
 - i. I AM**
 - j. One of the created sons of God
 - k. The highest of all angels
 - l. All of the above
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10. Jesus claimed that
 - m. The Prophets in the Old Testament spoke of Him
 - n. The volume of the book was written of Him
 - o. Both a and b**
 - p. None of the above