

HOW DO WE KNOW THAT JESUS CHRIST IS GOD?

1. **From the prophecies concerning His appearance:** The Old Testament reveals that Christ co-created the world with God the Father: ***“Let Us make man in Our image and likeness” (Gen. 1:26)***. Hundreds of years before the birth of Jesus Christ, prophets revealed that God would come to the earth: ***“and I will walk among you and will be your God” (Lev. 26:12); “Afterward He appeared upon earth, and He conversed with men” (Bar. 3:35-37); “Blessed is he that comes in the name of the Lord... God is the Lord, and he hath appeared unto us” (Ps. 117:26-27)***. They foretold that God would be born from a virgin: ***“Behold, the virgin shall conceive in the womb, and shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name Emmanuel” (Isa. 7:14)***. They indicated where God would be born: ***“And thou, Bethlehem, house of Ephratha, art few in number to be reckoned among the thousands of Juda: yet out of thee shall one come forth to me, to be a ruler of Israel; and his goings forth were from the beginning, even from eternity” (Mic. 5:2)***. They described the miracles He would perform: ***“Then shall the eyes of the blind be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall hear. Then shall the lame man leap as an hart, and the tongue of the stammerers shall speak plainly” (Isa. 35:5-6)***. They told us that He would walk on the sea: ***“Who alone has stretched out the heavens, and Who walks on the sea as on firm ground” (Job 9:8)***. They told us that He would be crucified: ***“They have pierced my hands and my feet. They have numbered all my bones...They have parted my garments amongst themselves, and for my vesture have they cast lots” (Ps. 21:16-18); “And thy life shall be suspended before thine eyes” (Dt. 28:66)***. They foretold of His ascension back into Heaven: ***“God is gone up in jubilation, the Lord with the voice of the trumpet” (Ps. 46:5)***. These and hundreds of more prophecies were fulfilled with the incarnation of Jesus Christ; no such prophecies were ever made concerning any other person.

2. **From His birth:** Archangel Gabriel appeared to the Virgin Mary and told her that she would give birth to ***“a Son...Who shall be great and shall be called the Son of the Highest...and He shall reign over the house of Jacob forever; and His Kingdom shall have no end” (Lk. 1:31-33)***. The Archangel Gabriel also informed Joseph that Jesus Christ would ***“save His people from their sins.” (Mt. 1:21)***. When Jesus Christ was born, angels appeared glorifying God: ***“Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, goodwill toward men” (Lk. 2:14)***. Furthermore, the angels said the following to the shepherds: ***“For unto you is born this day...a Savior, who is Christ the Lord” (Lk. 2:11)***. The Magi who came and worshipped Jesus Christ offered Him gold (as to a king), myrrh (signifying His death and burial), and incense (which is only offered to God). Such remarkable events never took place with the birth of any other person. Only for Jesus Christ, Who is the Lord, Who is the Savior of the world, and Whose Kingdom is eternal.

3. From the testimony of God the Father: During His baptism, there was a voice that came from Heaven saying: ***“This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased” (Mt. 3:17).*** During the Transfiguration, a voice came from Heaven saying: ***“This is My beloved Son. Listen to Him!” (Mk. 9:7).*** And when Christ said: ***“Father, glorify Thy name,”*** then ***“there came a voice from Heaven saying, ‘I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again’ (Jn. 12:29).*** God never testified in this manner directly from Heaven about any other person, except for His Son Jesus Christ.

4. From His testimony concerning Himself: No person ever said, “I am God.” Many people preached about God and claimed that they were prophets. But Jesus Christ said: ***“I am God” (Jn. 5:18 & Jn. 8:28).*** He said that He existed before Abraham (Jn. 8:58), and that He is simultaneously on the earth and in Heaven (Jn. 3:13). He said that He is not from this world (Jn. 8:23), but that He came down from Heaven (Jn. 6:38). He said that He and the Father are one (Jn. 10:30), and that he who sees Christ sees the Father (Jn. 12:45). He also said that He will return to judge the entire world during His Second Coming. He also told the Apostles that He will be with them forever. No other person ever thought of or dared to make such claims—only Jesus Christ, the perfect God Who became perfect man.

5. From His works: He turned water into wine; He resurrected three people, and when He died on the Cross there were many people who were resurrected and came out of the tombs; He created eyeballs from dirt and His saliva (Jn. 9:5); He gave sight to blind people; He expelled demons from possessed people; He fed 20,000 people with five loaves of bread (Jn. 6:11); twice after the Apostles had fished all night and caught nothing, He told them to cast their nets, and they were immediately filled with fish; He walked on the water (Jn. 6:19); He commanded the sea and the wind to stop and they did so immediately; He granted hearing to the deaf; He made paralyzed people walk; He touched Peter’s mother-in-law and immediately her fever left; He knew the thoughts and the deeds of every person; He made the fig tree wither with only His words; He healed lepers; He healed the lady with the issue of blood; He forgave sins (which is a prerogative of God alone). All these works and miracles are not the works of a man, but of the God-man, Who has absolute authority over life and death, and over all of creation. Even though the prophets performed a limited number of miracles by praying to God, Jesus Christ performed countless miracles with His authoritative command alone: ***“I say to you” (Mk. 9:25).*** This, no other person in history has ever done.

