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The Deity of Christ

Biblical evidence for the divine nature of the Son



JESUS AND THE TRINITY

Thinking biblically and entering into conversation

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The Deity of Christ

A coherent refutation of the teaching of Jehovah’s Witnesses

CENTRAL THESIS

The New Testament statements about Christ cannot consistently be placed in the category of a supreme created being. Christ stands on the Creator’s side, bears Yahweh’s exclusive titles and saving honor, receives the worship of all creation, and shares God’s throne. The cumulative explanation is that the Son is personally distinct from the Father and nevertheless possesses the same divine nature.

Study and reference edition Based on: “The Deity of Christ — A coherent refutation of the teaching of Jehovah’s Witnesses.”

Translation note: English translation of the complete German source. Biblical quotations throughout are translated from the wording in the German source; they are not presented as verbatim quotations from an official English Bible translation. The Greek wording is retained. This translation does not independently revise the source’s theology.

Argument at a glance

The strength of the argument lies not in an isolated proof text, but in the convergence of several independent lines of evidence.

Argument	Central statement
John 1:1	The Logos is described not as “a god” alongside God, but as God in his nature; at the same time he remains distinct from the Father.
Creation	Everything that came into being came into being through Christ. Anyone belonging to the totality of created things cannot at the same time be the universal Creator of that totality.
Saving honor	Yahweh declares that there is no Savior besides him. Nevertheless, the New Testament calls Jesus “God and Savior.”
Thomas’s confession	Thomas addresses “My Lord and my God!” directly to Jesus; Jesus does not reject this confession.
Titles of Yahweh	“The First and the Last” and “Alpha and Omega” are applied to Christ in Revelation.
Worship	In Revelation 5, all creation jointly worships the one seated on the throne and the Lamb.
Throne	Revelation 22 speaks of the one “throne of God and of the Lamb” and then uses the singular for his service and reign.
Overall logic	A created being cannot simultaneously stand outside creation, bear Yahweh’s exclusive titles, possess divine saving honor, and receive the worship of all creation.

LOGICAL FOCUS

The decisive question is not: “Are there individual verses that can be interpreted differently?” What matters is: “Which model explains all the data simultaneously, without having to relativize God’s uniqueness in one place, Christ’s creatorship in another, and his worship in a third?”

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1. Starting point: the actual issue in dispute

The debate concerns more than the translation of individual verses. It concerns the ontological category in which Scripture places Jesus: Creator or creature, bearer of divine honor or recipient of merely derived honor.

1.1. The position of Jehovah’s Witnesses

The teaching of Jehovah’s Witnesses maintains that Jesus Christ is not Almighty God, but the first and highest being created by Jehovah. From this starting point, texts about Christ are read in a way that acknowledges his preexistence, power, and extraordinary position while excluding his equality of essence with God.

This intermediate category creates the central tension: on the one hand Jesus is supposed to be a creature, yet on the other hand he is supposed to possess functions, titles, and honors that Scripture attributes exclusively to the one God. The apologetic task therefore consists in making this tension visible through the entire body of evidence rather than a single verse.

1.2. The right strategy of proof

- Do not isolate: an individual text can almost always be reinterpreted by means of additional assumptions.
- Accumulate: several independent lines must be explained simultaneously — nature, creation, saving honor, titles, worship, and dominion.
- Maintain monotheism: the Christian claim is not that Jesus is a second God alongside the Father.
- Distinguish the persons: the Son is not the Father; personal distinction is compatible with equality of essence.

> **CENTRAL STATEMENT**
>
> The strongest argument is not “This one verse settles everything,” but: Scripture repeatedly places Christ on God’s side rather than on the side of the created order.

2. John 1:1: “The Word was God”

John begins not with Jesus’s birth, but with the eternal Logos. Already in the prologue, Christ’s identity is thus unfolded in categories of preexistence, relationship to God, and divine nature.

