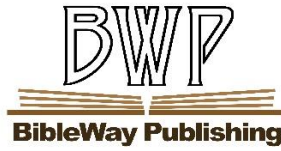


Man Who Was **God**



Randolph Dunn



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The Man Who Was God

Introduction

"In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters." (Genesis 1:1-2) *"In the beginning was the Word."* (John 1:1) *"Then God said, 'Let us make man in our image, in our likeness.'"* (Genesis 1:26) The word "God" was translated from the Hebrew word 'Elohiym plural of *El*, but they are also one *"The Father and I are one."* (John 10:30) These spirit beings must have existed before they spoke the heavens and earth into existence along with all its living creatures, animals and vegetation. Then, they made man from what they spoke into existence into their likeness.

According to the apostle John the "Word" was with God and was God. The Word became flesh and dwelt among man. John, the Baptist, referred to Him as "the Lamb of God" who takes away the sins.

What an awesome revelation, the spirit being, Deity - the creator of all things, will sacrifice Himself as the atoning sacrifice to cleanse those They created in Their likeness and set eternity in their hearts. *"He has also set eternity in the hearts of men; yet they cannot fathom what God has done from beginning to end."* (Eccl 3:11-12) Those who put their trust in and obey Him are promised eternal life with Him if they continue to live by obedient faith as priests to serve Him.

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Deity

"In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters." (Gen 1:1-2)

"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God, in the beginning. Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made." ... "The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us." (John 1:1-3; 14)

Comment: "Word" (Lógos) was with "God" (Theós) at their creation. But Lógos became "flesh" (Sarx a human) and lived among man to become the perfect and only sacrifice that could remove sin and reconcile man to God.

*"For there are three that bear record in heaven, **the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one.** And there are three that bear witness in earth, the spirit, and the water, and the blood: and these three agree in one."* (1 John 5:7-8)

Comment: These two verses appear to support the "Trinity Theory." However, "It should be noted that "there is no sure evidence of this reading in any Greek manuscript until the 1500s" (Dr. Daniel B. Wallace, The Textual Problem in 1 John 5:7-8). It is, simply stated -- utterly absent from all the early Greek manuscripts of the NT. Dr. Albert Barnes states the obvious: "It is incredible that a genuine passage of the New Testament should be missing in all the early Greek manuscripts." (zianet.com/maxey/reflx379.htm) This is discussed more in Appendix C.

"That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we looked upon and have touched with our hands (man's nature), concerning the word of life — the life was made manifest, and we have seen it, and testify to it and proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and was made manifest to us — that which we have seen and heard we proclaim also to you, so that you too may have fellowship with us; and indeed our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ." (1 John 1:1-4)

Comment: So, "God," the "Word" and the "Spirit" were present in the creation. Therefore, one could conclude just from these few verses there were three "Gods" or one in three forms – God, Word, and Spirit. So, as spirit beings the creator of all things can be manifested into things of His creation in order for man can understand. For instance:

"The Lord appeared to Abraham near the great trees of Mamre while he was sitting at the entrance to his tent in the heat of the day. Abraham looked up and saw three men standing nearby. When he saw them, he hurried from the entrance of his tent to meet them and bowed low to the ground." (Gen 18:1-2)

*"Now Moses was tending the flock of Jethro his father-in-law, the priest of Midian, and he led the flock to the far side of the desert and came to Horeb, the mountain of God. There the angel of the Lord appeared to him in flames of fire from within a bush. Moses saw that though the bush was on fire it did not burn up. So, Moses thought, 'I will go over and see this strange sight — why the bush does not burn up.' When **the Lord saw** that he had gone over to look, **God** ('Elohiym) **called** to him from within the bush, 'Moses! Moses!' and Moses said, 'Here I am.'"" So, God manifest Himself in the burning bush." (Ex 3:1-4)*

Balaam got up in the morning, saddled his donkey and went with the princes of Moab. But God was very angry when he went, and the angel of the Lord stood in the road to oppose him. Balaam was riding on his donkey, and his two servants were with him. When the donkey saw the angel of the Lord standing in the road with a drawn sword in his hand, she turned off the road into a field. Balaam beat her to get her back on the road. Then the angel of the Lord stood in a narrow path between two vineyards, with walls on both sides. When the donkey saw the angel of the Lord, she pressed close to the wall, crushing Balaam's foot against it. So, he beat her again. Then the angel of the Lord moved on ahead and stood in a narrow place where there was no room to turn, either to the right or to the left. When the donkey saw the angel of the Lord, she lay down under Balaam, and he was angry and beat her with his staff. Then the Lord opened the donkey's mouth, and she said to Balaam, 'What have I done to you to make you beat me these three times?'" (Num 22:21-28)

God also manifested Himself again in the form of finger of the hand writing on the wall in Babylon before King Belshazzar. (Daniel 5:5)

Chapter 2

Prophecies About Jesus, the Son of the Living God

There are many Old Testament prophecies concerning Jesus. But what are the possibilities of making just 25 predictions about someone who was to be born many years later and having these predictions come true?

Dr. Hawley O. Taylor has provided this answer: If the events foretold for Israel's Messiah who was to come, then the overall probability that all 'n' events would find their fulfillment in one person would be 33 million. Even if the prophecy regarding the virgin birth be excluded, the number remains astronomically large. Too large to assume that this accidentally happened!

Here are just a few prophecies and their fulfillment. Dr. Taylor's statement is provided in Appendix A prior to a list of over 60 prophecies and their fulfillment.

Jeremiah 23:5 - "Behold, the days are coming, declares the LORD, when I will raise up for David a righteous Branch, and he shall reign as king and deal wisely, and shall execute justice and righteousness in the land."

Matthew 1:1 - "This is a record of the life of Jesus the Messiah, the son of David, the son of Abraham."

Luke 3:23- 38 – Luke traced the genealogy of Jesus back through David all the way to Adam.

Zechariah 9:9 – "Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout aloud, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, your king is coming to you; righteous and having salvation is he, humble and mounted on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey."

Matthew 21:6-7 – "And the disciples went, and did even as Jesus appointed them, and brought the ass, and the colt, and put on them their garments; and he sat thereon."

Isaiah 53:5 – "But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed."

Matthew 27:26 – "Then released he unto them Barabbas; but Jesus he scourged and delivered to be crucified."

Isaiah 53:7 – "He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth; like a lamb that is led to the slaughter, and like a sheep that before its shearers is silent, so he opened not his mouth."

Matthew 27:12-14 – "While Jesus was being accused by the high priests and elders, he made no reply. Then Pilate asked him, 'Don't you hear how many charges they're bringing against you?' But Jesus did not reply at all, so that the governor was very surprised."

Isaiah 53:9 – "And they made his grave with the wicked and with a rich man in his death, although he had done no violence, and there was no deceit in his mouth."

Matthew 27:57-59 – "Later that evening, a rich man arrived from Arimathea. His name was Joseph, and he had become a disciple of Jesus. He went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus, and Pilate ordered it to be done. So, Joseph took the body and wrapped it in a clean linen cloth. Then he placed it in his own new tomb, which he had cut out of the rock. After rolling a large stone across the door of the tomb, he left."

Isaiah 61:1-2 - "The Spirit of the LORD is upon me, because the LORD has anointed me; he has sent me to bring good news to the oppressed and to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim freedom for the captives, and release from darkness for the prisoners; to proclaim the year of the LORD's favor,"

Luke 4:16-19; 21 – "And He came to Nazareth, where He had been brought up; and as was His custom, He entered the synagogue on the Sabbath, and stood up to read. And the book of the prophet Isaiah was handed to Him. And He opened the book and found the place where it was written:

'The spirit of the lord is upon me, because he anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives, and recovery of sight to the blind, to set free those who are oppressed, to proclaim the favorable year of the lord.'

"Today this Scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing."

Chapter 3

Birth and Early Life of Jesus

God through the prophet Isaiah stated *"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."* (Isaiah 7:14)

God did not manifest Himself as the promised Messiah, instead He came in human form by the action of the Spirit of God.

"In the sixth month, God sent the angel Gabriel to Nazareth, a town in Galilee, to a virgin pledged to be married to a man named Joseph, a descendant of David. The virgin's name was Mary. The angel went to her and said, "Greetings, you who are highly favored! The Lord is with you." Mary was greatly troubled at his words and wondered what kind of greeting this might be. But the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, you have found favor with God. You will be with child and give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most-High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his father David, and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever; his kingdom will never end." "How will this be," Mary asked the angel, "since I am a virgin?" The angel answered, "The Holy Spirit will come upon 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." (Luke 1:26-35)

"In those days Caesar Augustus issued a decree that a census should be taken of the entire Roman world. (This was the first census that took place while Quirinius was governor of Syria.) And everyone went to his own town to register. 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. He went there to register with Mary, who was pledged to be married to him and was expecting a child. While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born, and 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." (Luke 2:1-7)

"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. Because 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. But 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. She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins. All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had said through the prophet: "The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel" - which means, God with us.' (Matthew 1:18-23) Refer to Appendix A for prophecies.

