

20th Century Bible Course

Dear Student:

Lesson 1 took us on a brief exploration of our textbook, the Bible. During that initial journey we discovered that the Bible is unique among books in many ways--its authorship, its claims, its prophecies, and its power. We should also understand that the Bible is the story of a person, and that person is Jesus.

Not only is Jesus the central figure of the Bible, but He is also the tallest figure of history. Indeed, "all history is His-story." That such a person as Jesus really was born and lived among men nearly two thousand years ago, there can be no reasonable doubt. Agreement is far from universal, however, on what men think of Jesus.

"I am the WAY, the TRUTH, and the LIFE," said Jesus (John 14:6). This is a sensational claim! Jesus made other tremendous claims about His origin. His nature. His mission, and His teaching. Around these claims and around the personality of Jesus, controversies have raged ever since His birth.

"What think ye of Christ? whose son is he?" (Matthew 22:42). This question, asked by Christ Himself, is one that every person must answer individually. Just who is this Man called Jesus? Intellectuals accept Him as a great teacher. Spiritists call Him a great medium. Youth adopt Him as their primary candidate. Revolutionaries claim Him as the greatest revolutionary. UFO followers describe Him as their Senior Pilot. What do *you* think of Jesus? Is He to you the only WAY to God, the absolute authority for TRUTH, the only source of a richer LIFE in this world and of an endless LIFE in the world to come? Answering this question is the most important decision one can ever make.

This second lesson, "Ten Things You Should Know About Jesus," will give you information and facts that will help you to not only to decide who Jesus is to you, but also what relationship you desire to have with Him.

Very sincerely, Your Bible Instructor

20TH CENTURY BIBLE COURSE

LESSON 2

TEN THINGS YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT JESUS

SCRIPTURE READING: JOHN 1:1-4 , COLOSSIANS 1:12-22, HEBREWS 1:1-4

Part 1 - WHO JESUS IS

1. Who does the Bible claim Jesus to be? John 3:16 _____ Matthew 3:17

Jesus once asked His disciples, "Whom do men say that I the Son of man am? And they said. Some say that thou art John the Baptist: some, Elias;and others, Jeremias, or one of the prophets" (Matthew

16:13, 14). The people were willing to believe that Jesus was some prophet raised from the dead, or Elijah returned from heaven, but because He came as a humble teacher, without the pretense and pomp of a ruler, not many people were willing to accept Him as the Son of God, the Saviour of men.

<<< FACT 1 - The Scriptures clearly teach that Jesus is the Son of God. >>>

Part 2- THE RELATIONSHIP OF JESUS TO GOD

1. What relationship did Jesus claim with His Father? John 10:30 _____

**2. How did the apostle John describe this relationship? John 1:1, 14 "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the _____
_____. And the Word was made _____ and dwelt among us." (See also Hebrews 1:8)**

The Greek word translated *the Word* means the thought of God expressed. Christ is the visible likeness of the invisible God (Colossians 1:15). He is not simply "a" god but "the" God, which is superior to all other created things (Colossians 1:18). "For it was by God's own decision that the Son has in Himself the full nature of God" (Colossians 1:19, TEV).

We need have no anxiety about the Godship of Jesus Christ. In reading the Bible you will discover an identity, a oneness, between God and Jesus Christ throughout. At times it is difficult to tell whether it is speaking of the Father or the Son. Christians gladly accept the definition of Moses in Deuteronomy 6:4 "The Lord our God is one Lord." We cannot completely explain these mysteries, but we can think of some comparisons: A ship's rope gathers its strength from three strands wound together to form but one rope. A flower may have three petals, yet they unite in one plant.

<<< FACT 2 - The Scriptures make plain that Christ is one with God and is called God. >>>

Part 3- CHRIST BEFORE BETHLEHEM

1. What do the Scriptures say of Christ's existence before He was born in human flesh? Micah 5:2 "... whose goings forth have been from of _____, from _____."

John 17:5 Jesus claimed to have been with the Father "_____ the world was."