2.1. Grammatical structure

> “καὶ θεὸς ἦν ὁ λόγος”
>
> John 1:1c

The subject is ὁ λόγος, “the Logos”; θεός functions as a predicate noun. The word order emphasizes what the Logos is in his nature. John says both that the Logos was “with God” and that the Logos was “God.” Personal distinction and the determination of divine nature are thereby placed alongside one another.

The absence of the definite article before θεός does not grammatically compel the rendering “a god.” An anarthrous predicate noun can qualitatively describe the subject’s nature. This fits the immediate context precisely: the Logos is not the Father, but he possesses the divine nature.

2.2. Why “a god” does not follow

The New World Translation bases its rendering on the missing article. The problem is the inconsistent application of the same rule. In the same chapter, θεός occurs without an article in other places where the translation certainly does not use “a god,” for example John 1:6; 1:12; 1:13; and 1:18.

- John 1:6: “sent from God.”
- John 1:12: “children of God.”
- John 1:13: “born of God.”
- John 1:18: “No one has ever seen God.”

> **LOGICAL CONCLUSION**
> If the mere absence of the article automatically produced indefiniteness, the same translation rule would have to apply consistently in these passages too. Since it does not apply there, John 1:1 cannot be justified as “a god” solely on the basis of the missing article.

2.3. Nature and personal distinction

John avoids two errors simultaneously. First, he does not personally identify the Logos with the Father, because the Logos is “with God.” Second, he does not place the Logos within the created order, because the Logos “was God” and immediately afterward is described as the Creator of everything that came into being.

> **CENTRAL STATEMENT**
> John 1:1 does not provide a doctrine of two gods. The verse distinguishes the persons and simultaneously unites them at the level of divine nature.

3. Christ as Creator of all things

The creation argument is particularly strong ontologically because it divides the totality of reality into two categories: that which came into being, and the one through whom it came into being.

3.1. John 1:3

> “Everything came into being through him, and without him not even one thing came into being that has come into being.”
>
> John 1:3

John first formulates the statement universally and then reinforces it negatively. Positively: everything came into being through the Logos. Negatively: not a single thing that came into being did so without him. The set of things that came into being is thus covered completely.

> **LOGICAL CONCLUSION**
> If Christ himself were a thing that came into being, he would have to belong to the set of which John says that it came into being through the Logos. The Logos would then in some sense have to have come into being through himself. The text instead places him as the origin or mediator of creation over against the totality of what came into being.

3.2. Colossians 1:15–17

> “For in him everything was created … Everything was created through him and for him.”
>
> Colossians 1:16

Colossians expands the statement: creation is not only “through” Christ but also “for” Christ. He is therefore not merely an instrument within an order of creation superior to him. He stands over against created things as creation’s goal.

The repeated universal terms “everything,” the listing of visible and invisible realities, and the statement that he is “before all things” make an exception for Christ himself exegetically artificial. An inserted category of “all other things” changes precisely the universal scope that the text’s language unfolds.

3.3. The “firstborn” objection

The title “firstborn of all creation” in Colossians 1:15 must be understood in its immediate context. “Firstborn” can designate rank, precedence, and the status of heir; the following explanatory clause states why Christ possesses this position: because everything was created in him. The context therefore defines the title through sovereignty over creation, not creaturehood.

Colossians 1:18 uses the same range of titles with reference to resurrection and precedence: Christ is to “have preeminence in everything.” The semantic emphasis is therefore on preeminence. Understanding it as “the first created being” clashes with the immediately following universal statements about his creative activity.

> **CENTRAL STATEMENT**
>
> The Creator stands on the Creator’s side, not on the side of creation. Precisely this categorical distinction makes John 1:3 and Colossians 1:16–17 so significant.

4. Yahweh alone is Savior — Jesus is Savior

The prophetic declarations of exclusivity concerning Yahweh establish a monotheistic framework. The New Testament places Jesus within the divine saving identity rather than outside this framework.

