

A) *The Blood Transfusion*

During the Vietnam War, a remote village and an orphanage run by missionaries had been bombed. Tragically, an 8 year old girl had multiple injuries and was bleeding to death. A Navy doctor and a nurse came but only had their medical kits. The girl was in critical condition and needed blood and neither American had the right blood type but several of the uninjured children did. The Navy doctor tried to communicate to them but was unable. The nurse only could through her broken language in their native tongue. They tried to let the other children know that they needed one of them to give up their blood to save her.

Wide-eyed silence met their request. After several moments of eye-searching, a boy stepped forward to give his blood.

In the middle of the procedure, the boy covered his face with his free hand and started to cry uncontrollably. "Is it hurting?" asked the nurse. He only shook his head, "No." But he still cried uncontrollably. Just then help came who could speak English and Vietnamese. The nurse then quickly found out why the little boy was so upset. You see, he thought he was going to die by giving his blood. He had misunderstood the request and thought he had to give all his blood in order to save that little girl. Perplexed by this, the translator asked, "Young friend, then, why did you agree to this, if you thought you'd die?" He answered, "She's my friend."

- Source Unknown

Questions to Ponder?

- 1) What does this story have to do with how God has treated us?
- 2) What if everyone everywhere had this kind of love for others, even their enemies? What would the results be?
- 3) Ultimately, *how does God desire us to deal with each other* and what is *the motivation* he's given us so we strive to do this?

Consider - Romans 5:8-9: "God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners (the enemies of God), Christ died for us... We have now been justified (declared not guilty) by his blood." And 1 John 4:10: "This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins. Dear friends, since God so loved us, we also ought to love one another."

B) *Christianity*

So far we have seen how Christianity separates itself from all other religions: 1) No other religion has a leader who has claimed so much about himself ("The Only Savior") and has proven that message and all the Bible by such an amazing historical feat like the resurrection from the dead. 2) No other religion teaches that humans are utterly lost and absolutely incapable before God to save themselves or even help themselves in part because of their own sinfulness. Connected to that we find that no other religion takes sin and God's demands of us as seriously as Christianity - one sin's consequence makes us worthy of temporal and eternal separation from God and that God demands nothing short of perfection from every one of us. 3) Today, we also find that Christianity is distinct in this: God is as absolutely merciful as he is absolutely holy and just. And to discover this truth, we need to talk about why Jesus' blood and his willingness to give it all is the only perfect match for our need.

C. Who was Jesus?

Introduction:

That was a controversial question in his day... ¹³ When Jesus came to the region of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, “Who do people say the Son of Man is?” ¹⁴ They replied, “Some say John the Baptist; others say Elijah; and still others, Jeremiah or one of the prophets.” ¹⁵ “But what about you?” he asked. “Who do you say I am?” ¹⁶ Simon Peter answered, “You are the Christ, **the Son of the living God.**” ¹⁷ Jesus replied, “Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah, for this was not revealed to you by man, but by my Father in heaven. (Matthew 16:13-17).

As it was then, so it is now. “Who is Jesus” is still a controversial question today... (The only Savior? God? Good Man? Great Teacher? Prophet?) The only way to honestly address Jesus, then, and find out who he is and whether or not his blood is precious enough to save all humankind is for us to simply consider what he claimed about himself according to his disciples/eye witnesses of him. After all, they are the only primary sources we have to know anything about who Jesus really was at all. Finally, we look at the evidence (empty tomb, impact, his teachings with our life experience, why we die...) to confirm whether or not this is Truth.

a. Claim #1 In order to give honor to God Jesus claimed you must give equal honor to him.

²² Moreover, the Father judges no one, but has entrusted all judgment to the Son, ²³ that all may honor the Son *just as* they honor the Father. He who does not honor the Son does not honor the Father, who sent him. (John 5:22-23)

b. Claim #2 The Bible and the historical Resurrection call Jesus both God and God’s Son.

⁵ Theirs are the patriarchs, and from them is traced the human ancestry of Christ, who is God over all, forever praised! ...The Son is the radiance of God’s glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word. After he had provided purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven. (Matthew 16:6 – see previous; Romans 9:5; Hebrews 1:3)

c. Claim #3 His perfect life, his miracles, and especially his resurrection prove him to be God.

