



The Deity and Humanity of Jesus Christ

When Did Christians First Believe That Jesus Was Divine?



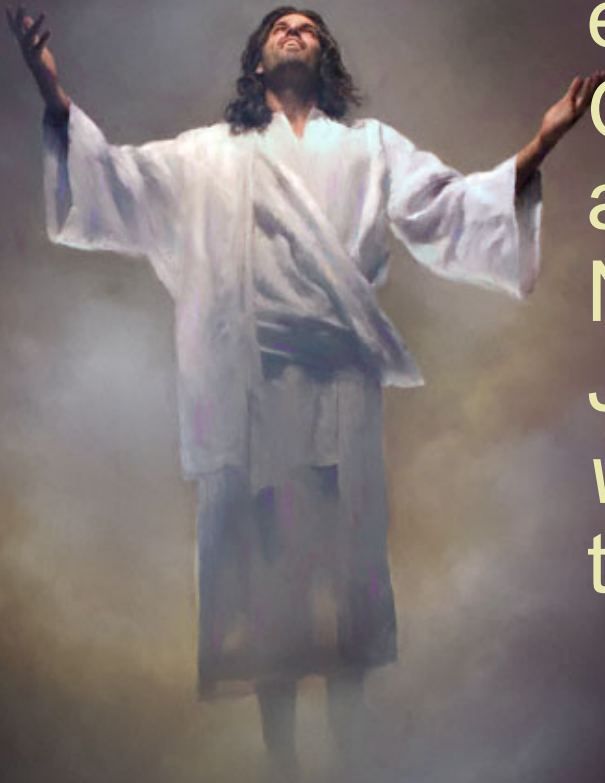
DVC – At Nicea Constantine Changed Jesus From Human to Divine

“At this gathering,” Teabing said, “many aspects of Christianity were debated and voted upon – the date of Easter, the role of the bishops, the administration of sacraments, and, of course, the *divinity* of Jesus.” “I don’t follow. His divinity?” “My dear,” Teabing declared, “until *that* moment in history Jesus was viewed by His followers as a mortal prophet... a great and powerful man, but a *man* nonetheless. A mortal.”



DVC – At Nicea Constantine Changed Jesus From Human to Divine

“Not the Son of God?” “Right,” Teabing said. “Jesus’ establishment as ‘the Son of God’ was officially proposed and voted on by the Council of Nicea.” “Hold on. You’re saying Jesus’ divinity was the result of a *vote*?” “A relatively close vote at that,” Teabing added.



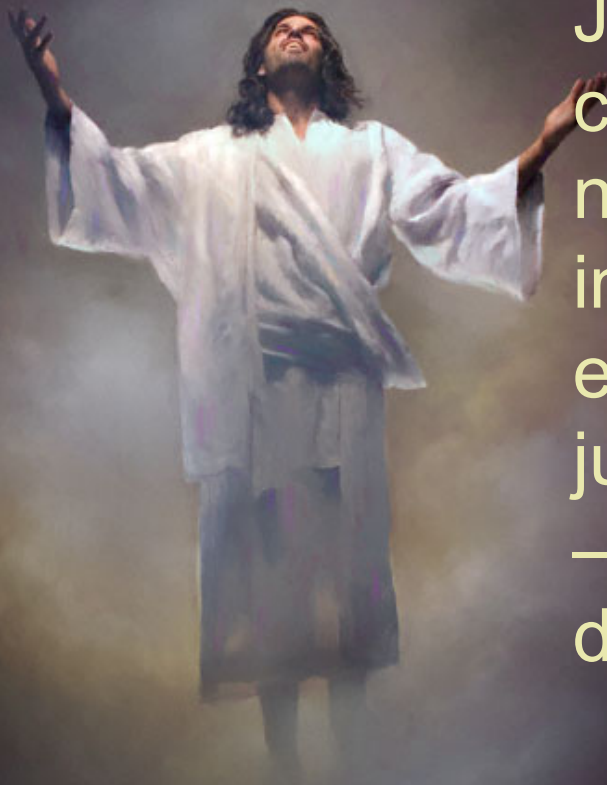
Reality

Jesus was always considered to be Divine by His followers – this was not even debated at Nicea



Jesus Was Always Considered Divine

Constantine did call the Council of Nicea, and one of the issues involved Jesus' divinity. But this was not a council that met to decide whether or not Jesus was divine, as Teabing indicates. Quite the contrary, everyone at the Council – and in fact, just about every Christian everywhere – already agreed that Jesus was divine, the Son of God.

