

Jesus: The HANDS of God

HANDS acronym and information taken from the book *Putting Jesus in His Place: The Case for the Deity of Christ* by Robert Bowman Jr. and J. Ed Komoszewski.

- Jesus shares the **honors** due to God.
- Jesus shares the **attributes** of God.
- Jesus shares the **names** of God.
- Jesus shares in the **deeds** that God does.
- Jesus shares the **seat** of God's throne.

Divine Honors

Not all acts of worship imply deity or deification. If, however, the figure is the recipient of honors reserved exclusively for God, or of a wide range of honors normally associated with God and his believers express such honors in context of religious activity or spiritual devotion, such honors do indicate that those offering him such honors regard him as God.

By this standard, the evidence for the deity of Christ is quite compelling.

1. The Son is to be honored just as we honor the Father.

“that all may honor the Son, just as they honor the Father. Whoever does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent him.” (John 5:23, ESV)

2. He is the object of worship that is expressed in the words of the OT references to the worship of YHWH (Heb. 1:6) or in scenes in which all creation worships Christ alongside God in heaven itself (Rev. 5:8-14).

“And again, when he brings the firstborn into the world, he says, “Let all God’s angels worship him.”” (Hebrews 1:6, ESV) (citing Deut. 32:43)

“And when he had taken the scroll, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb, each holding a harp, and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints. And they sang a new song, saying, “Worthy are you to take the scroll and to open its seals, for you were slain, and by your blood you ransomed people for God from every tribe and language and people and nation, and you have made them a kingdom and priests to our God, and they shall reign on the earth.” Then I looked, and I heard around the throne and the living creatures and the elders the voice of many angels, numbering myriads of myriads and thousands of thousands, saying with a loud voice, “Worthy is the Lamb who was slain, to receive power and wealth and wisdom and might and honor and glory and blessing!” And I heard every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth and in the sea, and all that is in them, saying, “To him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb be blessing and honor and glory and might forever and ever!” And the four living creatures said, “Amen!” and the elders fell down and worshiped.” (Revelation 5:8–14, ESV)

3. He hears and answers prayers for salvation (Rom. 10:12-13), for the safekeeping one's spirit at the moment of death (Acts 7:59-60), and for other needs (John 14:4).

"For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; for the same Lord is Lord of all, bestowing his riches on all who call on him. For "everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved."" (Romans 10:12–13, ESV)

"And as they were stoning Stephen, he called out, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." And falling to his knees he cried out with a loud voice, "Lord, do not hold this sin against them." And when he had said this, he fell asleep." (Acts 7:59–60, ESV)

"If you ask me anything in my name, I will do it." (John 14:14, ESV)

4. Religious songs are sung in his honor.

"addressing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody to the Lord with your heart," (Ephesians 5:19, ESV)

"And they sang a new song, saying, "Worthy are you to take the scroll and to open its seals, for you were slain, and by your blood you ransomed people for God from every tribe and language and people and nation, and you have made them a kingdom and priests to our God, and they shall reign on the earth."" (Revelation 5:9–10, ESV)

5. He is as much the object of religious faith as God is.

"Let not your hearts be troubled. Believe in God; believe also in me." (John 14:1, ESV)

6. We are to fear and revere him.

"submitting to one another out of reverence for Christ." (Ephesians 5:21, ESV)

"But even if you should suffer for righteousness' sake, you will be blessed. Have no fear of them, nor be troubled, but in your hearts honor Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and respect, having a good conscience, so that, when you are slandered, those who revile your good behavior in Christ may be put to shame." (1 Peter 3:14–16, ESV)

7. We are to serve Christ.

"And to him was given dominion and glory and a kingdom, that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve him; his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom one that shall not be destroyed." (Daniel 7:14, ESV)

"This is how one should regard us, as servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God. Moreover, it is required of stewards that they be found faithful." (1 Corinthians 4:1–2, ESV)

8. We are to love him as we do God.

"If you love me, you will keep my commandments." (John 14:15, ESV)

"Whoever has my commandments and keeps them, he it is who loves me. And he who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I will love him and manifest myself to him."" (John 14:21, ESV)

Divine Attributes

Given that angels bear some likeness to God's heavenly spirits and that human beings are created in God's image, elements of likeness or resemblance to God does not prove deity. Similarly, likeness to angels does not make one an angel. If, however, a figure possesses attributes that are unique to God, or if his likeness to God is complete, total, and perfect, those are strong, clear indicators that the figure is deity. The New Testament attributes characteristics to Christ that show him to be something far greater than a human being; indeed, they show him to be God.

1. The totality of what it means to be God is embodied in Jesus Christ.

"For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell," (Colossians 1:19, ESV)

"For in him the whole fullness of deity dwells bodily," (Colossians 2:9, ESV)

2. The Son is completely, perfectly like God the Father.

"Jesus said to him, 'Have I been with you so long, and you still do not know me, Philip? Whoever has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, 'Show us the Father'?" (John 14:9, ESV)

"He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature, and he upholds the universe by the word of his power. After making purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high," (Hebrews 1:3, ESV)

3. He existed before all creation and is eternal, uncreated, and immutable.

"He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created through him and for him. And he is before all things, and in him all things hold together." (Colossians 1:15–17, ESV)

4. His moral character, in particular his love, is perfectly that of God.

"Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword? As it is written, 'For your sake we are being killed all the day long; we are regarded as sheep to be slaughtered.' No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord." (Romans 8:35–39, ESV)

5. His omnipotence is implicit in his work of creation and providential sustaining of the universe.

"but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed the heir of all things, through whom also he created the world. He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature, and he upholds the universe by the word of his power. After making purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high," (Hebrews 1:2–3, ESV)

6. The same power became incarnate, paradoxically humbled in weakness for our salvation.

“Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, so that 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.” (Philippians 2:5–11, ESV)

7. He is omnipresent.

“teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.” (Matthew 28:20, ESV)

8. He is omniscient.

“Now we know that you know all things and do not need anyone to question you; this is why we believe that you came from God.” Jesus answered them, “Do you now believe?” (John 16:30–31, ESV)

9. Like God, he is beyond our comprehension.

“All things have been handed over to me by my Father, and no one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and anyone to whom the Son chooses to reveal him.” (Matthew 11:27, ESV)