Birth

"In those days Caesar Augustus issued a decree that a census should be taken of the entire Roman world. (This was the first census that took place while Quirinius was governor of Syria.) And everyone went to his own town to register. 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. He went there to register with Mary, who was pledged to be married to him and was expecting a child. While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born, and 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." (Luke 2:1-7)

Escape to Egypt

"After Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, during the time of King Herod, Magi (wise men) from the east came to Jerusalem 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.' When King Herod heard this he was disturbed, and all Jerusalem with him." (Matthew 2:1-3)

"And having been warned in a dream not to go back to Herod, they returned to their country by another route. When they had gone, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream. 'Get up,' he said, "take the child and his mother and escape to Egypt. Stay there until I tell you, for Herod is going to search for the child to kill him." (Matthew 2:12-13)

Returning Home to Nazareth

"After Herod died, an angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt and said, 'Get up, take the child and his mother and go to the land of Israel, for those who were trying to take the child's life are dead.' So, he got up, took the child and his mother and went to the land of Israel. But when he heard that Archelaus was reigning in Judea in place of his father Herod, he was afraid to go there. Having been warned in a dream, he withdrew to the district of Galilee, and he went and lived in a town called Nazareth. So was fulfilled what was said through the prophets: "He will be called a Nazarene." (Matthew 2:19-23)

Youth

"Every year his parents went to Jerusalem for the Feast of the Passover. When he was twelve years old, they went up to the Feast, according to the custom. After the Feast was over, while his parents were returning home, the boy Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem, but they were unaware of it. Thinking he was in their company, they traveled on for a day. Then they began looking for him among their relatives and friends. When they did not find him, they went back to Jerusalem to look for him. After three days they found him in the temple courts, sitting among the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions. Everyone who heard him was amazed at his understanding and his answers. When his parents saw him, they were astonished. His mother said to him, 'Son, why have you treated us like this? Your father and I have been anxiously searching for you'. 'Why were you searching for me?' he asked. 'Didn't you know I had to be in my Father's house (business)?' Then he went down to Nazareth with them and was obedient to them. But his mother treasured all

these things in her heart. And Jesus grew in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men.” (Luke 2:41-52)

Conclusion

One of the most profound truths revealed in the Bible is that Jesus of Nazareth, born over 2,000 years ago in Bethlehem, was and is God! When he was born it was to a virgin and the angel who announced his conception said he would be called Immanuel, meaning, "God with us". Of his entrance into the world, it was written: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God ... And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth." (1 John 1:1, 14) When Philip asked him "Lord, show us the Father", Jesus replied: "Have I been with you so long, and yet you have not known Me, Philip? He who has seen Me has seen the Father." Surely, we recognize our fragile and humble state as human beings, but God considered us to be of such great value that He visited us! Do you want to see God? Look at Jesus! Jesus was God who came to be with us in a very personal and comforting way.

But Jesus went away. Can it be that God is still with us? The Bible's answer is clear - Yes! But how so? It is through His Spirit. Listen to Jesus' words from John 14: *"And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever; the Spirit of truth ... you know Him, for He dwells with you and will be in you." "If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our home with him."*

The conclusion is inescapable. God, our Creator, thought so much of us that He came to earth in human form to help us. We called him Jesus of Nazareth. He returned to heaven after completing his mission here but sent the Holy Spirit to help us. And so today, God the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit want to make their home within us. They want to personally reside in you. They want us to participate in their life.

The life of Christ is the life that Jesus lived and the kind of life we also can live with His help, if we want to.

In Matthew 5, Jesus gives us what amounts to a self-portrait. These are traits every Christian should and could possess: humility, compassion, meekness, righteousness, mercy, peacemaking, and faithfulness. This is not a list where you can pick and choose, according to your personal preference or inclination.

Chapter 4

Growing in Favor with God and Man

By the life Jesus lived all could see the nature of God in Him.

Jesus was Humble

The opposite of humility is self-centeredness or pride. This is the basic characteristic of a mindset influenced and controlled by Satan: e.g., *"a proud look is an abomination to the LORD."* God promises to *"destroy the house of the proud,"* ... *"A haughty look, a proud heart ... are sin."* (Proverbs 5:16-17 ... 15:25)

Pride says: *"Don't tell me anything. I already know it all."* Humility says: *"Thanks for your advice and help."*

Pride says: *"I need, I want, I deserve."* Humility says: *"He needs, they want, you deserve."*

Pride says: *"God, I am so much better than my fellow man."* Humility says: *"Lord have mercy on me, a sinner."*

Pride criticizes others to tear them down. Humility praises others in order to build them up.

Pride says: "I can do all things." Humility says: *"I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me."*

In Jesus, we see a man who gave himself to the downtrodden of his age. He associated with workers and fishermen. He drank from the same cup of the mixed-race woman who was so despised and rejected by religious people. Jesus showed his spirit of humility when entering each city, he touched the unclean bodies of the lepers and the tongues of the deaf-mutes. He cared for the demon-possessed ones to whom others were so afraid to get near. He accepted the invitations to eat in the houses of "sinners" and "publicans" as well as Pharisees and hypocrites.

Jesus was dependent:

"The Son can do nothing of Himself, but what He sees the Father do." (John 5:19)

"I can of Myself do nothing." (John 5:30)

"For I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me." (John 6:38)

"I do not seek My own glory; there is One who seeks and judges." (John 8:50)

Jesus was a servant:

The Lord of all, taking a towel and water basin, kneeling before unworthy men to wash their feet, including the friend who would soon betray him.

Jesus's life was simple:

They say that Alexander the Great entered India in a grand procession of 200 painted elephants, 200 soldiers on black horses and 200 lions surrounding him as he sat on a golden throne atop an ivory chariot proclaiming "I am the Lord of the universe. I conquered the world. Now I will conquer the stars". Alexander died at 33 and today owns nothing. But the King of kings and Lord of lords entered Jerusalem on a borrowed donkey.

Jesus was compassionate

The religious leaders of the Jews were mostly Pharisees, a group known for their pride and self-righteousness. Do you remember the prayer of the Pharisees in the temple? *"Lord, I thank you that I am not like this publican sinner here beside me."*

The Pharisees were the "sanctified ones." They considered themselves so superior to others that they would not even touch a "sinner." Jesus, though, "the friend of sinners" came telling: *"Blessed are those who weep"*; that is, those filled with compassion, a sensitive heart, the contrite, those whose hearts are touched with the sorrows of others.

The Roman Empire lived by the rule of "might makes right" and the voice that spoke the loudest was the sword. Our Jesus taught: "Blessed are the meek."

The Pharisees robbed widows' houses and for pretense prayed long prayers but Jesus said: *"Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness."*

He was always touched by the desperate situation of the sorrowful. A leper came to him crying, *"If you will,*

you can purify me." (Mark 1:40) Jesus heard the leper's plea, and he was "deeply moved", he extended his hand, touched him, and said: 'Be clean!'

He saw a widow at the burial of her only son. Seeing her grief, he had compassion on her and said, "Do not weep." He then proceeded to bring her son back to life. (Luke 7:13)

Jesus saw two blind men, *"touched their eyes and they immediately they received their sight."* (Matthew 20:34)

Jesus' greatest compassion, though, is not for sick bodies but for sick souls. We read in Matthew 9:35-36 how Jesus felt compassion for the multitude who were like sheep without a shepherd, lost people, aimlessly wandering, not knowing what they were looking for, nor where they were headed.

Jesus, coming into his beloved city, Jerusalem, also wept. He looked into the future of that city and it was dark. The Jews rejected Jesus and refused to repent of their sins and for that, they would suffer a terrible punishment. Enemy armies would invade and destroy the city. Most of the inhabitants would be killed or sold as slaves to other countries. Their glorious temple, a symbol of their privilege and the presence of God among them would be torn down, leaving not one stone on top of another. Their genealogical records were destroyed preventing them from selecting a High Priest as required by the "Law of Moses." They could no longer prove they were "the Children of Abraham." All this happened 40 years later in 70 AD. Jesus loved them and cried thinking about the destiny of the rebellious and disobedient. (Luke 19:41-44)

Jesus was meek

What does it mean to be meek? According to our dictionary, meek means you are "showing patience and humility, gentleness ... easily imposed upon, submissive". The meek one doesn't throw fits or fly off the handle under pressure. A good synonym is "gentle." A meek person is under control.

Perhaps the most misunderstood quality of the life of Christ is his gentleness or meekness. He wasn't weak but strong. Remember how he was arrested, beaten with rods, scourged with a whip, spit on, and mocked? The multitude called for his death and he was nailed to a Roman cross. The crowd challenged him, *"If you are the Son of God, come down!"*

On the cross, he could have called 10,000 angels to set him free and destroy that ungrateful generation. But he didn't do it. Jesus, *"committed no sin, nor was deceit found in His mouth ... when He was reviled, did not revile in return; when He suffered, He did not threaten, but committed Himself to Him who judges righteously."* (1 Peter 2:22,23) Listen to what he did say on that cross: *"Father, forgive them for they do not know what they do."* Now that is meekness, properly defined as strength under control, calmness in the midst of trials, and tranquility of soul even in difficult circumstances.

Jesus did not promote weakness but tolerance and so was able to help the weak become strong. He did not load them down with burdens too heavy for them to bear. He always called people to behave well and to be of good character but, at the same time, he understood and put up with the silliness and immaturities of the weak. Jesus was on the side of the weak. He never stopped being gentle.

He didn't stop being meek in Matthew 23 when he denounced the hypocrites: "Serpents, brood of vipers! How can you escape the condemnation of hell?" Nor will he cease to be meek when, one day, he *"is revealed from heaven with His mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on those who do not know God, and on*

those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ." (2 Thessalonians 1:7, 8) To be meek doesn't mean you don't fight against evil, rebuke the sinner or try to correct an injustice. Sometimes force must be used. We must take action, speak out, and resist, but we just do it the right way, Jesus' way, the controlled way.

Jesus was righteous

People are searching for something in life that satisfies their desires and needs. They are hungry and thirsty but not only for bread and water. They want things, material possessions, close relationships, meaning in life and peace. They want to be happy. There is, though, a more vital hunger that God wants us to experience and always stands ready to satisfy. It is hunger and thirst for righteousness. Remembering that "blessed" is sometimes translated as "happy", notice what Jesus did not say. He didn't say that those who seek happiness will be happy. Instead, he said that those who seek righteousness will be happy. Those who seek God and His will, those who want to think and act rightly, will find happiness.

