

Jesus, The Son Of God

Gospel Foundation Of Faith: Shelf 1 — Volume 5

The greatest personality in human history, who has affected the lives of more than any one person, was born two thousand years ago in a humble environment and laid in the manger of a barn in Bethlehem of Judea. This was Jesus of Nazareth, the Son of the Most High God. He is the only incarnate Son of the one true and living God. Everyone who would follow Jesus, therefore, must accept Him as the incarnation of God on earth. There can be no compromise of this truth. If Jesus is who He said He was, the incarnation of God on earth, then He was just that, or the greatest liar who ever lived. And those who are Christians would be the most deceived people of the world in their belief that Jesus was the incarnation of God.

No Individual Has Affected More People In All History Than Jesus.

The expansion of Christianity into all the world could never have been the result of any religion that was the invention of pious religious people. **The phenomenal growth of Christianity in the first century can be answered only in the fact that it had a supernatural beginning.** As a great personality of history, Jesus was who He said He was, the Son of God. Nothing else answers the questions as to why Christianity has grown to the point of captivating the hearts and minds of millions of people for more than two thousand years.

The Incarnation Answers The Reason For The Early Growth Of Christianity.

Jesus fulfilled hundreds of prophecies that were made centuries before He came into this world. He validated the divine origin of His teachings by the evidence of His miracles. He taught a moral way of life that has been unmatched by all man-made

religions. And finally, He was proved to be the only Son of God by His resurrection from the dead and ascension to the right hand of God to reign as King of kings and Lord of lords (See Rm 1:4; 1 Tm 6:15).

The existence, work and character of Jesus Christ could not have been the result of some over zealous disciples. He was actually the incarnation of God into the flesh of man. Understanding that Jesus is not an invented historical character by a group of religious zealots, but the actual incarnate Son of God, should inspire every person on earth to respond to His gospel journey into this world for us.

When any religious group minimized the existence of the incarnation of the Son of God, the adherents of that group are actually minimizing Jesus to simply being a good moral teacher of Israel.

1. **T or F:** One can be a Christian without accepting the incarnation of the Son of God.
2. **T or F:** If one rejects the incarnation of the Son of God, but accepts Jesus as a good teacher of the Jews, then he or she can still be a Christian.

~ The Incarnation Of God In Jesus ~

Our attraction to Jesus is because of who He is. If He were not truly the incarnate Son of God, and the One about whom the Bible claims Him to be, then He could never be a valid foundation upon whom people could base their faith. He is worthy of our faith because He is the Son of God.

Incarnation Assumes That Jesus Was The Son Of God.

1. Jesus was indwelt by the fullness of God (Cl 1:19; 2:9).
2. Jesus is the incarnation of God in the flesh (Jn 1:1,14; 1 Jn 1:1,2; 2 Jn 9).
3. Jesus is the only Son of God (Jn 1:14,18; 3:16,18).
4. Jesus is one with God (Is 9:6; Jn 1:1,2; 10:30; Ti 2:13; 1 Jn 5:20).
5. Jesus is eternal in existence (Rm 9:5; Hb 7:3; Rv 1:8).
6. Jesus is omniscient, that is, all-knowing (Mt 9:4; Lk 5:22; Jn 2:25).

If Jesus were not the incarnation of God in the flesh, then He deceived millions of people around the world throughout history.

3. **T or F:** We are attracted to Jesus only because He was a great teacher of moral principles.

~ The Proof Of Jesus' Sonship ~

Both the Bible and recorded history are evidence that Jesus is who He said He was. If one believes in the Bible, then he must believe that Jesus is the only begotten Son of God (Jn 3:16; 20:30,31). Recorded history provides convincing evidence that Jesus was a personality of historical significance. He was not a mythical figure of some over zealous religious people who needed a religious figurehead to be the foundation of their faith. Jesus was real. He was the real incarnation of God on earth in the flesh of man.

4. **T or F:** Over zealous religious leaders did not invent the personality of Jesus.
5. **T or F:** If Jesus were accepted only on the basis of those who were seeking a Messiah and Savior, then He would be no greater than the expectations of the people.

E. Proof Of Prophecy

We know that the Old Testament books were written before Jesus lived on earth. Significantly, in the Old Testament books there are over 300 prophecies concerning Jesus and His work. Since some of these prophecies were recorded as long as 1,400 years before Jesus lived, **the evidence of prophecy of His divine existence and coming into this world is overwhelming.**

Prophecy Is
God's Miracles
In Words.

