

THE DOCTRINE OF CHRIST

INTRODUCTION

The Old Testament opens with man made in the likeness of God. The New Testament opens with God made in the likeness of man.

In the Old Testament the sovereign Creator created his creatures. In the New Testament, the sinful creatures crucified their sovereign Creator.

These statements, in essence, summarize the person and work of Jesus Christ, who is both the Lamb of God and the Lion of Judah.

It has been estimated that some 40 billion individuals have lived upon this earth since Adam. What a contrast can be seen in this vast multitude of humanity. It includes black men, white men, brown men, and yellow men. These men have explored and settled in every corner of this earth. They speak dozens of languages, practice multitudes of religions, and have formulated numerous cultures.

But every single human being in this 40 billion number shares one vital thing in common. His purpose of life down here and his eternal destiny afterwards depend completely upon his personal relationship with the subject of this study – the Lord Jesus Christ. It is therefore absolutely impossible to overemphasize the importance of his life. The key question of the universe continues to be, “What think ye of Christ?” (Matthew 22:42).

Jesus said, “Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me” (John 5:39). Note the following:

To the artist he is the one altogether lovely (Song of Sol. 5:16).

To the architect he is the chief Cornerstone (1 Pet. 2:6).

To the astronomer he is the Sun of righteousness (Mal. 4:2).

To the baker he is the Bread of Life (John 6:35).

To the banker he is the hidden treasure (Matt. 13:44).

To the builder he is the sure foundation (Isa. 28:16).

To the carpenter he is the door (John 10:7).

To the doctor he is the Great Physician (Jer. 8:22).

To the educator he is the new and living way (Heb. 10:20).

To the farmer he is the sower and the Lord of the harvest (Luke 10:2).

- I. The Preexistence of Jesus Christ as God – It is possible (as some have done) to hold to his preexistence without believing in his deity. For instance, the Jehovah’s Witnesses cult brazenly declares that Christ preexisted as Michael the archangel prior to Bethlehem. But the Bible dogmatically declares both his preexistence *and* his deity.
 - A. The fact of his divine preexistence
 1. As taught by Isaiah – “For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be

called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace” (Isa. 9:6).

- a. His eternal preexistence is seen through the title “the everlasting Father,” a phrase that can also be translated “the Father of Eternity” – The Hebrew word for father is *ah*, which can also be rendered “source,” and “inventor.” In other words Jesus is the father and source of eternity itself.
- b. His divine preexistence is seen by the twin titles “wonderful,” and “mighty God.”

(1) Wonderful – The Hebrew word for *wonderful* is *pehleh*. The same phrase occurs in Isaiah 28:29: “This also cometh forth from the LORD of hosts, which is wonderful in counsel, and excellent in working.”

(2) The mighty God – Here the Hebrew is *el gibbor* and can be found in many Old Testament passages, all of which refer to God himself. (See Deut. 10:17; Judg. 5:23; Psa. 24:8; 45:3; Isa. 10:21; 42:13; Jer. 32:18.)

2. As taught by Micah – “But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, though you are small among the clans of Judah, out of you will come for me one who will be ruler over Israel, whose origins are from of old, from ancient times” (Mic. 5:2, NIV).
3. As taught by John the Baptist – “John bare witness of him, and cried, saying, This was he of whom I spake, He that cometh after me is preferred before me: for he was before me” (John 1:15).

What does this verse mean? According to Luke 1:36, John’s birth to Elisabeth occurred some six months prior to Jesus’ birth. Even though, humanly speaking, John the Baptist was born before Jesus was born, John declares in these verses that Jesus existed before him and that he recognizes Jesus as our Messiah... “the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world” (John 1:29).

4. As taught by the Apostle John – “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God” (John 1:1). “(For the life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and shew unto you that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us;)” (1 John 1:2).

In these verses the Apostle John connects Jesus’ preexistence to his deity.

5. As taught by the Apostle Paul – “For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: and he is before all things, and by him all things consist” (Col. 1:16-17). (See also 2 Cor. 8:9; Phil. 2:6-8.)

6. As taught by the Apostle Peter – “Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you” (1 Pet. 1:20).
7. As taught by Christ himself – “For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me” (John 6:38). “I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world.... When Jesus knew in himself that his disciples murmured at it, he said unto them, Doth this offend you? What and if ye shall see the Son of man ascend up where he was before?” (John 6:51, 61-62). “Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I am” (John 8:58). “And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was” (John 17:5). Here Christ requests that the Father share his glory with the Son. But note the Father’s previous statement about his glory in Isaiah: “I am the Lord: that is my name: and my glory will I not give to another” (Isa. 42:8).

One is forced to conclude that either Christ was God indeed and had a rightful claim to this glory, or he was an arrogant imposter demanding something the Father would never give him. Of course Jesus’ divine preexistence is inescapable. Jesus Christ is God. (See also Rev. 1:8, 11; 22:13.)

8. As taught by the book of Hebrews – “But unto the Son he saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom” (Heb. 1:8). “Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever” (Heb. 13:8). (See also Heb. 1:10-12.)
- B. The activities of the divine preexistent Christ – What was our Savior doing prior to his Bethlehem appearance? The Scriptures make it plain he was busy indeed.
1. He was creating the universe – “All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made” (John 1:3). “For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him” (Col. 1:16). “Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds; and, Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the works of thine hands” (Heb. 1:2, 10),

Moses, in Genesis 1:1, tells us, “In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.” In other words, Moses, who wrote the book of Genesis, tells us that the universe was created by God. However, in the above verses John tells us that the world and the universe were made by Christ. Of course there is no contradiction. Jesus *was* God, and he created

all things. This creation included everything, from electrons to galaxies, and from angels to Adam.

2. He was controlling this created universe – “Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high” (Heb. 1:3); “And he is before all things, and by him all things consist” (Col. 1:17).

From the time he created the earth and placed it some 93 million miles from the sun right on up to this very day he is controlling that distance. If the earth would suddenly venture too close to the sun – get a few million miles closer to it – we would all “boil away.” If the earth would stray a few more million miles from the sun in its orbit around the sun, we would freeze to death. However, we have the assurance he is controlling the universe.

3. He was communing with the Father – “Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world” (John 17:24).

II. The Old Testament Ministry of Jesus Christ – The Old Testament records a number of theophanies. A theophany is a pre-Bethlehem appearance of Christ. Most Bible theologians hold that the recurring angel of the Lord episodes in the Old Testament are to be identified with Christ himself. This theological position is strongly suggested by two key passages.

The first is found in Genesis 48, where the dying patriarch Jacob is blessing his two grandchildren. The old founder of Israel prays: “The angel which redeemed me from all evil, bless the lads” (Gen. 48:16a). As no regular angel can redeem men, it is assumed the angel here is actually Jesus Christ.

The second passage is found in Judges 13, where a barren couple has just learned from the angel of the Lord about the future birth of Samson. In gratitude, Manoah (the father) requests the name of the angel, that he might call the babe after him. Note the answer, however: “And the angel of the Lord said unto him, Why askest thou thus after my name, seeing it is secret?” (Judg. 13:18).

This word *secret* is from the same Hebrew root word found in Isaiah 9:6, where it is translated “Wonderful.” “For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace” (Isa. 9:6). Since we know the “Wonderful” in this verse is a reference to Christ, it is highly probable the “secret” in Judges 13:18 is also referring to Christ.

Let us now examine some other Old Testament theophanies.

A. He appeared to Hagar, Abraham's Egyptian wife, on two occasions.

1. First occasion, prior to the birth of her son Ishmael (Gen. 16:7-14) – The first biblical reference to the angel of the Lord occurs here as he tenderly ministers to a pagan and pregnant Egyptian girl.
 2. Second occasion, following the birth of Ishmael (Gen. 21:16-20)
- B. He appeared to Abraham.
1. Concerning the birth of Isaac (Gen.18:10)
 2. Concerning the destruction of Sodom (Gen.18:17)
 3. Concerning the sacrifice of Isaac (Gen. 22:11)
- C. He appeared to Jacob.
1. At Bethel (Gen. 28:12-15)
 2. By the brook Jabbok (Gen. 32:24-30)
- D. He appeared to Moses – These three occasions were all connected with Mount Sinai.
1. The first occasion was *near* the mountain – “And when the Lord saw that he turned aside to see, God called unto him out of the midst of the bush, and said, Moses, Moses. And he said, Here am I. And he said, Draw not nigh hither: put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground” (Exod. 3:4-5).
 2. The second occasion was *on* the mountain – “Behold, I send an Angel before thee, to keep thee in the way, and to bring thee into the place which I have prepared” (Exod. 23:20).
 3. The last occasion was *in* the mountain – “And it shall come to pass, while my glory passeth by, that I will put thee in a cliff of the rock, and will cover thee with my hand while I pass by” (Exod. 33:22).
- E. He appeared to Joshua (Josh. 5:13-15) – He appeared to Joshua on the eve of the battle against Jericho and introduced himself as “captain of the host of the Lord.”
- F. He appeared to Gideon (Judg. 6:11-24) – The angel of the Lord found a very discouraged Gideon threshing wheat beside a wine press to hide it from the opposing Midianites.
- G. He appeared to Samson's parents (Judg. 13).
- H. He appeared to Isaiah (Isa. 6:1-13) – A study of the book of Isaiah reveals that Isaiah was allowed to see more of the glory of the preincarnate Christ than any other Old Testament prophet.
- I. He appeared to three young Hebrews in the fiery furnace – How exciting are the astonished words of the pagan king Nebuchadnezzar as he witnessed this appearance. “Then Nebuchadnezzar the king was astonished, and rose up in haste, and spake, and said unto his counsellors, Did not we cast three men bound into the midst of the fire? They answered and said unto the king, True, O king. He answered and said, Lo, I see four men loose, walking in the midst of the fire, and they have no hurt; and the form of the fourth is like the Son of God” (Dan. 3:24-25).
- J. He appeared to Daniel.

1. The first of these appearances was in a lions' den – "Then said Daniel unto the king, O king, live for ever. My God hath sent his angel, and hath shut the lions' mouths, that they have not hurt me" (Dan. 6:21-22).
 2. The second occurred during the beginning of King Belshazzar's reign – "I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed" (Dan. 7:13-14).
 3. The third occurred by the Tigris River – "Then I lifted up mine eyes, and looked, and behold a certain man clothed in linen, whose loins were girded with fine gold of Uphaz: His body also was like the beryl, and his face as the appearance of lightning, and his eyes as lamps of fire, and his arms and his feet like in colour to polished brass, and the voice of his words like the voice of a multitude" (Dan. 10:5-6).
- K. He appeared to Zechariah (Zech. 1:8-13; 2:8-11; 3:10; 6:12-15) – In his book Zechariah describes Christ as protecting Jerusalem (1:8-13), measuring Jerusalem (2:8-11), cleansing Jerusalem (3:10), and building Jerusalem (6:12-15).

As you can see, from the above study of the Old Testament ministry of Christ, he was busily at work, even before his Bethlehem appearance. John MacArthur summarizes:

The ministry of the Angel of the Lord in the Old Testament parallels the ministry of Jesus Christ in the New Testament:

1. He revealed God's Word (Exod. 3:2-6; John 1:18).
2. He called leaders like Moses, Gideon, and Samson into God's service just as Christ called his disciples (Exod. 3:6-10; Judg. 6:14-16; 13:1-5, 24-25; Matt. 10:1-4).
3. He delivered his people through Moses, Gideon, and Samson just as Christ delivered his people through his work on the cross (Exod. 14:19-20; Judg. 6:14-16; Gal. 5:1).
4. He protected his people. Psalm 34:7 says, "The angel of the Lord encampeth around about those who fear him, and delivereth them." Christ protects us as well.
5. He interceded for Israel (Zech. 1:12). Similarly Christ is our intercessor (Heb. 7:25).
6. He defended believers against the attacks of Satan (Zech. 3:1-6), which is precisely what Christ does (1 John 2:1-2).
7. He confirmed the covenant with Abraham (Gen. 22:15-18), and Christ sealed the New Covenant with his blood (Matt. 26:28).

8. He comforted Hagar (Gen. 16:7-11), which is reminiscent of how Jesus comforts us (Matt. 11:28-30). (*God, Satan, and Angels*, p. 147)

III. The Virgin Birth Incarnation of Jesus Christ – “And the Word was made 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” (John 1:14). “Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God” (1 John 4:2). “For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh” (Rom. 8:3). “And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory” (1 Tim. 3:16).