Do you know what righteousness is? It is the same thing as justice, only on a personal level. It is not just treating others fairly or rightly but also doing right yourself. In his life here, Christ treated people fairly, did what was right, judged evil, and defended the innocent. His righteousness includes retribution for evil committed. He is a just judge who is involved in the fight between good and evil. In this sense, he is not impartial. He wants good to prevail over evil. Jesus loves what is right but hates what is wrong. It ought to be important for us to know that Jesus always did and will always do what is right.

Jesus never rejected a person because of his past mistakes (Matthew 9:13) nor abandoned truth for traditions that would deny help to the needy (Matthew 12:1-2). In every word and deed, Jesus showed us the perfect example of what it means to be righteous.

Jesus is our example of maturity (Ephesians 4:15). He is the source of our strength and fruit (John 15:1-5). As he did, we must desire the fellowship of the family of God (Hebrews 10:23-27), feeding ourselves on the Word of God (2 Timothy 3:16, 17), and sharing our possessions with others (2 Corinthians 9:7-10). We must obey God instead of men. (Acts 4:19) This is the life that Jesus revealed to us.

Christ's righteousness is also seen in his role of Judge. **"God has established a day when He will judge the world with righteousness through Jesus."** (Acts 17:31) When He comes in judgment, he will divide the sheep from the goats, the righteous from the wicked. *"We must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad."* (2 Corinthians 5:10) What will the Righteous Judge say to you on that day?

Jesus was merciful

The merciful One defined as his priority the needs of men. Mercy attends to the needs of people ahead of man-made rules and customs.

In the judgment, Christ will say to the unmerciful: *"Depart from Me, you cursed, into the everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels: for I was hungry and you gave Me no food; I was thirsty and you gave Me no drink; I was a stranger and you did not take Me in, naked and you did not clothe Me, sick and in prison and you did not visit Me.'* Then they also will answer Him, saying, *'Lord, when did we see You hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not minister to You?'* Then He will answer them, saying, *'Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to Me.'*" (Matthew 25:41-45)

Comment: Mercy is an essential part of true Christianity.

Mercy is when we feel the pain of someone in a bad situation. It is not, though, only feeling the pain, but acting to alleviate and help.

Coming down from the mountain after delivering a powerful sermon, he met a leper who said, *"Lord, if You are willing, You can make me clean."* Jesus put out His hand and touched him, saying, *"I am willing; be cleansed."* (Matthew 8:3)

To at the very end, we see Christ, crucified on the cross of Calvary, dying in anguish between two thieves. He had his hands full with his own problems but, hearing the thief's request, he felt great compassion.

Jesus was pure

Many people have a wrong idea about what it means to be a believer: "Yes, I am a believer because I don't drink, smoke, dance, or gamble." What mattered to him was a list of prohibitions, but the law of Christ always emphasized more what you do and what you are on the inside than things you don't do. Your behavior should be and will be a simple reflection of what exists in your heart – pure heart or pure in heart.

Purity starts with thoughts. *"For as a man thinks in his heart, so is he"* (Proverbs 23:7). Acts are not the most important thing. Sure, your actions are important, but the fact is that *"A good man out of the good treasure of his heart brings forth good; and an evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart brings forth evil. For out of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaks"* (Luke 6:45). The main emphasis of spiritual development must always be the inner person; that is, the heart.

The word here translated as "pure" is the Greek word *katharos*, which is defined as pure, clean, unsoiled, uncontaminated, sincere, upright, and void of evil. Jesus said in Matthew 15:19, that *"... out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies. These are the things which defile a man."*

"The Lord does not see as man sees; for man looks at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart." (1 Samuel 16:7)

Jesus was a peacemaker

To most people, peace is simply "the absence of strife." If there are no wars, we say the world is at peace; or if we aren't fighting with our neighbors, we have neighborhood peace. But peace in the scriptures is far more than that. In the Old Testament, the Hebrew word for peace is *shalom*, which means "wholeness, completeness, harmony of life." In the New Testament, the Greek word for peace is *eirene* meaning "inner well-being." Putting them all together, peace can be defined as "inner calm, even in the midst of outward turmoil or calamity." To enjoy peace is to be in harmony with God, self, and others.

There is only true peace when love takes the place of hatred. The peacemaker is the one who works to replace hatred and strife with love and unity.

Jesus is the great peacemaker he destroyed the enmity that separated Jews and Gentiles in one body. Jesus' effect on these natural enemies was fantastic. People of different cultures, languages, races, religions, customs, etc., who had centuries of history full of war after war - Jesus caused them to become beloved brothers. The instrument he used to make peace was the cross of Calvary. The vision is of Jesus walking through the desert. In front of him, all is dead and brown. But on He walks and wherever he passes, he leaves love, peace, and harmony. The desert comes to life and is transformed into a beautiful, lush garden: birds singing, flowers blooming, water running, and green pastures. In reality, that's exactly what Jesus did, but in spiritual terms. (Ephesians 2:11-16)

Jesus embraced the worst sinner, touched the vilest leper, purified the most despicable prostitute, took all types of people, and joined them together into one beautiful family of God. He paid a high price but saw his mission as a peacemaker as a priority in his life.

Jesus was faithful

A person's true character is most clearly revealed when that person is feeling the pressures of life. When everything is pleasant and easy, free of irritations, insults, and injuries, it isn't very hard to be good and kind, patient and agreeable. But in the midst of persecution, pain, illness, criticism, and rejection, a man's true colors come to the surface. It is in these moments that some appear as light in the darkness and others just blend into that darkness. It is in these moments that some give up and others keep going.

Jesus Christ is our best example of faithfulness. Satan threw his most fiery darts at Jesus. His enemies tried to kill him. Religious leaders falsely accused him. His own people rejected him.

Arrested and tortured, Jesus did not turn back. Abandoned by his closest friends, he did not turn back. Is it worthwhile to surrender ourselves to Christ? The answer is a resounding "Yes!" We may be weak and frail but Jesus is faithful to those who want to follow him. The sorrows of this life do not compare to the future glory that God will give to those who are faithful to Him. This chapter Adapted from The Life of Christ by Joe McKinney, thebiblewayonline.com

Chapter 5

The Father's Will

Following the creation of the cosmos God desired a creation in His likeness. So, He created man and gave him the ability to make decisions. He created him from the elements of the earth, dust, but also in His image, likeness and nature. Man is not the exact representation of God but a likeness, as depicted below.

There are many references in the scriptures that describe God, the Father; God, the Son, and God, the Spirit. Mortal man has many of these attributes but not to the same degree as God. The following is a comparison of some attributes of God and man.

GOD	MAN
God loves 1 John 4:8 but hates sin	Man can love and hate fellowman
God is life. John 1:4	Physical man lives but will die

God is truth. John 14:6	Man can know some truth
God is just (holy, righteous) 2 Thessalonians 1:6	Man tends to put self ahead of what is just and right
God is mercy. Luke 6:36	Man seeks revenge
God is peace. 2 John 3 and John 14:7	Man wars and strives against each other
God is faithful. 1 Corinthians 10:13	Man struggles to be faithful but breaks covenants
God is without sin. 2 Corinthians 5:21	Man yields to temptation and sins

Following the creation God placed man in a paradise with the instruction:

- a. To be fruitful and multiply,
- b. to tend the Garden of Eden,
- c. Not to eat of the tree of knowledge of good and evil.

For an unknown period of time, God walked and talked with man as he was a perfect creation, righteous. But man sinned and suffered the consequences including his righteous relationship with God

But at just the right time or perfect situation, God came to the earth in the fleshly body of Jesus of Nazareth to become the only sacrifice to atone for man's sins. In doing so He provided the only way for man's deliverance from the bondage of sin, e.g., salvation and reconciliation with God.

Throughout the Gospels, we constantly read statements from Jesus about why He left His abode in Heaven with God. His actions and statements show His purpose was to glorify God by completing the work He was sent to do as He stated:

- I had to be in My Father's House
- I must do the work that the Father gave me to finish,
- I have brought you glory on earth by completing Your work.

This was emphasized by Matthew when Jesus stated "**come unto me**, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, **and learn of me**" (Matthew 11:28-29). For them to come and "learn of Me" Jesus had to **do His Father's will** (John 6:38) which was doing **the work that God sent Him to do**. (John 9:4)

Work Jesus Came To Do

*"You see, at just the right time, when we were still powerless, Christ died for the ungodly." ... "But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us" (Romans 5:6, 8) because he wanted **to seek and save the lost**. (Luke 19:10)*

*"The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. He is patient with you, **not wanting anyone to perish**, but everyone to come to repentance [a change from a life of sin and self to one of righteousness reflecting God]." (2 Peter 3:9)*

Therefore, **God's will was to provide a way for His creation to be reconciled unto Him**. "God ... wants all men to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth. For there is one God and one mediator between God and men, the man of flesh - Christ Jesus, who gave himself as a ransom for all men (1 Timothy 2:4-6 also Matthew 20:28; Mark 10:25 and Hebrews 9:15). John put it this way "For God so loved the world that **he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes** [pisteuo – commits to] **in him shall not perish but have eternal life.**" (John 3:16)

*"For the grace of God (Jesus, the Christ) that brings salvation has appeared to all men" (Titus 2:11). But "Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only **he who does the will of my***

Father who is in heaven" (Matthew 7:21). So "Why do you call me, 'Lord, Lord' and do not do what I say" (Luke 6:46)?

One who hears His Words, the way unto salvation, and fails to accept and obey them is *"like a man who built a house on the ground (earth, sand or dirt as opposed to stone) without a solid foundation, consequently, like the house, his destruction will be complete"* (Luke 6:49).

"My Father is always at his work to this very day, and I, too, am working" (John 5:17). Jesus did His Father's work as he lived a sinless life pleasing God in order to offer His life and body as the only and perfect sacrifice to God to atone, cleanse man of his sins. He taught that all who believe by committing to Him through obedient faith would have eternal life with the Father (John 3:15, 16). He also said "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.