The pre-existence of Christ is a doctrine that was most definitely taught by Jesus. "I came down *from heaven*," He emphatically declared (John 6:38). "From the days of eternity," said one writer, "the Lord Jesus Christ was one with the Father; He was 'the image of God, the image of His greatness and majesty,' 'the outshining of His glory.' It was to manifest this glory that He came to our world."

<<< FACT 3 - Christ existed with God before the creation of our world.>>>

Part 4- CHRIST AND CREATION

1. What part did Christ have in the work of creation? Hebrews 1:1, 2 "He made the _____." Colossians 1:16

John 1:1-3 "_____ were made by him; and without him was not _____ that was made."

This "Word," who created all things, was none other than Christ, as verses 10 and 14 clearly show, and this mighty Creator is able also to create new life in us. That is why Paul says, "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature [or creation]" (2 Corinthians 5:17).

<<< FACT 4 - Christ cooperated with God the Father in the work of creation. >>>

Part 5- THE BIRTH OF JESUS

1. In what way was the birth of Jesus supernatural?

Isaiah 7:14

Matthew 1:18 Mary "was found with child of the _____." (See also verses 22, 23.)

This is known as the incarnation. Christ was not a new being, but He appeared in human form. What a thrilling thing is this miracle of heaven--the fact that a humble girl--an ordinary human being--unmindful of her tremendous position in the history of the world and the plan of salvation, was approached by an angel with the news that she was to become the mother of God--the mother of Jesus--who was Immanuel, God with us! And it is even more wonderful when we realize that all this was done in order that God could become human and pay the price of our sin, rescuing us from the pit of destruction and redeeming us for eternal life. This is beyond our ability to understand, yet not beyond our ability to believe and accept.

<<< FACT 5 -Jesus was conceived by the Holy Spirit and born in the flesh of a virgin--the God-Man.>>>

Part 6- JESUS IS TEMPTED

1. Did Jesus have to struggle with temptation as we do? Hebrews 4:15 _____ With what results?

Because the Son of God lived a sinless life in the flesh. He accomplished five things:

- (1) He demonstrated that, by the indwelling power of God, the law of God could be kept by converted man (John 15:10; Romans 8:3,4).
- (2) His righteous life is now available to cover man's past sins (Romans 5:17; 2 Corinthians 5:21).
- (3) He is able to sympathize with man's struggle against sin (Hebrews 4:15).
- (4) He has successfully revealed God to man (John 14:4-8).
- (5) He is in a position to impart overcoming power to all who are tempted (Philippians 4:13 ; 2 Corinthians 12:9 ; 1 Corinthians 10:13)

<<< FACT 6 - Jesus overcame temptation and lived a sinless life >>>.

Part 7- THE DEATH OF JESUS

1. What did Jesus' death accomplish for us? Romans 5:8

Matthew 26:27, 28 "He took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it; for this is my _____ of the new testament, which is _____ for many for the _____ [forgiveness] of sins."

It was May, 1946. A young scientist, Louis Slotin, was conducting a daring experiment at Los Alamos, the atomic test center. To determine the amount of uranium 235 necessary for a chain reaction--scientists call it the critical mass--he was pushing two hemispheres of uranium nearer together. Just as the mass became critical, he would push the spheres apart with his screwdriver, instantly stopping the chain reaction. He had performed the same experiment many times before, but that day, just as the material became critical, the screwdriver slipped. Instantly the room was filled with a dazzling bluish haze. Instead of ducking and thereby possibly saving himself, Louis tore the two hemispheres apart with his bare hands, thus stopping the chain reaction. "You'll come through all right," he later said quietly to his workmates who had been in the room with him, "but I haven't the faintest chance myself." Nine days later he was dead.

Nearly two thousand years ago the Son of God walked into sin's most concentrated radiation, at a

time when the hemispheres of sin had reached a critical mass. When the countdown of the centuries reached its end (Galations 4:4) calls it the "fulness of time"). He who had made the atom permitted Himself to be nailed to the tower at ground zero, allowed wicked men to trigger the cruel device we call Calvary. To interrupt the chain reaction of sin, to stop its radiation, He gave His life.