6. From His teachings: Jesus Christ taught and revealed to us truths that no one else ever conceived. He taught us that God is Triune, that God is a Father, that God is love. He taught us to have faith and hope in God’s providence. He taught us to have humility, to love our enemies, and to love God with all our heart and mind. He revealed to us that man will be judged for his deeds, words, and thoughts, that man has an eternal soul, that He will resurrect all people during the Second Coming. He taught us of the existence of Heaven and Hell. Truly! As even the Jews confessed: ***“Never did man speak like this man!” (Jn. 7:46).***

7. From His blameless life: Jesus Christ lived a pure, blameless, and holy life. He lived a life of virginity. He lived in poverty. He walked everywhere by foot. No one was ever able to accuse Him of anything. Indeed! His question: ***“who can convict me of sin?” (Jn. 8:46)*** remains unanswered throughout all the centuries up until today. This can be said about no other person, only the sinless God-man Jesus Christ, ***“who did no sin, neither was guile found in His mouth” (Is. 53:9)***.

8. From His Resurrection and His Ascension: Every human being tries to prolong their life and flees from danger. Jesus Christ is the only person who ever said “kill me, and I will resurrect myself in three days” (Jn. 10:17-18). Every person when they die is buried, and their bones remain in the grave permanently. Jesus Christ’s tomb, however, is the only tomb that is empty, because He truly resurrected (Lk. 24:5-6). This is great testimony that Jesus Christ is the ruler of life and death; everyone else is subject to death’s dominion, and thus remains in the grave. Additionally, forty days after His resurrection, Christ was lifted up on clouds and ascended into Heaven (Lk. 24:51), and sat at the right of the Father (Mk. 16:19), from where He will come again to judge the entire world. This was witnessed by the Apostles and the Virgin Mary. No other person ever ascended into Heaven with his body after they died. Only He Who descended from Heaven.

9. From His own prophecies: He predicted that He would be crucified, slapped, ridiculed, and whipped. He foresaw that Judas would betray Him (Jn. 13:21) and that Peter would deny Him (Lk. 22:34). He predicted how Peter would be martyred for Him (Jn. 21:18-19). He predicted the destruction of Jerusalem (Lk. 21:20); He predicted that the Jews would be dispersed throughout the entire world and lose their homeland (Lk. 21:24); He promised that He would send the Holy Spirit to His Apostles (Jn. 16:7); He predicted that the Apostles would preach all over the entire world; He predicted that the Apostles would be persecuted; He predicted that the Gentiles would espouse the Christian Faith. Every single prediction Christ made was fulfilled to the letter.

10. From the descent of the Holy Spirit: Fifty days after His resurrection, the Holy Spirit descended upon the holy Apostles, and immediately the Apostles were invested with divine power (Acts 2:3). They began to speak different languages (Acts 2:4) and to perform awesome miracles (Acts 2:43); they raced all over the world and convinced idolaters to become Christians; they convinced sinful people to give up their pleasures and to espouse a holy way of life; and finally, they gave up their lives to testify that Jesus Christ is God. This all could not have been accomplished by uneducated fisherman of the lowest social status if Christ was not God.

11. From the miracles performed and experienced by His faithful followers: From Apostolic times up until the present, faithful Orthodox Christians have performed miracles only by calling upon the name of Christ. If Jesus Christ was not God, how could miracles take place by praying to Him? Moreover, the incorrupt, fragrant, and myrrh-streaming relics of Christ's saints, the tearing and miracle-working icons of Christ and His mother, the Holy Light that appears every Pascha at His tomb in Jerusalem, and numerous other wondrous phenomena exclusively found within and limited to the Orthodox Christian Faith loudly proclaim that Jesus Christ is truly God; and as God, He performs miracles as perpetual testimony of His divinity.

12. From His love: Even though Jesus Christ did not have to die (because He was sinless), and even though He could have avoided being crucified, He willingly proceeded to death on the Cross in order to save the human race. No person ever gave up their life and willingly suffered for the love of the human race. And while on the Cross, He prayed for and forgave the people who were crucifying Him. This type of love, no one has ever shown us! Only the God-man Jesus Christ: the Son of God and God of love.

—For an in depth study, please refer to *Christology*, by St. Nektarios—