

People are right to expect sufficient warrant for their beliefs. They are right to expect sufficient justification for being asked to believe truth claims.

**Main Idea:** Jesus has provided sufficient evidence to believe his truth claims. His “sheep” know him, and so listen to his message, believe and follow. Opponents demand more than sufficient evidence.


## I. Jesus’ cross is a new and better altar, his death is a new and better sacrifice.

### The Festival of Hanukkah (Dedication)

10:22 “At that time the Feast of Dedication took place at Jerusalem.”

- **The Time:** Chs. 7-10:21 involves the Fall feast of Tabernacles. The time of the feast of Hannukah/dedication is winter 8 days in the month of December. It is winter and the temperature hovers around the 50’s each December.
- **The Feast of Dedication:** Hannukah is the Jewish festival commemorating the Jews’ victory over Greek occupation in the Maccabean Revolt in 167 BC – 160 BC. **Antiochus Epiphanes** was a Syrian or Seleucid King who oppressed the Jews and attempted to end Jewish religion and the Jewish way of life as it had been practiced since the time of Moses. **He tried to end the practice of circumcision, meeting on the Sabbath, and the kosher dietary laws of Judasim.** All marks of being Jewish. Additionally, during his brutal regime—he publicly tortured women by killing their babies, hanging the deceased children around Jewish women’s necks and forcing them to walk through the streets as they mourned their slain babies. Antiochus built a Greek Gymnasium—a cultural center that required Jews to renounce their faith and he was largely successful. Straight off the success of building the Greek gymnasium and converting many to Hellenism, Antiochus III pushed further to erase all traces of Jewry among the people. **The final straw for his cruel reign came when he desecrated the Holy Temple of God by erecting a statue of Zeus in the temple,** and sacrificing a pig on the holy altar to Yahweh, and then hanging the head of that pig on a spike in the holy of holies. And that’s all the Jews could take. Under extreme duress and pressure, many if not most Jews converted to Greek religion and

culture and language—but a few faithful Jews remained in Judea. When a Greek General was sent to force the people of **Modi'in** to sacrifice to Greek idols, a local Jewish priest named Mattathias rose up and refused, calling all faithful to the covenant and the Law to join him (1 Maccabees 2:27).

- **Followed by his sons: John, Simon, Judas, Lazarus, and Jonathan.** With the Jewish people behind them, they became known as the **Hasmoneans**, or the Hammer of Israel. Judah led the armies of Israel, a ragtag group of rebels and dissidents—they defeated Antiochus' best armies led by his best generals though outnumbered 5-1.
- After routing the Greeks in a stunning victory, **Judas Maccabaeus** was distraught to return to Jerusalem and find the temple of God vandalized, and desecrated. **They took two steps to reclaim the Hebrew temple—they cleaned and refit the space, and dismantled the altar of sacrifice—every stone because pigs had been sacrificed in honor of false gods of Greece. The Maccabean text reads, 1 Macc. 4:44-46** “Then Judas and his brothers said, ‘Now that our enemies have been trodden, let us go up to purify the sanctuary and rededicate it’...38 They found the sanctuary desolate, the altar abominated, the sacred gates scorched, weeds overgrown in the courts as in a thicket or on a mountainside, and the priests' chambers destroyed...Judas appointed men to attack those in the citadel, while he purified the sanctuary. 42 He chose blameless priests, devoted to the Torah; 43 these cleansed the sanctuary and carried away the stones of the defilement to a suitable place. 44 They deliberated what ought to be done with the altar for burnt offerings that had been desecrated. 45 They decided it best to dismantle it, lest it be a lasting shame to them that the Gentiles had abominated it with the blood of pigs; so they disassembled the altar. 46 They stored the stones on the temple mount in the colonnade, until the coming of a prophet who could decide for them what ought to be done with [the altar stones].”
- They placed those stones in the colonnade or porch of Solomon's temple  **(picture)** waiting for a future Messiah/prophet to come reclaim them—to purify them and restore sacrifices on the ancient altar.

**10:23-24** “and Jesus was walking in the temple, in the colonnade of Solomon. <sup>24</sup> So the Jews gathered around him and said to him, “How long will you keep us in suspense? If you are the Christ, tell us plainly.”

- **They are clearly looking for a Political deliverer—a new Judas Maccabaeus to push back on Roman rule.** They are possibly even looking for a prophetic figure to tell them what to do with the altar stones stored in Solomon’s portico/colonnade. But Jesus hasn’t come to be that kind of Messianic figure.

