

“Jesus, Like No Other”

(Revelation 5:1-10)

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Proposition: Jesus is the perfect God, the perfect Savior

Introduction:

If you were to create the ultimate basketball player, you would most likely make Michael Jordan.

If you were to create the ultimate hockey player, you would make Wayne Gretzky.

If you were to create the ultimate businessman, you would make Bill Gates.

If you were to create the ultimate designer, you'd make Ralph Lauren.

If you were to make the perfect car, you would make a Rolls Royce or a Ferrari.

If you were to create the perfect and most handsome man, you would create Brad Pitt.

You get the picture.

What if you wanted to create the god of your dreams, which is what atheists believe religious people have done?

Listen to some Quotes from Famous Atheists

- “All religions have been made by men.” –Napoleon Bonaparte
- “Faith is believing something you know ain’t true.”—Samuel Clemens (Mark Twain)
- Faith means not wanting to know what is true. — Friedrich Nietzsche
- The fact that a believer is happier than a skeptic is no more to the point than the fact that a drunken man is happier than a sober one. — George Bernard Shaw
- “All thinking men are atheists”—Ernest Hemmingway
- “I believe in God, only I spell it Nature.” — Frank Lloyd Wright
- “I do not find in orthodox Christianity one redeeming feature.” And “Religions are all alike, founded upon fables and mythologies.” – the deist, Thomas Jefferson (US president)
- “Religions all vary in their degree of idiocy, but I reject them all. For most people, religion is nothing more than a substitute for a malfunctioning brain.”—Gene Roddenberry (creator of Star Trek)

So if were to play the atheist’s game and were to create a perfect god what would this god look like? What characteristics would it possess? I would bet that if you could dream up a god, not in a million years would you create the one that looked and behaved like the Christian God. Think about it.

Can you imagine those first Christians getting together? They call the meeting.

Okay, welcome everyone. Today’s agenda as we kick off this new religion is...God. What do we want to believe about God and what do we want him to be like? So who wants to start us off? I see your hand, Matthew, what would you like this god to be like.

Well, I think we should really throw them off and so I propose that we begin with a logical inequality. Let’s make this god to be one god, but at the same time, let’s make him to be three gods. By doing so maybe we can have the best of the monotheistic and pantheistic worldviews.

Haahhh, Matthew....i like your thinking. This is good, this is good. Thaddeus, are you taking notes?

Okay, who else, who has an idea? Okay Bartholomew, what's your suggestion?

Here's what I was thinking...let's make God's standard for getting into heaven, not 51% of our good deeds out-weighting the bad deeds, and not 60% pass/fail, nor a 90% cut off for an A, but rather, now get this... 100% good deeds AND THOUGHTS. Anything less than 100% perfection lands you in hell. How's that? (And people wonder why we think God might be Asian.)

And so our moderator says, "It's radical, it's crazy, but I like it." Anyone want to motion to accept Bart's idea?

Okay, one more...alright, alright, take it easy Cephas. What's your idea? You ready?

Get this. Let's make it that God has a son....uhhh....let's call him Jesus....and we'll borrow this whole messiah idea from our Jewish friends...okay....

And the moderator interrupts....come on Cephas, where you going with this!?"

And Cephas replies...be patient, just hear me out...let me finish.

Okay, okay, but hurry it up.

Alright... so this son of God...who has always existed...and piggy backing on Matthew's one-three god idea...he becomes a real human...so God becomes man...okay...and then he lives out a real human life...but his life is perfect. He never sins...He never does anything bad...His teachings are out of this world (and we'll have to fill those details in later). And then, and then, get this...people will get so mad at him for being so good that they'll kill him. And so he'll die on a...et's say...a wooden cross...okay? You following me?

"Sounds interesting," says the moderator, "keep going."

"So he dies on this cross to take the punishment for people's sins...but he doesn't stay dead. After three days, cuz two is too short and four's kinda long...so let's make it three. After three days he'll rise again and live. And then it'll be that...if a person believes that, that being Jesus, the Son of God died on a cross and then rose again from the dead, and we believe that, and become his followers, then we go to heaven."

"Are you finished?" asks the moderator.

"Yeah...that's it. That's my idea."

Folks are scratching their heads, brows are furrowed...and the crowd erupts...Stupendous...I love it...why didn't I think of that?

Okay, back to reality. How many of us, if we were given the chance to invent a god or religion, would have come up with that? Come on, I want all hands up. No way! It's ludicrous.

Now if I were to create a god, I would most likely create a god that I could control—one that would give me what I wanted whenever I wanted it. I think I'd create a god that was easy, and handed out easy buttons to all his followers. He'd be really predictable and his standard of justice would be the same as my standard of justice (which by the way, is why so many people think god is unfair, and never think that it just might possibly be that our sense of justice is off). But the God we find in the bible, the Christian God is nothing like that.