A. False views concerning the Incarnation

1. The Ebionites – The Ebionites denied the reality of Jesus’ divine nature. Their error is refuted by the Apostle John in the first verse of his Gospel account: “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God” (John 1:1).
2. The Gnostics – The Gnostics denied the reality of Jesus’ human nature. Their error is refuted by the Apostle John in the first verse of his first epistle: “That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life” (1 John 1:1).
3. The Arians – The Arians affirmed Jesus’ preexistence but denied his deity. This is the position of the present-day Jehovah's Witnesses.
4. The Nestorians – The Nestorians believed two persons actually indwelt the body of Christ, the human person and the divine person.
5. The Eutychians – The Eutychians went to the opposite extreme and said both natures (the human and the divine) mingled to make up a third and totally different nature from the original two natures.

B. The true view of the Incarnation

1. The definition involved

The word *incarnation* means “in flesh” and denotes the act whereby the eternal Son of God took to Himself an additional nature, humanity, through the virgin birth. The result is that Christ remains forever unblemished deity, which He has had from eternity past; but He also possesses true, sinless humanity in one Person forever (cf. John 1:14; Phil. 2:7-8; 1 Tim. 3:6).

The virgin birth was the *means* whereby the incarnation took place and guaranteed the sinlessness of the Son of God. For this reason the virgin birth was essential. Isaiah 7:14 predicted the virgin birth and Matthew 1:23 provides the commentary, indicating its fulfillment in the birth of

Christ. Matthew 1:23 identifies Mary as a “virgin” (Gk. *parthenos*, clearly denoting a virgin). (Paul Enns, *Moody Handbook of Theology*, p. 222)

Note: This Greek word *parthenos* is used 14 times in the New Testament, and on every occasion it refers to a virgin. (See Matt. 1:23; 25:1, 7, 11; Luke 1:27 – twice; Acts 21:9; 1 Cor. 7:25, 28, 34, 36-37; 2 Cor. 11:2; Rev. 14:4.)

In the one person, Jesus Christ, there are two natures – a human nature and a divine nature, each in its completeness and integrity, and these two natures are organically and indissolubly united, yet so that no third nature is formed thereby. (A. H. Strong, *Systematic Theology*, p. 673)

Charles Ryrie suggests:

More concisely one may describe the person of Christ incarnate as being full Deity and perfect humanity united without mixture, change, division, or separation in one Person forever. The key components of the description include “full Deity” (no diminution of any attribute of Deity), “perfect humanity” (“perfect” rather than “full” in order to emphasize his sinlessness), “one Person” (not two), and “forever” (for He continues to have a body, though resurrected, Acts 1:11; Rev. 5:6). (*Basic Theology*, p. 247)

2. The illustration involved – The great evangelist D. L. Moody often related the story of a young biologist who came across an especially large and active ant hill during his walk in a forest. Delighted with his find, the biologist sat down on a nearby rock, and taking out pen and notebook, began writing down what he saw. Soon, however, the entire ant hill was in an upheaval as the tiny creatures became aware of his presence. Frustrated, the biologist walked away wishing he could in some manner communicate with them, assuring the little creatures of his interest and that no harm would be forthcoming.

He concluded, however, the only way this could happen would be to take upon himself the body of an ant and thus become part of their existence, sharing his story in a way they could comprehend.

This is exactly what occurred at the Incarnation. The infinite, holy, eternal, and sinless Son of God agreed to take upon himself a finite and fleshly body that he, the lofty Creator, might personally communicate with us, his lowly creatures.

3. The nature involved – The term “hypostatic union” is often employed in explaining the nature of the Incarnation. Consider the following three quotations describing the hypostatic union:

a. From Paul Enns

The hypostatic union may be defined as “the second person, the preincarnate Christ came and took to Himself a human nature and remains forever undiminished Deity and true humanity united in one person forever.” When Christ came, a Person came, not just a nature; He took on an additional nature, a human nature – He did not simply dwell in a human person. The result of the union of the two natures is the theanthropic Person (the God-Man). (*Moody Handbook of Theology*, p. 227)

b. From Robert Lightner

To deny either the undiminished deity or the perfect humanity of Christ is to put oneself outside the pale of orthodoxy. Equally as essential to orthodox theology is the belief that these two are inseparable and will remain eternally united in the person of Christ. The hypostatic union is the theological description of this and refers to the two hypostases, or natures, forming the one person of Christ.

Apart from this union Christ could not have been mediator between God and man. If he had only been man, his death could not have atoned for man's sin. If he had been only God, he could not have died, since God cannot die. If he had not been man, he would not have had a genuine link with humanity and would not have had perfect sympathy with man. (*Biblical Theology*, p.81.)

c. From Charles Ryrie

This simply means that the attributes of both natures belong to the one Person without mixing the natures or dividing the Person. Practically speaking, it is the basis for Christ being seen to be weak, yet omnipotent; ignorant, yet omniscient; limited, yet infinite.

I have said that attributes cannot be transferred from one nature to the other. To do so would change the mix of the complex of attributes and thus the nature. If infinity can be transferred to humanity, then Deity loses infinity and is no longer full Deity. However, attributes of both natures must be expressed through the one Person. Thus the Person can seem to “transfer” back and forth from the expression of one or the other natures, though the attributes themselves must remain as part of whichever nature they properly belong to. Thus theologians have developed a system to classify the actions of the person of Christ with respect to origination of the action.

Some examples include (a) actions predicated on the whole Person, like redemption (both natures being involved); (b) actions predicated on the divine nature (though the whole Person is the subject), like preexistence (true only of the divine nature); and (c) actions predicated on the human nature, like being thirsty.

Whatever help such a classification may give, it seems more important to remember that the Person does whatever He does, revealing whatever attribute of whichever nature He reveals. The Person thirsted; the Person knew all things; the Person does not know the day or the hour; and (probably the hardest one) the Person died. Of course, Deity does not die or thirst, but the Person, Jesus Christ, the God-Man, did both. (*Basic Theology*, p. 247.)

4. The miracle involved – The miracle of the virgin birth was not the actual birth, but rather the conception of Christ's earthly body. Furthermore, the conception was not only supernatural, but unique also, for God had already performed supernatural births for Sarah, Hannah, Elisabeth, and others. Finally it should be noted that we are not to speak of the virgin birth as the Immaculate Conception. This is the false religious dogma that Mary was conceived and born without original sin.
5. The duration (or perpetuity) involved – When the Son of God joined himself to a body at Bethlehem it was an eternal arrangement. He will continue to manifest himself in this body (in its resurrected state, of course) throughout the ages.
6. The prophecies involved:
 - a. Old Testament prophecies
 - (1) The fact of his birth – “And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel” (Gen. 3:15). Genesis 3:15 is known to Bible students as the protoevangel verse. This literally means, “first Gospel” verse, that is, the first mention of Christ's birth. This is important to note, for neither Adam or Eve (to whom these words were first spoken) had experienced physical birth. Both were directly created, one from the dust of the ground (Gen. 2:7), and the other from a human side (Gen. 22:1-22). But the Messiah would be born.
 - (2) The method of his birth
 - (a) He was to be born of a woman – This too must have been a shocker, for originally the woman had come from the man, but not so with the future Messiah. He would proceed from the seed of the woman (Gen, 3:15).
 - (b) He was to be born of a virgin woman – “Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel” (Isa. 7:14).

This woman would conceive and bear the Christ child without the aid of a man.

- (3) The nature of his birth – “For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace” (Isa. 9:6). In a nutshell, he would become the God-man.
 - (a) The phrase “a child is born” refers to his humanity.
 - (b) The phrase “a son is given” refers to his deity.
- (4) The nationality of his birth
 - (a) First, he would come from the nation Israel (Gen. 12:3) – This prophecy was especially remarkable, for Israel did not officially become a nation until the days of Moses, many centuries later (Exod. 19 – 20). Even then it would remain a small and insignificant country in the Middle East. In matters of military strength, cultural accomplishments, inventions, etc., Israel would contribute nothing. Her mission, however, was to be far more important, for the Savior of all men would come from her borders.
 - (b) Second, he would come from Judah, one of Israel’s 12 tribes (Gen. 49:10) – The oldest tribe was Reuben, and perhaps the most influential tribe was Ephraim, but the Messiah would come from the tribe of Judah.
 - (c) Third, he would come from the house of David, of the tribe of Judah in Israel (2 Sam. 7:12-13) – David was the eighth son of a poor Bethlehem sheep herder, but this family would produce the Savior of the world.
- (5) The time of his birth – According to Daniel 9:24-27, his death would occur some 483 years after the beginning of the project to rebuild the Jerusalem walls. He was born, of course, some 33 years prior to his death.
- (6) The place of his birth – It was to be in the little town of Bethlehem. “But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting” (Mic. 5:2). God could have chosen Rome, or Babylon, or even the Jewish religious center of Jerusalem, but instead he picked Bethlehem, the house of Bread.
- (7) The sign accompanying his birth – A special supernatural light in the form of a star would brighten the heavens and point to his birth place (Num. 24:17).
- (8) The unusual interest at his birth

- (a) Wise men would come to Bethlehem to worship him (Isa. 60:3, 6, 9; Psa. 72:10)
 - (b) Wicked men would come to Bethlehem to kill him (Jer 31:15).
- b. New Testament prophecies – Heavenly announcements were given to at least eight individuals or groups concerning the Incarnation in the New Testament.
- (1) To Zacharias – “And he shall go before him in the spirit and power of Elias, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just; to make ready a people prepared for the Lord....And thou, child, shalt be called the prophet of the Highest: for thou shalt go before the face of the Lord to prepare his ways” (Luke 1:17, 76). This prophecy was given to Zacharias concerning his son, John the Baptist.
 - (2) To Mary – “And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS....And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God” (Luke 1:31, 35). In these verses the angel Gabriel appears to Mary and he tells her that she has found favor among women and God is going to allow her the privilege of bearing the Messiah into the world.
 - (3) To Elisabeth – “And she spake out with a loud voice, and said, Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb. And whence is this to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me?” (Luke 1:42-43).
 - (4) To Joseph – The angel Gabriel appeared to Joseph, the distraught would-be husband of Mary, to reassure him. “But while he thought on these things, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost. And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins” (Matt. 1:20-21).
 - (5) To the shepherds – “And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour which is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger: (Luke 2:10-12)
 - (6) To the Wise Men – “Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judaea in the days of Herod the king, behold there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem, saying, Where is he that is born King of

the Jews? For we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him” (Matt. 2:1-2) “When they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceeding great joy. And when they were come into the house, they saw the young child with Mary his mother, and fell down, and worshipped him: and when they had opened their treasures, they presented unto him gifts; gold, and frankincense, and myrrh. And being warned of God in a dream that they should not return to Herod, they departed into their own country another way” (Matt. 2:10-12).

(7) To Simeon – “And it was revealed unto him by the Holy Ghost, that he should not see death, before he had seen the Lord’s Christ” (Luke 2:26).

(8) To Anna – “And she coming in that instant gave thanks likewise unto the Lord, and spake of him to all them that looked for redemption in Jerusalem” (Luke 2:38).

7. The reasons involved – Why the Virgin Birth incarnation? God never does anything without a good reason, and in this case, there were some 12 excellent reasons for the Incarnation.

a. To reveal the invisible God – “No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him” (John 1:18). “Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Shew us the Father?” (John 14:9).

God loved the world, and how could he get his message across? He sent Jesus into the world to become man and tell God’s story in man’s language to reveal the invisible God.

b. To fulfill prophecy – “And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel” (Gen. 3:15). This was the first promise of Bethlehem – the seed of woman shall bruise the head of the serpent.

c. To guarantee the Davidic Covenant – In 2 Samuel 7 David was discouraged because he wanted to build the temple, and the Lord would not allow him to do so. Because he was a man of war, the Lord would instead allow his son, Solomon, to build the temple. However, God promised David something far more precious, and it was what theologians refer to today as the Davidic Covenant. This covenant assured David that someday an heir from his own seed would rule over Israel on his throne forever.

“And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name Jesus. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: And he shall reign over the house of

Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end” (Luke 1:31-33). In this Scripture from Luke 1, the angel Gabriel reminded Mary of the fact that the Incarnation was the fulfillment of the Davidic Covenant.

- d. To make a sacrifice for our sins – Jesus left the ivory palaces of heaven to come down to this world and enter the womb of Mary, to make sacrifice for our sins. “But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man” (Heb. 2:9).

“For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins. Wherefore when he cometh into the world, he saith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared me.... By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.... But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God” (Heb. 10:4-5, 10, 12).

“And ye know that he was manifested to take away our sins; and in him is no sin” (1 John 3:5). “For even the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many” (Mark 10:45).