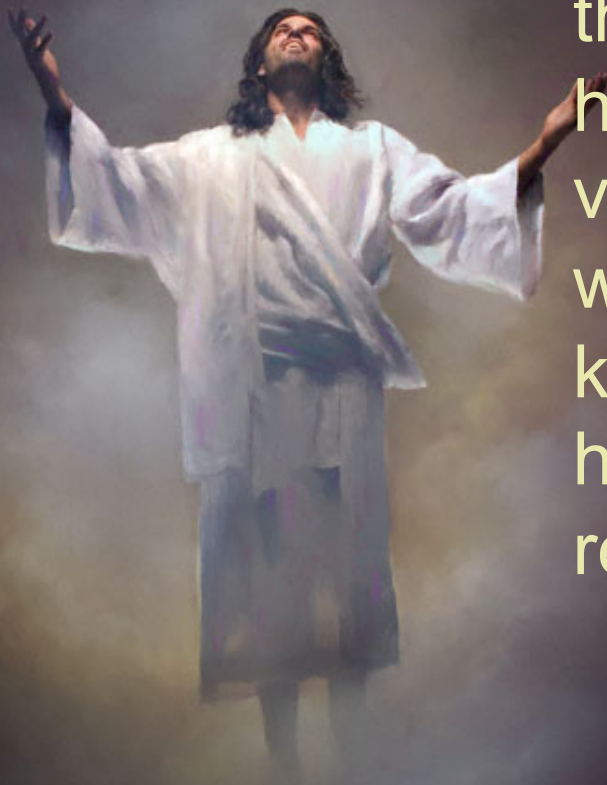


Jesus Was Always Considered Divine

The question being debated was how to understand Jesus' divinity in light of the circumstance that he was also human...And there certainly was no vote to determine Jesus' divinity; this was already a matter of common knowledge among Christians, and had been from the early years of the religion.

Bart Ehrman

Truth and Fiction in the Da Vinci Code, 14-15

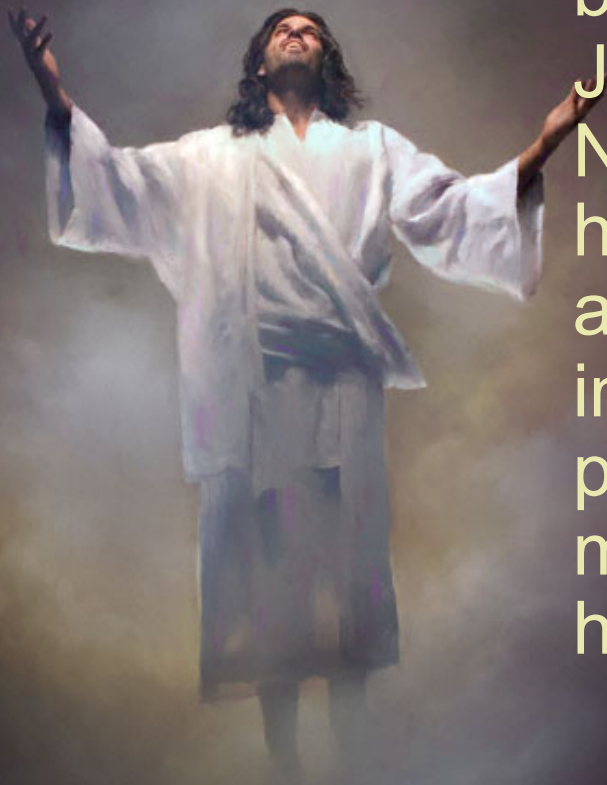


Jesus Was Always Considered Divine

The view that Teabing lays out is wrong on all key points: Christians before Nicea already did accept Jesus as divine; the Gospels of the New Testament portray him as human as much as they portray him as divine; the Gospels that did *not* get included in the New Testament portray him as divine as much, or more so, than they portray him as human.

Bart Ehrman

Truth and Fiction in the Da Vinci Code, 15



Early Teaching on Jesus' Divinity

¹ In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, **and the Word was God.** ² He was with God in the beginning.
³ **Through him all things were made;** without him nothing was made that has been made.

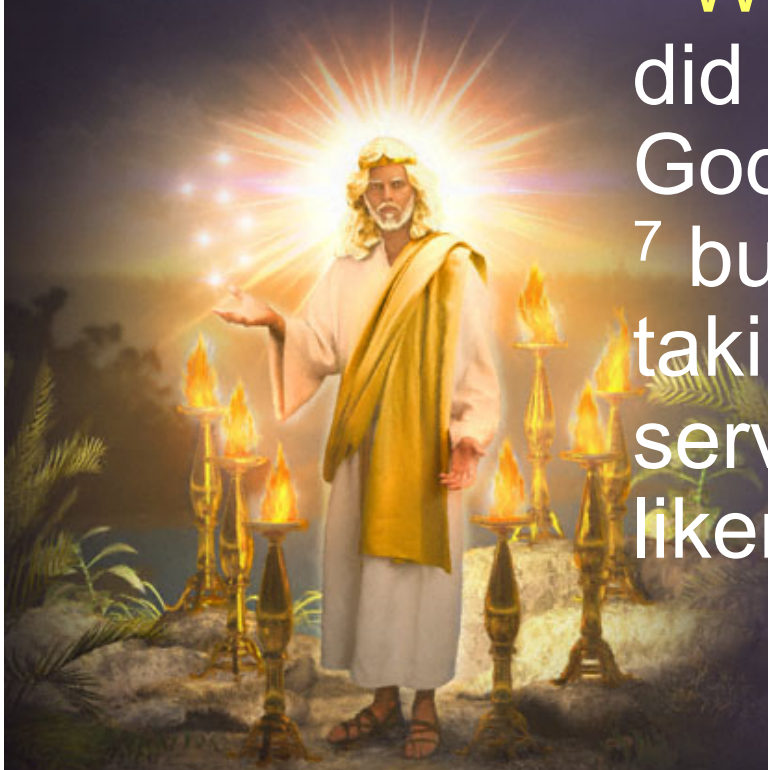
John 1:1-3




Early Teaching on Jesus' Divinity

⁵ Your attitude should be the same as that of **Christ Jesus:**
⁶ **Who, being in very nature God,** did not consider equality with God something to be grasped,
⁷ but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness.