What is amazing is that every prophecy in the Old Testament concerning Jesus was fulfilled by Him. If it were left to chance, the probability of one person fulfilling all these prophecies would be impossible. The fact that Jesus fulfilled all of them to the last detail proves beyond doubt that He was sent from God in fulfillment of all Old Testament prophecies.

Consider the following prophecies:

1. The Seed of woman who would crush Satan (Gn 3:15).
 2. Descend from Abraham (Gn 12:1-3; see Gl 3:16).
 3. Descendant of Isaac (Gn 21:12; see Hb 11:18).
 4. Born of Judah (Gn 49:10; see Hb 7:17).
 5. Descendant of David (2 Sm 7:12-16; see Rv 22:16).
 6. Born of a virgin (Is 7:14; see Mt 1:18,23).
 7. Born in Bethlehem (Mc 5:2; see Mt 2:1,8; Jn 7:42).
 8. Born during Roman Empire (Dn 2:44; 7:13,14).
 9. Have a forerunner (Ml 3:1; 4:5; see Mt 3:1-3).
 10. Babies killed at birthplace (Jr 31:15; see Mt 2:16-18).
 11. Sojourner in Egypt (Hs 11:1; see Mt 2:15).
 12. Live in Galilee (Is 9:1,2; see Mt 4:15).
 13. Live in Nazareth (Mt 2:23).
 14. Teach in parables (Ps 78:2; Is 6:9,10; see Mt 13:34,35).
 15. Would be betrayed (Ps 41:9; see Mk 14:43-46).
 16. Die with malefactors (Is 53:9,12; see Lk 22:37).
 17. Would be pierced (Ps 22:16; see Jn 19:34-37).
 18. Would rise from the dead (Ps 16:10; see At 2:32).
 19. Would ascend to heaven (Ps 68:18; see Lk 24:51).
6. **T or F:** The chance of one personality in all history fulfilling all the prophecies of the Messiah is impossible.

E. Proof Of Historical Existence

Many ancient documents mention the existence of Jesus as a significant personality of history. The mention of Jesus and Christianity in the following secular historical documents proves beyond doubt that Jesus was indeed One who had great impact on the people of His time:

**Earthly Testimony
Proves Jesus
To Be A
Person Of History.**

- ▶ **Julius Africanus** quoted Thallus, who lived in Rome around A.D. 52. Thallus was familiar with the darkness that came over the earth at the time Jesus was crucified (Mt 27:45).
- ▶ **Mara Bar-Serapion** in a letter to his son referred to the Jews' execution of "their king," a reference to Jesus.
- ▶ **Tacitus**, who was born around A.D. 52-54, referred to "Christus" (Christ) who suffered the penalty of death during the reign of Tiberius.
- ▶ **Plinius Secundus** (Pliny, the younger), governor of Bithynia around A.D. 112, wrote to Caesar Trajan concern-

ing the problem of “Christians” in his province.

- ▶ **Jewish Talmud** (Jewish teachings that were compiled from A.D. 70 - 200) makes many references to “Yeshu’a of Nazareth,” (Jesus, of Nazareth) though the references are made in a negative context.
 - ▶ **Josephus**, a Jewish historian of the middle and end of the first century, refers to “Jesus, a wise man, ... a doer of marvelous deeds.”
7. **T or F:** References to Jesus by secular historical writers is proof that He was an actual personality of history.
 8. Who said that Christ suffered the penalty of death during the reign of Tiberius?
(A) Plinius, (B) Julius Africanus, (C) Mara Bar-Serapion, (D) Tacitus
 9. Who was the Jewish historian who referred to “Jesus, a wise man”?
(A) Tacitus, (B) Plinius, (C) Josephus, (D) Julius

C. Proof Of Miracles & Resurrection

If Jesus were who He said He was, then certainly we would expect Him to have control over the supernatural environment from which He came. We would also expect Him to have control over the world of natural laws into which He came. He would thus not be subject to physical death. His resurrection was necessary. While religions of men focus on the tombs of their founders, Christians focus on the reign of a resurrected Savior. The rapid growth of the church in the first century in just a few years after its establishment can be answered only in the fact that Jesus was actually raised from the dead.

