

Jesus Our Savior

Simon Peter, a bond-servant and apostle of Jesus Christ, to those who have received a faith of the same kind as ours, by the righteousness of our God and Savior, Jesus Christ: (NASB) 2 Peter 1:1

Who is Jesus? That is a question many people have not honestly asked or even investigated. Obviously Christians have seriously asked this question, as well as some who remain non-Christians. Most everyone agrees that Jesus really existed and walked on this earth. Currently, some are rewriting history saying Jesus was never born. The facts about Jesus have been ignored, forgotten; many are not aware of the ancient non-Christian historical documents which reveal that Jesus did in fact live and walk on this earth. The Bible gives us many prophecies about Jesus that have come true. There is only one person who satisfies all of the prophecies - Jesus. So let us look at the Bible and discover the truth about Jesus, the Son of God.

JESUS ALWAYS EXISTED. John 8:48-58 records a discussion between Jesus and some of the Jewish leaders of His day (approximately. A.D. 30-31). The Jewish leaders were angry with Jesus because Jesus said He existed before Abraham (John 8:58). (Abraham was an Old Testament saint who was born about 2000 B.C.) Therefore, the Jewish religious leaders picked up stones in order to kill Him. On another occasion in John 17:5, Jesus goes even further and says that He was alive before the world existed, when He says,

And now, glorify Thou Me together with Thyself, Father, with the glory which I had with Thee before the world was. (NASB) John 17:5

How long has Jesus existed? Col 1:16-17 says Jesus existed before “all things.” Before “all things were created both in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible.” (NASB) In fact, it says that Jesus created all these things. So then, who is Jesus? The following verses will answer several important questions. The first set of questions will tell us who the “Word” is in John 1:1. Next we will discover the meaning of the term “Son of God.”

1. In John 1:14-15, John the Baptist said some things about the “Word.” What did the Word do in verse 14?

2. Who was born first, John the Baptist or Jesus (see Luke 1:57-59 and Luke 2:6-7)?

3. In John 1:15, John the Baptist says the Word is more important. Why?

4. Now read John 1:29-30 and compare that with John 1:14-15. Who is the Word?

5. When did Jesus exist? (see John 1:1)

6. Why was Jesus called the “Son of God” according to Luke 1:35?

7. The Jews were angry with Jesus because He said He was God (John 10:33). So He asked them a question (John 10:36). According to Jesus, what does the term Son of God mean?

8. What is the ultimate proof that Jesus is divine (Matt. 28:6-7)?

JESUS BECOMING MAN. In the Old Testament, God placed numerous predictions about the coming of Messiah, or the Christ, hundreds and even thousands of years before Jesus Christ would appear. The most significant one is found in Daniel 9:25-27 where we find a prediction that Messiah would die after March 29 A.D. 33. Jesus died on April 3 A.D. 33. In Isaiah 9:6-7 we are told that a child would be born and He would be the Mighty God. So shall we look at some of the other predictions? In the table below you will find 11 Old Testament predictions and New Testament fulfillments. Read each passage and in the empty space describe what the prediction is about.

THE GOD-MAN. So God became a baby, was born into the right family, grew into an adult, preached, healed, performed miracles, died and returned to life. His return to life was the ultimate proof that He was God. He was both God and man.

Prediction	Date	Fulfillment	Description
Isaiah 11:1-2	740-680 B.C.	Luke 3:23, 32; 4:1	_____
Jeremiah 23:5	627-585 B.C.	Luke 3:23, 31	_____
Isaiah 7:14	740-680 B.C.	Luke 1:26-31; Matt 1:20-23	_____
Micah 5:2	735-710 B.C.	Matt. 2:1	_____
Isaiah 61:1-2	740-680 B.C.	Luke 4:16-21	_____
Isaiah 35:5-6	740-680 B.C.	Luke 6:17-19	_____
Malachi 3:1	432-425 B.C.	John 2:14-16	_____
Psalms 22:16-17	970-610 B.C.	Luke 23:33	_____
Zechariah 12:10	520-512 B.C.	John 19:34-57	_____
Amos 8:9	760-753 B.C.	Matt. 27:45	_____
Psalms 68:18	970-610 B.C.	Acts 1:9-11	_____

Acts of Pontius Pilate

Pontius Pilate (1 BC - circa AD 37) was the fifth Roman procurator of Judea (AD 26 - 36), under Emperor Tiberius, who sentenced Jesus to death by crucifixion. The quotes below come from Justin Martyr who quotes the Acts of Pontius Pilate, a document now missing. Its existence is strongly supported by Epiphanius (Heresies 50.1), Justin Martyr (First Apology) and Tertullian (Apology).