Philippians 2:5-7



Early Teaching on Jesus' Divinity



¹ In the past God spoke to our forefathers through the prophets at many times and in various ways, ² but in these last days he has spoken to us by **his Son**, whom he appointed heir of all things, and **through whom he made the universe.** ³ **The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word.** After he had provided purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven. ⁸ **But about the Son he says, "Your throne, O God, will last for ever and ever, and righteousness will be the scepter of your kingdom.**

Early Teaching on Jesus' Divinity

¹ The beginning of the gospel about Jesus Christ, **the Son of God.**

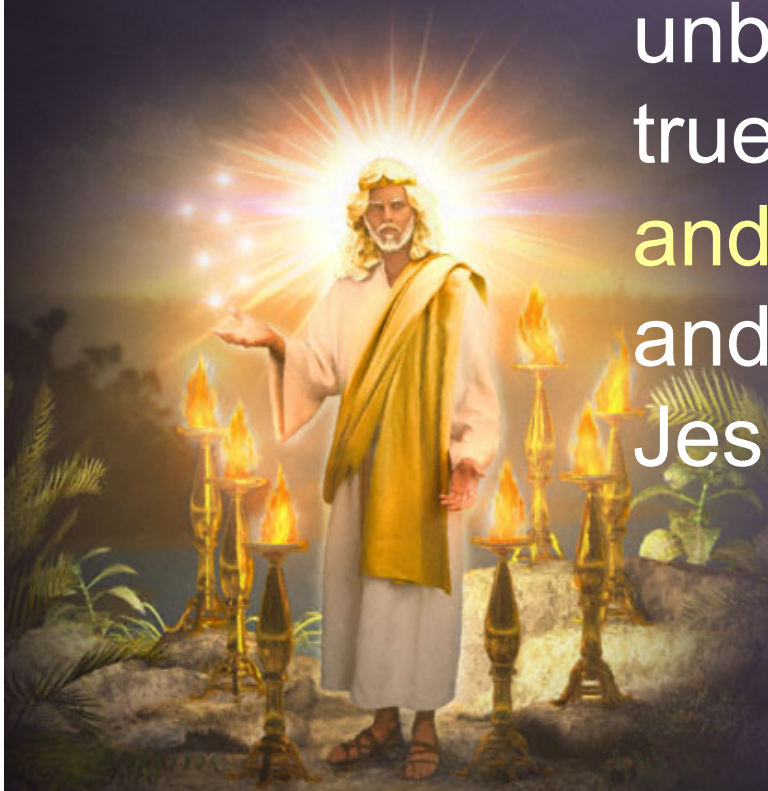
Mark 1:1



Early Teaching on Jesus' Divinity

There is one physician, both fleshly and spiritual, born and unborn, **God come in the flesh**, true life in death, **from both Mary and God**, first subject to suffering and then beyond suffering, **Jesus Christ our Lord.**

Ignatius, Letter to the Ephesians, 7:2, c. 110



Early Teaching on Jesus' Divinity

On an appointed day they had been accustomed to meet before daybreak, and to recite a hymn antiphonally **to Christ, as to a god...**”

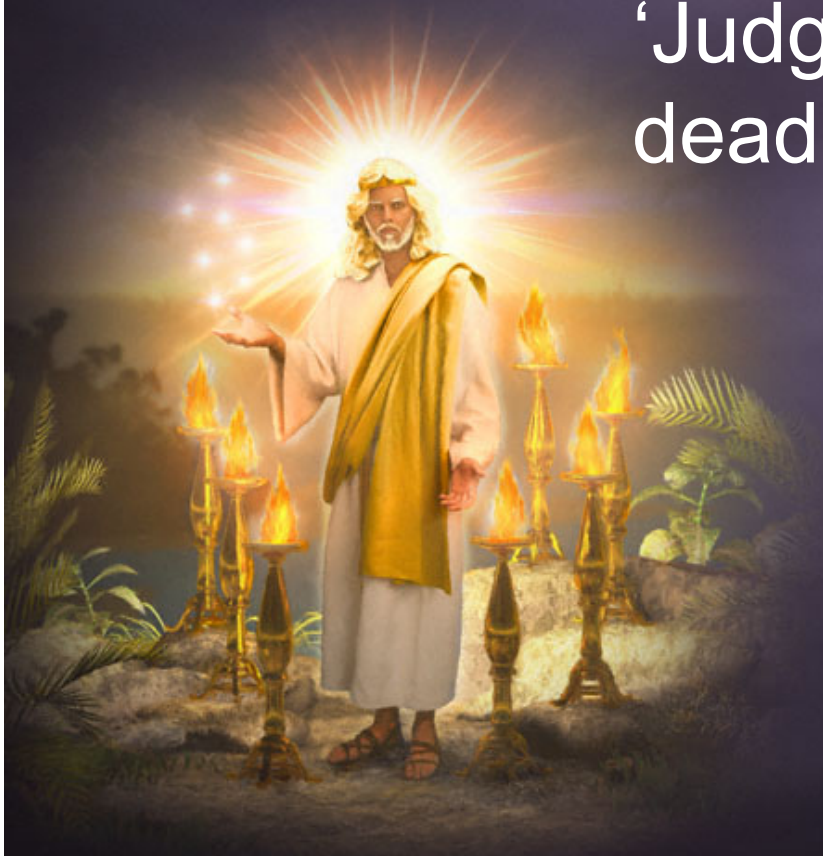
Pliny the Younger, Letter to Trajan, c. 112



Early Teaching on Jesus' Divinity

Brothers we ought to think of
Jesus Christ as we do of God, as
'Judge of the living and the
dead.'"

