

WRAP-UP: SOME KEY POINTS

1. The Bible is God's written revelation to man and is our basis for all Christian truth and teaching.
2. The Bible is divinely inspired and fully accurate and trustworthy.
3. The Bible is relevant, applicable and authoritative for our lives.
4. God has revealed Himself from outside and inside the Bible.
5. Having a personal relationship with someone and knowing facts about someone are two different things.
6. God wants us to know Him. He wants a personal relationship with us!
7. God has taken the initiative by providing for us the way to relate to Him through His Son Jesus Christ.
8. We must choose to relate to Him.
9. You can have a personal relationship with God.

ACTION POINTS

1. Review today's class notes.
2. Write down any questions that come to mind so we can discuss them next week.
3. Listen to Lon Solomon's sermons on CD (Week 1) entitled *The Reliability of the Bible, Parts 1 and 2*.
4. Learn memory verse #1.
 - ❑ **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.*
5. For your interest and information, take a look at **Attachments 1, 2 and 3** at the end of this book: *The Reliability of the Bible* summary, *Other Questions About the Bible*, and *Non-Biblical Arguments for the Existence of God*.
6. Read and answer the Week 2 preview questions.
 - Who did Jesus say He was?
(*John 10:30-33*)
 - Who did Peter say Jesus was?
(*Matthew 16:13*)
 - Who did Thomas say He was?
(*John 20:24-29*)
 - Why did John write his Gospel account?
(*John 20:31*)

NEXT WEEK'S TOPIC:

Who is Jesus Christ and Why is He Unique?

Growing On Your Own

Take time this week to look up each verse in your Bible and read it in context.

Hints for Memorizing Scripture

1. Read the verse in its context.
2. Seek to understand it.
3. Write out the verse and its reference on an index card.
4. Recite the verse aloud one phrase at a time. Do this several times.
5. Repeat the process several times daily during slack periods: while riding on the bus or subway; commuting to work in your car; coffee time or lunch break.
6. After memorizing the verse, review it later on a regular basis to keep it fresh in your mind!

CHRISTIANITY 101 :: WEEK 2

Who is Jesus Christ and Why is He Unique?

MEMORY VERSE #1

- ☐ **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.*

Last week we learned that if we want to know God in a personal way, we need to connect with Jesus Christ. So today we're going to do our best to answer the question, "Who is Jesus Christ and Why is He Unique?" All through history people have asked that question. Why is the answer to it so important? Three reasons!

TODAY'S TOPIC:

Who is Jesus Christ and Why is He Unique?

1. Jesus was God's ultimate revelation of Himself.

- ☐ **Hebrews 1:1-2:** *In the past God spoke to our forefathers through the [Old Testament] prophets at many times and in various ways **but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son.***
- ☐ **John 14:9b:** *Jesus answered: ". . . **Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father . . .**"*

2. Jesus claimed to be the central theme of Scripture.

- ☐ **John 5:39:** *You [Jewish leaders] diligently study the Scriptures [the Old Testament] because you think that by them you possess eternal life. **These are the Scriptures that testify about Me.***

3. Jesus is God's plan of salvation.

- ☐ **2 Timothy 3:15:** *and how from infancy you [Timothy] have known **the holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Jesus Christ.***

As we answer the question, "Who is Jesus Christ and why is He unique?" we also need to examine seven significant lines of evidence.

SEVEN LINES OF EVIDENCE FOR THE UNIQUENESS OF JESUS CHRIST

1. Old Testament prophecy
2. Jesus' words
3. Jesus' works (miracles)
4. Worship given to Jesus
5. Statements of Jesus' contemporaries
6. Jesus' impact and influence upon history
7. Transformed lives

Other Verses on Prophets and Prophecy

God said He would predict things long before they came to pass to confirm that He is God and to demonstrate it through fulfilled prophecy.

☐ Numbers 23:19...God is not a man, that he should lie, nor a son of man, that he should change his mind. Does he speak and then not act? Does he promise and not fulfill?

☐ Isaiah 48:3-5...³I foretold the former things long ago, my mouth announced them and I made them known; then suddenly I acted, and they came to pass. ⁴For I knew how stubborn you were; the sinews of your neck were iron, your forehead was bronze. ⁵Therefore I told you these things long ago; before they happened I announced them to you so that you could not say, 'My idols did them; my wooden image and metal god ordained them.'

