What the Bible Teaches About Jesus

"For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all men, instructing us to deny ungodliness and worldly desires and to live sensibly, righteously and godly in the present age, looking for the blessed hope and the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Christ Jesus; who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from every lawless deed and purify for Himself a people for His own possession, zealous for good deeds." (Titus 2:11-14).

The Great Divide in Thinking About Jesus.

C. S. Lewis has argued convincingly that Jesus could not have been "just a great prophet." He had to be what he said he was or else he was insane. Many years ago, people who claimed to be God were placed in mental hospitals. If Jesus claimed to be God, He either was God or He was mistaken. If he was insane or mistaken, He could not have been a great prophet. Jesus is recognized as the world's greatest teacher in the area of morals and spirituality; therefore, the world recognizes that he was not insane. If Jesus had been insane, during his own lifetime he would have been treated as one who was mentally ill. Instead, Jesus worked miracles of grace and healing to confirm his teaching. He was killed on a cross because he was a threat to the leaders of his day, not because he was insane. The Bible teaches that Jesus is God: the Second Person of the Trinity. This we believe. Therefore, we worship and obey Jesus as God. Historic, Biblical Christianity has taught for 2,000 years that Jesus is God and Savior.

What Jesus Said About Himself.

1. Jesus acted upon the basis that He had the authority to forgive people for ALL their sins. Only God has this authority. **Matthew 9:2-7** — *"And behold, they were bringing to Him a paralytic, lying on a bed; and Jesus seeing their faith said to the paralytic, 'Take courage, My son, your sins are forgiven.' And behold, some of the scribes said to themselves, 'This fellow blasphemes.' And Jesus knowing their thoughts said, 'Why are you thinking evil in your hearts? For which is easier, to say, "Your sins are forgiven," or to say, "Rise, and walk"? But in order that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins — then He said to the paralytic— "Rise, take up your bed, and go home."' And he rose, and went home."* Jesus forgave sins naturally; because He was God, this was His right.

2. Jesus claimed that after his death and resurrection he would have the ability to be everywhere or anywhere all at the same time and in the same

respect. All of Him can be everywhere. He claimed to be omnipresent, a natural ability of God. **Matthew 18:20** — "*For where two or three have gathered together in My name, there I am in their midst.*" Jesus is through all space, just as God is.

3. After his death and resurrection, Jesus claimed the ability to be within people. **John 17:26** — "*and I have made Thy name known to them, and will make it known; that the love wherewith Thou didst love Me may be in them, and I in them.*"

4. After his resurrection, Jesus claimed to have all authority and power in heaven and on earth. **Matthew 28:18** — "*And Jesus came up and spoke to them, saying, 'All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth.'*" **Mark 13:26** — "*And then they will see the Son of Man coming in clouds with great power and glory.*" Jesus said that in the future all people would see His great power and glory.

5. Jesus claimed to be eternal and live throughout all time: a natural ability of God. **Matthew 28:20** — "*teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.*" Jesus expects obedience as we would obey God.

6. Jesus claimed to have lived before Abraham was born, and applied the Divine Name of God "I am" to himself. **John 8:58, 59** — "*Jesus said to them, 'Truly, truly, I say to you, before Abraham was born, I am.' Therefore they picked up stones to throw at Him; but Jesus hid Himself, and went out of the temple.*" His enemies recognized this claim and wanted to kill him for it. They finally succeeded, but the tomb would not hold him and he rose from the dead.

7. Jesus claimed to be with God and have God's glory before the creation of the world. He prayed to God from this perspective. **John 17:5** — "*And now, glorify Thou Me together with Thyself, Father, with the glory which I had with Thee before the world was.*"

8. Jesus claimed the ability to give life to anyone, which only God can do. **John 5:21** — "*For just as the Father raises the dead and gives them life, even so the Son also gives life to whom He wishes.*"

9. Jesus claimed the authority to judge every person. And He claimed that people should honor him just as they honor God, the heavenly Father. **John 5:22** — "*For not even the Father judges anyone, but He has given all judgment to the Son, in order that all may honor the Son, even as they honor the Father. He who does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent Him.*"

10. Jesus claimed to be the Son of God. And as the Son, Jesus is the Second Person of the Trinity. **Matthew 28:19** — *"Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit."*

What Jesus' Followers Said About Him.

1. The Apostle John said Jesus was the Word, that Jesus was God, and that Jesus was with God in the beginning. **John 1:1-2** — *"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God."*

2. The Apostle John said Jesus created all things. This is what the Bible says that God did. **John 1:3** — *"All things came into being by Him, and apart from Him nothing came into being that has come into being."*

3. The Apostle John says Jesus became flesh and is the only begotten Son of God. **John 1:14** — *"And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth."*

4. John the Baptist, who was humanly older than Jesus, said Jesus existed before him. **John 1:15** — *"John bore witness of Him, and cried out, saying, 'This was He of whom I said, "He who comes after me has a higher rank than I, for He existed before me."'*

5. The Apostle Paul said we would be judged by Jesus. **2 Corinthians 5:10** — *"For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may be recompensed for his deeds in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad."*

6. The Apostle Paul called Jesus God and Savior. ***Titus 2:13*** — *"looking for the blessed hope and the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Christ Jesus"*

See the Next Study "What The Bible Teaches About The Holy Spirit."

For much of this outline I am indebted to the book *Basic Bible Studies* by Francis A. Schaeffer. Published by Tyndale House Publishers, Wheaton, Ill., 1972. The new edition of this book is *25 Basic Bible Studies: With, Two Contents, Two Realities*, published by Crossway Books, 1996. However, I have changed his outline order, have added some additional scriptures, and have not used all the scriptures he suggested. The Scripture references are from the *New American Standard Bible*, The Lockman Foundation, La Habra, CA, 1977. "What the Bible Teaches About God" is copyright © 2003 by L.G. Parkhurst, Jr.