2 Clement 1:1, c. 100



Early Teaching on Jesus' Divinity

And furthermore, my brothers: if the Lord submitted to suffer for our souls, even though **He is Lord of the whole world, to whom God said at the foundation of the world, "Let us make man according to our image and likeness...."**

Epistle of Barnabas, 5.5, c. 100





The Real Debate At Nicea

The Teachings of Arius

- Jesus was divine, but was still created by the Father
- Christ did not exist from all eternity – “there was a time when He was not”



The Teachings of Arius

- Christ was divine, but was inferior to the Father – not economically, but ontologically
- Jehovah Witnesses are have the same errors today



A rolled-up scroll with a leather strap and metal fasteners, resting on a surface with a cross pattern. The scroll is made of parchment and is secured with a brown leather strap that has a metal buckle. The scroll is held in place by two metal rings at the top and bottom. The background is a warm, reddish-brown color with a faint, repeating pattern of crosses. The scroll is positioned diagonally across the frame.

The Decision At Nicea

The Decision At Nicea

- The council affirmed the NT teaching – Jesus is divine and uncreated – He was begotten, not made
- It affirmed that Christ was eternal - there was never a time when He was not



The Decision At Nicea

- Christ was equal to the Father ontologically, but subordinate economically
- This is the position of all Orthodox Christians – to deny this places one outside the faith



The Decision At Nicea

- As a side note, the actual vote was not close as Teabing claims – of approximately 300 bishops, only two disagreed with the decision of the Council

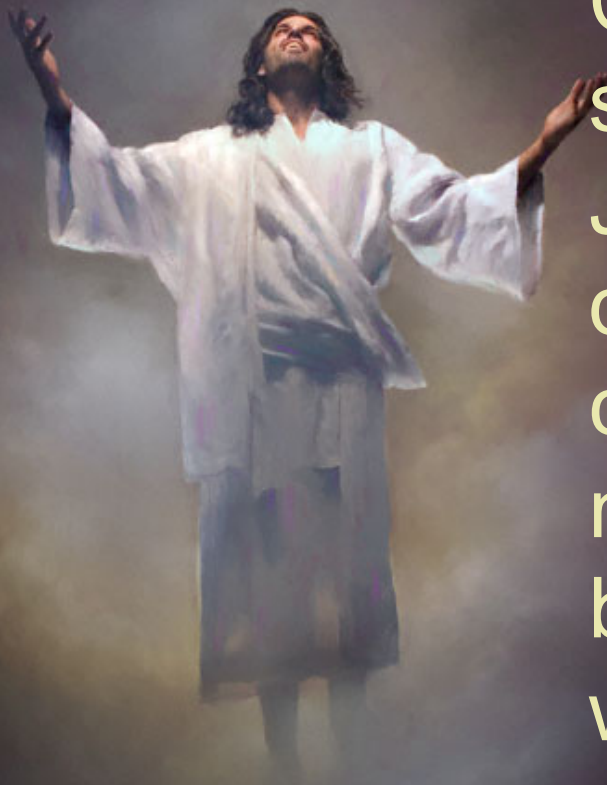


Did Christians Deny That Jesus Was Truly Human?



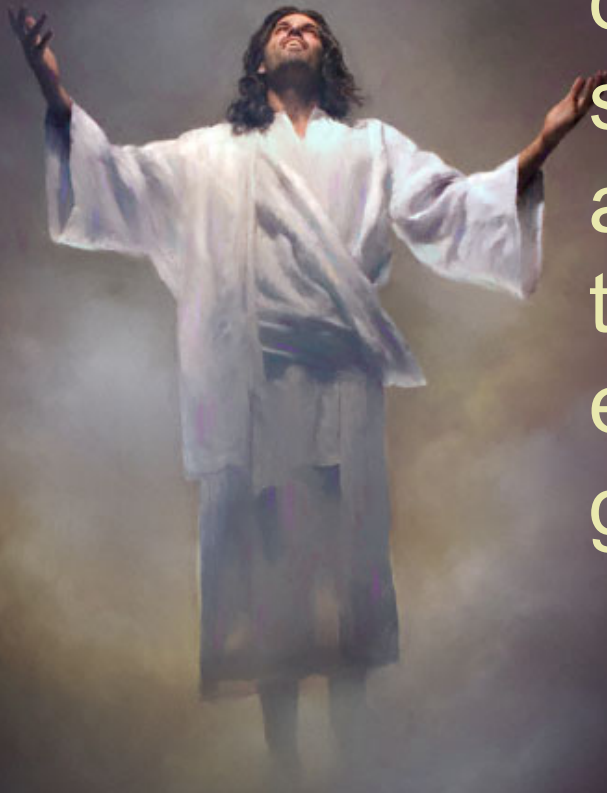
DVC – Christians Denied Jesus Was Human

“The twist is this,” Teabing said, talking faster now. “Because Constantine upgraded Jesus’ status almost four centuries *after* Jesus’ death, thousands of documents already existed chronicling His life as *mortal* man. To rewrite the history books, Constantine knew he would need a bold stroke...



DVC – Christians Denied Jesus Was Human

Constantine commissioned and financed a new Bible, which omitted those gospels that spoke of Christ's human traits and embellished those gospels that made Him godlike. The earlier gospels were outlawed, gathered up, and burned.”