The deadly radiation of sin had written death on every nerve, every tissue, every cell of our bodies (Romans 5:12). Sin had built up in intensity until it became a critical mass at Calvary. But the Son of God threw His own body across the fury of its chain reaction and forever broke its power. His hands will bear the mark of the encounter throughout eternity! He was treated as we deserve, that we might be treated as He deserves. He suffered the death which we were to die that we might receive the life which was His. Truly, "with his stripes we are healed" (Isaiah 53:5). The human mind may never fully fathom the atonement, but we can accept it, and all who will accept the sacrifice of Calvary will experience the joy of a changed heart.

<<< FACT 7 - The Bible teaches that Jesus died to make possible the forgiveness of our sins.>>>

Part 8-THE RESURRECTION OF JESUS

1. Why does Jesus have the keys of death? Revelation 1:17,18

The resurrection of Jesus is a doctrine that distinguishes Christianity from all other religions. Buddha, Confucius, Mohammed, and the founders of other religious movements are still in their tombs. Jesus alone points to an empty tomb as evidence of divine power and of His conquest over death. No fact connected with the life of Christ is so firmly supported as the fact of the resurrection.

A group of infidels in England during the eighteenth century became convinced that all efforts to overthrow the Christian religion would fail as long as people believed in the resurrection of Christ and in the conversion of the apostle Paul. One of their number, Dr. Gilbert West, a brilliant lawyer, was asked to publish a tract upon the alleged resurrection of Christ, while another, Lord Lyttelton, was to write a pamphlet exposing the conversion of Paul as a myth. Some time later these two men met. West inquired of Lyttelton

whether he had completed his assignment. Lyttelton replied in the affirmative, but stated that in examining the evidence he had himself become convinced of the conversion of Paul and was writing to support it. Then Lyttelton asked if West had finished his work on the resurrection. In reply, West confessed to a similar experience. In weighing all the facts, according to recognized laws of legal evidence, Dr. West became satisfied that Jesus Christ really rose from the dead. The result was his celebrated book, *Observations on the History and Evidence of the Resurrection of Jesus Christ*.

2. If the resurrection of Jesus were not a fact, how would that affect us? 1 Corinthians 15:17,18

The resurrected Christ is a living Christ. It is only the power of the living Christ, the power of the resurrection, that can change the life of man and save him. Paul sought to know "the power of his resurrection" as a daily experience, that he might at last be raised in the resurrection of the just (Philippians 3:10,11). The resurrection of Christ is thus a sample and pledge of ours. "Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming" (1 Corinthians 15:23).

<<< FACT 8 -Jesus rose a victor over death, thus providing assurance of our resurrection from the grave.>>>

Part 9- WHAT JESUS IS DOING NOW

1. What happened to Jesus 40 days after His resurrection? Acts 1:9-11

2. What position does Jesus now have? Hebrews 8:1 (NT 194 [153])

3. As our High Priest, what does He do for us? Hebrews 7:24,25

Christ ascended to heaven to become our mediator (1 Timothy 2:5), to serve as our advocate (attorney) (1 John 2:1). We need a representative in heaven who understands our problems. Jesus does. He was "made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest" (Hebrews 2:17). That is why we are encouraged to come in reverent boldness to His throne of mercy for grace and power (Hebrews 4:16).

<<< FACT 9 - Since ascending to heaven, Jesus has been mediating in our behalf. >>>

10- CHRIST'S PROMISED RETURN

1. What promise did Jesus make His disciples the last evening He spent with them? John 14:1-3

2. Which coming does Paul call this? Hebrews 9:28

The second coming of Christ is the climax of the gospel. It is the time of reward. Without it the cross loses its meaning. The cross is the seed sowing of God's love; the second coming is the harvest. It is home-coming for God's people.

<<<FACT 10 - The Scriptures testify that Jesus will come again. Let us be ready to meet Him.>>>

"For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever be-lieveth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John 3:16). Such love on the part of God the Father and God, His Son-Jesus Christ! Today Jesus still holds out those hands-hands marked by His encounter with sin-to you and to me in a touching invitation to respond: "Come to Me, all of you who are tired from carrying your heavy loads, and I will give you rest" (Matthew 11:28).

What is your reply?