Chapter 6

The Beginning of His Ministry

"Then Jesus came from Galilee to the Jordan to John, to be baptized by him. John would have prevented him, saying, 'I need to be baptized by you, and do you come to me?'" But Jesus answered him, "Let it be so now, for thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness.' Then he consented. And when Jesus was baptized, immediately he went up from the water, and behold, the heavens were opened to him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and coming to rest on him, and behold, a voice from heaven said, 'This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased.'" (Matt 3:13-17)

"When all the people were being baptized, Jesus was baptized too. And as he was praying, heaven was opened and the Holy Spirit descended on him in bodily form like a dove. And a voice came from heaven: "You are my Son, whom I love; with you I am well pleased." (Luke 3:21-22)

"And Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit in the wilderness for forty days, being tempted by the devil." ... "If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down from here, for it is written, "'He will command his angels concerning you, to guard you,' and "'On their hands they will bear you up, lest you strike your foot against a stone.'" And Jesus answered him, "It is said, 'You shall not put the Lord your God to the test.'" (Luke 4:1-2, 9-12)

Comment: God is not to be tested. But He will test man's faith by allowing man to be presented with choices. Man can choose his desires like Adam and Eve and the Pharisees or choose to do what God desires.

"Let no one say when he is tempted, 'I am being tempted by God,' for God cannot be tempted with evil, and he himself tempts no one. But each person is tempted when he is lured and enticed by his own desire." (James 1:13-14)

His Mission

"When the devil had finished all this tempting, he left him until an opportune time. Jesus returned to Galilee in the power of the Spirit, and news about him spread through the whole countryside. He taught in their synagogues, and everyone praised him. He went to Nazareth, where he had been brought up, and on the Sabbath day he went into the synagogue, as was his custom. And he stood up to read. The scroll of the prophet

Isaiah was handed to him. Unrolling it, he found the place where it is written: 'The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to release the oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor' (from Isaiah 61:1-2). Then he rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the attendant and sat down. The eyes of everyone in the synagogue were fastened on him, and he began by saying to them, "Today this scripture is fulfilled in your hearing." (Luke 4:13-21)

Comment: God's people are to proclaim Christ, the "Good News" as it was the message of forgiveness of sins. The Jews looked forward to the forgiveness of their sins as their sacrifices could not remove them.

Their "sin offering, a special kind, was first mentioned in the Mosaic legislation. It is essentially expiatory, intended to restore covenant relations with the Deity. The special features were: (1) the blood must be sprinkled before the sanctuary, put upon the horns of the altar of incense, and poured out at the base of the altar of burnt offering; (2) the flesh was holy, not to be touched by the worshipper, but eaten by the priest only. The special ritual of the Day of Atonement centers around the sin offering. (International Standard Bible Encyclopaedia) This foreshadowed Jesus' sin offering.

"I tell you the truth, he who believes has everlasting life. I am the bread of life. Your forefathers ate the manna in the desert, yet they died. But here is the bread that comes down from heaven, which a man may eat and not die. I am the living bread that came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever. This bread is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world." (John 6:47-51)

Comment: Christ is the living bread to eternal life, the "Words of Life" which one must consume to live forever.

Jesus said *"I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me."* (John 14:6-7) Jesus came to them and said, *"All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. 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, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely, I am with you always, to the very end of the age."* (Matthew 28:18-20)

Proof of all this was in prophecies fulfilled, miracles, and ultimately in His public death, burial, and His resurrection witnessed by hundreds of His disciples.

His Parables

Someone has said that a parable is an earthly story with a heavenly meaning. It appears that a lot of the teachings of Jesus were done in parables. Of course, it was to do the will of "The Father". It may be that the Jews who were trying to please God could understand many of these parables, while the religious leaders whose hearts were more concerned with position, power, prestige and money could not comprehend or refused to accept His message in parables. It is difficult for a closed mind to recognize the obvious.

His Miracles

What was the purpose of the Miracles? Was Jesus trying to draw attention to Himself, wanting His countrymen to make Him their king, or fulfilling God's promise to send the anointed one? As with the parables, it was to "do the will of The Father."

Often great crowds followed Jesus, perhaps trying to see "what's in it for me?" or just curious or with a desire for political power if Jesus was to be their earthly king. Some may have believed He could be the Messiah. These witnesses can be divided into three groups:

The Recipient of the Miracle

Surely all were filled with joy and gladness and most glorified God. The one notable exception was the cleansing of the ten lepers nine of which did not return to give God glory.

Those Witnessing the Miracle

The witnesses not only observed the miracle; they recognized man's limitations noting that only through God's power could such miracles be performed. Most praised God and glorified Him – but not the Pharisees. A list of Jesus' miracles is provided in Appendix B

The Religious Leaders

The religious leaders were the Scribes and Pharisees having wealth, power, prestige, and praise of men. They believed Jesus was going to destroy their nation, their position, and their power if the common man continued to believe He was the Messiah. Consequently, they refused to acknowledge that He was from above or that any of the miracles He performed were from God. They attributed them to the power of the Devil. They wanted to kill Him but feared the people who believed He was from God. Finally, they violated many of their own traditions and laws; e.g., trial on the Sabbath, seeking false witnesses, paying money for his capture but refusing it when returned acknowledging it was "blood money." Ultimately, they said "Let Him come down from the cross and we will believe in Him". Instead of coming down from the cross He came back to life after dying and they still refused to believe in Him.

His Enemies

The scriptures identify those opposed to Christ during His earthly ministry and opposed His church following His resurrection and ascension.

Herod (Roman king)

"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". ... When King Herod heard this, he was disturbed ... "He sent them to Bethlehem and said, 'Go and make a careful search for the child. As soon as you find him, report to me, so that I too may go and worship him'". ... "When Herod realized that he had been outwitted by the Magi, he was furious, and he gave orders to kill all the boys in Bethlehem and its vicinity who were two years old and under, in accordance with the time he had learned from the Magi." (Matthew 2:2-3; 8, 16)

The Devil (Satan)

"Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the desert to be tempted by the devil. After fasting forty days and forty nights, he was hungry. The tempter came to him and said, 'If you are the Son of God,' ... Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendor. 'All this I will give you,' he said, 'if you will bow down and worship me'. Jesus said to him, 'Away from me, Satan! For it is written: 'Worship the Lord your God, and serve him only.'" Then the devil left him, and angels came and attended him." (Matthew 4:1-3; 8-11)

Citizens of Nazareth (Hometown folks)

“When Jesus had finished these parables, he moved on from there. Coming to his hometown, he began teaching the people in their synagogue, and they were amazed. ‘Where did this man get this wisdom and these miraculous powers?’ they asked. ‘Isn’t this the carpenter’s son? Isn’t his mother’s name Mary, and aren’t his brothers James, Joseph, Simon and Judas? Aren’t all his sisters with us? Where then did this man get all these things?’ And they took offense at him.” (Matthew 13:53-57)

Judas Iscariot (One of the Apostles)

“Then one of the twelve, called Judas Iscariot, went to the chief priests and said, “What are you willing to give me if I deliver Him to you?” And they counted out to him thirty pieces of silver. So, from that time he sought opportunity to betray Him.” (Matthew 26:14-16)

Pharisees, Chief Priests, Elders, Scribes and Council

“As they went out, behold, they brought to Him a man, mute and demon-possessed. And when the demon was cast out, the mute spoke. And the multitudes marveled, saying, ‘It was never seen like this in Israel!’ ... But the Pharisees said, ‘He casts out demons by the ruler of the demons.’ ... behold, there was a man who had a withered hand. And they asked Him, saying, ‘Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath?’ — that they might accuse Him. Then He said to them, ‘What man is there among you who has one sheep, and if it falls into a pit on the Sabbath, will not lay hold of it and lift it out? Of how much more value then, is a man than a sheep? Therefore, it is lawful to do good on the Sabbath.’ Then He said to the man, ‘Stretch out your hand.’ And he stretched it out, and it was restored as whole as the other. Then the Pharisees went out and plotted against Him, how they might destroy Him. ... Now when the chief priests and Pharisees heard His parables, they perceived that He was speaking of them. But when they sought to lay hands on Him, they feared the multitudes, because they took Him for a prophet.” (Matthew 9:32-34; 12:10-14; 21:45-46)

“Then Jesus spoke to the multitudes and to His disciples, saying: ‘The scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses’ seat. Therefore, whatever they tell you to observe, that observe and do, but do not do according to their works; for they say, and do not do’ ... ‘But woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you shut up the kingdom of heaven against men; for you neither go in yourselves, nor do you allow those who are entering to go in.’ ... Then the chief priests, the scribes, and the elders of the people assembled at the palace of the high priest, who was called Caiaphas, and plotted to take Jesus by trickery and kill Him.” (Matthew 23:1-3; 13-14)

“And those who had laid hold of Jesus led Him away to Caiaphas the high priest, where the scribes and the elders were assembled. But Peter followed Him at a distance to the high priest’s courtyard. And he went in and sat with the servants to see the end. Now the chief priests, the elders, and all the council sought false testimony against Jesus to put Him to death but found none. Even though many false witnesses came forward, they found none.” (Matthew 26:57-60)

The Antichrists (Those who deny Christ is God)

“This is how you can recognize the Spirit of God: Every spirit that acknowledges that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God, but every spirit that does not acknowledge Jesus is not from God. This is the spirit of the antichrist, which you have heard is coming and even now is already in the world.” (1 John 4:2-3)

“Many deceivers, who do not acknowledge Jesus Christ as coming in the flesh, have gone out into the world. Any such person is the deceiver and the antichrist.” (2 John 7)

His Arrest

The physical passion of Christ began in Gethsemane. Of the many aspects of this initial suffering, the one of greatest physiological interest is the bloody sweat. It is interesting that St. Luke, the physician, is the only one to mention this. He says, *"And being in Agony, He prayed the longer. And His sweat became as drops of blood, trickling down upon the ground."* (Luke 22:44)

Trial by Religious Leaders

"Jesus said to the chief priests, the temple guard, and the elders, who had come for him, 'Am I leading a rebellion, that you have come with swords and clubs? Every day I was with you in the temple courts, and you did not lay a hand on me. But this is your hour-when darkness reigns.' Then seizing him, they led him away and took him into the house of the high priest." (Luke 22:52-54)

After the arrest in the middle of the night, Jesus was brought before the Sanhedrin and Caiaphas, the High Priest. It is here that the first physical trauma was inflicted. A soldier struck Jesus across the face for remaining silent when questioned by Caiaphas. The palace guards blindfolded Him and mockingly taunted Him to identify them as they each passed by, spat upon Him, and struck Him in the face.