- e. To reconcile man to God – “To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation” (2 Cor. 5:19). “For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; Who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time” (1 Tim. 2:5-6).
- f. To provide an example for believers – We are told in the Scriptures that Christ suffered, and that he left an example for us, that we should follow his steps. The world often misunderstands the Incarnation. The world thinks Christ is the example for unbelievers. That’s not what 1 Peter 2:21 says. It says that Christ has come to be an example for believers. He is not an example for unbelievers. He is the Savior. He came to save unbelievers and make them believers. Once we are saved we study the life of Christ because he is our example. But there could be no example apart from the Incarnation.

“For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps” (1 Pet. 2:21). “He that saith he abideth in him ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked” (1 John 2:6).

- g. To provide the believer with a high priest – In order to provide believers with a high priest, it was necessary that Christ should be made like unto his brethren. He passed sinlessly through all human

experiences, that he might be a merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God, to make atonement for our sins. He was obliged to become completely like his brethren – apart from sin, of course.

“Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people” (Heb. 2:17). “Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus” (Heb. 3:1). “For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin” (Heb. 4:15).

- h. To destroy the devil and his works – “Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil” (Heb. 2:14). “He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil” (1 John 3:8).
- i. To escape the historical curse
 - (1) Upon Adam’s seed – “Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned” (Rom. 5:12).
 - (2) Upon King Jehoiakim and his son, Jehoiachin – Both King Jehoiakim and his son, Jehoiachin, were wicked rulers (Jer. 22:30; Jer. 36:27-31). They were both judged by God and warned that their physical seed would never prosper upon the throne of David. Jesus escaped that judgment by being born of a virgin.
- j. To preach, heal, and liberate – “The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord” (Luke 4:18-19).
- k. To give life – abundant life – “He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him” (John 3:36). “The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly” (John 10:10).
- l. To glorify the Father – “Therefore, when he was gone out, Jesus said, Now is the Son of man glorified, and God is glorified in him” (John 13:31). “And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son” (John 14:13). “I have glorified

thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do” (John 17:4).

- IV. The Biblical Names and Titles of Jesus Christ – It may be true that a rose by another name would smell as sweet. But not so concerning Bible names, which often give keen insight into the lives of those who bear the titles. This is especially true concerning Christ. A wealth of information concerning his person and work can be obtained from studying some of the names and titles ascribed to him. Note some of these:

Adam (1 Cor. 15:45)
Advocate (1 John 2:1)
Almighty (Rev. 1:8)
Alpha (Rev. 1:8; 21:6)
Amen (Rev. 3:14)
Angel of the Lord (Gen. 16:9-14; Judg. 6:11-24)
Anointed (Psa. 2:2)
Apostle (Heb. 3:1)
Author (Heb. 12:2)
Babe (Luke 2:16)
Beginning of Creation (Rev. 3:14)
Begotten of the Father (John 1:14)
Beloved (Eph. 1:6)
Beloved son (Mark 1:11)
Bishop (1 Pet. 2:25)
Blessed (1 Tim. 6:15)
Branch (Zech. 3:8)
Bread of Life (John 6:35)
Bridegroom (Matt. 9:15; John 3:29)
Bright and Morning Star (Rev. 22:16)
Captain (Josh. 5:14)
Carpenter (Mark 6:3)
Child (Isa. 9:6)
Christ (Matt. 1:16; 2:4)
Commander (Isa. 55:4)
Consolation of Israel (Luke 2:25)
Corner Stone (Eph. 2:20)
Counselor (Isa. 9:6)
Dayspring from on High (Luke 1:78)
Day Star (2 Pet. 1:19)
Deliverer (Rom. 11:26)
Desire of all Nations (Hag. 2:7)
Door of the Sheep (John 10:7)
Emmanuel (Matt. 1:23)
Eternal Life (1 John 5:20)

Everlasting Father (Isa. 9:6)
Express Image of God (Heb. 1:3)
Faithful Witness (Rev. 1:5; 3:14)
Faithful and True (Rev. 19:11)
First Fruits (1 Cor. 15:23)
Forerunner (Heb. 6:20)
Foundation (Isa. 28:16)
Fountain (Zech. 13:1)
Friend of Sinners (Matt. 11:19)
Gift of God (2 Cor. 9:15)
Glory of the Lord (Isa. 60:1)
God (John 1:1; Rom. 9:5; 1 Tim. 3:16)
Good Master (Mark 10:17)
Governor (Matt. 2:6)
Guide (Psa. 48:14)
Head of the Church (Col. 1:18)
Heir of all things (Heb. 1:2)
High Priest (Heb. 2:17; 3:1)
Holy Child (Acts 4:30)
Holy One of God (Mark 1:24)
Holy One of Israel (Isa. 41:14)
Horn of Salvation (Psa. 18:2)
I Am – He calls himself this name seven times in John’s Gospel:
 I am the Bread of Life (John 6:35)
 I am the Light of the World (John 9:5)
 I am the Good Shepherd (John 10:11)
 I am the Door (John 10:9)
 I am the Resurrection (John 11:25)
 I am the True Vine (John 15:1)
 I am the Way (John 14:6)
Jehovah (Isa. 26:4)
Jesus (Matt. 1:21)
Judge (Mic. 5:1; Acts 10:42)
King
 King of Israel (Matt. 27:42; John 1:49)
 King of Kings (Rev. 17:14; 19:16)
Lamb of God (John 1:29, 36)
Lawgiver (Isa. 33:22)
Lily of the Valley (Song of Sol. 2:1)
Lion of the Tribe of Judah (Rev. 5:5)
Living Bread (John 6:51)
Lord of Lords (Rev. 19:16)
Man (Acts 17:31; 1 Tim. 2:5)

Master (Matt. 8:19)
Mediator (1 Tim. 2:5)
Messiah (Dan. 9:25; John 1:41)
Mighty God (Isa. 9:6)
Minister (Heb. 8:2)
Nazarene (Matt. 2:23)
Only Begotten Son (John 1:18)
Passover (1 Cor. 5:7)
Physician (Matt. 9:12)
Potentate (1 Tim. 6:15)
Power of God (1 Cor. 1:24)
Priest (Heb. 4:14)
Prince (Acts 3:15; 5:31)
Prince of Peace (Isa. 9:6)
Prophet (Acts 3:22)
Propitiation (1 John 2:2; 4:10)
Purifier (Mal. 3:3)
Rabbi – On three well-known occasions he was called by this name:
 By Nicodemus (John 3:2)
 By Judas (Matt. 26:25)
 By Mary Magdalene (John 20:16)
Ransom (1 Tim. 2:6)
Redeemer (Isa. 59:20; 60:16)
Refiner (Mal. 3:3)
Refuge (Isa. 25:4)
Righteousness (Jer. 23:6; 33:16)
Rock (Deut. 32:15)
Rod (Isa. 11:1)
Root of David (Rev. 22:16)
Rose of Sharon (Song of Sol. 2:1)
Sacrifice (Eph. 5:2)
Savior – He was called Savior by:
 His mother (Luke 1:47)
 The angels (Luke 2:11)
 The men of Samaria (John 4:42)
Second Man (1 Cor. 15:47)
Seed of Abraham (Gal. 3:16, 19)
Seed of David (2 Tim. 2:8)
Seed of the Woman (Gen. 3:15)
Servant (Isa. 42:1; 49:5-7)
Shepherd
 The Chief Shepherd (1 Pet. 5:4)
 The Good Shepherd (John 10:11, 14)

The Great Shepherd (Heb. 13:20)
My Shepherd (Psa. 23:1)
Shiloh (Gen. 49:10)
Son of David – He was called by this name by the following:
Two blind men in Capernaum (Matt. 9:27)
The Syro-Phoenician woman (Matt. 15:22)
Two blind men in Jericho (one named Bartimaeus – Matt. 20:30; Mark 10:46-47)
The Palm Sunday crowd (Matt. 21:9)
Son of God – Christ referred to himself by this name on only two occasions: (John 9:35; 10:36), but many others in the Gospels also called him by this name. He was called the Son of God by:
Satan (Matt. 4:3, 6)
Gabriel (Luke 1:35)
A demon (Matt. 8:29; Luke 4:41)
A disciple (Matt. 14:33)
Peter (Matt. 16:16)
Martha (John 11:27)
Nathanael (John 1:49)
A centurion (Matt. 27:54)
Son of Man – This was his favorite name for himself. According to his own testimony, the Son of Man:
Came not to be ministered unto (Matt. 20:28)
Came to save that which was lost (Matt. 18:11)
Can forgive sins (Matt. 9:6)
Had nowhere to lay his head (Matt. 8:20)
Is Lord of the Sabbath (Luke 6:5)
Would be betrayed (Matt. 17:22)
Would suffer (Matt. 17:12)
Would be lifted up (John 3:14)
Would be three days in the heart of the earth (Matt. 12:40)
Would be raised from the dead (Matt. 17:9)
Will come again in the glory of his Father (Matt. 16:27; 24:30)
Will send forth his angels (Matt. 13:41)
Shall sit upon the throne of his glory (Matt. 19:28)
Son of Mary (Mark 6:3)
Son of the Highest (Luke 1:32)
Stone (Matt. 21:42; Mark 12:10; Acts 4:11; Rom. 9:32-33; Eph. 2:20; 1 Pet. 2:6-7)
Sun of Righteousness (Mal. 4:2)
Teacher (Master) (Matt. 26:18; John 3:2; 11:28)
Wonderful (Isa. 9:6)

Word – the Apostle John’s favorite name for Christ (John 1:1; 1 John 5:7; Rev. 19:13)

- V. The Humanity of Jesus Christ – Jesus was as much man as if he had never been God.
- A. He had a human parentage – “And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name Jesus” (Luke 1:31). “But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law” (Gal. 4:4).
 - B. He had a human body, soul, and spirit.
 - 1. Body – “For in that she hath poured this ointment on my body, she did it for my burial” (Matt. 26:12).
 - 2. Soul – “Then saith he unto them, My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death: tarry ye here, and watch with me” (Matt. 26:38). “Now is my soul troubled; and what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour: but for this cause came I unto this hour” (John 12:27).
 - 3. Spirit – “And immediately when Jesus perceived in his spirit that they so reasoned within themselves, he said unto them, Why reason ye these things in your hearts?” (Mark 2:8). “And when Jesus had cried with a loud voice, he said, Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit: and having said thus, he gave up the ghost” (Luke 23:46).
 - C. He looked like a man.
 - 1. To the Samaritan woman – The Samaritan woman assumed at first that Jesus was just another man. “Then saith the woman of Samaria unto him, How is it that thou, being a Jew, askest drink of me, which am a woman of Samaria? For the Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans” (John 4:9).
 - 2. To the Jews – “Then said the Jews unto him, Thou art not yet fifty years old, and hast thou seen Abraham?” (John 8:57).
 - 3. To Mary Magdalene – “Jesus saith unto her, Woman, why weepest thou? whom seekest thou? She, supposing him to be the gardener, saith unto him, Sir, if thou have borne him hence, tell me where thou hast laid him, and I will take him away” (John 20:15).
 - D. He possessed flesh and blood – “Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil” (Heb. 2:14).
 - E. He grew – “And the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, filled with wisdom: and the grace of God was upon him” (Luke 2:52).
 - F. He asked questions – “And it came to pass, that after three days they found him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the doctors, both hearing them, and asking them questions” (Luke 2:46).
 - G. He increased in wisdom – “And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man” (Luke 2:52).

H. He was limited in knowledge – Here it should be pointed out that this limitation was self-imposed. According to Philippians 2:5-8 (a passage we will examine in great detail in a later part of the study), Christ voluntarily abstained from using (yet always retained) certain divine attributes while here on earth, that he might totally depend upon the power and wisdom of the Holy Spirit. This fact helps explain the following passages:

“And Jesus, immediately knowing in himself that virtue had gone out of him, turned him about in the press, and said, Who touched my clothes?” (Mark 5:30). “And said, Where have ye laid him? They said unto him, Lord, come and see” (John 11:34). “And seeing a fig tree afar off having leaves, he came, if haply he might find any thing thereon: and when he came to it, he found nothing but leaves; for the time of figs was not yet” (Mark 11:13). “But of that day and that hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father” (Mark 13:32).