OT: Old Testament
NT: New Testament

Prophet Isaiah
about 750 - 700 BC

Prophet Micah
about 740 - 690 BC

1. THE EVIDENCE OF OLD TESTAMENT PROPHECY

Definition of a true, genuine prophet of God

- ☐ Deuteronomy 18:21-22: You may say to yourselves, "How can we know when a message has not been spoken by the LORD?" If what a prophet proclaims in the name of the LORD does not take place or come true, that is a message the LORD has not spoken. That prophet has spoken presumptuously. Do not be afraid of him.

As far back as 750 to 1000 BC—and in some cases even earlier—approximately 300 specific predictions were made concerning Jesus Christ as to His first and second coming. In particular, we will zero in on three of them which Jesus fulfilled in every detail. Later, you can look up others in our class notes on your own. Founders of other world religions **did not** fulfill prophecy as Jesus did. Here are three of the best known prophecies:

HIS VIRGIN BIRTH

OT prophecy
NT fulfillment

Isaiah 7:14
Matthew 1:18-25

- ☐ 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 1:18-25: ¹⁸This 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. ¹⁹Because Joseph her husband was a righteous man and did not want to expose her to public disgrace, he had in mind to divorce her quietly. ²⁰But after he had considered this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, because what is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. ²¹She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins." ²²All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had said through the prophet: 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." ²⁴When Joseph woke up, he did what the angel of the Lord had commanded him and took Mary home as his wife. ²⁵But he had no union with her until she gave birth to a son. And he gave him the name Jesus.

BORN IN BETHLEHEM

OT prophecy
NT fulfillment

Micah 5:2
Luke 2:1-7

- ☐ 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."
- ☐ Luke 2:1-7: ¹In those days Caesar Augustus issued a decree that a census should be taken of the entire Roman world. ²(This was the first census that took place while Quirinius was governor of Syria.) ³And everyone went to his own town to register. ⁴**So Joseph also went up from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to Bethlehem the town of David, because he belonged to the house and line of David.** ⁵He went there to register with Mary, who was pledged to be married to him and was expecting a child. ⁶**While they were there,** the time came for the baby to be born, ⁷and **she gave birth to her firstborn, a son.** She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.

METHOD OF DEATH: HANDS/FEET PIERCED; NO BONES BROKEN

OT prophecies Psalm 22:16-17, Zechariah 12:10b, Psalm 34:20
NT fulfillment John 19:31-37; 20:25-29

- ❑ **Psalm 22:16-17:** ¹⁶ Dogs have surrounded me; a band of evil men has encircled me, they have pierced my hands and feet. ¹⁷ I can count all my bones; people stare and gloat over me.
- ❑ **Zechariah 12:10b:** They will look on me, the one they have pierced.
- ❑ **Psalm 34:20:** [The LORD] protects all his bones, not one of them will be broken.
- ❑ **John 19:31-37:** ³¹ Now it was the day of Preparation, and the next day was to be a special Sabbath. Because the Jews did not want the bodies left on the crosses during the Sabbath, they asked Pilate to have the legs broken and the bodies taken down. ³² The soldiers therefore came and broke the legs of the first man who had been crucified with Jesus, and then those of the other. ³³ **But when they came to Jesus and found that he was already dead, they did not break his legs.** ³⁴ **Instead, one of the soldiers pierced Jesus' side with a spear, bringing a sudden flow of blood and water.** ³⁵ The man who saw it has given his testimony, and his testimony is true. He knows that he tells the truth, and he testifies so that you may believe. ³⁶ These things happened so that the Scripture would be fulfilled: "Not one of his bones will be broken," ³⁷ and, as another scripture says, "They will look on the one they have pierced."
- ❑ **John 20:25-29:** ²⁵ So the other disciples told [Thomas], "We have seen the Lord!" But he said to them, **"Unless I see the nail marks in his hands and put my finger where the nails were, and put my hand into his side, I will not believe it."** ²⁶ A week later his disciples were in the house again, and Thomas was with them. Though the doors were locked, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you!" ²⁷ **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!" ²⁹ Then Jesus told him, "Because you have seen me, you have believed; blessed are those who have not seen and yet believed."