**Jesus has no intention of restoring the past. Jesus has not come to restore the ancient altar, cleanse it, and rebuilt it for use in the temple. He has not come to restore Israel to political autonomy from Roman Rule.**

**Jesus is the kind of Messiah who will restore the people’s worship through a new and better altar—his cross and a new and better sacrifice—himself.**

## **II. The signs in John's gospel alone should be enough to convince anyone.**

<sup>25</sup> Jesus answered them, "I told you, and you do not believe. The works that I do in my Father's name bear witness about me, <sup>26</sup> but you do not believe because you are not among my sheep. <sup>27</sup> My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me. <sup>28</sup> I give them eternal life, and they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of my hand. <sup>29</sup> My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all, and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father's hand.

**Ch. 2: Jesus the New Temple**

**Ch. 3: Jesus the Spotless Lamb** who gives the New Birth of the Spirit

**Ch. 4: Jesus the Messiah** to the outcasts of Samaria and healing of Royal Official's Son with just a Word.

**Ch. 5: Jesus the LORD of the Sabbath** to seek and to save. The Son of Man of Daniel.

**Ch. 6: Jesus the Bread of Life** who came down from heaven and alone satisfies the soul.

**Ch. 7: Jesus the Water of Life** who springs forth from heart into living rivers of life.

**Ch. 8: Jesus the Light of the World** who alone illuminates the way of salvation.

**Ch. 9: Jesus the Restorer of Sight** to the blind and the one who blinds those who "see."

**Ch. 10: Jesus the Good Shepherd** who cares for, leads, and saves his sheep.

These signs and sayings alone should be enough for those who have eyes to see—the Sheep who listen to his voice because they know the Good Shepherd.

**The chronically doubting will never have enough evidence no matter how much you ever present. Never.**

**Illus. Richard Dawkins was asked in a documentary "What happens if you die and meet God. And he says, Here I am." Dawkins responded, "I will say with Bertrand Russel—still not enough evidence sir."**

Those who have hardened themselves to the truth will not believe even a man were to die and raise back to life.

### **III. Jesus is God's unique Son, evidenced by the superior quality of his works.**

<sup>30</sup> I and the Father are one.”

<sup>31</sup> Again his Jewish opponents picked up stones to stone him, <sup>32</sup> but Jesus said to them, “I have shown you many good works from the Father. For which of these do you stone me?”

<sup>33</sup> “We are not stoning you for any good work,” they replied, “but for blasphemy, because you, a mere man, claim to be God.”

<sup>34</sup> Jesus answered them, “Is it not written in your Law, ‘I have said you are “gods”’? <sup>35</sup> If he called them ‘gods,’ to whom the word of God came—and Scripture cannot be set aside— <sup>36</sup> what about the one whom the Father set apart as his very own and sent into the world? Why then do you accuse me of blasphemy because I said, ‘I am God’s Son’? <sup>37</sup> Do not believe me unless I do the works of my Father. <sup>38</sup> But if I do them, even though you do not believe me, believe the works, that you may know and understand that the Father is in me, and I in the Father.”

<sup>39</sup> Again they tried to seize him, but he escaped their grasp.

**In what sense are Jesus and the Father one?**

## In what sense are Jesus and the Father one?

### 1. Jesus was truly divine. What do we mean by that?

The properties and attributes which distinguish God as the infinite, personal, creator of the universe are all true of Jesus. Jesus is the truly human but also truly God. Christ's immaterial nature was fully divine, equal in subsistence with Father and Spirit, yet distinct in person.

**Colossians 2:8-9** "See to it that no one takes you captive through hollow and deceptive philosophy, which depends on human tradition and the elemental spiritual forces of this world rather than on Christ. <sup>9</sup> For in Christ all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form."

Paul is careful to warn them that no one takes them prisoner to hollow and deceptive philosophy or false teaching about Christ.

Notice the Pharisees response? Which miracle do you stone me for? And their response is—not your miracles but because you a mere man claim to be God. They've really missed the point. Jesus is not a mere man making himself God, he is God who has made himself a man.

