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## The Deity of Jesus

by Bill Lockwood

“The justice of God would not permit that Jesus, as a ransom, be more than a perfect man; and certainly not be the supreme God Almighty in the flesh” (*Let God Be True*, Brooklyn: Watchtower Bible and Tract Society, 1946, p. 87). Thus reads one of the official publications of the Jehovah’s Witness organization. It is the gospel of unbelief.

The Bible declares that Jesus was actually God in the flesh. Deity become human. John 1:1 reads, “*In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.*” The Witnesses distort this text by mistranslating, “the Word was a god.” (New World Translation). This is completely at odds with all of Greek scholarship. Christ is stated *to be God* who came in the flesh (John 1:14). The term “God” refers to “divine nature.” Jesus, as well as the Father, both shared the divine nature.

Our Lord is referred to as “*the great God and our Savior*” (Titus 2:13) and “*God and Savior*” (2 Peter 1:1). Paul adds in Philippians 2:6 that “*Christ, existing in the form of God, counted not being on an equality with God a thing to be grasped . . .*” A definition of the word “form” is here given by a Greek authority: “Form” is ... properly the nature or essence, not in the abstract, but actually subsisting in the individual, and retained as long as the individual itself exists . . . Thus in the passage before us “form of God” is the Divine nature actually subsisting in the Person of Christ . . . For the interpretation of the “form of God” it is sufficient to say that (1) it includes the whole nature and essence of Deity, and is inseparable from them since they could have no actual existence without it; and (2) that it does not include in itself anything “accidental” or “separable,” such as particular modes of manifestation, or conditions of glory and majesty, which may at one time be attached to the “form,” at another separated from it... “The true meaning of “form” in the expression “form of God” is confirmed by its recurrence in the corresponding phrase, “form of a servant.” It is universally admitted that the two phrases are directly antithetical and that “form” must therefore have the same sense in both” (*Vine’s Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words*, p. 453-54).

Consider a similar passage in which Paul exalts the nature of Jesus Christ with these words, “*...who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation...*” (Colossians 1:15, 16). The word “image,” according to Celsus Spicq’s *Theological Lexicon*, is “not a copy, but the thing expressed” (p. 418). In other words, Jesus Christ is the very expression of God. By referring to Christ as the “firstborn” of all creation in the next clause, the apostle simply shows our Lord’s authority over creation and not, as some erringly suppose, that Christ was the “first being created.” The word “firstborn” is defined as “priority over” and is explained by the inspired writer in the very next phrase by pointing out that “for in Him were *all things* created.” Proof of Jesus’ position as firstborn is given by saying that ALL things were created by Him!

Christ indeed is worthy to be worshipped! Beware of false prophets who would demote the Savior to a mere mortal.