King David
about 1000 BC

Prophet Zechariah
about 520 BC

OTHER OLD TESTAMENT PROPHECIES AND NEW TESTAMENT FULFILLMENTS

Prophecy Specifics	Old Testament Prophecy	New Testament Fulfillment
Seed of Abraham.....	Genesis 12:3.....	Matthew 1:1-16
Tribe of Judah.....	Genesis 49:10.....	Hebrews 7:14
Lineage of David	2 Samuel 7:12, 13, 16	Romans 1:3
Palm Sunday events.....	Zechariah 9:9	Matthew 21:1-7
Betrayal for 30 pieces of silver.....	Zechariah 11:12-13.....	Matthew 26:14-15; 27:3-10
Lots cast for Jesus' coat.....	Psalm 22:18	John 19:23-24
Burial.....	Isaiah 53:9	Matthew 27:38, 57-60
Resurrection.....	Psalm 16:8-11.....	Acts 2:22-32

Fulfilled prophecy shows that Jesus Christ was absolutely unique, different from the founders of other world religions because He fulfilled each and every Bible prophecy about the Messiah whom God had promised.

So Bible prophecy is the first line of evidence showing Jesus' uniqueness as the prophesied Messiah.

2. THE EVIDENCE OF JESUS' WORDS

What specifically did Jesus say or claim about Himself?

- a. Claimed to be _____ in essence with God the _____.

John 10:30-31: *"I and the Father are one." Again the Jews picked up stones to stone him."*

Such a claim by anyone **except the Messiah Himself** the Jews considered blasphemous and punishable by death.

- b. Claimed for Himself the same _____ ascribed to God.

John 5:23: *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.*

- c. Claimed to be _____ by the very nature of His rhetorical question.

John 8:46: *"Can any of you prove me guilty of sin? If I am telling the truth, why don't you believe me?"*

This means not only that Jesus did not commit **any** sin, but also in fact He possessed no sin nature.

- d. Claimed divine authority to _____.

Luke 5:24a: ²⁴ *But that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins . . .*

By this miracle (Luke 5:18-26) Jesus addressed the issue of human sin and was claiming the divine authority to forgive it. Later He accomplished the once-for-all removal of our sin problem by dying on the cross and shedding His blood. More on this subject in Week 3 of **Christianity 101**.

- e. Claimed to be the _____ (Messiah), the Son of God.

Matthew 26:63-64: ⁶³ *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."* ⁶⁴ *"Yes, it is as you say," Jesus replied.*

- f. Claimed to be the _____ [Jehovah] of the Old Testament.

Exodus 3:13-14: ¹³ *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.'"*

John 8:56-59a: ⁵⁶ *"Your father Abraham rejoiced at the thought of seeing my day; he saw it and was glad."* ⁵⁷ *"You are not yet fifty years old," the Jews said to him, "and you have seen Abraham!"* ⁵⁸ *"I tell you the truth," Jesus answered, "before Abraham was born, I am!"* ⁵⁹ *At this, they picked up stones to stone him.*

- g. Claimed to be the _____, the only _____ to God the Father, and to be _____ with Him.

John 14:6,9: ⁶ *Jesus answered, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me."* . . . ⁹ *Jesus answered: "Don't you know me, Philip, even after I have been among you such a long time? Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father..."*

- h. Claimed to be the _____ of _____ and that He would _____ again from the dead.

Mark 9:31b: *He said to them, "The Son of Man is going to be betrayed into the hands of men. They will kill him, and after three days he will rise."*

Jesus made claims of deity that no founder of any world religion proved or even dared to make.

Death by Stoning

Leviticus 24:16.....Anyone who blasphemes the name of the LORD must be put to death. The entire assembly must stone him. Whether an alien or native-born, when he blasphemes the Name, he must be put to death.

Jesus' Seven "I AM's"

Jesus made seven claims about Himself: I am....

- "The Bread of Heaven"
John 6:35,42,48,51
- "The Light of the World"
John 8:12
- "The Door of the Sheep"
John 10:7,9
- "The Good Shepherd"
John 10:11,14
- "The Resurrection and the Life"
John 11:25
- "The Way, and the Truth and the Life"
John 14:6
- "The True Vine"
John 15:1,5

Son of Man

"Son of Man" is a title or term which was reserved and used exclusively for the Jewish Messiah: both His earthly mission and His future triumph as Redeemer and Judge. Jesus applies this term to Himself 84 times in the Gospels. (See also Daniel 7:13-14)