- I. He prayed – “And in the morning, rising up a great while before day, he went out, and departed into a solitary place, and there prayed” (1:35). “And it came to pass, that, as he was praying in a certain place, when he ceased, one of his disciples said unto him, Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples” (Luke 11:1).
- J. He was tempted – “Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil” (Matt. 4:1). “For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted” (Heb. 2:18). “For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin” (Heb. 4:15),
- K. He learned obedience – “Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered” (Heb. 5:8).
- L. He hungered – “And when he had fasted forty days and forty nights, he was afterward an hungered” (Matt. 4:2). “Now in the morning as he returned into the city, he hungered” (Matt. 21:18).
- M. He thirsted – “There cometh a woman of Samaria to draw water: Jesus saith unto her, Give me to drink” (John 4:7). “After this, Jesus knowing that all things were now accomplished, that the scripture might be fulfilled, saith, I thirst” (John 19:28).
- N. He was weary – “Now Jacob's well was there. Jesus therefore, being wearied with his journey, sat thus on the well: and it was about the sixth hour” (John 4:6).
- O. He slept – “And, behold, there arose a great tempest in the sea, insomuch that the ship was covered with the waves: but he was asleep” (Matt. 8:24).
- P. He loved – “Then Jesus beholding him loved him, and said unto him, One thing thou lackest: go thy way, sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, take up the cross, and follow me” (Mark 10:21).

- Q. He had compassion – “But when he saw the multitudes, he was moved with compassion on them, because they fainted, and were scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd” (Matt. 9:36).
- R. He was angered and grieved – “And when he had looked round about on them with anger, being grieved for the hardness of their hearts, he saith unto the man, Stretch forth thine hand. And he stretched it out: and his hand was restored whole as the other” (Mark 3:5).
- S. He wept – “Jesus wept” (John 11:35). “And when he was come near, he beheld the city Jerusalem, and wept over it” (Luke 19:41).
- T. He experienced joy – “In that hour Jesus rejoiced in spirit, and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes: even so, Father; for so it seemed good in thy sight” (Luke 10:21). “Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God” (Heb. 12:2).
- U. He was troubled – “When Jesus therefore saw her weeping, and the Jews also weeping which came with her, he groaned in the spirit, and was troubled” (John 11:33). “Now is my soul troubled; and what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour: but for this cause came I unto this hour” (John 12:27). “When Jesus had thus said, he was troubled in spirit, and testified, and said, Verily, verily, I say unto you, that one of you shall betray me” (John 13:21). “And he taketh with him Peter and James and John, and began to be sore amazed, and to be very heavy; And saith unto them, My soul is exceeding sorrowful unto death: tarry ye here, and watch” (Mark 14:33-34).
- V. He sweat drops as of blood – “And being in an agony he prayed more earnestly: and his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground” (Luke 22:44).
- W. He suffered – “Forasmuch then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind: for he that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin” (1 Pet. 4:1).
- X. He bled – “But one of the soldiers with a spear pierced his side, and forthwith came there out blood and water” (John 19:34).
- Y. He died – “Jesus, when he had cried again with a loud voice, yielded up the ghost” (Matt. 27:50). “For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures;” (1 Cor. 15:3).
- Z. He was buried – “And when Joseph had taken the body, he wrapped it in a clean linen cloth, And laid it in his own new tomb, which he had hewn out in the rock: and he rolled a great stone to the door of the sepulchre, and departed” (Matt. 27:59-60).

- VI. The Deity of Jesus Christ – Jesus Christ was as much God as had he never been man. We shall examine this tremendous theological truth by considering the preeminence, the prophecies, and the proof involved.
- A. The preeminence involved – The person of Jesus Christ is given the highest preeminence and priority in the Scriptures.
1. His identity as God himself is declared – “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God” (John 1:1).
 “Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ” (Titus 2:13). “And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know him that is true, and we are in him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and eternal life” (1 John 5:20). “To the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen” (Jude 25). (See also John 20:28; Acts 8:37; Gal. 2:20.)
 2. His equality with God himself is described – “That all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father. He that honoureth not the Son honoureth not the Father which hath sent him” (John 5:23). “I and my Father are one” (John 10:30). “For in Christ all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form, and you have been given fullness in Christ, who is the head over every power and authority” (Col. 2:9, NIV).
 Note: John Davis writes concerning Colossians 2:9, “The Greek has two words for ‘live’ or ‘have your home.’ The weaker one suggests that your abode is temporary; you may move on. He does not use this word, *paroikein*, but the much stronger word, *katoikein*, which means to ‘make your permanent abode.’ The fullness of deity has its permanent location in Jesus” (*Handbook of Basic Bible Texts*, p. 72). (See also John 14:8-10; Phil. 25-6.)
- B. The prophecies involved – Various Old Testament passages speak of the deity of the coming Messiah.
1. As described by David – “Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: the sceptre of thy kingdom is a right sceptre. Thou lovest righteousness, and hatest wickedness: therefore God, thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows” (Psa. 45:6-7). “The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool” (Psa. 110:1).
 2. As described by Solomon – “The Lord possessed me in the beginning of his way, before his works of old. I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was.... Then I was by him, as one brought up with him: and I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him” (Prov. 8:22, 23, 30).
 3. As described by Isaiah (Isa. 9:6)

4. As described by Daniel – “I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed” (Dan. 7:13-14).
 5. As described by Micah – “But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, though you are small among the clans of Judah, out of you will come for me one who will be ruler over Israel, whose origins are from of old, from ancient times” (Micah 5:2, NIV).
 6. As described by Zechariah – “Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: behold, thy King cometh unto thee: he is just, and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass” (Zech. 9:9). “And the Lord shall be king over all the earth: in that day shall there be one Lord, and his name one” (Zech. 14:9). Note: In 9:9 Zechariah describes the Messiah as Israel’s king and here in 14:9 as the Lord God himself.
- C. The proof involved – While upon this earth, both the words and works of Jesus Christ strongly cried out that he was indeed the incarnate God.
1. He is omnipresent – “And no man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man which is in heaven” (John 3:13). “For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them” (Matt, 18:20). “Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen” (Matt. 28:20).
 2. He is omnipotent – “And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth” (Matt. 28:18). “Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high” (Heb. 1:3).
 - a. Over disease – “And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all manner of sickness and all manner of disease among the people” (Matt. 4:23).
 - b. Over Satan – “Then saith Jesus unto him, Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve” (Matt. 4:10). “Now is the judgment of this world: now shall the prince of this world be cast out” (John 12:31). “Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil” (Heb. 2:14).

- c. Over demons – “When the even was come, they brought unto him many that were possessed with devils: and he cast out the spirits with his word, and healed all that were sick” (Matt. 8:16).
- d. Over men – “As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him” (John 17:2).
- e. Over nature – “And he saith unto them, Why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith? Then he arose, and rebuked the winds and the sea; and there was a great calm. But the men marvelled, saying, What manner of man is this, that even the winds and the sea obey him!” (Matt. 8:26-27).
- f. Over sin – “And ye know that he was manifested to take away our sins; and in him is no sin” (1 John 3:5).
- g. Over traditions – “Why do thy disciples transgress the tradition of the elders? for they wash not their hands when they eat bread. But he answered and said unto them, Why do ye also transgress the commandment of God by your tradition?” (Matt. 15:2-3). (See also Matt. 9:10-17.)
- h. Over the Sabbath – “For the Son of man is Lord even of the sabbath day” (Matt. 12:8).
- i. Over the temple – “But I say unto you, That in this place is one greater than the temple” (Matt. 12:6).
- j. Over death itself
 - (1) Physical death – “Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation” (John 5:28-29).

Note: While on earth Jesus raised three from the dead. This included a young man at Nain (Luke 7:14-15), the daughter of Jairus (Luke 8:54-56), and Lazarus (John 11:43).

- (2) Spiritual death – “Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life” (John 5:24). “And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage” (Heb. 2:15).
3. He is omniscient – “Now are we sure that thou knowest all things, and needest not that any man should ask thee: by this we believe that thou camest forth from God” (John 16:30).
 - a. He knew the fickleness of the crowds – “Now when he was in Jerusalem at the passover, in the feast day, many believed in his name, when they saw the miracles which he did. But Jesus did not commit

- himself unto them, because he knew all men, and needed not that any should testify of man: for he knew what was in man” (John 2:23-25).
- b. He knew the wickedness of the scribes and Pharisees – “And, behold, certain of the scribes said within themselves, This man blasphemeth. And Jesus knowing their thoughts said, Wherefore think ye evil in your hearts?” (Matt. 9:3-4). “And Jesus knew their thoughts, and said unto them, Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation; and every city or house divided against itself shall not stand” (Matt. 12:25).
 - c. He knew the problem of his disciples – “Then there arose a reasoning among them, which of them should be greatest. And Jesus, perceiving the thought of their heart, took a child, and set him by him” (Luke 9:46-47).
 - d. He knew the whereabouts of Nathanael – “Nathanael saith unto him, Whence knowest thou me? Jesus answered and said unto him, Before that Philip called thee, when thou wast under the fig tree, I saw thee” (John 1:48).
 - e. He knew the history of the Samaritan woman – “Come, see a man, which told me all things that ever I did: is not this the Christ?” (John 4:29).
 - f. He knew the true nature of Judas – “Jesus answered them, Have not I chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil?” (John 6:70). “For he knew who should betray him; therefore said he, Ye are not all clean” (John 13:11).
4. He receives worship – “Then saith Jesus unto him, Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve” (Matt. 4:10). Having said these words, he then accepted the worship of men, thus proving he looked upon himself as God. He received this worship:
- a. From the angels – “And again, when he bringeth in the first begotten into the world, he saith, And let all the angels of God worship him” (Heb. 1:6).
 - b. From the Wise Men – “And when they were come into the house, they saw the young child with Mary his mother, and fell down, and worshipped him: and when they had opened their treasures, they presented unto him gifts; gold, and frankincense, and myrrh” (Matt. 2:11).
 - c. From a leper – “And, behold, there came a leper and worshipped him, saying, Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean” (Matt. 8:2).
 - d. From a Jewish ruler – “While he spake these things unto them, behold, there came a certain ruler, and worshipped him, saying, My daughter is even now dead: but come and lay thy hand upon her, and she shall live” (Matt. 9:18).

- e. From a heartbroken mother – “Then came she and worshipped him, saying, Lord, help me” (Matt. 15:25).
 - f. From the mother of James and John – “Then came to him the mother of Zebedee’s children with her sons, worshipping him, and desiring a certain thing of him” (Matt. 20:20).
 - g. From the maniac of Gadara – “But when he saw Jesus afar off, he ran and worshipped him” (Mark 5:6).
 - h. From the man born blind – “And he said, Lord, I believe. And he worshipped him” (John 9:38).
 - i. From Thomas – “And Thomas answered and said unto him, My Lord and my God” (John 20:28).
 - j. From the women at the empty tomb – “And as they went to tell his disciples, behold, Jesus met them, saying, All hail. And they came and held him by the feet, and worshipped him” (Matt. 28:9).
 - k. From his disciples – “Then they that were in the ship came and worshipped him, saying, Of a truth thou art the Son of God” (Matt. 14:33). “Then the eleven disciples went away into Galilee, into a mountain where Jesus had appointed them. “And when they saw him, they worshipped him: but some doubted” (Matt. 28:16-17).
5. He forgives sin – “When Jesus saw their faith, he said unto the sick of the palsy, Son, thy sins be forgiven thee” (Mark 2:5). Our Lord warned that to reject him meant to die in one’s sins: “I said therefore unto you, that ye shall die in your sins: for if ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins” (John 8:24).
 6. He possesses all authority – “For he taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes” (Matt. 7:29). (See also Phil. 2:9-11.)
 7. He is the source of life itself – “And the Word was made 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” (John 1:4), “For as the Father hath life in himself; so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself” (John 5:26).
 8. He is Creator of all things – “All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made” (John 1:3). “For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him” (Col. 1:16). “Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds” (Heb. 1:2).
 9. He is preserver of all things – “And he is before all things, and by him all things consist” (Col. 1:17). “Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high” (Heb. 1:3).

10. He alone can meet all our needs – “In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink” (John 7:37). “Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me” (John 14:6). “Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls” (Matt. 11:28-29).
11. He receives our prayers – “And they stoned Stephen, calling upon God, and saying, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit” (Acts 7:59).
12. He is the final judge – “When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory: and before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats” (Matt. 25:31-32). “For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son.... And hath given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of man” (John 5:22, 27). “Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead” (Acts 17:31).
13. He is both the Lord of Glory and King of kings (see 2:1; Rev. 19:16) – Dr. John Walvoord in his book, *Jesus Christ, Our Lord*, quotes the following from Charles Hodge:

All divine names and titles are applied to Him. He is called God, the mighty God, the great God, God over all; Jehovah; Lord; the Lord of lords and King of kings. All divine attributes are ascribed to Him. He is declared to be omnipresent, omniscient, almighty, and immutable, the same yesterday, today, and forever. He is set forth as the creator and upholder and ruler of the universe. All things were created by Him and for Him; and by Him all things consist. He is the object of worship to all intelligent creatures, even the highest; all the angels (i.e., all creatures between man and God) are commanded to prostrate themselves before Him. He is the object of all the religious sentiments; of reverence, love, faith, and devotion. To Him men and angels are responsible for their character and conduct. He required that man should honour Him as they honoured the Father; that they should exercise the same faith in Him that they do in God. He declares that He and the Father are one; that those who had seen Him had seen the Father also. He calls all men unto Him; promises to forgive their sins; to send them the Holy Spirit; to give them rest and peace; to raise them up at the last day; and to give them eternal life. God is not more, and cannot promise more, or do more than Christ is said to be, to promise, and to do. He has, therefore, been the Christian's God from the beginning, in all ages and in all places. (p. 31)

VII. The Impeccability of Jesus – The doctrine of impeccability (from the Latin, meaning “not able to sin) deals with the absolute moral purity found within both the character and conduct of Jesus Christ while he was upon this earth.