4.1. The exclusivity of saving honor

> “I, I am the LORD, and besides me there is no Savior.”
>
> Isaiah 43:11

> “Besides me there is no saving God.”
>
> Isaiah 45:21

These formulations are exclusive. Salvation here is not merely a delegable function like the activity of a human judge or king. Yahweh binds the ultimate saving identity to himself.

4.2. Titus 2:13 and 2 Peter 1:1

> “our great God and Savior Jesus Christ”
>
> Titus 2:13

> “our God and Savior Jesus Christ”
>
> 2 Peter 1:1

Both texts connect “God” and “Savior” with Jesus Christ. Especially in conjunction with Isaiah, a strong argument concerning identity emerges: the one whose saving honor is exclusive in the Old Testament is recognized in Christ in the New Testament.

4.3. The Trinitarian solution

If Jesus were a creature ontologically separate from God, a problematic distribution of exclusive saving honor would arise: the one God would be Savior, while a creature would simultaneously be Savior in the same salvation-historical and cultic manner. The doctrine of the Trinity resolves the tension through personal distinction within the one divine essence rather than through two gods.

> **CENTRAL STATEMENT**
> The Father is God and Savior. The Son is God and Savior. Nevertheless, there is only one God. Saving honor is not distributed between God and a creature.

5. Thomas: “My Lord and my God”

John leads his Gospel from the statement “the Word was God” to a disciple’s personal confession: “My Lord and my God.”

5.1. Direct address to Jesus

> “My Lord and my God!”
>
> John 20:28

The narrative addition is decisive: Thomas “said to him,” that is, to Jesus. The sentence is not an undirected exclamation toward heaven or a merely emotional interjection. It directly addresses the risen Christ.

Jesus does not correct Thomas. On the contrary, he connects Thomas’s statement with the faith arising from seeing, and then pronounces blessed those who do not see and yet believe.

5.2. Function within John’s Gospel

The confession stands immediately before the Gospel’s programmatic statement of purpose. Literarily, it forms a climax: the prologue has declared the Logos’s divine identity; the narrative unfolds signs, self-revelations, and conflicts; Thomas finally responds by personally acknowledging Jesus as “my God.”

> **LOGICAL CONCLUSION**
> Anyone separating John 20:28 from Christ’s deity must explain not only the direct address, but also unravel the literary arc of the whole Gospel against its natural direction of reading.

6. Jesus bears Yahweh’s titles

Revelation takes up God’s exclusive self-designations from Isaiah and applies them to the crucified and risen Jesus.

6.1. “The First and the Last”

> “I am the First and I am the Last, and besides me there is no God.”
>
> Isaiah 44:6

> “I am the First and the Last … I was dead, and behold, I live.”
>
> Revelation 1:17–18

The speaker’s identification in Revelation 1 is unambiguous: the one who “was dead” and lives is Jesus Christ. It is precisely he who bears the title that Isaiah connects with God’s uniqueness.

6.2. “Alpha and Omega”

> “I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last, the Beginning and the End.”
>
> Revelation 22:13

The sequence of speakers in Revelation 22 is often discussed. The immediate context connects the coming, the recompense, the titles “Alpha and Omega,” and then the self-identification “I, Jesus.” At the very least, Revelation as a whole shows that the divine predicates “Beginning and End” and “First and Last” do not function as honorary titles for creatures.

6.3. Identity without confusing the persons

The use of the same divine titles does not mean that Jesus is the Father. Revelation expressly distinguishes God and the Lamb. The conclusion lies at another level: what marks Yahweh’s unique and eternal identity in the Old Testament cannot be assigned to a mere creature as a parallel title of identity.

> **CENTRAL STATEMENT**
>
> Trinitarian Christology distinguishes the question “Who is the person?” from “What is this person in nature?” The Son is not the Father; yet Scripture attributes to the Son what characterizes divine identity.

7. Revelation 5: the Lamb receives worship

Revelation 5 offers a scene of worship in which the boundary between Creator and creation becomes particularly visible.