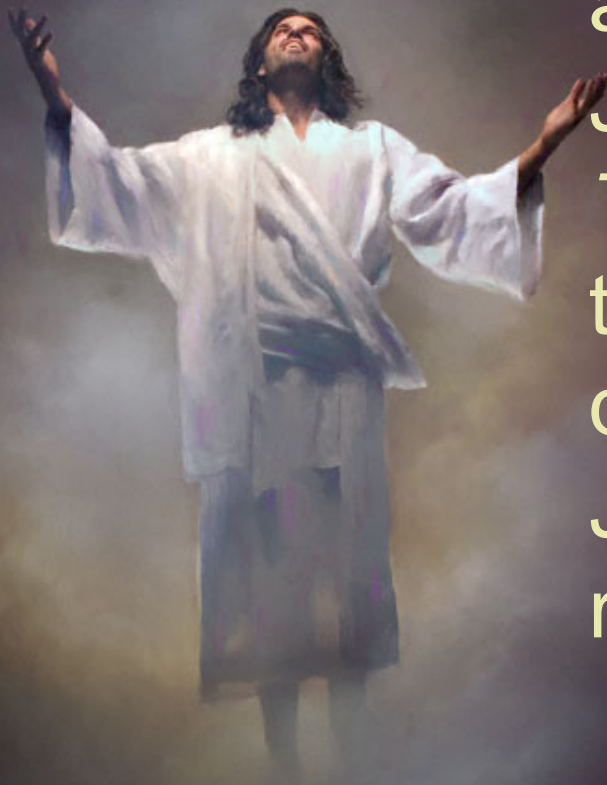
Reality – Christians Affirmed Jesus Was Human and Divine

The Gospels of the New Testament speak of Jesus in very human terms. In the Gospels He sleeps (Matthew 8:24), is hungry (Matthew 4:2), eats (Matthew 11:19), and cries (John 11:35). This is a very human Jesus!



Reality – Gnostics Denied Jesus' Humanity

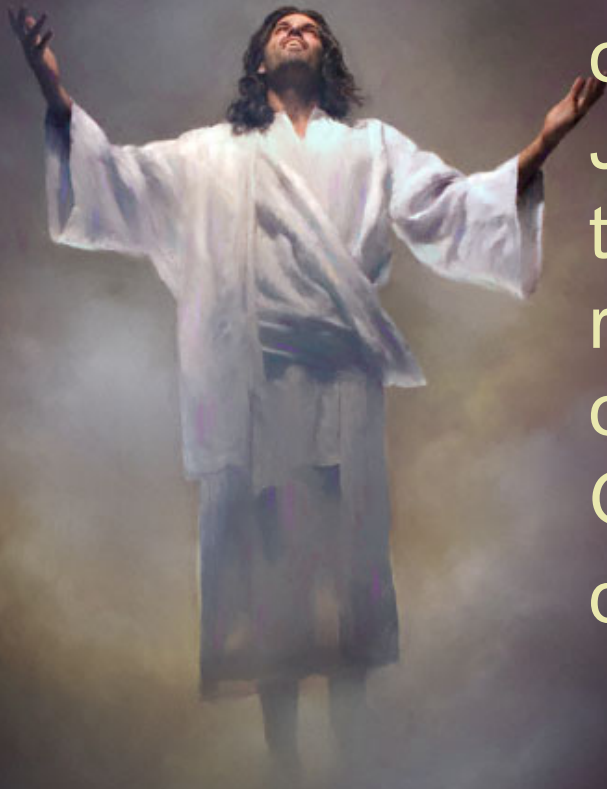
“[According to the Gnostic texts] the incarnation is really an apparition. This ‘more divine’ Jesus is the opposite of what *The Da Vinci Code* claims for these secret gospel texts; they do not have a more human Jesus but a more divine and removed Jesus.”



Reality – Gnostics Denied Jesus' Humanity

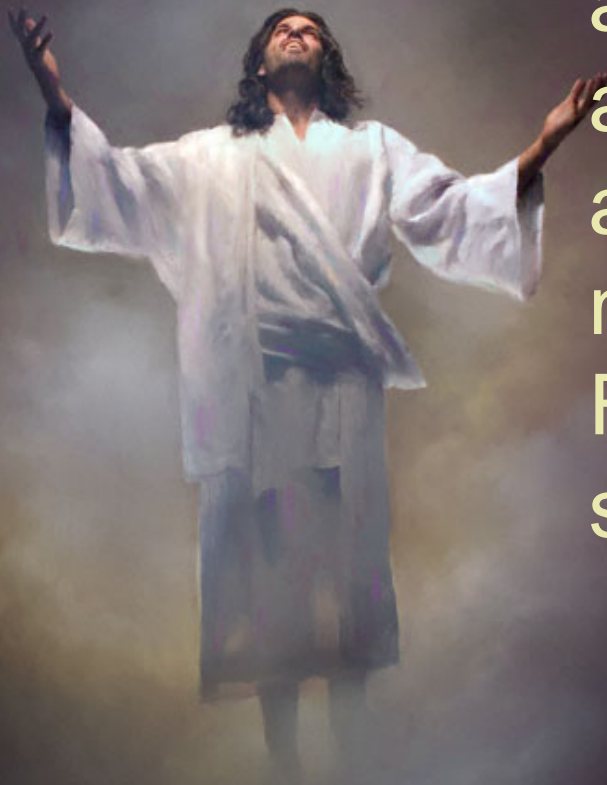
“As it turns out, though, rather than opposing them [orthodox Christians] for thinking that Jesus was divine, it opposes them for maintaining that Jesus was *human*. That is to say, this book [the *Apocalypse of Peter*] runs precisely counter to the claims of Leigh Teabing that the Gnostic Gospels portray a more human, less divine Jesus.”