I want to show you what the real God/Savior of the Bible is like. He's found in the person of Jesus Christ and he might be nothing like what you would have imagined.

Revelation 5:1-10 TNIV

*1 Then I saw in the right hand of him who sat on the throne a scroll with writing on both sides and sealed with seven seals. 2 And I saw a mighty angel proclaiming in a loud voice, "Who is worthy to break the seals and open the scroll?" 3 But no one in heaven or on earth or under the earth could open the scroll or even look inside it. 4 I wept and wept because no one was found who was worthy to open the scroll or look inside. 5 Then one of the elders said to me, "Do not weep! See, the **Lion of the tribe of Judah**, the Root of David, has triumphed. He is able to open the scroll and its seven seals."*

*6 Then I saw a **Lamb**, looking as if it had been slain, standing in the center before the throne, encircled by the four living creatures and the elders. The Lamb had seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God sent out into all the earth. 7 He went and took the scroll from the right hand of him who sat on the throne. 8 And when he had taken it, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb. Each one had a harp and they were holding golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of God's people. 9 And they sang a new song, saying: "You are worthy to take the scroll and to open its seals, because you were slain, and with your blood you purchased for God members of every tribe and language and people and nation.*

10 You have made them to be a kingdom and priests to serve our God, and they will reign on the earth."

In his sermon written in 1738, entitled *The Excellency of Christ*, Pastor Jonathan Edwards writes and delivers this incredible sermon on the nature of our God in the person of Jesus Christ. And as this is Easter, we celebrate the resurrection and victory of Jesus Christ over sin and death and we celebrate and willingly submit to his supreme reign over the cosmos. So my goal for this sermon is that if you are not yet a Christian, you will see who Jesus is...this person who is at the center of this religion that has several billion followers globally. And if you are already a Christian, then I hope this sermon will take you into worship. I hope you will see how incredible Jesus is and worship him even more deeply.

So in this passage that we just read, Jesus is referred to as the Lion and the Lamb. King and Servant (Lion and Lamb)

When you place these two animals side by side, all you see are opposites and contradictions. There are few similarities. One is a predator the other is prey. One is wild and untamed, the other is domesticated. One is strong and powerful, the other is weak. One gives people images of leadership and majesty. In this passage the lamb is weak, bloodied, and sacrificed. In the person of Jesus Christ is found such extreme differences, polar opposites. He is the Lion of the tribe of Judah, full of power and majesty, and at the same time he is also the lamb, that was sacrificed for the sins of the world.

In the person of Jesus we also see infinite Highness and infinite Lowness

How is that? Well the Bible teaches and Christians believe that Jesus Christ is God, He's the creator, He always existed, and he brought everything into being. He's all powerful. There is no being visible or invisible that's higher and more glorious than him. In fact, he's infinitely high and if he's infinitely high, for him to take one step down, is a step of infinite lowness. So only in the person of Christ do we see those two extremes and opposites. The Bible says in Philippians 2, that Jesus was God, and then in the same breath it says that Jesus became nothing when he became a man and emptied himself. When we worship Jesus, we worship him for his greatness and it feels so proper to do that. And then when we worship him for his lowness, only in Jesus, does lowness become a trait worth worshipping. So that's what we see in Jesus.

In the person of JC meet together perfect justice and perfect grace or mercy. In no other person can we come even close. We can picture the most perfect judge in a court of law – a judge that is fair, a judge that does not compromise, a judge that considers the offended as well as the offender. But to be just, you have to sacrifice grace (mercy). And in order to be gracious or merciful you have to sacrifice justice.

Jesus is the only person that has the divine right to judge us and therefore he is the only person who has the right, and not only the right, but the ability to be gracious, to forgive us. At the cross and through the resurrection of Jesus Christ met perfectly justice and grace. Justice for heavenly offenses was taken out on Jesus. Grace for wretched sinners was distributed to us. That's what happened at the cross!

Deepest reverence toward God and at the same time possessed equality with God.

In Jesus is found the highest Majesty and Meekness

He is the one that is most infinitely worthy of having good things done to him, but he endured the greatest evils when he suffered.

In Christ is absolute sovereignty (power), and perfect resignation (perfectly submitting to God, perfectly giving up the rights of the ruling king. The one that had the majesty and glory of heaven and the praise of angelic beings, took upon himself a towel and a washbasin in order to wash feet...

In Christ there is self-sufficiency and total trust and reliance upon God.

Easter is all about Jesus. And in the person of Jesus and only Jesus do we see these incredible qualities...we see him extremes, both sides of these incredible attributes.

Again, my hope is that many of you would see Jesus for who he is and come to know him personally. I hope that you would be able to accept Jesus as the saviour of your sins and the Lord of your life. And for others, I hope that your devotion and love for Jesus, your awe of him will deepen today, as we celebrate the resurrection of Jesus, the Lion and the Lamb.