7.1. The division: creation and the one worshiped

The Lamb stands at the center of the heavenly throne room. The symbolism of the seven horns and seven eyes describes perfect power and comprehensive knowledge. The heavenly beings fall down before the Lamb, and the scene finally expands to “every creature.”

It is precisely this universality that is logically decisive. If every creature in heaven, on earth, under the earth, and in the sea offers praise, and the Lamb receives this praise, the Lamb does not stand within the totality of worshiping creatures.

7.2. Joint doxology

> “To the one seated on the throne and to the Lamb belong praise and honor and glory and power for ever and ever!”
>
> Revelation 5:13

In a joint doxology, praise is addressed to the one seated on the throne and to the Lamb. It is not limited in time and is represented as universal heavenly worship rather than merely courtly homage.

> **LOGICAL CONCLUSION**
> If the Lamb were a creature, the vision would contain the remarkable structure of all creation worshiping God and one of its fellow creatures in the same eternal doxology. The vision itself suggests the opposite classification: the Lamb stands on the side of the one worshiped.

8. Revelation 22: one shared throne

The Bible’s final vision concentrates the dominion of God and the Lamb in a strikingly unified form.

8.1. “The throne of God and of the Lamb”

> “The throne of God and of the Lamb.”
>
> Revelation 22:1

The text speaks neither of two competing thrones nor of a supreme throne of God plus a subordinate throne of a creature. The wording connects God and the Lamb with one shared center of dominion.

8.2. The remarkable singular

> “The throne of God and of the Lamb will be in it, and his servants will serve him.”
>
> Revelation 22:3

The compound designation “God and the Lamb” is followed by singular forms. Grammar alone is not a complete proof of the Trinity; in Revelation’s overall composition, however, it reinforces the already established unity of divine dominion, worship, and presence.

> **CENTRAL STATEMENT**
> The Bible ends not with a cosmic order in which God and his highest creature reign alongside each other, but with “the throne of God and of the Lamb” as the center of the new creation.

9. God’s glory is given to no creature

The Old Testament exclusivity of divine honor sharpens the problem for every Christology that ontologically counts Jesus among creation.

9.1. The problem of the Watchtower model

According to the teaching of Jehovah’s Witnesses, Jesus is not supposed to be God. Yet the model must simultaneously acknowledge that Jesus is Creator or mediator of creation, Savior, bearer of the highest divine titles, Lord on God’s throne, and recipient of heavenly worship. Thus precisely the divine honor that biblical monotheism does not present as divisible is in fact distributed between God and a created being.

- Jesus is Savior, although Yahweh exclusively claims saving honor for himself.
- Jesus bears Yahweh's titles, although "the First and the Last" marks God's uniqueness.
- Jesus receives universal praise, although every creature belongs among the worshipers.
- Jesus shares God's throne, although the final dominion is described as God's dominion.

9.2. The coherent alternative

The classical Christian claim requires no second deity. Rather, it maintains that the Son is eternally distinct from the Father, but not alien in essence. The same divine honor can therefore belong to the Father and the Son without deifying a creature or dissolving monotheism.

> **QUESTION FOR EXAMINATION**
> Which theory requires fewer exceptions foreign to the text: the theory in which a creature repeatedly receives God's exclusive functions and honors, or the theory in which the Son is personally distinct and nevertheless true God?

10. Personally distinct, of the same essence

The deity of Christ must not be confused with modalism. The very texts examined hold distinction and unity together.

10.1. No identity of Father and Son

John 1:1 says both that the Logos was "with God" and "was God." Revelation 5 distinguishes the one seated on the throne and the Lamb. Revelation 22 names "God and the Lamb." The persons are therefore not interchangeable.

The Trinitarian thesis is therefore not "Jesus is the Father," but: the Father is God, the Son is God, and the Father and Son are personally distinct from one another. Unity lies in the one divine essence rather than in a single person.