Bart Ehrman, *Truth and Fiction in the Da Vinci Code*, 56



Reality – NT Documents Were Not Altered

Contrary to the claims of DVC, the NT documents were not altered. The NT is the most well attested document of antiquity, and if any changes had been made at Nicea, we would know! For more information, see the seminar on “How I Got My Bible”



Reality – Constantine & Scriptures

The historical reality is that the Emperor Constantine had nothing to do with the formation of the canon of Scripture: he did not choose which books to include or exclude, and he did not order the destruction of the Gospels that were left out of the canon (there were no imperial book burnings).

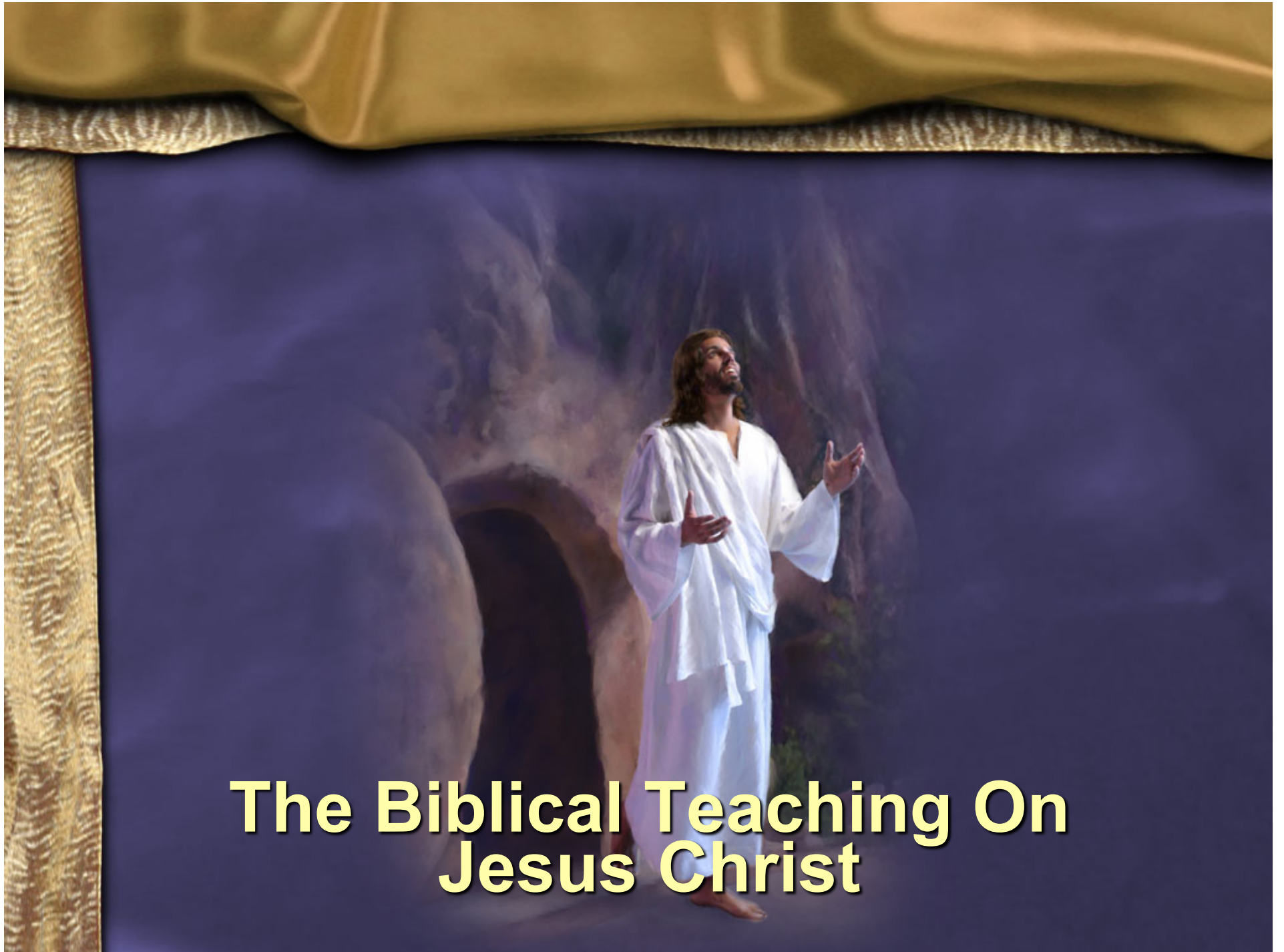


Reality – Constantine & Scriptures

The formation of the New Testament canon was instead a long and drawn-out process that began centuries before Constantine and did not conclude until long after he was dead. So far as we know, based on our historical record, the emperor was not involved in the process.

Bart Ehrman, *Truth and Fiction in the Da Vinci Code*, 74





The Biblical Teaching On Jesus Christ

The Biblical Teaching On Jesus Christ

Jesus is the Eternal Son of God, Who has always existed, along with the Father and the Holy Spirit.