A. The problem of impeccability – There exists no disagreement whatsoever among Bible believers as to whether Christ *did* sin, but rather whether he *could have* sinned.

Paul Enns observes:

Those who hold to the peccability of Christ do so on the basis of Hebrews 4:15: He “has been tempted in all things as we are, yet without sin.” If the temptation was genuine then Christ had to be able to sin, otherwise the temptation was not a genuine temptation. Charles Hodge, a Reformed theologian, is perhaps the best representative of this view. He states:

“If He was a true man He must have been capable of sinning. That He did not sin under the greatest provocation; that when He was reviled He blessed; when He suffered He threatened not; that He was dumb, as a sheep before its shearers, is held up to us as an example. Temptation implies the possibility of sin. If from the constitution of his person it was impossible for Christ to sin, then his temptation was unreal and without effect, and He cannot sympathize with his people.” (*Moody Handbook of Theology*, p. 236)

As opposed to Hodge, the great champion for Christ’s impeccability William Shedd writes:

It is objected to the doctrine of Christ's impeccability that it is inconsistent with his temptability. A person who cannot sin, it is said, cannot be tempted to sin. This is not correct, any more than it would be correct to say that because an army cannot be conquered, it cannot be attacked. (*Dogmatic Theology*, vol. II, p. 336)

In refuting the doctrine of peccability, Paul Enns concludes:

The weaknesses of this view are that it does not sufficiently consider Christ in his Person as God as well as man. Additionally, the word *temptation* (Gk. *peirazo*) is also used of God the Father (Acts 15:10; 1 Cor. 10:9; Heb. 3:9) and the Holy Spirit (Acts 5:9). It is unlikely that anyone would say the Father or the Holy Spirit could have sinned. The conclusion is that temptation does not demand the ability to sin. The people genuinely tempted God the Father and the Holy Spirit, but there was no likelihood of those Persons of the Trinity sinning.

The evidence for the impeccability of Christ is set forth by Shedd and others in the following way.

- (1) The immutability of Christ (Heb. 13:8). Christ is unchangeable and therefore could not sin. If Christ could have sinned while on earth, then he could sin now because of his immutability. If he could have sinned on earth, what assurance is there that he will not sin now?
- (2) The omnipotence of Christ (Matt. 28:18). Christ was omnipotent and therefore could not sin. Weakness is implied where sin is possible, yet there was no weakness of any kind in Christ. How could he be omnipotent and still be able to sin?
- (3) The omniscience of Christ (John 2:25). Christ was omniscient and therefore could not sin. Sin depends on ignorance in order that the sinner may be deceived, but Christ could not be deceived because he knows all things, including the hypothetical (Matt. 11:21). If Christ could have sinned then he really did not know what would happen if he would sin.
- (4) The deity of Christ. Christ is not only man but also God. If he were only a man then he could have sinned, but God cannot sin and in a union of the two natures, the human nature submits to the divine nature (otherwise the finite is stronger than the infinite). United in the one Person of Christ are the two natures, humanity and deity; because Christ is also deity he could not sin.
- (5) The nature of temptation (James 1:14-15). The temptation that came to Christ was *from without*. However, for sin to take place, there must be an *inner* response to the outward temptation. Since Jesus did not possess a sin nature, there was nothing within him to respond to the temptation. People sin because there is an inner response to the outer temptation.
- (6) The will of Christ. In moral decisions, Christ could have only one will: to do the will of his Father; in moral decisions the human will was subservient to the divine will. If Christ could have sinned then his human will would have been stronger than the divine will.
- (7) The authority of Christ (John 10:18). In his deity, Christ had complete authority over his humanity. For example, no one could take the life of Christ except He would lay it down willingly (John 10:18). If Christ had authority over life and death, He certainly had authority over sin; if He could withhold death at will, He could also withhold sin at will. (*Moody Handbook of Theology*, pp. 236-237)

The question is asked, however, that, if Christ could not have sinned, then what was the purpose of the temptations in the wilderness? Here it should be

observed that these trials were not to see *if* Christ would sin, but to *prove* he would not. It is possible for a tiny Chihuahua dog to attack a huge lion, but it is impossible for the little creature to conquer the big cat. A row boat may declare war on a mighty nuclear equipped battleship, but it could never sink it.

B. The proofs for impeccability

1. The testimony of Gabriel – “And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God” (Luke 1:35).
2. His own testimony – “Which of you convinceth me of sin? And if I say the truth, why do ye not believe me? (John 8:45). “Hereafter I will not talk much with you: for the prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me” (John 14:30). “If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love” (John 15:10).
3. The testimony from his enemies
 - a. Judas – “Saying, I have sinned in that I have betrayed the innocent blood. And they said, What is that to us? see thou to that” (Matt. 27:4).
 - b. Herod Antipas (Luke 23:15)
 - c. Pilate – On at least four separate occasions Pilate speaks concerning the innocence of Jesus. “Pilate saith unto him, What is truth? And when he had said this, he went out again unto the Jews, and saith unto them, I find in him no fault at all” (John 18:38). “When Pilate saw that he could prevail nothing, but that rather a tumult was made, he took water, and washed his hands before the multitude, saying, I am innocent of the blood of this just person: see ye to it” (Matt. 27:24). (See also John 19:4, 6.)
 - d. Pilate’s wife – “When he was set down on the judgment seat, his wife sent unto him, saying, Have thou nothing to do with that just man: for I have suffered many things this day in a dream because of him” (Matt. 27:19).
 - e. The repentant dying thief – “And one of the malefactors which were hanged railed on him, saying, If thou be Christ, save thyself and us. But the other answering rebuked him, saying, Dost not thou fear God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation? And we indeed justly; for we receive the due reward of our deeds: but this man hath done nothing amiss” (Luke 23:39-41).
 - f. The Roman centurion – “Now when the centurion saw what was done, he glorified God, saying, Certainly this was a righteous man” (Luke 23:47).
4. The testimony of Paul – “For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him” (2 Cor. 5:21).

5. The testimony of Peter – “But ye denied the Holy One and the Just, and desired a murderer to be granted unto you” (Acts 3:14). “But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot” (1 Pet. 1:19). “Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth” (1 Pet. 2:22).
6. The testimony of John – “And ye know that he was manifested to take away our sins; and in him is no sin” (1 John 3:5).
7. The testimony of Hebrews – “For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin” (Heb. 4:15). “For such an high priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens; who needeth not daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins, and then for the people's: for this he did once, when he offered up himself” (Heb. 7:26-27).

VIII. The Character of Jesus Christ – What kind of man was our Lord? What were some of his characteristics? Consider:

- A. His zeal – “And his disciples remembered that it was written, The zeal of thine house hath eaten me up” (John 2:17).
 1. His zeal forced him to remain behind in Jerusalem as a boy – “And he said unto them, How is it that ye sought me? wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?” (Luke 2:49).
 2. His zeal led him to become the first circuit preacher – “And when it was day, he departed and went into a desert place: and the people sought him, and came unto him, and stayed him, that he should not depart from them. And he said unto them, I must preach the kingdom of God to other cities also: for therefore am I sent. And he preached in the synagogues of Galilee” (Luke 2:42-44). “And it came to pass afterward, that he went throughout every city and village, preaching and shewing the glad tidings of the kingdom of God: and the twelve were with him,” (Luke 8:1).
 3. His zeal caused his friends to think him mad – “And when his friends heard of it, they went out to lay hold on him: for they said, He is beside himself” (Mark 3:21). The words “He is beside himself” may be paraphrased, “He has gone crazy over religion.”
 4. His zeal prompted him to risk his life in purifying the temple – “And his disciples remembered that it was written, The zeal of thine house hath eaten me up” (John 2:17).
 5. His zeal gave him no rest until he accomplished his mission – “I am come to send fire on the earth; and what will I, if it be already kindled? But I have a baptism to be baptized with; and how am I straitened till it be accomplished!” (Luke 12:49-50).
- B. His compassion – “Who can have compassion on the ignorant, and on them that are out of the way; for that he himself also is compassed with infirmity” (Heb. 5:2).

1. Upon the shepherdless multitudes – “But when he saw the multitudes, he was moved with compassion on them, because they fainted, and were scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd” (Matt. 9:36).
2. Upon the sick multitudes – “And Jesus went forth, and saw a great multitude, and was moved with compassion toward them, and he healed their sick” (Matt. 14:14).
3. Upon the hungry multitudes – “Then Jesus called his disciples unto him, and said, I have compassion on the multitude, because they continue with me now three days, and have nothing to eat: and I will not send them away fasting, lest they faint in the way” (Matt. 15:32).
4. Upon a widow – “And when the Lord saw her, he had compassion on her, and said unto her, Weep not” (Luke 7:13).
5. Upon a leper – “And Jesus, moved with compassion, put forth his hand, and touched him, and saith unto him, I will; be thou clean” (Mark 1:41).
6. Upon a father – “And oftentimes it hath cast him into the fire, and into the waters, to destroy him: but if thou canst do any thing, have compassion on us, and help us. Jesus said unto him, If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth” (Mark 9:22-23).
7. Upon a demoniac – “Howbeit Jesus suffered him not, but saith unto him, Go home to thy friends, and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee, and hath had compassion on thee” (Mark 5:19).

It did not take a sinner long to know that, while Jesus hated *sin*, he loved the *sinner*. Our Lord was very compassionate. People instantly knew this about him, That’s the great secret in winning people to Christ or in ministering to the saints – the manifestation of a real, genuine love for those being ministered to.

- C. His meekness and gentleness – “Now I Paul myself beseech you by the meekness and gentleness of Christ, who in presence am base among you, but being absent am bold toward you” (2 Cor. 10:1). “For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps” (1 Pet, 2:21-23),
1. In dealing with our infirmities – “Behold my servant, whom I have chosen; my beloved, in whom my soul is well pleased: I will put my spirit upon him, and he shall shew judgment to the Gentiles. He shall not strive, nor cry; neither shall any man hear his voice in the streets. A bruised reed shall he not break, and smoking flax shall he not quench, till he send forth judgment unto victory, And in his name shall the Gentiles trust” (Matt. 12:18-21). “Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him. For he knoweth our frame; he remembereth that we are dust” (Psa. 103:13-14).
 2. In washing the feet of the disciples – “He riseth from supper, and laid aside his garments; and took a towel, and girded himself. After that he

poureth water into a basin, and began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe them with the towel wherewith he was girded" (John 13:4-5).

3. In his own words – "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light" (Matt. 11:28-30).
4. In his sufferings and death – "He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth" (Isa. 53:7).

D. His courage

1. As seen in his hometown proclamation (Luke 4:16-30) – During this, his first recorded sermon in Nazareth, he boldly pointed out Israel's historical unbelief which prompted God even back in Old Testament times to bypass, on occasion, the chosen people and bless believing Gentiles instead. A murderous attempt was made on his life at the end of the message.
2. As seen in his two cleansings of the temple (John 2:13-17; Matt. 21:12-16) – The first of these took place at the beginning of his ministry and the second during the final week. Both took great personal courage.
3. As seen in his fearless ministry to a madman (Mark 5:1-9) – No coward would have dared confront (as did our Lord) this raging lunatic who doubtless possessed superhuman and satanic strength.
4. As seen in risking his life to raise Lazarus (John 11:7, 8, 16, 53) – He was fully aware (as were his frightened disciples) that a trip to Bethany at this time would simply invite the enraged Jews to attempt to stone him again (see John 11:8). But he went anyway.
5. As seen in denouncing the wicked Pharisees (Matt. 23) – Never in written history was a group of religious hypocrites so soundly and severely rebuked as were the wicked Pharisees by the Savior here in Matthew 23. Furthermore, he condemned this powerful and perverted group to their face.
6. As seen in his approach to Calvary – "And they were in the way going up to Jerusalem; and Jesus went before them: and they were amazed; and as they followed, they were afraid. And he took again the twelve, and began to tell them what things should happen unto him, saying, Behold, we go up to Jerusalem; and the Son of man shall be delivered unto the chief priests, and unto the scribes; and they shall condemn him to death, and shall deliver him to the Gentiles: and they shall mock him, and shall scourge him, and shall spit upon him, and shall kill him: and the third day he shall rise again" (Mark 10:32-34). "And it came to pass, when the time was come that he should be received up, he stedfastly set his face to go to Jerusalem" (Luke 9:51). (See also Matt. 26:46.)

