

I. Is Jesus ‘God’ or ‘the Son of God’?

The correct answer is: Both!

A human analogy might help. Every person is ‘human’ because that is his or her nature or essence. Every person shares that ‘human nature’ with 7 billion other people in the human race. But each person is an individual. Everyone has a ‘personal identity’ that they alone possess. It is shared by no-one else. That is what makes every person unique.

Jesus is ‘God’ because that describes His divine nature or essence (*dhat*). He shares that divine essence with the Father and the Holy Spirit in the Holy Trinity. Jesus is ‘the Son of God’ because that is his ‘personal identity’. He shares that unique character with no-one else.

2. Removing misunderstanding: *The issue is relationship & inheritance not biological birth*

(a) The Bible does not teach that Jesus is the physical son of God by a sexual union e.g. Q.72:3 “And exalted is the Majesty of our Lord: He has taken *attaxadha* neither a wife nor a son.” The Bible agrees that God never got married!

(i) The word ‘only-begotten’ *monogenes*

(John.1:14,18; 3:16) means ‘one and only’ (from *mono* ‘one’ + *genes* ‘kind’) i.e. unique

(ii) Luke 1:35 –The angel answered, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God."

(iii) Arabic & Greek have 2 words for ‘son’:

	Often physical son only	Could be metaphorical
Greek	<i>tekno</i> s	<i>huios</i>
Arabic	<i>walad</i>	<i>ibn</i>

1

*tekno*s and *walad* are never applied to Jesus but *huios* & *ibn* are

(b) The Qur’an sometimes denies a physical relationship:

(i) Q.66:12 “And Mary the daughter of `Imran who guarded her chastity; and We (Allah) breathed into her body (lit. ‘opening’ *farj*) of Our spirit”. Also Q.21.91; 4.171. Jesus was born of the breath or Spirit of God, not from human sperm.

(c) The Qur’an sometimes speaks of a physical relationship

(i) Q.6:101 – “How can He (Allah) have children when he had no wife?” Yet Mary had a son without a husband (Q.3:47; 19:20)

(ii) Q23:91 “Allah took *attaxadha* no son [otherwise] each god would govern his own creation, and would try to overcome the others”

(d) Only mention of *ibn allah* is Q.9:30

II. Why do Christians say ‘Jesus is the Son of God’?

Jesus is ‘the Son of God’ for the following reasons:

(a) **The Virgin birth:** is taught in the Qur’an (Q.66.12; 21.91; 19.16-22; 3.40-42), and in the Bible (Mt.1.18-25; Lk.1.26,27; Mk.6.3; Jn.1.13; 8.41,42; Rom.1.3,4; Gal.4.4; 1.Tim.3.16). If Jesus is not the Son of God, then whose son is he? Everyone has a father.

(b) Jesus claimed to be the Son of God

He asked the Jews: “Why then do you accuse me of blasphemy because I said, ‘I am God’s Son’? **John 10:36**

At Jesus’ trial, “the high priest asked him, ‘Are you the Christ, the Son of the Blessed One?’ “I am,” said Jesus. “And you will see the Son of

2

Man sitting at the right hand of the Mighty One and coming on the clouds of heaven.” The high priest tore his clothes. “Why do we need any more witnesses?” he asked. “You have heard the blasphemy. What do you think?” They all condemned him as worthy of death. **Mark 14:61-64**

They all asked, "Are you then the Son of God?" He replied, "You are right in saying I am."

Luke 22:70 (Also Mt.26:63,64)

The Jews insisted, "We have a law, and according to that law he must die, because he claimed to be the Son of God." **John 19:7**

At the cross, some called out: “Let God rescue him... for he said, ‘I am the Son of God.’”

Matthew 27:43

(c) God the Father said that Jesus was the Son of God

At Jesus’ baptism, the Father spoke from heaven: “This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well-pleased” (Mt.3:17/Mk.1:11/Lk.3:22)

At the transfiguration, the Father said: “This is my son whom I have chosen: listen to him.” (Mt.17:5; Mk.9:17; Lk.9:35; 2.Pet.1:16,17)

(d) Eyewitnesses testified that Jesus was the Son of God

(i) Gabriel said to Mary: “He shall be very great & shall be called the Son of God.” Lk.1:32

(ii) John the Baptist said: “I testify that this is the Son of God.” Jn.1:34

(iii) Nathaniel said to Jesus: “You are the Son of God.” Jn.1:49

(iv) The demons asked: “What do you want with us, Son of God?” Mt.8:29

3

(v) Gerasene demoniac asked: "What do you want with me, Jesus, Son of the Most High God?" Lk.8:28

(vi) Disciples declared: "Truly you are the Son of God." Mt.14:32

(vii) Peter admitted: "You are the Christ, the Son of the Living God." (Mt.16:16)

(viii) Martha declared: "I believe you are the Christ, the Son of God who has come into the world." Jn.11:27

(ix) The Centurion observed: "Truly this was the Son of God." Mt.27:54; Mk.15:39

What does it mean that "Jesus is God's Son"?

- He shares the same divine **essence** with the Father ("The Father and I are one" Jn.10:30; "I am in the Father and the Father is in me" Jn.14:10,11; For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him (Col.1:19)
- He shares the same **origin** as the Father ("I came down from heaven" Jn.6:42, 62; 8:23; 3:13) He had come from God Jn.13:7
- **Pre-existence**: John.1.1-3, prior to anything else (Col.1.15-20; Jn.17:5; Heb.1:3). "You loved me before the foundation of the world" (Jn.17:24)
- He is **loved** by the Father : Jn.3:35; 5:20; 10:17
- He **knows** the Father, and the Father knows him – Jn.10:15
- He was **sent** by the Father: John 4:34; 5:23,24,30,36,37; 6:29,38,39,44,57; 7:16,28,29; 8:16,18,26,29,42; 9:4; 10:36; 11:42; 12:44,45,49; 13:20; 14:24; 15:21; 16:5; 17:3,8,18,21,23,

25; 20:21; Mt.10:40; 15:24; Lk.4:43
The Father **testifies about Jesus** –
Jn.5:37; 8:18

- He was **taught** by the Father on earth (Jn.7:16; 5:19-23)
- He **revealed** the Father – Jn:1:18; Mt.11:27 also Jn.14:6
- **He did obediently did the Will Of God The Father** Ps.40:7-9; Jn 4:34; 5:17-20; 5:23-30, 36; 6:35-38; 7:28; 8:25-29; 9:3-4; 14:23-31; 17:1-4; Heb. 10:4-10
- He has the **authority** of the Father (Jn.5:27)
- He comes in **the Father's glory** Mk.8:38 (c.f Mt.25:31 – "his glory")
- He **honoured** the Father ("The Father is greater than I am" Jn.10:29; 14:28) – Function – see Phil.2:7-11
- He **returned** to the Father (destiny Jn.7:33; 14:2, 21; 16:5,28; Rev.11:15

(f) Jesus' close relationship with the Father:

Whoever me, Him who sent me:

- * believes in (Jn.12:44); * loves me/will be loved (Jn.14:21,23;16:27);
- * accepts (Jn.13:20); * receives (Mt.10:40); * welcomes (Mk.9:37);
- * has seen (Jn.14:9); * looks at me/sees (Jn.12:45); * if you knew me/would know (Jn.14:7); * does not honour (Jn.5:23);
- * hates (Jn.15:23); * rejects (Lk.10:16)

Is Jesus the Son of God? What the Qur'an and the Bible say

According the Qur'an, Muhammad was told to say: "If (Allah) Most Gracious had a son I would be the first to worship." (Q.43:81).