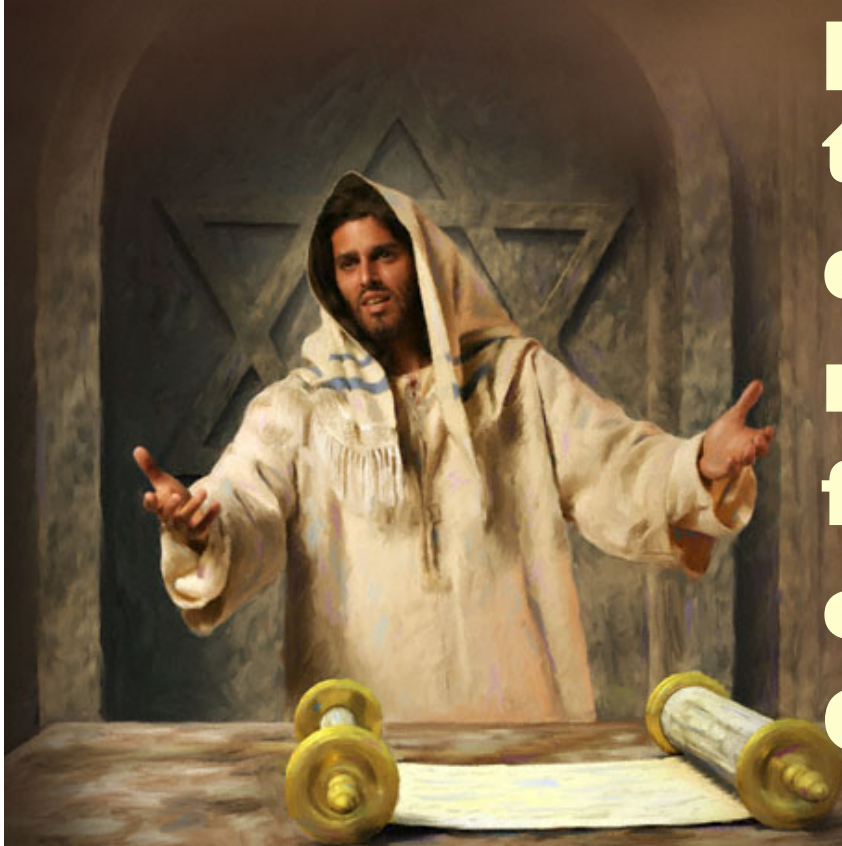
The Biblical Teaching On Jesus Christ

Jesus was born of the
Virgin Mary, becoming
fully human – the God-
Man



The Biblical Teaching On Jesus Christ

Jesus lived a life of perfect obedience to God and His Law, displaying perfect righteousness and fulfilling mankind's obligation to obey God



The Biblical Teaching On Jesus Christ

Jesus willingly suffered and died on the cross, bearing the righteous wrath of God for the sin of all mankind so that we could be free from punishment and receive the blessings of God



The Biblical Teaching On Jesus Christ

Jesus was bodily raised from the dead, gave convincing proof of this fact, and ascended into heaven.



The Biblical Teaching On Jesus Christ

Those who look to Jesus Christ in faith are saved, not because of their own works, but because of the life, death, and resurrection of Christ.



The Biblical Teaching On Jesus Christ

All other beliefs about Jesus Christ are false and lead one away from God and cause one to remain under God's righteous wrath for sin



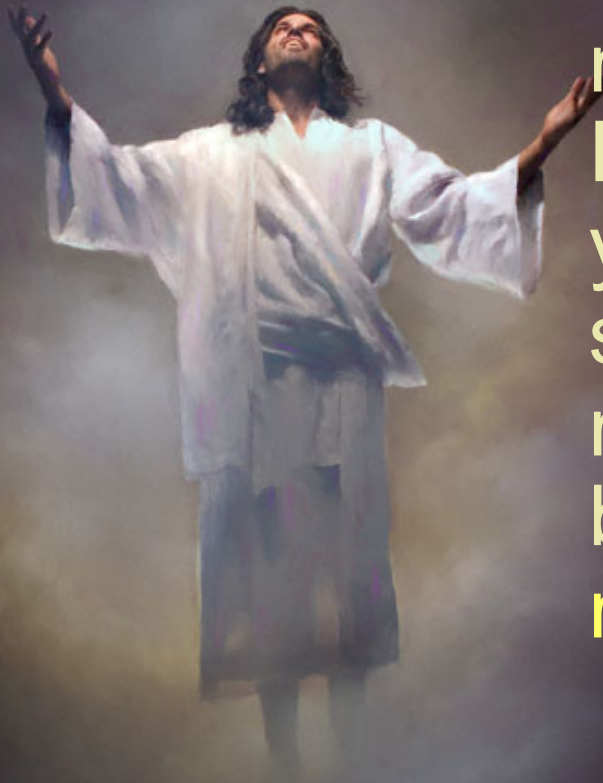
Jesus Christ: Lord, Liar, Or Lunatic



Jesus Claimed to Be God

³¹ Again the Jews picked up stones to stone him, ³² but Jesus said to them, "I have shown you many great miracles from the Father. For which of these do you stone me?" ³³ "We are not stoning you for any of these," replied the Jews, "but for blasphemy, because you, a mere man, claim to be God."