- E. His obedience – “For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me” (John 6:38).
1. The demonstrations
 - a. In the temple – “And he said unto them, How is it that ye sought me? Wist ye not that I must be about my Father’s business?” (Luke 2:49).
 - b. In the garden – “And he was withdrawn from them about a stone’s cast, and kneeled down, and prayed, saying, Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me: nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done” (Luke 22:41-42).
 2. The declarations
 - a. By Paul – “For as by one man’s disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous” (Rom. 5:19). “And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross” (Phil. 2:8).
 - b. By Hebrews – “Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered; and being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him” (Heb. 5:8-9).
- F. His love – “Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends” (John 15:13), As a member of the Trinity, Christ naturally loves that which his Father loves. However, while he was on earth, he especially loved:
1. His Father – “But that the world may know that I love the Father; and as the Father gave me commandment, even so I do. Arise, let us go hence” (John 14:31). “If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father’s commandments, and abide in his love” (John 15:10).
 2. His disciples (John 13:34, 17:2, 9, 12; 19:25-27) – “A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another” (John 13:34).
 3. Little children – “And they brought young children to him, that he should touch them: and his disciples rebuked those that brought them. But when Jesus saw it, he was much displeased, and said unto them, Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God. Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein. And he took them up in his arms, put his hands upon them, and blessed them” (Mark 10:13-16),
 4. Certain close friends (John 11:1-3; 13:23) – “Now there was leaning on Jesus’ bosom one of his disciples, whom Jesus loved” (John 13:23).
 5. The city of Jerusalem – “O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens

under her wings, and ye would not!” (Matt. 23:37). “And when he was come near, he beheld the city, and wept over it” (Luke 19:41).

- IX. The Kenosis (Divine Emptying) of Jesus Christ – Perhaps the most profound theological passage in the entire Bible is found in Philippians 2:5-11.

“Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father” (Phil. 2:5-11).

This great doctrinal truth in essence summarizes both what the Savior *gave up* and what he *gained* as a result of his earthly ministry.

A. What he gave up

1. He left heaven’s glory – “And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was” (John 17:5). “For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich” (2 Cor. 8:9).
2. He made himself of no reputation – The Greek word found in Philippians 2:7 is *kenoo* and means “to empty.” Just what did Christ empty himself of?
 - a. Negative – He did *not* lay aside, in any sense of the word, his deity. He was, is, and ever shall be the total Son of God. (See John 1:1, 2 Cor. 4:4; Col. 1:15; 2:9; Heb. 1:3.)

In the late eighties a well-known TV evangelist wrote a book entitled *Jesus Was Not Poor*, the purpose being to “prove” from the Scriptures that the Savior was actually a very wealthy man, and that he now desires that all his people also be rich. Some of the incredible “proofs” in this bizarre book include:

The fact that Jesus owned a large home, based on John 1:39. In reality, this verse does not even hint of this.

The fact that Jesus wore “designer clothes,” as seen by the seamless garment at the cross referred to in John 19:23-24. No comment is necessary here.

The fact that he could afford to hire a chief financial officer, Judas by name, as recorded in John 12:6. Again, no comment needed.

When asked however, to explain 2 Cor. 8:9, where Paul says that Christ “though he was rich, yet for your sakes became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich,” the evangelist confidently replied:

“The poverty spoken of here did not refer to Christ’s money, but rather his deity! In other words, Jesus gave up his deity at Bethlehem!” If this statement be true, then both Isaiah (7:14) and Matthew (1:23) were wrong for each had predicted the virgin’s babe would be known as Immanuel, which means, “God with us.”

- b. Positive – He did, for awhile, hide his heavenly fame in an earthly frame. Even though he retained every single attribute of deity while on earth, he did, nevertheless, surrender the independent exercise of those divine characteristics. There is a common false view of the *kenosis* that teaches that Jesus emptied himself of his *relative* attributes (omniscience, omnipotence, omnipresence) while retaining his *immanent* attributes (his holiness, love, and truth). But this is in error. He did, it is true, abstain for awhile from using some of these relative attributes, but he never gave them up.

- (1) He abstained from his omnipresence for a period – “Then said Jesus unto them plainly, Lazarus is dead. And I am glad for your sakes that I was not there, to the intent ye may believe; nevertheless let us go unto him” (John 11:14-15).
- (2) He abstained from his omniscience for a period – “But of that day and that hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father” (Mark 13:32). “And Jesus said, Who touched me? When all denied, Peter and they that were with him said, Master, the multitude throng thee and press thee, and sayest thou, Who touched me? And Jesus said, Somebody hath touched me: for I perceive that virtue is gone out of me” (Luke 8:45-46).
- (3) He abstained from his omnipotence for a period – “Then answered Jesus and said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do: for what things soever he doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise” (John 5:19).

Two phrases found in Philippians 2:6 need to be examined at this point.

The form of God: This does not mean that Christ had a physical shape prior to the Incarnation. It refers to that inner, essential, and abiding nature of a person or thing. As an example, we might say, “The tennis player was in rare form today.”

Robbery to be equal with God: That is, he did not hold or consider the outer manifestation of his deity in Heaven as a treasure to be grasped and retained at all costs. Christ in his incarnation did not concern himself with retaining all this.

3. He was made in the likeness of men – “And the Word was made 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” (John 1:14). “But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the Law” (Gal. 4:4).

This simple but absolutely staggering fact cannot be even remotely grasped by human minds. The infinite, holy Creator suddenly becomes in the likeness of his finite and sinful creatures (yet without sin). Who can comprehend such unbelievable condescension? It is as if a mighty and magnificent earthly king would determine to lay aside for awhile his fantastic storehouse of wealth and, leaving behind an adoring and amazed court, take upon himself the body of a lowly ant. The “Son of Man” was, by the way, our Lord’s favorite name for himself while on earth. He took upon himself the form of a servant. He did not come as a mighty human Caesar or some world-renowned human philosopher. Even this would have been a condescension of colossal proportions. He came, rather, as a lowly servant.

4. He humbled himself – That is, he submitted to authority. “For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps: who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth: who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously: who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed” (1 Pet. 2:21-24).

He agreed to talk our language, to wear our clothes, to eat our food, to breathe our air, and to endure our vile and vicious treatment. Contrast his statement in the garden with Lucifer's statement.

Jesus: “And he went a little further, and fell on his face, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt” (Matt. 26:39). “He went away again the second time, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if this cup may not pass away from me, except I drink it, thy will be done” (Matt. 26:42).

Lucifer: “For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north: I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High” (Isa. 14:13-14).

5. He became obedient unto death – “No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father” (John 10:18). (See Matt. 26:39; John 10:18; Heb. 5:8; 12:2.)
6. He died on a cross – Jesus did not just die, but he suffered the worst kind of death both physically and judicially. (See Psa. 22; Isa. 53.) “Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree” (Gal, 3:13).

B. What he received

1. He has been highly exalted by the Father himself – “Behold, my servant shall deal prudently, he shall be exalted and extolled, and be very high” (Isa. 52:13). “These words spake Jesus, and lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee” (John 17:1). “Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear” (Acts 2:33). “But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man” (Heb. 2:9).
2. He has been given a name (a position and place of authority) above all other names – ‘Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come’ (Eph. 1:20-21). “Being made so much better than the angels, as he hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they” (Heb. 1:4).
3. He will be universally acknowledged as Lord of all.
 - a. The how of this acknowledgment – By the bowing of the knee and the confession of the tongue.
 - b. The who of this acknowledgment – “And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever” (Rev. 5:13).

This includes:

- (1) Those in heaven (the world of saints and angels)
- (2) Those on earth (the world of sinners)
- (3) Those under the earth (the world of demons)

Thus, to confess him in this life as Lord means salvation. But to wait until the next life to confess him as Lord means damnation. The bottom line here is all will eventually confess him as Lord. Concerning this there is no choice. The only choices are *where* and *when* and *how* we confess him.

X. The Offices of Jesus Christ – It is extremely important to know not only the names that Jesus has, but the offices that were connected to him while he was on this earth. Although he has other offices, there were three great offices in the Old Testament that were created by God to meet the spiritual and material needs of God's chosen people.

A. Those offices as overviewed by the Old Testament men of God.

1. The prophet, an individual who represented God before man – A prophet thus exercised:

- a. Hindsight – He knew the secrets of the past. Moses wrote of man’s creation, his fall, the universal flood, and other early events that transpired centuries before he himself was born in Egypt.
 - b. Insight – He knew the problems and needs of the present. Prophets like Isaiah, Amos, Joel, Jeremiah, and others thundered out God's wrath against the sin and decay of their times.
 - c. Foresight – He knew the secrets of the future. Daniel wrote of the coming tribulation, and Ezekiel described the glorious Millennium.
2. The priest, an individual who represented man before God –
Qualifications of the priesthood were:
- a. He must be taken from among men, a man with compassion for other men – “For every high priest taken from among men is ordained for men in things pertaining to God, that he may offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins: who can have compassion on the ignorant, and on them that are out of the way; for that he himself also is compassed with infirmity” (Heb. 5:1-2).
 - b. He must be chosen by God – “And he spake unto Korah and unto all his company, saying, Even tomorrow the Lord will shew who are his, and who is holy; and will cause him to come near unto him: even him whom he hath chosen will he cause to come near unto him” (Num. 16:5). “And no man taketh this honour unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron” (Heb. 5:4).
 - c. He must be consecrated to God – “They shall be holy unto their God, and not profane the name of their God: for the offerings of the Lord made by fire, and the bread of their God, they do offer: therefore they shall be holy” (Lev. 21:6).
3. The king, an individual who ruled for God
- a. He was to come from the tribe of Judah – “The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come” (Gen. 49:10).
 - b. He was to come from the seed of David (2 Sam. 7:8-17; Psa. 89:3-4) – “I have made a covenant with my chosen, I have sworn unto David my servant, thy seed will I establish for ever, and build up thy throne to all generations. Selah” (Psa. 89:3-4).
- B. Those offices as occupied by the New Testament Son of God
1. The prophet
 - a. The requirements involved – Our Lord fulfilled this office as was predicted concerning him by Moses. “I will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee, and will put my words in his mouth; and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him” (Deut. 18:18). Some 14 centuries later the Pharisees demanded to know from John the Baptist if he was this prophet (see John 1:21-23). As a prophet, our Lord demonstrated:

- (1) Hindsight – He knew the failures of the Samaritan woman (John 4:16-18).
- (2) Insight – He knew the fears of the disciples (John 14:1-3).
- (3) Foresight – He knew the fate of the temple (Matt. 24:1-2).
- b. The recognition involved – Christ was looked upon as a prophet by many during his earthly ministry.
 - (1) By the Samaritan woman – “The woman saith unto him, Sir, I perceive that thou art a prophet” (John 4:19).
 - (2) By the people of Galilee – “And there came a fear on all: and they glorified God, saying, That a great prophet is risen up among us; and, That God hath visited his people” (Luke 7:16).
 - (3) By the crowd in Jerusalem – “And the multitude said, This is Jesus the prophet of Nazareth of Galilee” (Matt. 21:11). “Many of the people therefore, when they heard this saying, said, Of a truth this is the Prophet” (John 7:40).
 - (4) By his enemies – “And when they had blindfolded him, they struck him on the face, and asked him, saying, Prophecy, who is it that smote thee?” (Luke 22:64).
 - (5) By the two disciples on the Emmaus Road – “And he said unto them, What things? And they said unto him, Concerning Jesus of Nazareth, which was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people” (Luke 24:19).

2. The priest

- a. He met the requirements for the priest's office.
 - (1) He was taken from among men – “For verily he took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham” (Heb. 2:16). “For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin” (Heb. 4:15).
 - (2) He was chosen by God – “And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him: and lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased” (Matt. 3:16-17). (See also Matt. 17:5.)

“And no man taketh this honour unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron. So also Christ glorified not himself to be made an high priest; but he that said unto him, Thou art my Son, to day have I begotten thee. As he saith also in another place, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec” (Heb. 5:4-6).
 - (3) He was consecrated to God – “And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing

which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God” (Luke 1:35). “For such an high priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens” (Heb. 7:26).