10.2. Subordination is not creaturehood

Statements in which the Son is sent, obeys the Father, or calls the Father greater concern his relational and salvation-historical position. Functional subordination does not automatically imply ontological inferiority. Even human relationships show that rank or role does not by itself determine the nature of a being.

This distinction is decisive for Christology: the Son can act as the one sent, accomplish the Father's will, and assume the position of a servant in the incarnation without thereby ceasing to be what the prologue says of him.

10.3. Philippians 2 as an interpretive framework

Philippians 2:6–8 describes Christ as the one who exists in the form of God and nevertheless humbles himself, assumes the form of a servant, and becomes obedient to the point of death. The movement of the text runs from an exalted preincarnate position to voluntary humiliation. Obedience here is part of his humiliation, not proof of a created nature.

> **CENTRAL STATEMENT**
> Statements about Christ's voluntary humiliation and his role as the one sent must not be played off against texts determining his divine identity. Both belong to biblical Christology.

11. Frequent objections and brief answers

The following answers bring together typical objections. They are intended not to replace the main argument, but to show how apparently opposing texts can be placed within the overall picture.

11.1. “The Father is greater than I”

John 14:28 stands in the context of the Son’s mission, humiliation, and return to the Father. “Greater” here designates the Father’s position in relation to the Son sent into the world and humbled. The verse does not say: “The Father is of a higher kind of essence than I.” A relation of rank within salvation history is not an ontological difference of kind.

11.2. “The only true God”

John 17:3 designates the Father as “the only true God” and Jesus as the one sent by him. The verse is directed against false gods, not against the Son’s deity. In the same Gospel of John, the Logos is designated as God, and Thomas calls Jesus “my God.” John therefore cannot intend “only true God” to exclude every divine predication of the Son without contradicting himself.

11.3. “The beginning of God’s creation”

Revelation 3:14 designates Christ as the ἀρχή of God’s creation. ἀρχή can mean “beginning,” but also origin, rule, or principle. The broader Johannine and Pauline evidence that everything was created through Christ favors understanding the statement as the origin or sovereign starting point of creation, rather than as “the first created specimen.”

11.4. “Firstborn of all creation”

Colossians 1 explains the title through the sentence that follows immediately: “For in him everything was created.” The firstborn possesses precedence over creation because creation exists in, through, and for him. The context moves from rank to sovereignty over creation and back to precedence.

11.5. “Worship” merely as respect?

Individual verbs for falling down or paying homage can also designate human respect, depending on context. Revelation 5, however, must not be reduced to a single verb. What matters is the entire scene of worship: heavenly beings, every creature, eternal praise, honor, glory, and power to God and the Lamb. The context is doxological and cosmic rather than merely courtly.

12. The cumulative overall argument

The individual lines can now be combined into a single argumentative framework.

12.1. Argumentative framework

- Premise 1: Scripture teaches one God and assigns exclusive divine identity markers to him.
- Premise 2: Everything created belongs to the created order and must not be treated as the universal Creator of everything that came into being.
- Premise 3: Jesus is presented as the one through whom everything created came into being and for whom it was created.
- Premise 4: Jesus bears titles that mark Yahweh’s unique identity in the Old Testament.
- Premise 5: Jesus possesses saving honor, is explicitly called “God,” and receives the worship of all creation together with God.
- Premise 6: Jesus remains personally distinct from the Father.

- Conclusion: Jesus is neither a second God nor a created intermediate being, but the Son distinct from the Father who possesses the same divine nature.

LOGICAL CONCLUSION

The burden of proof consequently shifts. It is not enough to name a possible alternative interpretation for each text in isolation. A competing model must explain why it is precisely a creature who cumulatively stands on the Creator's side, bears Yahweh's titles, possesses divine saving honor, is addressed as God, receives universal worship, and shares God's throne.