Roman Trial

"Pilate then went back inside the palace, summoned Jesus, and asked him, 'Are you the king of the Jews?' 'Is that your own idea,' Jesus asked, 'or did others talk to you about me?' 'Am I a Jew?' Pilate replied. 'It was your people and your chief priests who handed you over to me. What is it you have done?' Jesus said, 'My kingdom is not of this world. If it were, my servants would fight to prevent my arrest by the Jews. But now my kingdom is from another place.' 'You are a king, then!' said Pilate. Jesus answered, 'You are right in saying I am a king. In fact, for this reason, I was born, and for this I came into the world, to testify to the truth. Everyone on the side of truth listens to me.'" (John 18:33-37)

In the early morning, battered and bruised, dehydrated, and exhausted from a sleepless night, Jesus is taken across the Praetorium of the Fortress Antonia, the seat of government of the Procurator of Judea, Pontius Pilate. You are, of course, familiar with Pilate's action in attempting to pass responsibility to Herod Antipas, the Tetrarch of Judea. Jesus apparently suffered no physical mistreatment at the hands of Herod and was returned to Pilate. Adapted from - "A Physician Testifies About the Crucifixion, Dr. C. Truman Davis, konnections.com/Kcundick/crucifix.html"

It was in response to the cries of the mob that Pilate ordered Bar-Abbas released and condemned Jesus to scourging and crucifixion.

Chapter 7

The Atoning Sacrifice

"The soldiers led Jesus away into the palace (that is, the Praetorium) and called together the whole company of soldiers. They put a purple robe on him, then twisted together a crown of thorns and set it on him. And they began to call out to him, 'Hail, king of the Jews!' Again, and again, they struck him on the head with a staff and spit on him. Falling on their knees, they paid homage to him. And when they had mocked him, they took off the purple robe and put his own clothes on him." (Mark 15:16-20)

Scourging

There is much disagreement among authorities about the unusual scourging as a prelude to crucifixion. Most Roman writers from this period do not associate the two. Many scholars believe that Pilate originally ordered Jesus scourged as his full punishment and that the death sentence by crucifixion came only in response to the taunt by the mob that the Procurator was not properly defending Caesar against this pretender who allegedly claimed to be the King of the Jews.

Preparations for the scourging were carried out when the Prisoner was stripped of His clothing and His hands tied to a post above His head. It is doubtful the Romans would have made any attempt to follow the Jewish law in this matter, but the Jews had an ancient law prohibiting more than forty lashes.

The Roman legionnaire steps forward with the flagrum (or flagellum) in his hand. This is a short whip consisting of several heavy, leather thongs with two small balls of lead attached near the ends of each. The heavy whip is brought down with full force again and again across Jesus' shoulders, back, and legs. At first the thongs cut through the skin only. Then, as the blows continue, they cut deeper into the subcutaneous tissues, producing first an oozing of blood from the capillaries and veins of the skin, and finally spurting arterial bleeding from vessels in the underlying muscles.

The small balls of lead first produce large, deep bruises which are broken open by subsequent blows. Finally, the skin of the back is hanging in long ribbons and the entire area is an unrecognizable mass of torn, bleeding tissue. When it is determined by the centurion in charge that the prisoner is near death, the beating is finally stopped.

The half-fainting Jesus is then untied and allowed to slump to the stone pavement, wet with His own blood. The Roman soldiers see a great joke in this provincial Jew claiming to be king. They throw a robe across His shoulders and place a stick in His hand for a scepter. They still need a crown to make their travesty complete. Flexible branches covered with long thorns (commonly used in bundles for firewood) are plaited into the shape of a crown and this is pressed into His scalp. Again, there is copious bleeding, the scalp being one of the most vascular areas of the body.

After mocking Him and striking Him across the face, the soldiers take the stick from His hand and strike Him across the head, driving the thorns deeper into His scalp. Finally, they tire of their sadistic sport and the robe is torn from His back. Already having adhered to the clots of blood and serum in the wounds, its removal causes excruciating pain just as in the careless removal of a surgical bandage, and almost as though He were again being whipped, the wounds once more begin to bleed.

Crucifixion

In deference to Jewish custom, the Romans return His garments. The heavy patibulum of the cross is tied across His shoulders, and the procession of the condemned Christ, two thieves, and the execution detail of Roman soldiers headed by a centurion begins its slow journey along the Via Dolorosa. In spite of His efforts to walk erect, the weight of the heavy wooden beam, together with the shock produced by copious blood loss, is too much. He stumbles and falls. The rough wood of the beam gouges into the lacerated skin and muscles of the shoulders. He tries to rise, but human muscles have been pushed beyond their endurance.

The centurion, anxious to get on with the crucifixion, selects a stalwart North African onlooker, Simon of Cyrene, to carry the cross. Jesus follows, still bleeding and sweating the cold, clammy sweat of shock, until the 650-yard journey from the fortress Antonia to Golgotha is finally completed.

Jesus is offered wine mixed with myrrh, a mild analgesic mixture. He refuses to drink. Simon is ordered to place the patibulum on the ground and Jesus is quickly thrown backward with His shoulders against the wood. The legionnaire feels for the depression at the front of the wrist. He drives a heavy, square, wrought-iron nail through the wrist and deep into the wood. Quickly, he moves to the other side and repeats the action being careful not to pull the arms too tightly, but to allow some flexion and movement. The patibulum is then lifted in place at the top of the stipes and the titulus reading "Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews" is nailed in place.

The left foot is now pressed backward against the right foot, and with both feet extended, toes down, a nail is driven through the arch of each, leaving the knees moderately flexed. The victim is now crucified. As He slowly sags down with more weight on the nails in the wrists excruciating pain shoots along the fingers and up the arms to explode in the brain -- the nails in the wrists are putting pressure on the median nerves. As He pushes Himself upward to avoid this stretching torment, He places His full weight on the nail through His feet. Again, there is the searing agony of the nail tearing through the nerves between the metatarsal bones of the feet.

"They came to a place called Golgotha (which means The Place of the Skull). There they offered Jesus wine to drink, mixed with gall; but after tasting it, he refused to drink it. When they had crucified him, they divided up his clothes by casting lots. And sitting down, they kept watch over him there. Above his head they placed the written charge against him: THIS IS JESUS, THE KING OF THE JEWS." (Matthew 27:33-37)

"It was the third hour (9:00 am) when they crucified him. The written notice of the charge against him read: THE KING OF THE JEWS." (Mark 15:25-27)

"At the sixth hour [noon] darkness came over the whole land until the ninth hour. And at the ninth hour Jesus cried out in a loud voice, 'Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani?' - which means, My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" (Mark 15:33-34)

At this point, as the arms fatigue, great waves of cramps sweep over the muscles, knotting them in deep, relentless, throbbing pain. With these cramps comes the inability to push Himself upward. Hanging by his arms, the pectoral muscles are paralyzed and the intercostal muscles are unable to act. Air can be drawn into the lungs, but cannot be exhaled. Jesus fights to raise Himself in order to get even one short breath. Finally, carbon dioxide builds up in the lungs and in the bloodstream and the cramps partially subside. Spasmodically, he is able to push Himself upward to exhale and bring in the life-giving oxygen. It was undoubtedly during these periods that He uttered the seven short sentences recorded.

The first, "Father, forgive them for they know not what they do."

The second, to the penitent thief, "Today thou shalt be with me in Paradise."

The third, looking down at the terrified, grief-stricken adolescent John -- the beloved Apostle -- He said, "Behold thy mother." Then, looking to His mother Mary, "Woman behold thy son."

The fourth cry is from the beginning of the 22nd Psalm, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?"

Hours of limitless pain, cycles of twisting, joint-rending cramps, intermittent partial asphyxiation, searing pain where tissue is torn from His lacerated back. He moves up and down against the rough timber enduring hours of limitless pain, cycles of twisting, joint-rending cramps, and intermittent partial asp. Then another agony begins a terrible crushing pain deep in the chest as the pericardium slowly fills with serum and begins to compress the heart.

One remembers again the 22nd Psalm, the 14th verse: "I am poured out like water, and all my bones are out of joint; my heart is like wax; it is melted in the midst of my bowels."

It is now almost over. The loss of tissue fluids has reached a critical level; the compressed heart is struggling to pump heavy, thick, sluggish blood into the tissue; the tortured lungs are making a frantic effort to gasp in small gulps of air. The markedly dehydrated tissues send their flood of stimuli to the brain. Jesus gasps His fifth cry, "I thirst."

One remembers another verse from the prophetic 22nd Psalm: "My strength is dried up like a potsherd, and my tongue cleaveth to my jaws, and thou hast brought me into the dust of death."

A sponge soaked in posca, the cheap, sour wine that is the staple drink of the Roman legionaries, is lifted to His lips. He apparently doesn't take any of the liquid. The body of Jesus is now in extremes, and He can feel the chill of death creeping through His tissues. This realization brings out His sixth words "It is finished."

His mission of atonement is now complete. Finally, He chooses to die. With one last surge of strength, he once again presses His torn feet against the nail, straightens His legs, takes a deeper breath, and utters His seventh and last cry, "Father! Into thy hands I commit my spirit."