- ▶ Jesus worked many confirming miracles (Mt 4:23; Jn 3:2; 20:30,31; At 2:22).
 - ▶ Jesus had power to raise Himself (Jn 10:17,18; see At 2:24-36; Ep 1:20).
 - ▶ Jesus now reigns in heaven (Rm 5:17; 1 Co 15:20-28; Hb 8:1).
10. **T or F:** Because Jesus was a great teacher of moral principles, He did not have to work miraculous signs in order to prove that He was the Son of God.

D. Proof Of Loyal Disciples

The suffering and death of the early Christians can be attributed to the fact that **they truly believed Jesus was the resurrected Son of God**. In all the

suffering and death of the disciples, at the time of death no disciple denied Jesus. Because of what they believed, the disciples were willing to pay the ultimate price for their faith.

- ▶ The disciples willingly suffered for Jesus (At 4:18,19; 14:22; 2 Tm 3:12).
- ▶ The disciples willingly died for Jesus (At 8:1-3; 12:1ff; Rv 2:10).
- ▶ The disciples willingly died with confidence (2 Tm 4:7).

11. T or F: People suffer and die for even false religions, and thus, since Jesus was the Son of God, we would expect that His disciples would suffer and die for Him.

E. Proof Of The New Testament

The existence of the ancient New Testament documents is one of the most powerful evidences for the supernatural origin of the church. **The church was a powerful movement of faith in the first century because the spoken word of the gospel was first validated by the Holy Spirit** (Mk 16:20; Hb 2:3,4). The message that was first spoken was then written by several men over a period of several years without any contradictions in the original autographs (2 Tm 3:16). Such proves that neither Jesus nor the church were the invention of men.

The Existence
Of The Church
Validates Jesus'
Teachings.

Several false religions are based on the written oracles of their founders. If Jesus was who He said He was, then we would assume that He likewise would have personally written oracles concerning His beliefs and morals. But He did not.

- 12. T or F:** Though Jesus has all authority to reign over all things at this time, when He comes again He will receive more authority.
- 13.** Above what does Jesus now have all power?
(A) Palestine, (B) All powers, (C) Israel, (D) The middle East
- 14.** In His present mission at the right hand of God, what does Jesus do for us?
(A) Redeem, (B) Mediate, (C) High Priest, (D) A through C

~ The Power Of Jesus ~

No man on earth has ever claimed to be who Jesus claimed to be. He was thus either the greatest liar and deceiver who ever lived, or truly the One He claimed to be with the authority and power He now has over all things.

1. Jesus was the Creator of all things (Cl 1:16; Hb 1:2).
 2. Jesus is now head over all things (Mt 28:18; Jn 13:3; Ep 1:22).
 3. Jesus now reigns over all things (Rm 5:17; Ep 1:20-23; Ph 2:9-11; 1 Pt 3:22).
 4. Jesus is now far above all powers (Ep 1:20,21).
 5. Jesus will be the final judge of all (Jn 12:48; 2 Co 5:10).
 6. Jesus is King of kings and Lord of lords (1 Tm 6:15; Rv 19:16).
 7. Jesus is our only Savior (Jn 14:6; At 4:12).
 8. Jesus is our High Priest (Hb 3:1; 4:14; 7:26).
 9. Jesus is the Prophet (Lk 13:33; Jn 1:21; At 3:22-26).
 10. Jesus is our Redeemer (Ep 1:7; Ti 2:14).
 11. Jesus is our Mediator (1 Tm 2:5; Hb 8:6; 9:15; 12:24).
- 15. T or F:** Though Jesus is our only savior, this does not mean that there is salvation through other means.
- 16.** In the final judgment, whom will Jesus judge?
(A) All humanity, (B) Israel alone, (C) Only unbelievers, (D) Only persecutors
- 17.** In reference to all that now exists, what, or who, is Jesus?
(A) Head, (B) King, (C) Creator, (D) A through C

~ The Plea Of Jesus ~

Because Jesus has universal authority, He is the only one who has a right to make a universal plea to all people to come to Him for eternal life in the presence of God. **No prophet of God made any universal call as Jesus did that all people come to Him as the Savior of the world.** Abraham called people to faith and God. Moses called Israel to faith and God. But Jesus calls people to Himself for salvation. Jesus, therefore, is more than a prophet. He is the Son of God who calls the world to Himself as the only way, truth and life.

**Only God Can
Make A Universal
Plea For Salvation
To All People
On The Earth.**

1. Jesus says He is the only way, truth and life (Jn 14:6; see Hb 4:12).
2. Jesus is the only door through which we can enter into Him (Jn 10:9).
3. Jesus pleads that all come to Him (Mt 11:28,29).
4. Jesus says we must believe in Him (Jn 8:24).
5. Jesus says that everyone must believe and be baptized in order to be saved (Mk 16:15,16).