Can any of you prove me guilty of sin? ...Tempted in every way just as we are but was without sin... Jesus did many other miraculous signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not recorded in this book. ³¹ But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name. ...⁴ and who through the Spirit of holiness was declared with power to be the Son of God by his resurrection from the dead: Jesus Christ our Lord. ...¹⁷ The reason my Father loves me is that I lay down my life—only to take it up again. ¹⁸ No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have authority to lay it down and authority to take it up again. (John 8:46; Hebrews 1:4; John 20:30-31; Acts 13:32; Romans 1:4; John 10:17-18)

d. Claim #4 Jesus had to be divine so that his righteousness and blood would be enough to cover us all in righteousness and pay for all our sins. If he were only human, we wouldn’t be saved.

⁷ No man can redeem the life of another or give to God a ransom for him— ⁸ the ransom for a life is costly, no payment is ever enough— (Psalm 49:7-8).

Summary Truth: Creation or Creator – Which has more value? And who alone can be perfect?

D. Who else was Jesus?

a. Claim #1: Jesus had to be human to die for us.

Since the children have flesh and blood, he too shared in their humanity so that by his death he might destroy him who holds the power of death—that is, the devil—¹⁵ and free those who all their lives were held in slavery by their fear of death. ¹⁶For surely it is not angels he helps, but Abraham’s descendants. ¹⁷For this reason he had to be made like his brothers in every way, in order that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in service to God, and that he might make atonement for the sins of the people. (Hebrews 2:14-17)

b. Claim #2: Jesus had to be human to fulfill all requirements God gave to humans (“Be perfect”).

When the time had fully come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under law, to redeem those under law... (Galatians 4:4)

c. Claim #3 Jesus is both fully divine and fully human at the same time.

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God...¹⁴The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. ...³⁴“How will this be,” Mary asked the angel, “since I am a virgin?”³⁵The angel answered, “The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God... None of the rulers of this age understood it, for if they had, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory...¹⁵You killed the author of life, but God raised him from the dead. We are witnesses of this. (John 1:1, 14; Luke 1:34-35; 1 Corinthians 2:8; Acts 3:15).

Summary Truths: Did God die? Can God die? and Could the human race have a Savior from the “race” of angels or animals? (Hebrews 2:16 and 10:11)

E. The Difficulty with Jesus - 100% God 100% Man = The Godman

a. Jesus’ Humiliation (The time he didn’t always act or talk like God)

Jesus gave them this answer: “I tell you the truth, the Son can do nothing by himself; he can do only what he sees his Father doing, because whatever the Father does the Son also does...“You heard me say, ‘I am going away and I am coming back to you.’ If you loved me, you would be glad that I am going to the Father, for the Father is greater than I. (John 5:19; John 14:28)

Humiliation Addressed: (The reason he generally emptied himself of his power.)

Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, ⁷ but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. ⁸ And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death— even death on a cross! ⁹ Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, ¹⁰ that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, ¹¹ and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. (Philippians 2:6-8, 9-11)

Superman Illustration: Emptied Power

E. The Difficulty with Jesus - 100% God 100% Man = The Godman (Continued)

b. The Doctrine of the Trinity

i. The Bible teaches that there is only one God.

Isaiah 45:5, 1 Corinthians 8:4 I am the LORD, and there is no other; apart from me there is no God... We know that an idol is nothing at all in the world and that there is no God but one.

ii. The "problem" we have is that the Bible further reveals that this one God consists of **three distinct** persons.

John 17:3 (*Father is God*) Jesus prays, "Father...³ Now this is eternal life: that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent."

Colossians 2:9 (*Son is God*) For in Christ all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form...

2 Corinthians 3:17 (*Spirit is God*) Now the Lord is the Spirit...Matthew 3:16-17 (Yet all 3 are distinct from each other.) As soon as Jesus was baptized, he went up out of the water. At that moment heaven was opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and lighting on him.¹⁷ And a voice from heaven said, "This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased."

Summary Truth: The Trinity (A term coined by the Church) can't be comprehended but shouldn't frustrate us. After all, can anyone understand the essence of God and his Godhood? Consider Psalm 145:3 Great is the LORD and most worthy of praise; his greatness no one can fathom.

Conclusion Although it is popular to call Jesus a good man or even "a son of God", these are not legitimate options. He was either a Legend, a Liar, a Lunatic, or Lord. His resurrection indicated by the Bible and history shows he can only be Lord.

Extra Study: Read Romans 1-8. Romans is an epistle (a letter) written by the Apostle Paul to Christians in Rome – Romans. This is a congregation he had not met before, so he begins by touching on the fundamentals of the Christian Faith. To know the book of Romans, especially 1-8, you will become quite familiar with the basic doctrines of the Christian faith.