The rest you know. In order that the Sabbath not be profaned, the Jews asked that the condemned men be dispatched and removed from the crosses. The common method of ending a crucifixion was by crurifracture, the breaking of the bones of the legs. This prevented the victim from pushing himself upward; thus, the tension could not be relieved from the muscles of the chest and rapid suffocation occurred. The legs of the two thieves were broken, but when the soldiers came to Jesus, they saw that this was unnecessary.

Apparently, to make doubly sure of death, the legionnaire drove his lance through the fifth interspace between the ribs, upward through the pericardium, and into the heart. The 34th verse of the 19th chapter of the Gospel according to St. John reports: "And immediately there came out blood and water." That is, there was an escape of water fluid from the sac surrounding the heart, giving postmortem evidence that Our Lord died not the usual crucifixion death by suffocation, but of heart failure (a broken heart) due to shock and constriction of the heart by fluid in the pericardium.

Thus, we have had our glimpse -- including the medical evidence -- of that epitome of evil which man has exhibited toward Man and **toward God. It has been a terrible sight, and more than enough to leave** us despondent and depressed. How grateful we can be that we have the great sequel in the infinite mercy of God toward man.

End - Scourging and Crucifixion

Adapted from -- "A Physician Testifies About the Crucifixion, Dr. C. Truman Davis, konnections.com/Kcundick/crucifix.html"

David foretold it this way *"My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? Why are you so far from saving me, so far from the words of my groaning? ... But I am a worm and not a man, scorned by men and despised by the people. All who see me mock me; they hurl insults, shaking their heads: He trusts in the LORD; let the LORD*

rescue him. Let him deliver him, since he delights in him. ... I am poured out like water, and all my bones are out of joint. My heart has turned to wax; it has melted away within me. My strength is dried up like a potsherd, and my tongue sticks to the roof of my mouth; you lay me in the dust of death. Dogs have surrounded me; a band of evil men has encircled me, they have pierced my hands and my feet. I can count all my bones; people stare and gloat over me. They divide my garments among them and cast lots for my clothing. ... All the ends of the earth will remember and turn to the LORD, and all the families of the nations will bow down before him, for dominion belongs to the LORD and he rules over the nations. All the rich of the earth will feast and worship; all who go down to the dust will kneel before him — those who cannot keep themselves alive. Posterity will serve him; future generations will be told about the Lord. They will proclaim his righteousness to a people yet unborn — for he has done it.” (Psalm 22:1-8; 14-18; 27-31)

Burial

“It was Preparation Day (that is, the day before the Sabbath). So, as evening approached, Joseph of Arimathea, a prominent member of the Council, who was himself waiting for the kingdom of God, went boldly to Pilate and asked for Jesus' body. Pilate was surprised to hear that he was already dead. Summoning the centurion, he asked him if Jesus had already died. When he learned from the centurion that it was so, he gave the body to Joseph. So, Joseph bought some linen cloth, took down the body, wrapped it in the linen, and placed it in a tomb cut out of rock. Then he rolled a stone against the entrance of the tomb.” (Mark 15:42-46)

Resurrection

Jesus of Nazareth, The Messiah, did His Father's will (John 6:38) by offering His body of flesh as the only sacrifice that could atone for man's sins, forgiveness. His sin offering was accepted by God as evidenced of His resurrection from death. Without His resurrection Jesus' death would have been meaningless, no different than all mankind.

“After the Sabbath, at dawn on the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to look at the tomb. There was a violent earthquake, for an angel of the Lord came down from heaven and, going to the tomb, rolled back the stone and sat on it. His appearance was like lightning, and his clothes were white as snow. The guards were so afraid of him that they shook and became like dead men. The angel said to the women, “Do not be afraid, for I know that you are looking for Jesus, who was crucified. He is not here; he has risen, just as he said.” (Matt 28:1-6)

“On the evening of that first day of the week, when the disciples were together, with the doors locked for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said, ‘Peace be with you!’ After he said this, he showed them his hands and side. The disciples were overjoyed when they saw the Lord. Again, Jesus said, ‘Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, I am sending you.’ And with that he breathed on them and said, ‘Receive the Holy Spirit.’” (John 20:19-22)

“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!’ 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.’ Thomas said to him, ‘My Lord and my God!’” (John 20:26-28)

With the sacrificial sin offering and resurrection, Jesus established a New Covenant with man by HIS death. (Heb. 9:15)

God puts those in this New Covenant who believe Christ was God in a human body, change from a sinful life to a righteous one, and plead to God to forgive by being immersed in Christ's blood. They are now in Christ's Body, the "My Church" He established by His sacrifice and resurrection.

Chapter 8

Instructions to His Disciples

"My food," said Jesus "is to do the will of him who sent me and to finish his work. Do you not say, 'Four months more and then the harvest'? I tell you, open your eyes and look at the fields! They are ripe for harvest. Even now the reaper draws his wages, even now he harvests the crop for eternal life, so that the sower and the reaper may be glad together. Thus, the saying 'One sows and another reaps' is true. I sent you to reap what you have not worked for. Others have done the hard work, and you have reaped the benefits of their labor." (John 4:34-38)

What is this sowing and reaping that those in Christ are to do?

Make Disciples

"Jesus told His disciples shortly before He returned to the Father that 'All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore, go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name (authority) of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.'" (Matthew 28:18-19)

"Go into all the world and preach (proclaim) the good news (salvation is through Christ's life, death [the atoning sacrifice], death, burial and resurrection) to all creation. Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned." (Mark 16:15-16)

Those who accept Christ's message of forgiveness and salvation are to be taught to *"observe all things that I have commanded you"* (Matthew 28:20). In Acts 2:42 we find *"they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers."*

Comment: "Breaking Bread" probably refers to eating their common meal together. However, it could have been the "Lord's Supper" or both. The apostles' teachings were not of man's tradition or the apostles' opinion but the Words Christ spoke as the Holy Spirit enabled them to recall.

Were the apostles and disciples the only ones who had the task of preaching/teaching the Gospel? NO.

"On that day (stoning of Stephen) a great persecution broke out against those belonging to the way (those in Christ) at Jerusalem, and all except the apostles were scattered throughout Judea and Samaria. Godly men buried Stephen and mourned deeply for him. ... Those who had been scattered preached (euaggelizo - therefore, evangelized as keérux is the Greek word for preach) the word wherever they went." (Acts 8:1-5)

The apostle Paul stated *"I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes, (those who act upon their faith)."* (Romans 1:16)

Ascension and Second Coming

*“In my former book, Theophilus, I wrote about all that Jesus began to do and to teach until the day he was taken up to heaven, after giving instructions through the Holy Spirit to the apostles he had chosen. After his suffering, he showed himself to these men and gave many convincing proofs that he was alive. He appeared to them over a period of forty days and spoke about the kingdom of God. On one occasion, while he was eating with them, he gave them this command: ‘Do not leave Jerusalem, but **wait for the gift my Father promised, which you have heard me speak about.** For John baptized with water, but in a few days, you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.’ So, when they met together, they asked him, ‘Lord, are you at this time going to restore the kingdom to Israel?’ He said to them: ‘It is not for you to know the times or dates the Father has set by his own authority. But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.’ After he said this, he was taken up before their very eyes, and a cloud hid him from their sight. They were looking intently up into the sky as he was going, when suddenly two men dressed in white stood beside them. ‘Men of Galilee,’ they said, ‘why do you stand here looking into the sky? This same Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, will come back in the same way you have seen him go into heaven.’” (Acts 1:1-11)*

“Do not let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God; trust also in me. 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. 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. You know the way to the place where I am going.” (John 14:1-4)

“I declare to you, brothers, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable. Listen, I tell you a mystery: We will not all sleep, but we will all be changed— in a flash, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed. For the perishable must clothe itself with the imperishable, and the mortal with immortality. When the perishable has been clothed with the imperishable, and the mortal with immortality, then the saying that is written will come true: ‘Death has been swallowed up in victory.’” (1 Cor 15:50-54)

“Brothers, we do not want you to be ignorant about those who fall asleep, or to grieve like the rest of men, who have no hope. We believe that Jesus died and rose again and so we believe that God will bring with Jesus those who have fallen asleep in him. According to the Lord's own word, we tell you that we who are still alive, who are left till the coming of the Lord, will certainly not precede those who have fallen asleep. For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so, we will be with the Lord forever. Therefore encourage each other with these words.” (1 Thess 4:13-18)

Now, brothers, about times and dates we do not need to write to you, for you know very well that the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night. (1 Thess. 5:1-2)

“But the day of the Lord will come like a thief. The heavens will disappear with a roar; the elements will be destroyed by fire, and the earth and everything in it will be laid bare. Since everything will be destroyed in this

way, what kind of people ought you to be? You ought to live holy and godly lives as you look forward to the day of God and speed its coming. That day will bring about the destruction of the heavens by fire, and the elements will melt in the heat. But in keeping with his promise, we are looking forward to a new heaven and a new earth, the home of righteousness.” (2 Peter 3:10-13)

Are you prepared through obedient faith in Christ at His Second Coming?