12.2. Why the alternative becomes unstable

The Watchtower model can accommodate individual statements only by reducing their respective scope: "everything" receives implicit exceptions; "God" is qualitatively weakened; "First and Last" becomes a delegated honorary title; "worship" becomes mere homage; the shared throne is read as mere representation. Each individual modification may seem conceivable in isolation. Cumulatively, however, a pattern of continual weakening emerges precisely where the texts exalt Christ to the utmost.

Trinitarian Christology, by contrast, requires one consistent distinction: person is not essence. The Father and the Son are different persons; deity is not divided into two essences. This distinction explains both the language of relationship and the divine predicates simultaneously.

13. Conclusion

Taken together, the biblical statements about Christ yield a consistent profile.

- Creator of all things and not part of the order that came into being.
- Savior within a framework in which Yahweh alone is Savior.
- "Our great God and Savior," and addressed by Thomas as "my God."
- Bearer of the titles "the First and the Last" and the language of Alpha and Omega.
- Recipient of the praise of all creation.
- Sharer in the one "throne of God and of the Lamb."
- Personally distinct from the Father and nevertheless united with him in divine identity.

OVERALL JUDGMENT

The teaching that Jesus is merely a created being can maintain itself in the face of the cumulative evidence only through a series of exceptions and qualifications. The simpler and more coherent explanation is that Jesus Christ is true man and true God. He is distinct from the Father and possesses the same divine nature.

> "Jesus is not a second God. Jesus is not a created being. Jesus possesses the same divine nature as the Father."
>
> Summary thesis of the original document

Appendix A. Conversation guide

A compact sequence for a conversation with Jehovah’s Witnesses that avoids drifting into secondary questions too early.

1. CLARIFY MONOTHEISM

“Do we agree that only Yahweh is true God and that his divine honor belongs to no creature?”

2. READ JOHN 1:3

“Does Jesus belong to the things that came into being? If so, how can it be that without the Logos not one thing came into being that has come into being?”

3. CONNECT ISAIAH 43:11 WITH TITUS 2:13

“If there is no Savior besides Yahweh, how can Jesus be called God and Savior in this way?”

4. READ JOHN 20:28

“To whom does Thomas say: My Lord and my God? Why does Jesus not correct him?”

5. CONNECT ISAIAH 44:6 WITH REVELATION 1:17–18

“Who says: I am the First and the Last, and I was dead?”

6. READ REVELATION 5

“If every creature offers praise and the Lamb receives the praise, on which side of the distinction does the Lamb stand?”

7. CONCLUDE WITH REVELATION 22

“Why is there the one throne of God and of the Lamb?”

8. ASK THE OVERALL QUESTION

“Which model explains all these statements simultaneously, without weakening the terms at every point?”

Appendix B. Scripture index

The most important passages, with links back to the corresponding argumentative section.

Scripture	Significance	Section
Isaiah 43:11	Yahweh as the only Savior	4 →
Isaiah 44:6	The First and the Last	6 →
Isaiah 45:21	No saving God besides Yahweh	4 →
Isaiah 48:12	The First and the Last	6 →
John 1:1	The Logos is God	2 →
John 1:3	Everything came into being through the Logos	3 →
John 1:6, 12, 13, 18	Anarthrous θεός in context	2 →
John 14:28	The Father is greater	11 →
John 17:3	The only true God	11 →
John 20:28	My Lord and my God	5 →
Colossians 1:15–17	Firstborn; everything through and for Christ	3 →
Philippians 2:6–8	Form of God and voluntary humiliation	10 →
Titus 2:13	Our great God and Savior	4 →
2 Peter 1:1	Our God and Savior	4 →
Revelation 1:17–18	The First and the Last was dead and lives	6 →
Revelation 3:14	ἀρχή of God’s creation	11 →
Revelation 5:13	Joint doxology to God and the Lamb	7 →
Revelation 22:1–3	The throne of God and of the Lamb	8 →
Revelation 22:12–16	Alpha and Omega; “I, Jesus”	6 →