

WHAT ABOUT JESUS?

Some today will say that Jesus was a good teacher, a wonderful moral example to emulate, but not God. This morning we will look at what the Bible has to say about Jesus. We will look at what prophecy reveals, what people in the Bible say, and Jesus' claims as to His identity. From this we will be able to conclude that it is impossible for Jesus to be just a good teacher, one we can imitate our life after, but He also must be God. Either He is a liar, a lunatic, or Lord. We believe that Jesus is the Son of God, second person of the Trinity, God come in the flesh to be Savior and Redeemer through His death on the cross and resurrection from the dead that followed. We believe that He is again in heaven, ever interceding on the behalf of all those who know Him as Lord and Savior. Because we believe that the Bible is the inerrant, infallible, inspired Word of God, that will be our source. Let's look first at the testimony of:

I. PROPHECY

The OT, written over a period of 1,000 years contains nearly 300 references to the coming Messiah. All are fulfilled in Jesus Christ. The odds of just 8 prophecies being fulfilled in Jesus by coincidence are 1 in 10 to the 17th power. To give you an idea visually of what those odds look like it would be the state of Texas (286,596 square miles) silver dollars two feet deep, paint one red, mix it all in and pick it on the first try. The chance of Jesus fulfilling 48 prophecies by coincidence is 1 in 10 to the 157th power!

Let's look at just a few of these prophecies.

Born of a virgin

Isaiah 7:14 Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign: The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and will call him Immanuel.

Matthew 1:18 This is how the birth of Jesus Christ came about: His mother Mary was pledged to be married to Joseph, but before they came together, she was found to be with child through the Holy Spirit.

In the gospel of Luke an angel appeared to Mary and said, "Do not be afraid, Mary; you have found favor with God. You will conceive and give birth to a son, and you are to call him Jesus."

After she asks how this will be possible since she is a virgin the angel says, "The Holy Spirit will come on 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."

Born in Bethlehem

Micah 5:2 "But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, though you are small among the clans of Judah, out of you will come for me one who will be ruler over Israel, whose origins are from of old, from ancient times."

Matthew 2:1-6 After Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, during the time of King Herod, Magi from the east came to Jerusalem **2** and asked, "Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews? We saw his star in the east and have come to worship him." **3** When King Herod heard this he was disturbed, and all Jerusalem with him. **4** When he had called together all the people's chief priests and teachers of the law, he asked them where the Christ was to be born. **5** "In Bethlehem in Judea," they replied, "for this is what the prophet has written: **6** " 'But you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for out of you will come a ruler who will be the shepherd of my people Israel.'"

He shall be called Lord

Psalms 110:1 The LORD says to my Lord: "Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet."

Luke 2:11 Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord.

Shall be called Immanuel, which means "God with us"

Isaiah 7:14 Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign: The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and will call him Immanuel.

Matthew 1:23 “The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel”—which means, “God with us.”

Entered Jerusalem on a donkey

Zechariah 9:9 Rejoice greatly, O Daughter of Zion! Shout, Daughter of Jerusalem! See, your king comes to you, righteous and having salvation, gentle and riding on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey.

Luke 19:35–37 They brought it to Jesus, threw their cloaks on the colt and put Jesus on it. **36** As he went along, people spread their cloaks on the road. **37** When he came near the place where the road goes down the Mount of Olives, the whole crowd of disciples began joyfully to praise God in loud voices for all the miracles they had seen:

Isaiah 53

Isaiah 53:5 But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was upon him, and by his wounds we are healed.

Matthew 27:26 Then he released Barabbas to them. But he had Jesus flogged, and handed him over to be crucified.

Isaiah 53:7 He was oppressed and afflicted, yet he did not open his mouth; he was led like a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is silent, so he did not open his mouth.

Matthew 27:12 When he was accused by the chief priests and the elders, he gave no answer.

Isaiah 53:9 He was assigned a grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death, though he had done no violence, nor was any deceit in his mouth.

Matthew 27:57–60 As evening approached, there came a rich man from Arimathea, named Joseph, who had himself become a disciple of Jesus. **58** Going to Pilate, he asked for Jesus’ body, and Pilate ordered that it be given to him. **59** Joseph took the body, wrapped it in a clean linen cloth, **60** and placed it in his own new tomb that he had cut out of the rock. He rolled a big stone in front of the entrance to the tomb and went away.