Chapter 10

Christ's Plea

“Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.” (Matt 11:28-30)

“But do not forget this one thing, dear friends: With the Lord a day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like a day. The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.” (2 Peter 3:8-9)

“Later Jesus appeared to the Eleven as they were eating; he rebuked them for their lack of faith and their stubborn refusal to believe those who had seen him after he had risen. He said to them, “Go into all the world and preach the good news to all creation. Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned.” (Mark 16:14-16)

“So, they passed by Mysia and went down to Troas. During the night Paul had a vision of a man of Macedonia standing and begging him, “Come over to Macedonia and help us.” After Paul had seen the vision, we got ready at once to leave for Macedonia, concluding that God had called us to preach the gospel to them.” (Acts 16:8-10)

“The Son of Man came to seek and to save what was lost.” (Luke 19:10)

“Remain in me, and I will remain in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me. “I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing. If anyone does not remain in me, he is like a branch that is thrown away and withers; such branches are picked up, thrown into the fire and burned. If you remain in me and my words remain in you.” (John 15:4-7)

“Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them: ‘Rulers and elders of the people! If we are being called to account today for an act of kindness shown to a cripple and are asked how he was healed, then know this, you and all the people of Israel: It is by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified but whom God raised from the dead, that this man stands before you healed. He is “the stone you builders rejected, which has become the capstone.” Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to men by which we must be saved.” (Acts 4:8-12)

“For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved. As the Scripture says, ‘Anyone who trusts in him will never be put to shame.’ For there is no difference between Jew and Gentile — the same Lord is Lord of all and richly blesses all who call on him, for, “Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.” (Rom 10:10-13)

“I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile. For in the gospel a righteousness from God is revealed.” (Rom 1:16-17)
“A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.” (John 13:34-35)

“Once you were alienated from God and were enemies in your minds because of your evil behavior. But now he has reconciled you by Christ's physical body through death to present you holy in his sight, without blemish and free from accusation— if you continue in your faith, established and firm, not moved from the hope held out in the gospel.” (Col 1:21-23)

“So, if you think you are standing firm, be careful that you don't fall! No temptation has seized you except what is common to man. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can stand up under it.” (1 Cor 10:12-13)

“I know your afflictions and your poverty — yet you are rich! I know the slander of those who say they are Jews and are not, but are a synagogue of Satan. Do not be afraid of what you are about to suffer. I tell you, the devil will put some of you in prison to test you, and you will suffer persecution for ten days. Be faithful, even to the point of death, and I will give you the crown of life.” (Rev 2:9-10)

Chapter 11

Statements about The Man Who Was God

Christians wear the name of Christ because Christ is their Lord, Teacher, Guide, Savior, Redeemer, Model, High Priest, Hope, Sacrifice for sin, and much, much more. The rock-solid foundation for our faith is the truth of Peter's confession. Jesus is real and the Bible is true. All that needs to be known about Jesus is found in the Bible. All of human history revolves around Him. Jesus is the central character of the human drama. It is not surprising that the history of the world is divided into two spans of time: before Christ (B.C.) and after Christ (A.D.). Even though the Bible reveals Jesus, there is considerable evidence outside the Bible confirming that Jesus is a historical person, just as the Bible presents him. These external writings collaborate with what the Bible tells about him

Jesus

“The Father who sent me has himself testified concerning me. You have never heard his voice nor seen his form, nor does his word dwell in you, for you do not believe the one he sent. You diligently study the Scriptures because you think that by them you possess eternal life. These are the Scriptures that testify about me.” (John 5:37-39)

The Apostle Peter

"You are the Christ, the Son of the living God." (Matthew 16:16)

The Apostle John

"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning. Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. In him was life, and that life was the light of men. The light shines in the darkness, but the darkness has not understood it. There came a man who was sent from God; his name was John. He came as a witness to testify concerning that light, so that through him all men might believe. He himself was not the light; he came only as a witness to the light. The true light that gives light to every man was coming into the world. He was in the world, and though the world was made through him, the world did not recognize him. He came to that which was his own, but his own did not receive him. Yet to all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God - children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband's will, but born of God." (John 1:1-13)

"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 1:14)

John the Baptizer

"He [John] cries out, saying, 'This was he of whom I said, He who comes after me has surpassed me because he was before me.' From the fullness of his grace we have all received one blessing after another. For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. No one has ever seen God, but God the One and Only, who is at the Father's side, has made him known." (John 1:15-18)

"Jesus looked toward heaven and prayed Father, the time has come. Glorify your Son, that your Son may glorify you. For you granted Him authority over all people that he might give eternal life to all those you have given him. Now this is eternal life: that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent. I have brought you glory on earth by completing the work you gave me to do. And now, Father, glorify me in your presence with the glory I had with you before the world began." (John 17:1-5)

Jesus Before the Roman Governor, Pilate

"Pilate then went back inside the palace, summoned Jesus and asked him, 'Are you the king of the Jews?' 'Is that your own idea,' Jesus asked, 'or did others talk to you about me?' 'Am I a Jew?' Pilate replied. 'It was your people and your chief priests who handed you over to me. What is it you have done?' Jesus said, 'My kingdom is not of this world. If it were, my servants would fight to prevent my arrest by the Jews. But now my kingdom is from another place.' 'You are a king, then!' said Pilate. Jesus answered, 'You are right in saying I am a king. In fact, for this reason I was born, and for this I came into the world, to testify to the truth. Everyone on the side of truth listens to me.' 'What is truth?' Pilate asked." (John 18:33-38)

Jews insisted

"We have a law, and according to that law he must die, because he claimed to be the Son of God. When Pilate heard this, he was even more afraid, and he went back inside the palace. 'Where do you come from?' he asked Jesus, but Jesus gave him no answer. 'Do you refuse to speak to me?' Pilate said. 'Don't you realize I have power either to free you or to crucify you?' Jesus answered, 'You would have no power over me if it were not given to you from above. Therefore, the one who handed me over to you is guilty of a greater sin.'" (John 19:7-11)

The eunuch said to Phillip

The eunuch said, *"I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God."* (Acts 8:38)

"All this was done that anyone who received him, those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God - children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband's will, but born of God." (John 1:12-13)

Thallus

Matthew states "They had crucified him ... and sitting down, they kept watch over him there ... from the sixth hour until the ninth hour darkness came over all the land." (Matthew 27:35-36; 45-46) Mark put it this way "At the sixth hour darkness came over the whole land until the ninth hour." (Mark 15:33)

Thallus, a Samaritan-born historian who lived and worked in Rome about A.D. 52, was quoted by Julius Africanus, a Christian chronographer of the late second century.¹ "Thallus, in the third book of his histories, explains away this darkness as an eclipse of the sun." Africanus stated his objection to the report arguing that an eclipse of the sun cannot occur during the full moon, as was the case when Jesus died at Passover time. The force of the reference to Thallus is that the circumstances of Jesus' death were known and discussed in the Imperial City as early as the middle of the first century. The fact of Jesus' crucifixion must have been fairly well known by that time, to the extent that unbelievers like Thallus thought it necessary to explain the matter of the darkness as a natural phenomenon. ... Ironically, Thallus' efforts have been turned into the mainstream of historical proof for Jesus and for the reliability of Mark's account of the darkness at his death."²

Mara Bar-Serapion

"A manuscript in the British Museum preserves the text of a letter sent to his son by a Syrian named Mara Bar-Serapion. The father illustrated the folly of persecuting wise men like Socrates, Pythagoras, and the wise king of the Jews, which the context obviously shows to be Jesus. "What advantage did the Athenians gain from putting Socrates to death? Famine and plague came upon them as a judgment for their crime. What advantage did the men of Samos gain from burning Pythagoras? In a moment their land was covered with sand. What advantage did the Jews gain from executing their king? It was just after that that their kingdom was abolished. God justly avenged these three wise men: the Athenians died of hunger; the Samians were overwhelmed by the seas; the Jews, ruined and driven from their land, live in complete dispersion. ... Nor did the wise King die for good; he lived on in the teaching which He had given".³

Cornelius Tacitus

A Roman historian living from about AD 50 to AD 100 wrote regarding Nero's fire. "Consequently, to get rid of the report, Nero fastened the guilt and inflicted the most exquisite tortures on a class hated for their abominations, called Christians by the populace. Christus, from whom the name had its origin, suffered the extreme penalty during the reign of Tiberius at the hands of one of our procurators, Pontius Pilatus".⁴

Plinius Secundus

A Roman governor in AD 112 wrote Emperor Trajan "They were in the habit of meeting on a certain fixed day before it was light, when they sang an anthem to Christ as God and bound themselves by a solemn oath not to commit any wicked deed ... after which it was their custom to separate, and then meet again to partake of food, but food of an ordinary kind".⁵

Seutonius

An annalist and court official of the Imperial House during the reign of Hadrian wrote about AD 120 in the Life of Claudius. "As the Jews were making constant disturbances at the instigation of Chrestus, he (Claudius) expelled them from Rome."⁶ Edward C. Wharton then states "The reason for the fame of this quotation is due to the fact that Luke, some sixty years earlier, had recorded this same incident as the reason for the apostle Paul yoking up with a Christian Jewish couple named Aquila and Priscilla (Acts 18:1-2). Again, the mention of

Christ in the historical context is observed in extra-biblical literature."⁷

Flavius Josephus

Josephus has an interesting observation. "There arose about this time Jesus, a wise man, if indeed we should call him a man; for he was a doer of marvelous deeds, a teacher of men who receive the truth with pleasure. He won over many Jews and also many Greeks. This man was the Messiah. And when Pilate had condemned him to the cross at the instigation of our own leaders, those who had loved him from the first did not cease. For he appeared to them on the third day alive again, as the prophets had predicted and said many other wonderful things about him. And even now the race of Christians, so named after him, has not yet died out."⁸

Early Jewish and Gentile Writers

The following quote from F. F. Bruce summarizes this very clearly. "Whatever else may be thought of the evidence from early Jewish and Gentile writers...it does at least establish, for those who refuse the witness of Christian writings, the historical character of Jesus himself. Some writers may toy with the fancy of a 'Christ-myth,' but they do not do so on the ground of historical evidence. The historicity of Christ is as axiomatic (self-evident) for an unbiased historian as the historicity of Julius Caesar. It is not historians who propagate the 'Christ-myth' theories."⁹

Summary

These and many other passages clearly show that Jesus:

- a) was God through whom everything was created
- b) humbled Himself to come to earth in the form of a man
- c) became the perfect and only sacrifice for sin.
- d) was raised from physical death witnessed by many
- e) ascended back to His home, Heaven with The Father
- f) will come again to receive those who have obedient faith
- g) acknowledged as human by secular writers, non-believers

Footnotes:

1. F. F. Bruce, The New Testament Documents, Eerdmans, p. 113.
2. Edward C. Wharton, Christianity: A Clear Case of History Howard p. 7.
3. British Museum Syriac Mss., F. F. Bruce, Jesus and Christian Origins Outside the New Testament, p. 31.
4. The Annals and the Histories, 15:44. From Britannica Great Books, Vol. 15, p. 168.
5. Epistles, 10:96.
6. Life of Claudius, 25:4
7. Edward C. Wharton, Christianity: A Clear Case of History, Howard p. 11.
8. Antiquities, 18,3. 3.
9. F. F. Bruce, The New Testament Documents. P. 119. All the above were cited by Edward C. Wharton in his book Christianity: A Clear Case of History

Appendix A

Prophecy and their Fulfillment

There are over a hundred prophecies concerning Jesus in the Old Testament but what were the possibilities of making just 25 predictions about someone who was to be born many years later and having these predictions come true?