Religions are invented by people who are often humanistic in that they focus on the emotional or spiritual power of man. Sometimes they even focus on the mental power of an individual to conquer and control others. However, there is a difference between being religious and being Christian. All Christians are religious, but not all religious people are Christians.

**No One Can Go
Into Eternal Life
Other Than
Through The
Lord Jesus.**

One is a Christian because of his identity that is explained in the New Testament. If one does not identify himself as a Christian by the word of God, then he is simply a religious person who is trusting in his own feelings, religious heritage and/or traditions. For this reason, all Christians consider the word of God to be their final authority in all matters of faith.

True Christianity is based on the power of love (Jn 3:16; 1 Jn 5:1-3). It was through love that Jesus conquered the world. Any religious group that claims to be from God, but does not seek to motivate people by the love of God, is not from God (See 2 Co 4:15; 5:14). The evidence that Christianity is from God is in the fact that the response of our faith is based on the drawing power of God's love for us (Jn 12:32). Because Christians love God in response to His love that was revealed through Jesus (Rm 5:8), it is with the same motivation that Christians reach out to others with the message of the gospel (See Jn 13:34,35).

- 18. T or F:** If one claims to be saved outside obedience to the gospel of the Lord Jesus, then he or she has deceived themselves into believing that one can be saved on the basis of doing good works.

- 19. **T or F:** Because Jesus called all humanity unto Himself to be saved, this means that there is no other means by which one can be saved.
- 20. **T or F:** Since Jesus said that no one comes to the Father but through Him, then He is the only means by which to be saved.

CLASSROOM DISCUSSION

1. Why does a supernatural beginning validate the fact that Christianity is true and all the religions of humanity are false?
2. Why does belief in the incarnation of the Son of God make Jesus above and beyond being simply a good teacher?
3. How does prophecy prove that Jesus of Nazareth was the actual Son of God?
4. Why is persecution a part of being a part of walking the incarnational life as a Christian?
5. How is the existence of the New Testament a proof that Jesus was more than a good teacher of the Jews?
6. What gives Jesus the right to call all people out of religion to come unto Him?



ABREVIATIONS

OLD TESTAMENT

Genesis - **Gn**, Exodus - **Ex**, Leviticus - **Lv**, Numbers - **Nm**, Deuteronomy - **Dt**, Joshua - **Ja**, Judges - **Jg**, Ruth - **Rt**, 1 Samuel - **1 Sm**, 2 Samuel - **2 Sm**, 1 Kings - **1 Kg**, 2 Kings - **2 Kg**, 1 Chronicles - **1 Ch**, 2 Chronicles - **2 Ch**, Ezra - **Er**, Nehemiah - **Ne**, Esther - **Et**, Job - **Jb**, Psalms - **Ps**, Proverbs - **Pv**, Ecclesiastes - **Ec**, Song of Solomon - **Ss**, Isaiah - **Is**, Jeremiah - **Jr**, Lamentations - **Lm**, Ezekiel - **Ez**, Daniel - **Dn**, Hosea - **Hs**, Joel - **Jl**, Amos - **Am**, Obadiah - **Ob**, Jonah - **Jh**, Micah - **Mc**, Nahum - **Nh**, Habakkuk - **Hk**, Zephaniah - **Zp**, Haggai - **Hg**, Zechariah - **Zc**, Malachi - **Ml**

NEW TESTAMENT

Matthew - **Mt**, Mark - **Mk**, Luke - **Lk**, John - **Jn**, Acts - **At**, Romans - **Rm**, 1 Corinthians - **1 Co**, 2 Corinthians - **2 Co**, Galatians - **Gl**, Ephesians - **Ep**, Philippians - **Ph**, Colossians - **Cl**, 1 Thessalonians - **1 Th**, 2 Thessalonians - **2 Th**, 1 Timothy - **1 Tm**, 2 Timothy - **2 Tm**, Titus - **Ti**, Philemon - **Pi**, Hebrews - **Hb**, James - **Js**, 1 Peter - **1 Pt**, 2 Peter - **2 Pt**, 1 John - **1 Jn**, 2 John - **2 Jn**, 3 John - **3 Jn**, Jude - **Jd**, Revelation - **Rv**

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