

Is Jesus God?

Survey from 2022 regarding the State of Theology which is a biennial study conducted by Lifeway Research and Ligonier Ministries. <https://thestateoftheology.com/>

One of the many statements in the survey was “Jesus was a great teacher, but he was not God”. Catholics who agreed or strongly agreed range from 52-60%

Disclaimers: 3011 people were surveyed 99 of whom were Catholic. There is an accuracy of + 1.9 percent and that percentage is accurate when the number of subdivisions exceeds 50. Also, there is sadly many people who call themselves Catholic and never or rarely practice their faith. These may have been among those who were surveyed.

The Church has always taught, and this can be found in *Dei Verbum*, the Constitution on Divine Revelation from the Second Vatican Council that:

“Hence there exists a close connection and communication between sacred tradition and Sacred Scripture. For both of them, flowing from the same divine wellspring, in a certain way merge into a unity and tend toward the same end. For Sacred Scripture is the word of God inasmuch as it is consigned to writing under the inspiration of the divine Spirit, while sacred tradition takes the word of God entrusted by Christ the Lord and the Holy Spirit to the Apostles, and hands it on to their successors in its full purity, so that led by the light of the Spirit of truth, they may in proclaiming it preserve this word of God faithfully, explain it, and make it more widely known. Consequently it is not from Sacred Scripture alone that the Church draws her certainty about everything which has been revealed. Therefore both sacred tradition and Sacred Scripture are to be accepted and venerated with the same sense of loyalty and reverence.

Sacred tradition and Sacred Scripture form one sacred deposit of the word of God, committed to the Church. Holding fast to this deposit the entire holy people united with their shepherds remain always steadfast in the teaching of the Apostles, in the common life, in the breaking of the bread and in prayers (see Acts 2, 42, Greek text), so that holding to, practicing and professing the heritage of the faith, it becomes on the part of the bishops and faithful a single common effort.

But the task of authentically interpreting the word of God, whether written or handed on, has been entrusted exclusively to the living teaching office of the Church, whose authority is exercised in the name of Jesus Christ. This teaching office is not above the word of God, but serves it, teaching only what has been handed on, listening to it devoutly, guarding it scrupulously and explaining it faithfully in accord with a divine commission and with the help of the Holy Spirit, it draws from this one deposit of faith everything which it presents for belief as divinely revealed.

It is clear, therefore, that sacred tradition, Sacred Scripture and the teaching authority of the Church, in accord with God's most wise design, are so linked and joined together that one cannot stand without the others, and that all together and each in its own way under the action of the one Holy Spirit contribute effectively to the salvation of souls. (*Dei Verbum*, 9-10)

SACRED SCRIPTURE REGARDING THE DIVINITY OF JESUS

Matthew chapter 9 and Mark chapter 2 tell of the healing of the paralytic and the forgiveness of his sins which only God can do.

We can read in Matthew chapters 14, 21, 28 and John chapter 20 that people worship Jesus and he does not turn them down.

The whole Trinity in which God calls Jesus His Son can be found in Matthew 3 and 28 and Luke 3.

St. Paul writes in Romans 9:5, "...theirs the patriarchs, and from them, according to the flesh, is the Messiah. God, who is over all, be blessed forever. Amen."

In Hebrews 1:5 and v. 8 the author says, "For to which of the angels did God ever say, 'You are my son; this day I have begotten you'? 'I will be a father to him, and he shall be a son to me'? v.8. "...but of the Son: 'Your throne, O God, stands forever and ever; and a righteous scepter is the scepter of your kingdom.'"

Colossians chapter 1 talks clearly about Jesus being the maker and sustainer of all things. Verses 16 and 17: "For in him were created all things in heaven and on earth, the visible and the invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers; all things were created through him and for him. He is before all things, and in him all things hold together."

The first words in John's gospel: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came to be through him, and without him nothing came to be."

Colossians 2:9-10: "For in him dwells the whole fullness of the deity bodily and you share in this fullness in him, who is the head of every principality and power."

John 20: 27-29, "Then he said to Thomas, 'Put your finger here and see my hands, and bring your hand and put it into my side, and do not be unbelieving, but believe.'" Thomas answered and said to him, "My Lord and my God!"

TRADITION REGARDING THE DIVINITY OF JESUS

St. Polycarp: "Now may the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the eternal high priest himself, the Son of God Jesus Christ, build you up in faith and truth...and to us with you, and to all those under heaven who will yet believe in our Lord and God Jesus Christ and in his Father who raised him from the dead."

St. Ignatius of Antioch: "For our God, Jesus the Christ, was conceived by Mary according to God's plan, both from the seed of David and of the Holy Spirit."

Justin Martyr: "Therefore these words testify explicitly that He [Jesus] is witnessed to by Him [the Father] who established these things, as deserving to be worshipped, as God and as Christ."

St. Irenaeus: "Christ Jesus [is] our Lord, and God, and Savior, and King, according to the will of the invisible Father."

St. Hippolytus: "The Logos alone of this God is from God himself; wherefore also the Logos is God, being the substance of God."

And it is from this ancient and divinely inspired tradition that the Catechism says:
479: "At the time appointed by God, the only Son of the Father, the eternal Word, that is, the Word and substantial Image of the Father, became incarnate; without losing his divine nature he has assumed human nature."

480: "Jesus Christ is true God and true man, in the unity of his divine person; for this reason, he is the one and only mediator between God and men."

481: "Jesus Christ possesses two natures, one divine and the other human, not confused, but united in the one person of God's Son."

482: "Christ, being true God and true man, has a human intellect and will, perfectly attuned and subject to his divine intellect and divine will, which he has in common with the Father and the Holy Spirit."

483: "The Incarnation is therefore the mystery of the wonderful union of the divine and human natures in the one person of the Word."

We could go on and on for hours, days, weeks, and months, but let this be a start. Let this be a moment to open our eyes to what is happening around us in our families, among our friends and loved ones.

If it is true that the majority of Catholics don't believe in the real presence of the Eucharist, maybe this is one of the reasons why. So what can we do?

Our catechists and teachers work very hard to pass on the true authentic faith about the divine nature of God. But they cannot hope to succeed with our children alone. They need the support of parents, grandparents, aunts and uncles who will take the time to have these important and essential conversations with their children.

Perhaps we have friends or relatives who simply haven't heard all of this or have forgotten and have left the Church. Learn from our Tradition and from Sacred Scripture, keep it handy on your phone or other portable device so that you will be prepared to share this with those who may have lost their way.

There aren't enough priests, deacons and religious in the world to go to all of the places with this knowledge. To be present where you live day in and day out. We need your help. And together, through the help and power of the Holy Spirit, we can see a new day of hope in knowing that God is indeed with us.