Dr. Hawley O. Taylor has provided this answer: "Regarding these n cases of events foretold for Israel's Messiah who was to come, if the chances of success were even in the case of each one, that is p (probability) equals n in every case, then the overall probability that all n events would find their fulfillment in one person would be

p^n equals $(1/2)^n$. Thus, there would be but one chance in 2^n (33 million, where n equals 25) of all these foretold events coming true if they were mere guesses. Now a glance at these prophecies concerning Christ reveals that they do not all have an even chance of success, for in some instances it is highly improbable that the event could occur at all (as for a child to be born without a human father). A very conservative compromise would be p equals $1/5$; and the overall probability for the n prophecies coming true would be p^n equals $(1/5)^n$ or one chance out of a thousand trillion if n equals 25. [Modern Science and Christian Faith, p. 178.] Even if the prophecy regarding the virgin birth be excluded, the number remains astronomically large. Too large to assume that this accidentally happened! Twenty-five prophecies concerning Christ and their fulfillment, from Modern Science and Christian Faith, pp. 179-183.

	Prophecy	Prophesied	Fulfilled
1.	Of the tribe of Judah.	Gen. 49:10	Luke 3:23-33
2.	Of the Royal line of David	Jer. 23:5	Matt. 1:1
3.	Born of a virgin	Isa. 7:14	Matt. 1:18
4.	Born in Bethlehem	Micah 5:2	Matt. 2:1,2
5.	A forerunner shall prepare the way	Mal. 3:1	Mark 1:6,7
6.	He shall enter Jerusalem riding upon an ass	Zech. 9:9	Matt. 21:6,7
7.	A disciple shall betray Him	Zech. 13:6	Matt. 26:49,50
8.	Betrayal price stated	Zech. 11:1,2	Matt. 26:14,15
9.	Betrayal money to be returned	Zech. 11:13	Matt. 27:5,7
10.	His disciples shall forsake him	Zech. 13:7	Matt. 26:56
11.	False witnesses accuse him	Psa. 35:11	Matt. 26:59,60
12.	He shall suffer, abuse	Isa. 50:6	Matt. 26:67
13.	He shall suffer in silence	Isa. 53:7	Matt. 27:12-14
14.	He shall be whipped	Isa. 53:5	Matt. 27:26,29
15.	Hands and feet pierced	Psa. 22:16	Luke 23:33
16.	Numbered with criminals	Isa. 53:12	Mark 15:27
17.	To divide garments	Psa. 22:18	John 19:23,24
18.	Gall and vinegar to be offered	Psa. 69:21	John 19:28,29
19.	No bones to be broken	Psa. 34:20	John 19:33
20.	He shall be pierced	Zech. 12:10	John 19:
21.	The crowds shall rebuke him	Psa. 109:29	Matt. 27:39
22.	Darkness in daytime to signal crucifixion	Amos 8:9	Matt. 27:45
23.	To be buried with the rich	Isa. 53:9	Matt. 27:57-60
24.	To arise from the dead	Psa. 16:10	Matt. 28:6
25.	To ascend	Psa. 68:18a	Luke 24:51

Appendix B

The following is a list of prophecies concerning Christ from “Hermeneutics” by D. R. Duncan Cincinnati, n.d. pp. 395-99. The compiler of these facts is unknown to BibleWay Publishing.

Miracles of Jesus

Man with leprosy	Matthew 8:2-4, Mark 1:40-45, Luke 5:12-16
Apostle Peter's mother-in-law	Matthew 8:14-17, Mark 1:29-31, Luke 4:38-39
Withered hand	Matthew 8:28-34, Mark 5:1-20, Luke 8:26-39
Bedridden paralytic	Matthew 9:1-8, Mark 2:3-12, Luke 5:17-26
Ruler's daughter, Jairus, raised from dead	Matthew 9:18-26, Mark 5:22-33, Luke 8:41-56
Sight restored to two blind men	Matthew 9:27-31
Mute Man speaks	Matthew 9:32-35
Demon possessed man	Matthew 12:9-13, Mark 3:1-5, Luke 6:6-10
Blind and dumb man	Matthew 12:22-23, Mark 3:19-30, Luke 11:14-23
Five loaves and two fish	Matthew 14:13-21
Peter walking on water	Matthew 14:22-23
Canaanite woman	Matthew 15:21-28, Mark 7:24-30
Feeding of four thousand	Matthew 15:29-39, Mark 7:24-30
Demon possessed youth	Matthew 17:14-21, Mark 9:14-39, Luke 9:37-43
Tax money in fish's mouth	Matthew 17:24-27
Sight restored	Matthew 20:29-34, Mark 10:46-52, Luke 18:35-43
Man with an unclean spirit	Mark 1:23-26, Luke 4:33-37
A deaf man with a speech impediment	Mark 7:32-37
A blind man from Bethsaida	Mark 8:22-26
His resurrection	Mark 16:9-11, Luke 24:1-7, John 19:42- 20:14
Youth robbed of speech	Mark 9:14-26
The only son of a widow	Luke 7:11-16
Crippled woman	Luke 13:11-17
Man suffering from dropsy	Luke 14:1-6
Ten lepers	Luke 17:11-19
Capernaum official's son	John 4:46-54
Thirty-eight year invalid	John 5:1-16
Man blind from birth	John 9:1-41
Lazarus raised from dead	John 11:32-44
Other Miracles	
	Matthew 14:15-21, Mark 6:35-44 Luke 9:12-17, John 6:5-14
	Matthew 15:32-39, Mark 8:1-10
	Matthew 17:27
	Matthew 8:30-32
	Matthew 21:18-21, Mark 11:12-14...20-24
	Matthew 8:23-27, Mark 4:37-41, Luke 8:22-25
	Matthew 14:28-31
	Mark 5:51-52 John 6:21
	Luke 5:1-11
	Luke 4:30
	John 2:1-11

	John 21:6-14
	John 18:4-6

Appendix C

God/Logos/Word Discussion

In the beginning, was the Word (*lógos*), and the Word (*lógos*) was with God (*theón*), and the Word (*lógos*) was God (*theós*). He was with God (*theón*), in the beginning. Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made." ... "The Word (*lógos*) became flesh (*sárx*) and made his dwelling among us." (John 1:1-3; 14)

Comment: So, the "Word" was also present in the creation. God (*theón*, *theós*, a deity, especially the supreme Divinity Strong's NT#:2316 Thayer's Greek Lexicon). The "Word" (*lógos* - the essential Word of God; i.e., the personal wisdom and power in union with God (Strong's NT#:3056 Thayer's Greek Lexicon). "Flesh" (*sárx* opposite of spirit and denotes mere human. (Strong's NT#:4561 Thayer's Greek Lexicon) So, Jesus of Nazareth was *lógos* - before He became flesh (*sárx*). Therefore, one could conclude just from these few verses there were three "Gods."

"For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one. And there are three that bear witness in earth, the spirit, and the water, and the blood: and these three agree in one." (1 John 5:7-8)

Comment: Verses 7 & 8 would appear to support the "Trinity Theory." However, "It should be noted that "there is no sure evidence of this reading in any Greek manuscript until the 1500s" (Dr. Daniel B. Wallace, The Textual Problem in 1 John 5:7-8). It is, simply stated -- utterly absent from all the early Greek manuscripts of the NT. Dr. Albert Barnes states the obvious: "It is incredible that a genuine passage of the New Testament should be missing in all the early Greek manuscripts." (<http://www.zianet.com/maxey/reflx379.htm>)

Comment: Early "Church Fathers" did not mention this verse, even when eagerly scraping together verses to support the Doctrine of the Trinity. This verse first appears, not in a New Testament manuscript, but in a fifth-century Confession of Faith, and after that, it was assimilated into mss (manuscripts) of the Latin Vulgate, but it was (because of the lack of Greek documentary support) omitted from the first two "Textus Receptus" printed editions of the New Testament (namely those edited by Erasmus, 1516 and 1519), as well as some other very early Textus Receptus editions, such as Aldus 1518, Gerbelius 1521, Cephalus 1524 and 1526, and Colinaeus 1534. Stephanus (Robert Estienne), in his influential Editio Regia of 1550 (which was the model edition of the Textus Receptus in England {BibleWay Publisher's note: the Textus Receptus was used for the translation of the King James Bible}), was the first to provide an apparatus showing variant readings and showed this verse was lacking in seven Greek manuscripts. Martin Luther rejected this verse as a forgery and excluded it from his German translation of the Bible while he lived - it was inserted into the text by other hands after his death. The first appearance of the Comma in a Greek New Testament manuscript is no earlier than the 15th century.

Doubts about its genuineness were indicated in printed Greek New Testaments as early as that of the first two editions (1515 & 1519) of Erasmus of Rotterdam, who simply left the verse out because he could not find a Greek ms (manuscript) containing it - and provided a comment that "this is all I find in the Greek manuscripts." https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_New_Testament_verses_not_included_in_modern_English_translations#3_John_15

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