“At His coming the lame will leap as a deer, and the stammering tongue will clearly speak: the blind will see, and the lepers will be healed; and the dead will rise, and walk.’ And that [Jesus] did those things, you can learn from the Acts of Pontius Pilate.” First Apology 48.

“‘They pierced my hands and my feet,’ was used in reference to the nails of the cross which were driven into His hands and feet. And. . . they cast lots for His clothes, and after they crucified Him distributed it among them. And that these things did happen, you can ascertain from the Acts of Pontius Pilate.’ First Apology 35.

We saw earlier that John 1:1 says the Word was God and John 1:14 says that the Word became flesh. 1 John 4:2-3 says the same thing in a different way. In this passage, we are told that anyone who says that Jesus did not come in the flesh is not from God. Now this verse is meaningless if all it is saying is that a man became a man. The message of 1 John 4:2-3 is that God became a man. If anyone denies that God or Jesus came in the flesh, his/her teaching is to be rejected. Phil. 2:5-7 says that God took on human flesh. Listen to Romans 1:3-4,

. . . who was born of a descendant of David according to the flesh, who was declared the Son of God with power by the resurrection from the dead, according to the Spirit of holiness, Jesus Christ our Lord. (NASB) Romans 1:3-4.

Was Jesus really a man? In order to answer this question look up the following verses and write down one or two words that reveal how human He really was.

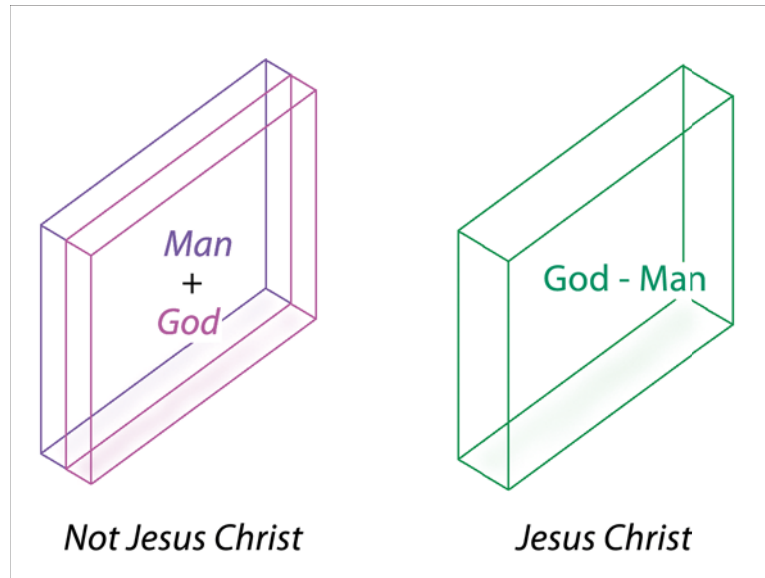
9. What proof does Luke 2:21-23 give us that Jesus was a male?

10. How was Jesus’ childhood growth described (Luke 2:52)?

11. What do Luke 4:2 and John 4:6 reveal about Jesus?

12. What did Jesus do when He was tired (Mark 4:38)?

13. What human response is described as coming from Christ in John 11:35?



14. What physical evidence does John 19:31-34 provide that Jesus was just like any other human being?

15. What is the ultimate proof that Jesus was human (John 19:33)?

Is Jesus our God? Is Jesus a man? The answer is yes to both questions, but He does not have two natures living in one body. He is not half God and half man. Scripture assumes we understand that He is completely man and completely God. Scripture never assumes He is half, quarter or a piece of God and/or man but that Jesus is totally and completely both. Jesus was totally and inseparably both God and man as illustrated in the figure. It is important to know that Jesus was not 50% God and 50% man. He was not like some actor who changes His clothes or was more God one time and more man another time. Scripture clearly teaches that Jesus was both man and God. So 1 Timothy 2:5 is right - Jesus is a man. Titus 2:13 is also correct - Jesus is God. Jesus was God and man at the same time always. Sometimes scripture refers to Jesus as a man and sometimes as God.

