

TRUTH in LOVE

Apologetics Conference

Is Jesus God?

Luke Kieser

Chicago, IL

Is God Good?

Is Jesus God?

Can God Be 3-in-1?

Why Does This Matter?

This Is Why We Worship

Why Does This Matter?

John 1:1-3 “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.”



Bart Ehrman

- ▶ M.Div. and Ph.D. degrees at Princeton Seminary
- ▶ James A. Gray Distinguished Professor at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
- ▶ <https://www.bartehrman.com/>



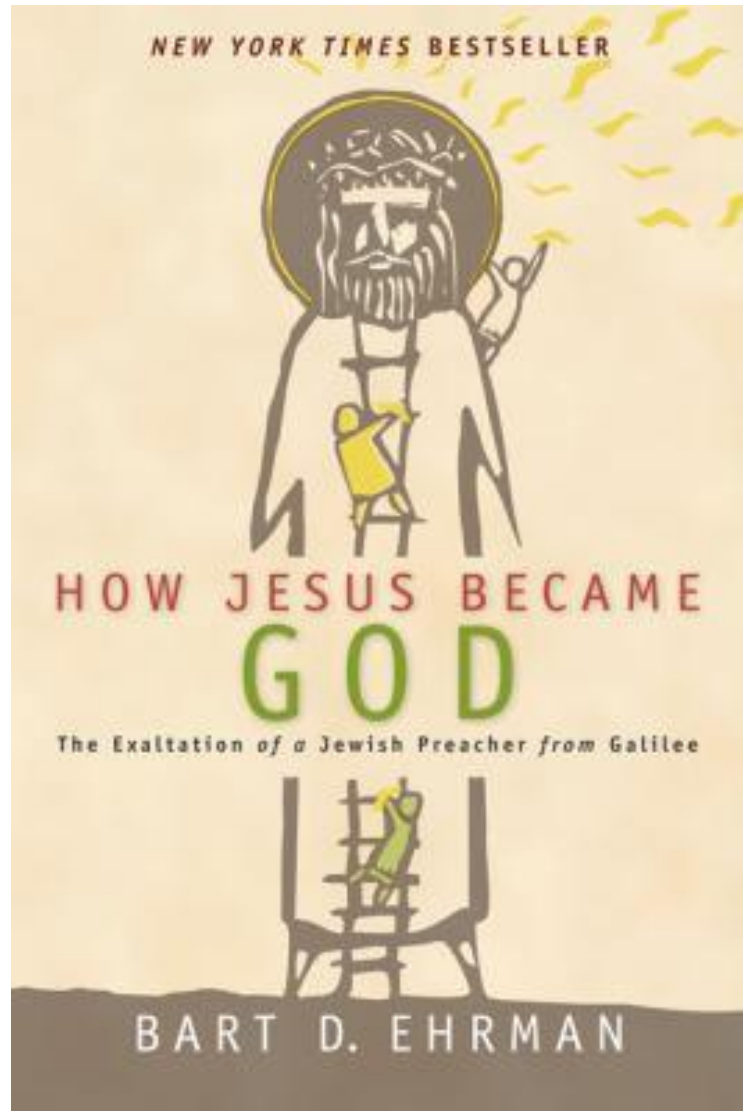
Dale Tuggy

- ▶ PhD in Philosophy from Brown University
- ▶ <https://trinities.org/dale>
- ▶ <https://independentscholar.academia.edu/DaleTuggy>
- ▶ <https://stanford.library.sydney.edu.au/entries/trinity/>

BART EHRMAN



How Jesus Became God



Humans Becoming Divine

1. Hercules, Zeus
2. “This Son of Man whom you have seen is the One who would remove the kings and the mighty ones from their comfortable seats and the strong ones from their thrones. He shall loosen the reins of the strong and crush the teeth of the sinners.”

(1 Enoch 46:4; 71:14 The Son of Man is Enoch)

Who Was the Historical Jesus?

Mark 8:38 “Whoever is ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of that one will the Son of Man be ashamed when he comes in the glory of his Father with the holy angels.”

Development of Jesus's Divinity

Romans 1:3-4 “Concerning his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, which was made of the seed of David according to the flesh; And declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead.”

Development in the Gospels

Mark - Son at baptism

Matthew and Luke - Son at birth

John - pre-existent Son

325 Nicea - Orthodoxy wins out

DALE TUGGY

Who Is God?

