



# Hard Sayings of Jesus

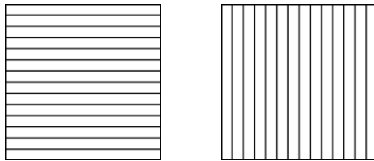
## Lesson 7: Who Is Jesus?

### Opening Prayer

### Introduction

For the visual learners among us:

Jesus is both fully God and fully man. Using the two shapes, make a drawing that orients the two shapes in a way that correctly shows the relationship between Jesus' two natures.



What options are possible? What were the theological ramifications of each?

### Studying God's Word

In Jesus' day, people were confused about who he was. A prophet? A resurrected leader from the past? The promised Messiah? That confusion still exists today. While some of that confusion simply stems from unbelief, some of it also comes from the reality that Jesus' statements about himself can be confusing for us at times. How do you really answer the question, "Who is Jesus?" If God wants us to know who Jesus is, why did Jesus speak the way he did?

**John 20:13-17** <sup>13</sup>They asked her, "Woman, why are you crying?" "They have taken my Lord away," she said, "and I don't know where they have put him." <sup>14</sup>At this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing there, but she did not realize that it was Jesus. <sup>15</sup>"Woman," he said, "why are you crying? Who is it you are looking for?" Thinking he was the gardener, she said, "Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have put him, and I will get him." <sup>16</sup>Jesus said to her, "Mary." She turned toward him and cried out in Aramaic, "Rabboni!" (which means Teacher). <sup>17</sup>Jesus said, "Do not hold on to me, for I have not yet returned to the Father. Go instead to my brothers and tell them, 'I am returning to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.'"

1. Describe the context surrounding this section of Scripture.
2. Pick out Jesus' words that are surprising, and explain what about them makes them difficult for us to understand.

3. What “problems” do the following words of Jesus raise?

**Mark 10:17-18** As Jesus started on his way, a man ran up to him and fell on his knees before him. “Good teacher,” he asked, “what must I do to inherit eternal life?” “Why do you call me good?” Jesus answered. “No one is good—except God alone.”

**John 14:28,31** “You heard me say, ‘I am going away and I am coming back to you.’ If you loved me, you would be glad that I am going to the Father, for the Father is greater than I. . . . The world must learn that I love the Father and that I do exactly what my Father has commanded me.”

**John 8:28-29** Jesus said, “When you have lifted up the Son of Man, then you will know that I am the one I claim to be and that I do nothing on my own but speak just what the Father has taught me. The one who sent me is with me; he has not left me alone, for I always do what pleases him.”

**Philippians 2:5-8** Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus: <sup>6</sup> Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, <sup>7</sup> but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. <sup>8</sup> And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death—even death on a cross!

a. What is true of Jesus’ nature?

b. Did Jesus ever give up that nature as God? Explain.

c. We call this Jesus’ *humiliation*. Define what this means. Whose decision was it?

4. Think of some times it can be especially comforting or helpful to know that Jesus is fully human. Be specific.

**Mark 2:5-11** When Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralytic, “Son, your sins are forgiven.” <sup>6</sup> Now some teachers of the law were sitting there, thinking to themselves, <sup>7</sup> “Why does this fellow talk like that? He’s blaspheming! Who can forgive sins but God alone?” <sup>8</sup> Immediately Jesus knew in his spirit that this was what they were thinking in their hearts, and he said to them, “Why are you thinking these things? <sup>9</sup> Which is easier: to say to the paralytic, ‘Your sins are forgiven,’ or to say, ‘Get up, take your mat and walk’? <sup>10</sup> But that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins....” He said to the paralytic, <sup>11</sup> “I tell you, get up, take your mat and go home.”

5. Answer Jesus’ question in verse 9. Why is that easier?

6. Explain what Jesus’ healing of the paralytic proved.

7. How do the following passages give witness to Jesus' divinity?

**John 8:58** "I tell you the truth," Jesus answered, "before Abraham was born, I am!"

**John 10:17-18** "The reason my Father loves me is that I lay down my life—only to take it up again. No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have authority to lay it down and authority to take it up again. This command I received from my Father."

**Matthew 26:63-64** But Jesus remained silent. The high priest said to him, "I charge you under oath by the living God: Tell us if you are the Christ, the Son of God." "Yes, it is as you say," Jesus replied. "But I say to all of you: In the future you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Mighty One and coming on the clouds of heaven."

8. Was Jesus always fully and completely divine during his human ministry? Another way to get to the heart of the question: Did *God* die on the cross? Defend your answer!
9. One of the truths of Christ's nature is that his human nature fully shares in all the attributes of his divine nature. What comfort does that give you?

## Summary

- Jesus has a true human nature. According to that nature, he is *less* than the Father.
- Jesus has a true divine nature. According to that nature, he is *equal* to the Father.
- While Jesus' two natures are impossible for our minds to reconcile, the truth brings us great comfort: He really is our brother, who faced the challenges of our lives and died our death. And he really is our God, whose life paid the price for our sins and who continues to reign over all things for our good.
- As you read through the gospels, actively ask yourself: How do I see Jesus' human nature here? How do I see his divine nature here? And what comfort comes from each? Use these truths to inform your prayer life when you are facing sadness, suffering, weakness, pain, and fear.

## Prayer