John 10:31-33



Jesus Claimed to Be God

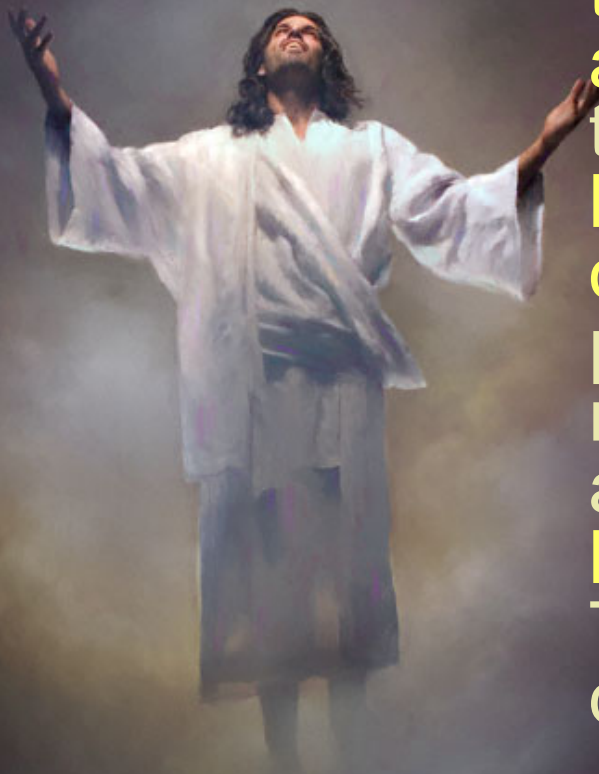
¹⁸ For this reason the Jews tried all the harder to kill him; not only was he breaking the Sabbath, but he was even calling God his own Father, making himself equal with God.

John 5:18



Jesus Claimed to Be God

⁶¹ But Jesus remained silent and gave no answer. Again the high priest asked him, "Are you the Christ, the Son of the Blessed One?" ⁶² "I am," said Jesus. "And you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Mighty One and coming on the clouds of heaven." ⁶³ The high priest tore his clothes. "Why do we need any more witnesses?" he asked. ⁶⁴ "You have heard the blasphemy. What do you think?" They all condemned him as worthy of death.



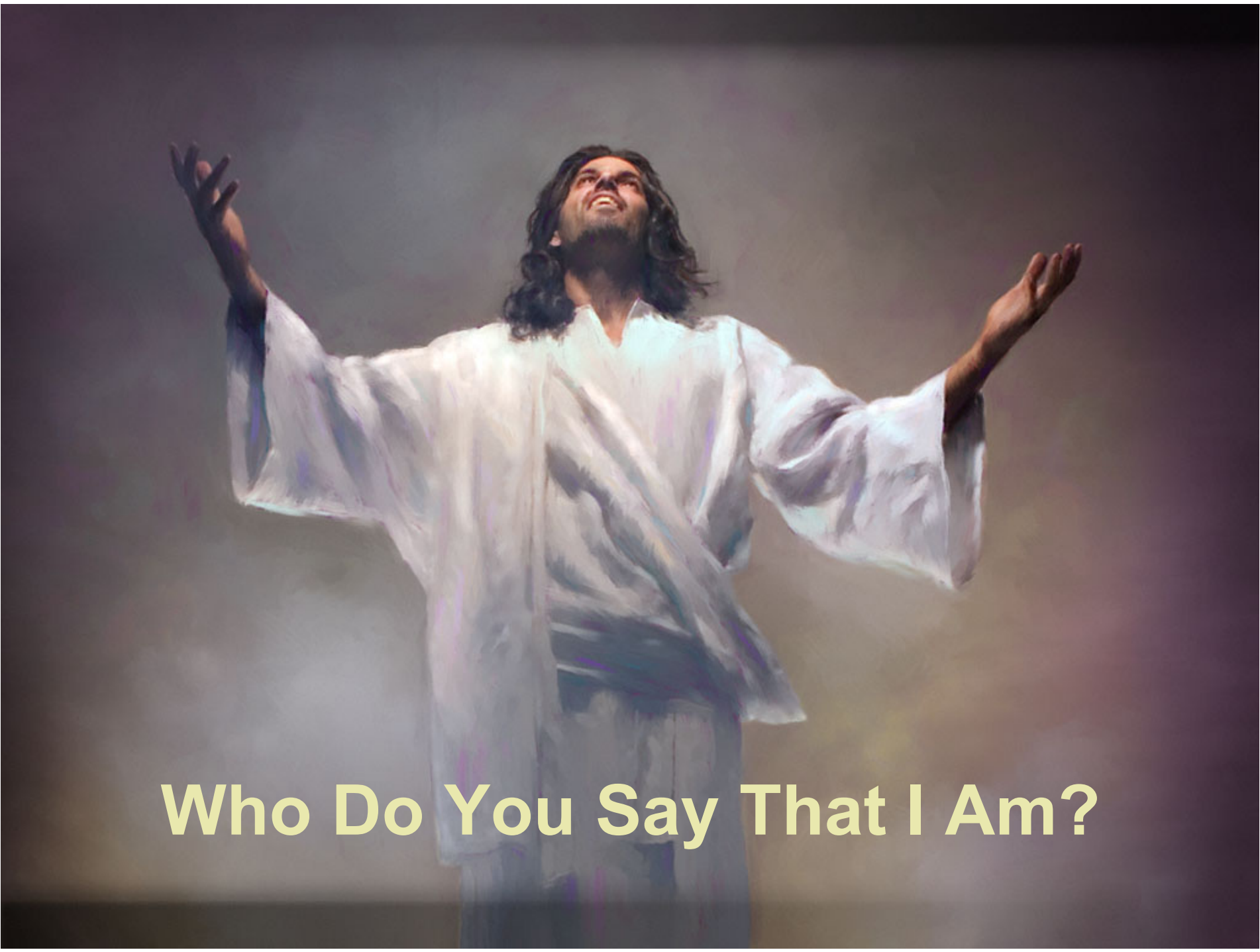
Only Three Options

Liar

Lunatic

Lord





Who Do You Say That I Am?