Isaiah 53:12 Therefore I will give him a portion among the great, and he will divide the spoils with the strong, because he poured out his life unto death, and was numbered with the transgressors. For he bore the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors.

Matthew 27:38 Two robbers were crucified with him, one on his right and one on his left.

Luke 23:34 Jesus said, “Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing.” And they divided up his clothes by casting lots.

Jesus will not remain in the grave

Psalms 16:10 because you will not abandon me to the grave, nor will you let your Holy One see decay.

Acts 2:24–27 But God raised him from the dead, freeing him from the agony of death, because it was impossible for death to keep its hold on him. **25** David said about him: “ ‘I saw the Lord always before me. Because he is at my right hand, I will not be shaken. **26** Therefore my heart is glad and my tongue rejoices; my body also will live in hope, **27** because you will not abandon me to the grave, nor will you let your Holy One see decay.”

Fulfilled prophecy show that Jesus Christ is the long-awaited Messiah, God come in the flesh, born of a virgin, the One who would die and raise again for our sins. What do people in the Bible say about Jesus?

II. PEOPLE IN THE BIBLE

The Apostle Paul

Philippians 2:6–11 Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, **7** but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. **8** And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death— even death on a cross! **9** Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, **10** that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, **11** and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Colossians 1:15–17 He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. **16** For by him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things were created by him and for him. **17** He is before all things, and in him all things hold together.

“The words he spoke, the works he performed, the life he led, the person he was – all disclosed the unseen Father. He is, in Paul’s words, the ‘visible image of the invisible God.’” F.F. Bruce

Titus 2:11–13 For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men. **12** It teaches us to say “No” to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age, **13** while we wait for the blessed hope—the glorious appearing of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ,

The Greek construction suggests that both titles, “great God” and “Savior” refer to one person: Jesus Christ. J.G. Harris

John the Baptist

John 1:29 The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him and said, “Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!

John 1:34 I have seen and I testify that this is the Son of God.”

The Apostle Peter

Matthew 16:15–17 “But what about you?” he asked. “Who do you say I am?” **16** Simon Peter answered, “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.” **17** Jesus replied, “Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah, for this was not revealed to you by man, but by my Father in heaven.

“Instead of rebuking for his brashness (as Jesus always did when confronted by error), Jesus blesses Peter for his confession of faith.” Scheffrahn

Acts 2:36 “Therefore let all Israel be assured of this: God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ.”

Acts 4:12 Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to men by which we must be saved.”

The Apostle Thomas

John 20:27–28 Then he said to Thomas, “Put your finger here; see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it into my side. Stop doubting and believe.” **28** Thomas said to him, “My Lord and my God!”

Jesus accepts the designation: “He rebukes Thomas for his unbelief, but not his worship.” John Stott

Writer of Hebrews

Hebrews 1:3 The Son is the radiance of God’s glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word. After he had provided purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven.

“Just as the image and superscription on a coin exactly corresponds to the device on the die, so the Son of God ‘bears the very stamp of his nature.’” F.F. Bruce

Hebrews 1:8 But about the Son he says, “Your throne, O God, will last for ever and ever, and righteousness will be the scepter of your kingdom.

Hebrews 4:15 For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are—yet was without sin.

The Apostle John

John 1:1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

John 1:14 The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.

John 1 affirms “The eternal existence, personal distinctiveness, and divine nature of the Logos.” J. Carl Laney

John 20:31 But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.

1 John 5:11–12 And this is the testimony: God has given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. **12** He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life.

John, who is an eyewitness of Jesus Christ, makes no hesitation in calling Him God.

Martha

John 11:27 “Yes, Lord,” she told him, “I believe that you are the Christ, the Son of God, who was to come into the world.”

Jesus is declared God, Savior, Messiah, Creator, Lord, Christ, Son of God, giver of eternal life, sinless, eternal, bearer of sin, exact image of God the Father, the One who holds all things together, and the One to whom all will bow down in worship.

So, we see the testimony of prophecy, the testimony of those in the Bible, and lastly, the testimony of:

III. JESUS

Jesus claims to be God

High Priest rending his garment: the law forbade the high priest to rend his garment in private troubles, but when acting as a judge, he was required by custom to express in this way his horror of any blasphemy uttered in his presence.