- b. He performed the responsibilities of the priest’s office.
 - (1) He offered himself upon Calvary – “But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man” (Heb. 2:9).
 - (2) He prayed (and prays) for his people (John 17; Rom. 8:34; Heb. 7:25) – “I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil. They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth” (John 17:15-17). “Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us” (Rom. 8:34). “Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them” (Heb. 7:25).
 - (3) He blesses his people (Eph. 1:3; 2:11-22) – “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ” (Eph. 1:3).

3. The king – He will fulfill the office of the king.

- a. He comes from the tribe of Judah.
- b. He comes from the seed of David – “And one of the elders saith unto me, Weep not: behold, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, hath prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof” (Rev. 5:5).

Jesus *was* a prophet. He *is* a priest. He *shall be* the King of kings and Lord of lords when he comes. You see, this is the reason God, in the Old Testament, pronounced judgment upon men like Saul and Uzziah, who were both kings and who both usurped the office of the priest. (Read about these two men for a clearer understanding.) There is only one man in whom God is going to entrust these offices of prophet, priest, and king. This man Jesus Christ our Lord, the mediator between God and man.

Thus, to summarize his three offices: His role as a *prophet* began at the River Jordan and ended at Calvary. His role as a *priest* began at Calvary (where he offered up himself), and continues today in heaven (where he prays for his people), and will end at the Second Coming. His role as a *king* will begin at the Battle of Armageddon and continue through the Millennium.

XI. The Death of Jesus Christ – Henry Thiessen writes:

The death of Christ has a prominent place in the New Testament. The last three days of our Lord's earthly life occupy about one-fifth of the narratives in the four Gospels. If all the three and a half years of his public ministry had been written out as fully as the last three days, we would have a Life of Christ of some 8,400 pages!... Torrey claims that the death of Christ is mentioned directly in the New Testament more than 175 times. Since there are 7,959 verses in the New Testament, this would mean that one out of every 53 verses refers to this theme.

The death of Christ is the essential thing in Christianity. Other religions base their claim to recognition on the teaching of their founders; Christianity is distinguished from all of them by the importance it assigns to the death of its Founder. Take away the death of Christ as interpreted by the Scriptures, and you reduce Christianity to the level of the ethic religions. Though we would still have a higher system of ethics, were we to take away the cross of Christ, we would have no more salvation than these other religions. Napoleon said, when banished to St. Helena, that Alexander, Caesar, Charlemagne, and he had founded mighty kingdoms on force, but that Jesus Christ had founded his on love. This is true, if we mean love expressed in his substitutionary death.

It is of Supreme Interest in Heaven. The death of Christ is the subject of supreme interest in heaven. We may expect those who have gone to heaven to have a fuller and truer conception of life's values than those who are still limited in their vision by their existence in the body. We are told that when Moses and Elijah appeared on the Mount of Transfiguration, they conversed with Christ about the decease which he was about to accomplish at Jerusalem (Luke 9:30-31). We also find that the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders sang the song of redemption through the death of Christ (Revelation 5:8-10). Even the multitude of angels around the throne, though not in need of redemption themselves, joined in the song of the Lamb that was slain (Revelation 5:11-12). Since those who have the veil of human limitations completely removed from their eyes – those who have entered into the fuller fruits of redemption through the blood of Christ – extol Christ's death above everything else, we mortals ought to study into the true meaning of that death. (*Systematic Theology*, pp. 313 – 314)

- A. The awesomeness of it – As considered from a national perspective – Israel killing its own Messiah. As considered from an international perspective – sinful creatures killing their own sinless Creator. This incredible, mind-boggling event was pondered by both men and angels.
 1. As pondered by the Old Testament prophets – “Of which salvation the prophets have enquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you: searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow”

(1 Pet. 1:10-11). “And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise” (Heb. 11:39).

In essence, these verses teach the Old Testament writers did *not* always fully understand all the prophecies concerning the Messiah the Holy Spirit directed them to write about. For example:

- a. Moses may have pondered his prophecy – “And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel” (Gen. 3:15).
- b. David may have pondered his prophecies – “My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? why art thou so far from helping me, and from the words of my roaring?... For dogs have compassed me: the assembly of the wicked have inclosed me: they pierced my hands and my feet.... They part my garments among them, and cast lots upon my vesture” (Psa. 22:1, 16, 18). “They gave me also gall for my meat; and in my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink” (Psa. 69:21).
- c. Isaiah may have pondered his prophecies – “I gave my back to the smiters, and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair: I hid not my face from shame and spitting” (Isa. 50:6). “As many were astonished at thee; his visage was so marred more than any man, and his form more than the sons of men” (Isa. 52:14).

“Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. 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. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all. He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth” (Isa. 53:4-7).

- d. Daniel may have pondered his prophecy – “And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself” (Dan. 9:26a).
 - e. Zechariah may have pondered his prophecy – “So they weighed for my price thirty pieces of silver” (Zech. 11:12). “And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications: and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn” (Zech. 12:10).
2. As pondered by the heavenly angels – “Unto whom it was revealed, that not unto themselves, but unto us they did minister the things, which are now reported unto you by them that have preached the gospel unto you with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven; which things the angels desire to look into” (1 Pet. 1:12). “To the intent that now unto the

principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God” (Eph. 3:10).

We are told that angels desire to look into the things of salvation (1 Pet. 1:12). Surely some of these accompanying things that transpired during the earthly life of our Lord must have filled them with joy and pride. They marveled at his birth. They were inspired by his sermons and thrilled by his miracles. But how did those holy, heavenly creatures react when they watched their beloved celestial Creator being systematically slaughtered by brutal mortal sinners? We cannot tell, but surely astonishment and outrage must have flooded their beings.

3. As predicted by the Savior himself – Our Lord spoke concerning his suffering and death on at least nine separate occasions.
 - a. After cleansing the temple – “Jesus answered and said unto them, Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up” (John 2:19).
 - b. During his conversation with Nicodemus – “And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up” (John 3:14).
 - c. After promising to build his church – “From that time forth began Jesus to shew unto his disciples, how that he must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised again the third day” (Matt. 16:21).
 - d. After the Transfiguration event – “And while they abode in Galilee, Jesus said unto them, The Son of man shall be betrayed into the hands of men: and they shall kill him, and the third day he shall be raised again. And they were exceeding sorry” (Matt. 17:22-23).
 - e. During his final trip to Jerusalem – “And Jesus going up to Jerusalem took the twelve disciples apart in the way, and said unto them, Behold, we go up to Jerusalem; and the Son of man shall be betrayed unto the chief priests and unto the scribes, and they shall condemn him to death, and shall deliver him to the Gentiles to mock, and to scourge, and to crucify him: and the third day he shall rise again” (Matt. 20:17-19).
 - f. During his parable of the wicked vineyard workers – “Then said the lord of the vineyard, What shall I do? I will send my beloved son: it may be they will reverence him when they see him. But when the husbandmen saw him, they reasoned among themselves, saying, This is the heir: come, let us kill him, that the inheritance may be ours. So they cast him out of the vineyard, and killed him. What therefore shall the lord of the vineyard do unto them?” (Luke 20:13-15).
 - g. Following his Triumphal Entry – “Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit.... And I, if I be lifted up from

the earth, will draw all men unto me. This he said, signifying what death he should die” (John 12:24, 32-33).

- h. In the Upper Room – “And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body. And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it; for this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins” (Matt. 26:26-28).
 - i. En route to Gethsemane – “Then saith Jesus unto them, All ye shall be offended because of me this night: for it is written, I will smite the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock shall be scattered abroad” (Matt. 26:31).
- B. The source of it – This is to say, who killed Christ? How did his death come about? What caused it?
1. The secondary sources involved
 - a. Judas (Matt. 26:14-16, 47-50)
 - b. Annas and Caiaphas (John 18:12-13, 24; Matt. 26:57, 65)
 - c. Pilate (Matt. 27:26)
 - d. The Jewish leaders (Matt. 26:3-4; 27:1)
 - e. The Roman soldiers (Matt. 27:27-31)
 - f. All sinners (Heb. 2:9)
 2. The primary source: The Father himself – “All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.... Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise him; he hath put him to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand” (Isa. 53:6, 10). “For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him” (2 Cor. 5:21).
- C. The scope of it – For whom did Christ die? In general it may be said he died for the world, the elect, and for each man.
1. His death for the world – “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life” (John 3:16). “The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world” (John 1:29). “And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world” (1 John 2:2). “For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men” (Titus 2:11). “The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance” (2 Pet. 3:9). “Who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time” (1 Tim. 2:6).

2. His death for the elect – “According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love” (Eph. 1:4). “Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it” (Eph. 5:25). “And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world” (Rev. 13:8).
 3. His death for each man – “But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man” (Heb. 2:9).
- D. Old Testament examples of it – During that first Easter Sunday afternoon the resurrected Christ appeared unrecognized to two disciples on their way to Emmaus. After listening to their despair over the recent crucifixion of Israel’s Messiah, our Lord admonished them as follows:

“Then he said unto them, O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken: ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory? And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself” (Luke 24:25-27).

The following Old Testament events that speak of Jesus’ death were no doubt referred to by our Lord to those disciples during that afternoon conversation.

1. The coats of skins (Gen. 3:21) – “Unto Adam also and to his wife did the Lord God make coats of skins, and clothed them.” God probably killed a lamb and from that lamb provided coats of skins for Adam and Eve, representing the righteousness of Christ and the costliness of salvation.
2. The ark of Noah (1 Pet. 3:18-22) – This is not a reference to the Ark of the Covenant, but to the ark of safety. Just as the ark delivered Noah and his family from the judgment of the flood, likewise salvation through Jesus Christ delivers believers from the judgment of God.
3. The offering up of Isaac (Gen. 22:1-14) – “By faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac: and he that had received the promises offered up his only begotten son... accounting that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead; from whence also he received him in a figure” (Heb. 11:17, 19).
4. The Passover lamb (Exod. 12) – In Exodus 12 a lamb was taken and killed, then its blood was sprinkled upon the door post. That blood then saved the life of that household’s eldest child when God himself passed over all the homes in Egypt on that fateful night during the tenth plague. The New Testament says that Christ has become our Passover. (See 1 Cor. 5:7.)
5. The passage through the Red Sea (1 Cor. 10:1-2) – This was perhaps the greatest miracle in the Old Testament. Paul, in 1 Corinthians 10, likens

this event in Israel's history to the death of Christ. God spared the nation of Israel from annihilation by the Egyptian army in making a way of escape across the Red Sea. God spares individuals from spiritual death because of sin by making a way of escape through the sacrificial death of his Son.

6. The branch cast into the waters of Marah (Exod. 15:23-26) – While the Israelites were out in the desert, the waters were bitter. Moses cried unto the Lord, and the Lord showed him a tree. When he had cast the tree into the waters, the waters were made sweet (v. 25). This is symbolic of the death of Christ – the work of Jesus on the cross. Through this work on the cross the bitter waters of experience in the life of the believer can be made sweet.
7. The smitten rock (1 Cor. 10:4) – In Exodus 17:6 Moses had only to strike the rock once and it gave them water. Paul, in 1 Corinthians 10:4, refers to the “rock” as representing Jesus Christ, the real source of their sustenance. The typology is this: Christ has only been smitten one time. We need not offer a sacrifice now – we need not kill a lamb, as in the Old Testament. All we need do is speak to him and ask him to save us. So the smitten rock in the Old Testament was certainly a type of the death of Christ.
8. The brazen serpent (John 3:14; Num. 21) – In John 3:14 Jesus illustrates, from Numbers 21, the redemptive plan of God. The Son of Man must be lifted up (as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness) so that man, bitten by sin, might have eternal life. Then John 3:16 tells us, “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.”
9. The Levitical offerings (Leviticus 1 – 5) – If you read these five chapters in Leviticus, you will notice there are five offerings. The meal offering is not a type of Christ's death, but rather a type of his sinless life. However, the other four – the burnt offering, the trespass offering, the peace offering, and the sin offering – speak of his death.
10. The ordinance of the red heifer (Numbers 19) – Laws had already been given whereby a living person coming in contact with a corpse would be considered unclean (that is, disqualified from religious life and service) for a period of seven days. But a crisis had probably now arisen. Due to the recent plague (16:49), no less than 14,700 corpses had come upon the scene. This event alone had, doubtless, contributed to the defilement of tens of thousands of people. What could be done about this? The rite of the red heifer was God's answer to this problem. The cleansing of a defiled Israelite was fourfold: (1) Eleazar was to slaughter an unblemished red heifer outside the camp (vv. 2-3). (2) Its blood was to be sprinkled toward the tabernacle seven times. (v. 4). (3) The red heifer was to be burned along with cedar, wood, hyssop, and some scarlet cloth material (vv. 5-6). (4) Finally, water was to be added to the ashes of the heifer and

sprinkled upon the defiled Israelite (vv. 17-19). This whole rite was to cleanse or purify them from being defiled by coming in contact with a corpse. This cleansing purified the Jew and kept him from being cut off from Israel, just as the cleansing of Christ keeps us from being cut off from God.