## 2. Errant Views of Christ's Divinity

- **Adoptionism:** The belief that Jesus was born a mere human but later adopted as a son and approved for divine ministry (Theodotus of Byzantium Heresy AD 190).
- **Arianism:** The belief that Jesus was a created being and a lesser deity who had a beginning in time along with all creation (Arius, AD 250-336).
- **Docetism:** The belief that Jesus' physical body was an illusion and that he only appeared to have been human in life and his crucifixion (Gnostics 2<sup>nd</sup> century). This heresy affirmed the false view of the "divine spark" simply imprisoned within humanity and that Christ's divine essence had successfully escaped humanity. So, Docetism is both a heresy regarding the humanity of Christ and his divinity.
- **Sabellianism:** Belief that the Father, Son, and the Holy Spirit are all three separate manifestations, taking on various roles and functions—but one God (Sabellius, 3<sup>rd</sup> cent).
- **Kenotic Theology (medieval and resurgent in Bill Johnson in Redding CA):** Belief that Christ gave up or divested himself of certain divine attributes at his incarnation. This is based on Paul's metaphorical use of the term *kenosis* meaning, "to empty" in Phil. 2:7 (ESV) ... "but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men."
- However, the context of this passage is not *of what* did Christ empty himself, but *into what* did Christ empty himself. The term in context is a metaphor for the humiliation of Christ—which theologians have typically taken to be his earthly life leading up to his cross. Again, the context here is Jesus taking on the status of a man, a slave, and ultimately obedient to death on cross—and it is through that act of humiliation that God vindicates Jesus' claims of Lordship.

### **3. What does it mean for men to be “gods” in the sense that Jesus used this term?**

**Men are fallen image-bearers.** The OT word for “gods” can be used of God proper; angelic beings, false idols, or the quality of being “godlike”; or earthly rulers.

**Human Beings as Image-bearers: Gen. 1:26** “Then God said, “Let us make mankind in our **image**, in our likeness, so that they may rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky, over the livestock and all the wild animals, and over all the creatures that move along the ground.”

We learn from this passage what it means for Adam and Eve and their descendants:

1. They have the life of God at creation, at birth.
2. They have a representative role to play.
3. They are to reign over creation as God’s proxy-rulers or co-regents.
4. Through the fall, that instinct to rule has been hopelessly corrupted in sin.

**The Word “Elohim” is used narrowly of people as...**

**Judges/Rulers in Israel: Exodus 22:7-8** “If anyone gives a neighbor silver or goods for safekeeping and they are stolen from the neighbor’s house, the thief, if caught, must pay back double. <sup>8</sup> But if the thief is not found, the owner of the house must appear before the judges (*elohim*), and they must determine whether the owner of the house has laid hands on the other person’s property.”

**The Word “Elohim” is used narrowly of people as...**

**Human Rulers of Nations: Ez. 28:2, 9** “Son of man, say to the leader of Tyre, 'Thus says the Lord GOD, "Because your heart is lifted up And you have said, 'I am a god, I sit in the seat of gods In the heart of the seas'; Yet you are a man and not God, Although you make your heart like the heart of God **9 'Will you still say, "I am a god," In the presence of your slayer, Though you are a man and not God, In the hands of those who wound you?"**

Here we see the representative authority that human judges and rulers have—appointed by God.



## The Word “Elohim” is used narrowly of people as...

**A Leader as Representative Spokesman: Ex. 4:16** “Moreover, he shall speak for you to the people; and he will be as a mouth for you and you will be as God to him.” 7:1 Then the LORD said to Moses, “See, I make you as God to Pharaoh, and your brother Aaron shall be your prophet.

It is clear from the next three verses that the word “gods” refers to magistrates, judges, and other people who hold positions of authority and rule.

Calling a human magistrate a “god” indicates three things: 1) he has authority over other human beings, 2) the power he wields as a civil authority is to be feared, and 3) he derives his power and authority from God Himself, who is pictured as judging the whole earth in verse 8.

**Jesus’ Citation: Ps. 82:6-7** “I said, ‘You are “gods”;

you are all sons of the Most High.’

<sup>7</sup> But you will die like mere mortals;

you will fall like every other ruler.”

But Jesus’ point is polemical not exegetical. He is simply arguing Val cahomer which is a rabbinic argument from the lesser to the Greater.

If the one and only God—the one true God would refer to us as “the image of God” and within that vocation as image-bearers give us the ruling responsibility and divinely ordained title of “god as judge” or “god in ruling” then how much more appropriate of a title is it to use of God’s unique and eternal Son from heaven?

**Conclusion: Jesus is winning the debates. So many are turning to faith in him. Hardened hearts are beginning to thaw to his teaching. And cold hearts are starting to melt under the rays of his glorious light.**

**And the Pharisees cannot take much more. Their Hearts are hardened like the clay bowl and the wax. The same sun that hardens clay melts wax.**