Mark 14:61–64 But Jesus remained silent and gave no answer. Again the high priest asked him, “Are you the Christ, the Son of the Blessed One?” **62** “I am,” said Jesus. “And you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Mighty One and coming on the clouds of heaven.” **63** The high priest tore his clothes. “Why do we need any more witnesses?” he asked. **64** “You have heard the blasphemy. What do you think?” They all condemned him as worthy of death.

Matthew 28:18–20 Then Jesus came to them and said, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. **19** Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, **20** and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”

Jesus claims equality with the God the Father

***John 10:25–33** Jesus answered, “I did tell you, but you do not believe. The miracles I do in my Father’s name speak for me, **26** but you do not believe because you are not my sheep. **27** My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me. **28** I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one can snatch them out of my hand. **29** My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all; no one can snatch them out of my Father’s hand. **30** I and the Father are one.” **31** Again the Jews picked up stones to stone him, **32** but Jesus said to them, “I have shown you many great miracles from the Father. For which of these do you stone me?” **33** “We are not stoning you for any of these,” replied the Jews, “but for blasphemy, because you, a mere man, claim to be God.”

***John 5:17–18** Jesus said to them, “My Father is always at his work to this very day, and I, too, am working.” **18** For this reason the Jews tried all the harder to kill him; not only was he breaking the Sabbath, but he was even calling God his own Father, making himself equal with God.

“The Jews were angry because of Jesus’ violation of the Sabbath, but they were furious when he was so presumptuous as to claim equality with the Father.” Merrill C. Tenney

Just as a human father’s son must be fully human, God’s Son must be fully God.

***John 8:58–59** “I tell you the truth,” Jesus answered, “before Abraham was born, I am!” **59** At this, they picked up stones to stone him, but Jesus hid himself, slipping away from the temple grounds.

Two things that would aggravate the Jewish leaders:

1) Jesus identifying Himself as “I AM”

Exodus 3:13–15 Moses said to God, “Suppose I go to the Israelites and say to them, ‘The God of your fathers has sent me to you,’ and they ask me, ‘What is his name?’ Then what shall I tell them?” **14** God said to Moses, “I AM WHO I AM. This is what you are to say to the Israelites: ‘I AM has sent me to you.’” **15** God also said to Moses, “Say to the Israelites, ‘The LORD, the God of your fathers—the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob—has sent me to you.’ This is my name forever, the name by which I am to be remembered from generation to generation.

2) Jesus claiming to be eternal (before Abraham) which means He was claiming to be God

Jesus claims to be the giver of eternal life

John 5:21–24 For just as the Father raises the dead and gives them life, even so the Son gives life to whom he is pleased to give it. **22** Moreover, the Father judges no one, but has entrusted all judgment to the Son, **23** that all may honor the Son just as they honor the Father. He who does not honor the Son does not honor the Father, who sent him. **24** “I tell you the truth, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life and will not be condemned; he has crossed over from death to life.

John 14:1–6 “Do not let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God; trust also in me. **2** In my Father’s house are many rooms; if it were not so, I would have told you. I am going there to prepare a place for you. **3** And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am. **4** You know the way to the place where I am going.” **5** Thomas said to him, “Lord, we don’t know where you are going, so how can we know the way?” **6** Jesus answered, “I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.

Jesus claims to be equal to God the Father, to be the Christ, the judge, eternal, the only way to the Father and eternal life, the One who would remain with His followers always. His claim to be equal to God the Father brought quite a reaction from the religious leaders: stone Him!! Jesus cannot be a good teacher, a good example, one whom we could imitate, if He is not God because that is clearly who He claims to be. He would be a liar or a lunatic. This morning the evidence speaks for itself. Jesus is who he says He is, who those in Scripture declare He is, and He is the One who fulfills the prophecy of the long-awaited Messiah!! He is the One who will radically change your life if you recognize Him as your Lord and Savior, your only hope for forgiveness of sins and eternal life.

It is not enough to say, ‘I believe in Jesus Christ.’ The New Testament asks you questions when you say that. It asks, ‘What do you believe about Him? Is He man only? Is He God only? Did He really come in the flesh or did He not? What did He do? What is the meaning of His death?’ Martyn Lloyd Jones

2 Corinthians 5:17 Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!