WHY DID GOD DO THIS? Imagine some new creatures being created in the Land. The Land was peaceful, beautiful, fun, refreshing and no one had to work. The creatures enjoyed the beauty and wonder of the Land. The Ruler of the Land had warned the creatures to be careful and watch for the Caretaker of the Land, but the creatures ignored the Ruler's warning. The

Nicene Creed A.D. 381

“We, then . . . teach men to confess one and the same Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, the same perfect in Godhead and also perfect in manhood; truly God and truly man . . . consubstantial with the Father according to the Godhead, and consubstantial with us according to the Manhood; in all things like unto us, without sin . . . before all ages of the Father . . . and in these latter days, for us and for our salvation, born . . . according to the Manhood; one and the same Christ, Son, Lord, Only-begotten to be acknowledged in two natures, inconfusedly, unchangeably, indivisibly, inseparably; the distinction of the natures being by no means taken away by the union, but rather being preserved, and concurring in one Person and one Substance, not parted or divided into two persons, but one and the same Son, and only begotten, God the Word, the Lord Jesus Christ.”

Caretaker of the land, encouraged them to rebel against the Ruler's one and only law, and eventually the creatures foolishly did so. As soon as they disobeyed the Ruler, they knew it, and He came to the foolish creatures. The Ruler of the Land told them their punishment was to be death and hardship. The Ruler had a plan to eventually restore all things. He decided to have his son die for the creatures. The creature is Adam. The Land is the Earth. The disobedience is sin. The evil caretaker is Satan. The Ruler is God and the son is Christ (Genesis 2:15-3:24). All that follows is a description of God's plan and what Christ did.

Why did Jesus come to earth? We are at war with God (Romans 5:10-11) and Jesus came to this earth to make it possible for us to have peace with God (Romans 5:1) - to be holy, even as God is holy, forever. To understand God's plan, answer the following questions:

16. What does God want from each person (Matthew 5:48)?

17. According to Romans 3:23, does God consider you perfect? What does He say you have done?

18. What happens if you break one of God's laws, according to James 2:10?

19. What is sin, according to 1 John 3:4?

20. What has God said that each person deserves (Romans. 6:23)?

21. After reading 1 Cor. 15:3-8, answer the following questions:

Why did Christ die (v. 3)? _____

After He died, what happened (v. 4)? _____

Is it possible to believe in vain (v. 2)? _____

22. What does God say you can do in John 3:16-18 to escape spiritual death?

CONCLUSION. God became a man, Jesus Christ, to save us from spiritual death. He did this by dying in A.D. 33. As sinners we can be declared holy when we depend on Jesus to forgive our sins. Most people pray and ask Jesus to forgive them and take control of their lives. The prayer is simple. You do not and cannot do anything to make Him want to forgive you. He just wants you to desire that He forgive you of your sins and to start changing your life so that you sin less and less and less.

Things To Ponder

1. What happens to the person who does not believe in Jesus (see John 3:16-18)?

2. In our study we discovered that Jesus is both God and man. In Acts 2:22-24, is Jesus in view as a man or God?

3. Do you have a desire to know Jesus? If so, how will you go about knowing Him better (Jer. 29:13-14a)?

4. Have you ever asked God - Jesus Christ to forgive your sins and clean-up your life? Explain!

5. If someone were to show you a Bible verse that says Jesus is a man, how would you answer his/her?

6. What does the resurrection of Jesus Christ prove according to Acts 17:31 and Romans 1:4?

7. John 1:4-5 says that Jesus is the light of the world. What does this mean to you (see John 8:12)?

8. Jesus is the Bread of Life and when we believe in Him, we should experience living water in our inner most being (John 4:10-11; 7:38)? Why does this happen and how?

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Answer true (T) or false (F) to each of the following statements:

1. Jesus Christ was a man. _____
2. Jesus Christ is God. _____
3. Jesus was half man and half God. _____
4. The Old Testament never indicated that Jesus was going to be God. _____
5. The Old Testament predicted the exact year in which Jesus would die. _____
6. Most of the prophecies about Jesus were given 500 to 1,000 years before He was born. _____
7. We can become a god just like Jesus if we know the truth. _____
8. The document entitled “Acts of Pontius Pilate” says that Jesus performed miracles, healed the blind and lame, raised the dead and was crucified. _____
9. Jesus came to earth so that He could forgive the sins of each man or woman. _____
10. Jesus existed before He was born on earth. _____