

JOHN 1 SEEMS TO SAY JESUS CHRIST IS GOD HIMSELF

Arians and Jehovah's Witnesses are famous deniers that Jesus was God. They say he was God's most powerful creation and who became man.

They seem to purposely misunderstand the Bible at John chapter 1.

The opening line in this chapter says, "In the beginning was the Word. The Word was with God and the Word was God" and later "...The word became flesh." This seems to say that Jesus Christ as the incarnate Word is actually God.

The definite article THE is missing where you expect to see it. So you get "In the beginning was the Word and the word was with THE God and the word was God". THE God is God but the word is described as God but is not THE God. That is poetry. What is the text saying? It is saying that you can describe Jesus as God but you cannot identify him as God. It is not talking about identity. The son can be descriptive of his father but not his father.

The idea is that Jesus is not God but is so saturated with God that they virtually are the same!

The term word is interesting. It is not a personal term. It means Word or Message. In Bible theology, God is love and justice and the truth. That is very abstract but it refers to how God is not like any being or person you can imagine. So the text does not say there was a person called the Word who became Jesus. It says God is the Message and the Message is Jesus. The idea is that God used Jesus to express and show himself. Its like how an actor has to become the character.

JOHN 1:18: This verse says that nobody ever seen God and that it is therefore God the only Son ever at the side of God who revealed him.

The New American Bible notes say that many manuscripts from ancient times do not call the Son God here. So there is a case to be made for saying that the verse never called the Son God. Now the verse says that nobody ever seen God so he needs somebody to reveal him to us – that is somebody apart from himself. That means somebody that is not God. Thus the rendering of the verse as saying that the Son of God is God is undoubtedly wrong.

The verse clearly proves that the author never meant that Jesus is actually God when he wrote that the word was God and the word became flesh in Jesus.

JOHN 5:18. Jesus "was speaking of God as being [in a special sense] His own Father, making Himself equal [putting himself on a level] with God".

John says Jesus claimed to be equal with God. We don't know what sense he meant this in. But we know he may not have meant that he is the same as God in everything because Jesus said immediately afterwards, "The Son is able to do nothing of himself (of His own accord); but He is able to do only what He sees the Father doing". If there are persons in God these persons do all the same things for God is a spirit that is an undivided immaterial substance. God would have an inferior part if he could be a Son that needed to learn from him. Christians say that Jesus was simply saying that though he was God he was also man and the man part needed to learn from the God part. They may be right but who can be sure if they are? As long as there is uncertainty we cannot be sure the citation proves that Jesus is considered God by the Gospel. This is why what Jesus said later about God wanting people to honour Jesus as much as him (v23) cannot be definitely understood as literally true. He may have meant that God wanted him to be honoured by prayers and love as much as him in some things. Statements that are general are to be interpreted in the light of their obvious exceptions.

CS Lewis said in his book, Miracles, that Jesus was a Jew and Jews frowned on pantheism so he did not claim to be a pantheistic God. That is like saying that Martin Luther was a Catholic and would not have decided that the pope was the antichrist. Lewis in his dishonesty wants us to surmise that Jesus calling himself Yahweh would be worse in Jewish eyes than Jesus claiming to be a pantheist deity. Indeed the person who claims to be almighty God is blaspheming Judaism more than a person who concurs with Pantheists that God is nature and therefore we are all God is. Most Hindus think they are God because they believe that God is nature. Some Hindus believe that to worship God in idols though he is the idol is wrong for you must experience and worship only the pure spiritual form of God, the thing that is the foundation of reality and the real thing behind the material illusions. So it is simplistic to say that Jesus could not have been a pantheist. Many Jews were and that is where the Kabbalah came from. Not once did Jesus say that Pantheism is wrong. Maybe others said he did but when they don't quote him we don't know if they interpreted him right or not. But there is nobody in the New Testament who gives any testimony that Jesus was against Pantheism. The Law of Economy requires that if anybody

reasonably sane claims to be God then he means a Pantheist God and is not claiming to be consciously running the universe like a madman might.