1 Cor 8:6, “But to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him.”

“In a relatively short period of time, with imperial assistance, and soon thereafter [God as the Trinity] was considered a non-negotiable, and moreover something which had always been clearly taught in scripture.” -Tuggy

Logical Contradiction

- ▶ If Jesus is Yahweh
- ▶ If the Father is Yahweh
- ▶ Then Jesus is the Father

How to Approach Their Work

Suggestions

1. **Saved by Trinity without being able to explain it**

Suggestions

1. Saved by Trinity without being able to explain it

2. Start with the Bible

Matt 3:16-17; 12:18; 28:19-20; **Mark** 1:10-11; **Luke** 3:21-22; 4:18; 10:21; 11:13; 24:49-50; **John** 1:33-34; 3:34; 4:23; 14:16; 14:25-26; 15:26; 16:7-9; 16:13-15; 20:21-22; **Acts** 1:4-8; 2:32-33; 2:38-39; 4:8-10; 4:24-26; 4:29-31; 5:30-32; 7:55; 10:38; 11:15-17; 20:21-23; 20:28; **Rom** 1:1-4; 5:1-5; 7:4-6; 8:1-3; 8:9; 8:16-17; 14:17-18; 15:12-13; 15:15-16; 15:30; **1 Cor** 2:1-4; 2:10-16; 3:9-16; 6:11; 12:4-6; **2 Cor** 3:3; 13:14; **Gal** 4:4-6; **Eph** 1:11-14; 2:17-18; 2:21-22; 4:4-6; 4:30-32; 5:18-20; **Col** 1:6-8; **1 Thes** 1:3-5; **2 Thes** 2:13-14; **Titus** 3:4-6; **Heb** 2:3-4; 3:1-7; 9:14; 10:12-15; 10:29-31; **1 Peter** 1:2-12; **1 John** 4:2; 4:13-15; 5:6-9; **Jude** 20-21; **Rev** 1:4-5; 1:9-10; 22:1; 22:17-18

(Reordering the Trinity by Rodrick Durst)

Suggestions

1. Saved by Trinity without being able to explain it
2. Start with the Bible
- 3. Use good sources - Google scholar**

Google Scholar

How Jesus became God Bart Ehrman



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Z Breitenbach - *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society*, 2019 - search.proquest.com

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19 Minding the Gap: Why Paul's Conversion Matters for Christology

D Bock - *The Language and Literature of the New Testament*, 2017 - brill.com

Suggestions

1. Saved by Trinity without being able to explain it
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3. Use good sources - Google scholar
- 4. Read the other side**

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- 5. Search within community**

Ways Forward



**Not Merely
a “god”**

Who Is Bowed To?

“Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I am God, and there is none else. I have sworn by myself, the word is gone out of my mouth in righteousness, and shall not return, That unto me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear. Surely, shall one say, in [Yahweh] have I righteousness and strength: even to him shall men come; and all that are incensed against him shall be ashamed. In [Yahweh] shall all the seed of Israel be justified, and shall glory.”

Isaiah 45:22-25

Who Is Bowed To?

“Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.”

Philippians 2:5:9-11

Who Is the One Lord and God?

“Hear, O Israel: The Lord, our God, is one Lord: And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might.”

Deuteronomy 6:4-5

Who Is the One Lord and God?

“We know that an idol is nothing in the world, and that there is none other God but one. For though there be that are called gods, whether in heaven or in earth, (as there be gods many, and lords many,) But to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him.”

1 Corinthians 8:4-6

Sigurd Grindheim

“The Jesus who emerges then is a Jesus who said and did what only God could say and do. His claims are unmatched by Jewish expectations of the Messiah, by Jewish ideas regarding the glorious characters of Israel’s past, the most exalted of the angels, and even the heavenly Son of Man. According to the contemporary Jewish sources, these divine agents do not engage Satan directly, and they do not [muster in] the new creation. They do not forgive sins, and they do not autonomously pass the ultimate, [final end-time] judgment. They do not pit their own authority against the authority of the word of God. Nor do they demand a loyalty that takes precedence over the commandments of God.”

The Surety of Our Salvation

What Is Essential to Salvation: DALE TUGGY

1. In this Jewish context it is assumed that the god in question is the one true God, Yahweh. This would be made explicit in a non-Jewish context. Notice how Luke swaps “God” for “the Father” in [Acts 2:]32. Yahweh just is the Father, and vice-versa.
2. The man Jesus is God’s Messiah.
3. According to God’s plan, Jesus was unjustly crucified by the Romans.
4. But God has vindicated him as his true Messiah by raising him from the dead.
5. And God has exalted Jesus to his right hand, making him not only Messiah, but also “Lord,” in fulfillment of prophecy.
6. God has given Jesus his spirit, which Jesus has now poured out on believers.
7. If you repent of your sins, agree to the above, and are baptized into Jesus, you’ll be forgiven, and you too will get the power of God’s spirit.

What Is Essential to Salvation: ORTHODOX

0. Jesus is the pre-existent creator

Created Alone

Isaiah 44:24 “Thus saith [Yahweh], thy redeemer, and he that formed thee from the womb, I am [Yahweh] that maketh all things; that stretcheth forth the heavens alone; that spreadeth abroad the earth by myself.”

What Is Essential to Salvation: ORTHODOX

0. Jesus is the pre-existent creator

Created by Word/Wisdom

Psalm 33:6 “By the word of [Yahweh] were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth.”

Proverbs 8:22 “The Lord possessed me [Wisdom] in the beginning of his way, before his works of old. 23 I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was... 27 When he prepared the heavens, I was there: when he set a compass upon the face of the depth:... 30 Then I was by him, as one brought up with him: and I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him.”

Wisdom of Solomon 7 “22 ... wisdom, the fashioner of all things,... 25 is a breath of the power of God, and a pure emanation of the glory of the Almighty; therefore nothing defiled gains entrance into her. 26 For she is a reflection of eternal light, a spotless mirror of the working of God, and an image of his goodness. 27 Although she is but one, she can do all things, and while remaining in herself, she renews all things” (NRSV).

What Is Essential to Salvation: ORTHODOX

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John 1:1-3 “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.”

Col 1:15-16 He “is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature: For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him.”

Heb 1:2-3 He is the one “by whom [God] made the worlds; Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power.”

What Is Essential to Salvation: ORTHODOX

0. Pre-existent creator

1. In this Jewish context it is assumed that the god in question is the one true God, Yahweh, who alone created the world and to whom alone belongs salvation and worship.

Isaiah 45:22-25 “Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I am God, and there is none else. I have sworn by myself, the word is gone out of my mouth in righteousness, and shall not return, That unto me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear. Surely, shall one say, in [Yahweh] have I righteousness and strength: even to him shall men come; and all that are incensed against him shall be ashamed. In [Yahweh] shall all the seed of Israel be justified, and shall glory.”

What Is Essential to Salvation: ORTHODOX

0. Pre-existent creator

1. God is Yahweh

2. The man Jesus is God's Messiah **and the return of Yahweh to Zion for salvation.**

Isaiah 40:1-5 “Comfort, comfort my people, says your God. Speak tenderly to Jerusalem, and cry to her that her warfare is ended, that her iniquity is pardoned, that she has received from [Yahweh]'s hand double for all her sins. A voice cries: “In the wilderness **prepare the way of [Yahweh]**; make straight in the desert a highway for our God... And **the glory of [Yahweh] shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it** together, for the mouth of [Yahweh] has spoken.”

What Is Essential to Salvation: ORTHODOX

0. Pre-existent creator

1. God is Yahweh

2. Jesus is Messiah & salvation of Yahweh

3. According to God's plan, Jesus was unjustly crucified by the Romans.

4. But God has vindicated him as his true Messiah by raising him from the dead, **and Jesus takes up his own life.**

John 10:18 “No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father.”

What Is Essential to Salvation: ORTHODOX

0. Pre-existent creator

1. God is Yahweh

2. Jesus is Messiah & salvation of Yahweh

3. Unjustly crucified

4. Exalted to God's right hand

5. And God has exalted Jesus to his right hand, making him not only Messiah, but also the **Lord, Yahweh**, in fulfillment of prophecy.

Philippians 2:9-11 “At the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.”

What Is Essential to Salvation: ORTHODOX

0. Pre-existent creator

1. God is Yahweh

2. Jesus is Messiah & salvation of Yahweh

3. Unjustly crucified

4. Exalted to God's right hand

5. Vindicated in resurrection, took up his own life

6. **The fullness of the Holy Spirit, which Jesus possessed,** has now poured out on believers.

7. If you repent of your sins, agree to the above, and are baptized into Jesus, **(or the name of the Father, Son, and Spirit)** you'll be forgiven, and you too will get the **personal presence of the Father and the Son by the Spirit.**

John 14:23 "Jesus answered him, "If anyone loves me, he will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him."

Galatians 2:20 "I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me."

What Is Essential to Salvation

Dale Tuggy

1. In this Jewish context it is assumed that the god in question is the one true God, Yahweh. This would be made explicit in a non-Jewish context. Notice how Luke swaps “God” for “the Father” in [Acts 2:]32. Yahweh just is the Father, and vice-versa.
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Orthodox

0. Jesus is the pre-existent creator.
1. In this Jewish context it is assumed that the god in question is the one true God, Yahweh, who alone created the world and to whom alone belongs salvation and worship
2. The man Jesus is God’s Messiah and the return of Yahweh to Zion for salvation.
3. According to God’s plan, Jesus was unjustly crucified by the Romans.
4. But God has vindicated him as his true Messiah by raising him from the dead, and Jesus takes up his own life.
5. And God has exalted Jesus to his right hand, making him not only Messiah, but also the Lord, Yahweh, in fulfillment of prophecy.
6. The fullness of the Holy Spirit, which Jesus possessed, has now poured out on believers.
7. If you repent of your sins, agree to the above, and are baptized into Jesus, (or the name of the Father, Son, and Spirit) you’ll be forgiven, and you too will get the personal presence of the Father and the Son by the Spirit.

Conclusion

“He remained Lord of all things even when he came [entering our likeness] in the form of a slave, and this is why the mystery of Christ is truly wonderful. Indeed God the Father said to the Jews through one of the prophets: “Look on this you scoffers, be struck with wonder and disappear, for I am doing a work in your days, a work in which you will not believe even if one were to explain it to you” (Hab 1:5; Acts 13:41). Indeed the mystery of Christ runs the risk of being disbelieved precisely because it is so incredibly wonderful.”

Cyril of Alexandria, *On the Unity of Christ*, trans. John Anthony McGuckin (Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir’s Seminary Press, 1995), 61.

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