11. The sacrifice on the Day of Atonement (Leviticus 16) – While Exodus 12 refers to a sacrifice for each family (the Passover lamb), Leviticus 16 refers to one sacrifice for the Jewish nation. This Day of Atonement is celebrated as Yom Kippur and is the single most important day in the entire Jewish calendar. On this day the high priest would actually take two goats and lay his hands upon one, and that goat would make its way out into the wilderness. That goat would be the scape goat, symbolically carrying away the sins of Israel. However, the other goat was killed, and its blood was sprinkled upon the mercy seat in the holy of holies. This Day of Atonement was a time annually to make an atonement for the children of Israel for all their sins. This is portrayed in Hebrews 9:7. Hebrews 9:12 contrasts this with the work of Christ when it says, “Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained *eternal* redemption for us” (emphasis mine).
12. The two memorials (Joshua 3-4) – When God rolled the waters of the Jordan River back and allowed the Israelites to pass through to dry ground, Joshua built a memorial of two piles of stones. One pile was in the Jordan River itself, and the other was on the western bank. The pile of stones in the Jordan River was symbolic of Christ because God allowed the waters of sin to come rushing in upon Christ, as God allowed these waters of the Jordan to come in with all their fury upon those 12 memorial stones.

E. Theories concerning it

1. The false positions
 - a. The recapitulation theory, advocated by Irenaeus (130 – 202) – This theory says Christ recapitulated in himself all the stages of human life that related to sin. In this way he reversed the course of Adam, who by his sin started humanity. Here it should be said Jesus Christ did not *reverse* Adam's course, but rather by his death *redeemed* all those of Adam's race who would believe from the road leading to destruction. (See Rom. 5:12-21.)
 - b. The payment-to-Satan theory, advocated by Origen (185 – 254) – This says man had sold his immortal soul to Satan through sin and that Christ's death was the devil's “pound of flesh” ransom note. This is wholly untrue, for Christ's death assured the final and eternal damnation of the devil. The only thing God owes Satan is a place in Gehenna hell forever.

- c. The satisfaction theory, advocated by Anselm (1033 – 1109) – This teaches that Jesus died to appease God’s offended honor. It acted somewhat like a pistol duel at dawn, where an insulted man takes revenge for prior insult and injury. While this theory is closer to the truth than the former ones, it still smacks of error. There was absolutely no revenge involved in the death of Christ.
 - d. The moral influence theory, advocated by (Abelard (1079 – 1142) – Here we are told God allowed Christ to die to show that he can enter into man’s sufferings. By this act God thus may stimulate man’s sympathy for Christ. This too is false, for (among other reasons) the very ones who put him to death continue to hate him and his followers the most. Furthermore, God’s eternal plan is not to “share man’s sufferings with him,” but rather to save him, that man might someday share the riches of Christ.
 - e. The example theory, advocated by Socinus (1539-1604) – Christ’s death simply showed how one man can give his life for others. But what would this single act accomplish? Soldiers, law officers, mothers, and other individuals had done this very thing thousands of times prior to and following Christ’s death. What could Calvary add to all this?
2. The substitutional (and orthodox) theory – This alone is the correct view. Dr. John Walvoord writes:

Christ in his death fully satisfied the demands of a righteous God for judgment upon sinners and, as their infinite sacrifice, provided a ground not only for the believer’s forgiveness, but for his justification and sanctification. (*Jesus Christ, Our Lord*, p. 162)

Moody Press in Chicago has printed an excellent tract written by Major D. W. Whittle entitled *Willie Lear, the Substitute* that aptly illustrates this point.

Willie Lear lived near Palmyra, Missouri. In 1862 he was a young man of about 18 years of age. Like most of those who lived in his neighborhood, he sympathized with the south in the Civil War, which was at that time in progress. The Union forces occupied Palmyra and had control of the district. Outrages were committed on both sides, and many indefensible deeds are recorded in the local histories of those sad times. Union soldiers were shot down from behind hedges, and Union men were driven away from their homes, and sometimes foully treated. To avenge these things, and to check them, the Federal commander arrested and imprisoned a large number of citizens. They were all charged with being “guerrillas,” and, after trial by court-martial, were all sentenced to be shot. Willie Lear was among the number.

After this condemnation, the general decided to select 10 of the number of those condemned for immediate execution, and reserve the remainder under hope of pardon if outrages in the neighborhood ceased, or for future punishment if not. These 10 men were drawn by lot. Willie Lear was not of this number.

A neighbor of Lear's, who was among the number to be shot, was terribly distressed at the thought of his situation. He was the father of a large family, a poor man, and the thought of the helpless condition in which he would leave his loved ones was very distressing to him.

Lear saw this, and it deeply moved him. He stepped forward to the commanding officer and offered to *take his neighbor's place*. The officer had no objection. The order had been issued that 10 men of the number should be shot, and if that number was made up, the law would be satisfied. The neighbor with the deepest of gratitude accepted Lear as his substitute: and so, by the acquiescence of the three parties concerned, the representative of the law, the condemned by the law, and the satisfier of the law by substitution, the matter was settled.

Willie Lear took the place of his friend in the line with the nine men drawn up before a detachment prepared with loaded rifles, and at the command, "Fire!" he, with the others, fell, riddled with bullets, his blood soaking the earth.

As the man for whom he died looked upon that blood, and beheld that mangled body, what would be his thought? Would he not say, with streaming eyes: "He died for me. I owe my life to him. Oh that I could do anything to show my gratitude to one who has done so much for me!

If he were asked, "How is it that you are delivered from the sentence that was hanging over you? would he be apt to ignore the work of his substitute by magnifying the importance of some fancied work of his own in the acceptance of the substitute? Would he say, "Oh, I was saved by my faith, and by my determination to live a better life. It is all by faith and development of character?" Would he have been so ungrateful as to leave out all mention of the death of that noble young man in his stead as the alone cause of his escape? If he would, he was not worth dying for, and it was a curse to his family and the community that he was spared. But no. He never returned such answers. He could not treat the act of his friend with such indifference.

Men for whom Christ died on the cross talk that way; but this man never did. He never tired of telling how Willie Lear had saved him, and gladly acknowledged his obligation to him.

"Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed" (1 Pet. 2:24).

F. The need for it – Henry Thiessen writes:

At first God and man stood face to face with each other. In sinning, Adam turned his back upon God. Then God turned His back upon Adam. Christ's death has satisfied the demands of God and now God has again turned His face toward man. It remains for man to turn round about and face God. Since God has been reconciled by the death of His Son, man is now entreated to be reconciled to God. (*Systematic Theology*, pp. 327 – 328)

The need, therefore, for Christ's death was twofold:

1. It was necessary because of God's holiness – “For I am the Lord your God: ye shall therefore sanctify yourselves, and ye shall be holy; for I am holy: neither shall ye defile yourselves with any manner of creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth” (Lev. 11:44). “The way of the wicked is an abomination unto the Lord: but he loveth him that followeth after righteousness” (Prov. 15:9).
2. It was necessary because of man's sinfulness – “What then? are we better than they? No, in no wise: for we have before proved both Jews and Gentiles, that they are all under sin; as it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one: there is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one. Their throat is an open sepulchre; with their tongues they have used deceit; the poison of asps is under their lips: whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness: their feet are swift to shed blood: destruction and misery are in their ways: and the way of peace have they not known: there is no fear of God before their eyes” (Rom. 3:9-18).

G. The results from it

1. In relation to sinners: Redemption – “In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace” (Eph. 1:7). “Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree” (Gal. 3:13). “And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation” (Rev. 5:9).
2. In relation to saints: Sanctification – “Who gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God and our Father” (Gal. 1:4). “By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all” (Heb. 10:10). “Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh” (Heb. 10:19-20).

3. In relation to Satan: Destruction – “Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil” (Heb. 2:14). “And having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it” (Col. 2:15). “He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning, For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil” (1 John 3:8).
4. In relation to the Savior: Expectation – “But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God; from henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his footstool” (Heb. 10:12-13).

XII. The Heart of the Earth Descent of Jesus Christ – “For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale’s belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth” (Matt. 12:40). “For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit: by which also he went and preached unto the spirits in prison; which sometime were disobedient, when once the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls were saved by water” (1 Pet. 3:18-20). “Now that he ascended, what is it but that he also descended first into the lower parts of the earth?” (Eph. 4:9).

On the strength of these verses, the following events are suggested, Between his death and resurrection, our Lord descended into the lower parts of this earth to perform a twofold ministry:

- A. To depopulate the “saved” compartment of hades (Luke 16:19-31) – “I knew a man in Christ above fourteen years ago, (whether in the body, I cannot tell; or whether out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth;) such an one caught up to the third heaven” (2 Cor. 12:2).
 - B. To preach judgment upon the fallen angels who had attempted to corrupt human flesh and thus prevent the promised incarnation of Christ (Gen. 3:15; 6:1-4) – The theme of Christ’s message therefore was, “It didn’t work!” “For if God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell, and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment” (2 Pet. 2:4). “And the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day” (Jude 6).
- XIII. The Resurrection of Jesus Christ
- A. The Resurrection, denied – There is surely no other single doctrine in all the Bible so hated by Satan as the resurrection of Christ. He has attempted (always unsuccessfully) to ridicule it, downplay it, deny it, or simply explain it away.

Here are but a few theories he has inspired his children (ungodly men) to promote concerning this precious doctrine:

1. The fraud theory – This says that either Jesus or his disciples (or both) simply invented the entire thing. It would have us believe that Christ was simply a clever crook who read the prophecies regarding the Messiah in the Old Testament and set about arranging for them to be fulfilled by himself. However, it would have been somewhat difficult for an imposter to arrange the place where he was to be born (it had to be Bethlehem) or for some Roman soldiers to cooperate by not breaking his bones on the cross. The only fraud here is on the part of those who offer this silly and sinful explanation.
 2. The swoon theory – We are informed here that Christ merely fainted on the cross and was later revived by the cool, dark air of the tomb. But how did he get out of that tomb? What bright light did he use to blind and terrify the Roman soldiers who stood guard outside?
 3. The vision theory – This would advocate that the early disciples were guilty of using some kind of primitive LSD. If this be true, then the practice was certainly widespread, for on one occasion alone over 500 claimed to have seen him. There is not one speck of biblical or secular evidence to support such an empty theory.
 4. The spirit theory – This holds that only his spirit arose. But Jesus is said to have eaten in his resurrected body. The very nail prints were still there. This view, like the above, cannot for one second stand the logic of reason.
 5. The heart theory – Here we are to believe that he was only resurrected in the hearts of his friends. The trouble here, however, is that none of those friends actually believed he would literally rise from the dead until they saw him with their own eyes and heard his words with their ears.
- B. The Resurrection, declared
1. David predicted it – “For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption” (Psa. 16:10). We know David here was not referring to himself but to the coming Messiah, for Israel’s great Old Testament king did indeed die and see corruption.
Both Peter and Paul used this fact in proving to Israel that Jesus Christ was indeed their Messiah.
 - a. Peter’s testimony – “Because thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption” (Acts 2:27).
 - b. Paul’s testimony – “Wherefore he saith also in another psalm, Thou shalt not suffer thine Holy One to see corruption. For David, after he had served his own generation by the will of God, fell on sleep, and was laid unto his fathers, and saw corruption: But he, whom God raised again, saw no corruption” (Acts 13:35-37).
 2. Isaiah predicted it – “Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise him; he hath put him to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see

his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand. He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied: by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities. Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he hath poured out his soul unto death: and he was numbered with the transgressors; and he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors” (Isa. 53:10-12).

3. Zechariah predicted it – “And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications: and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn” (Zech. 12:10).
4. Jesus himself predicted it many times,
 - a. After the first temple cleansing – “Jesus answered and said unto them, Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up” (John 2:19).
 - b. Upon being asked by the Pharisees to show them a sign
 - (1) First occasion – “But he answered and said unto them, An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given to it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas: for as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth” (Matt. 12:39-40).
 - (2) Second occasion (Matt. 16:4)
 - c. After promising to build his church – “From that time forth began Jesus to shew unto his disciples, how that he must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised again the third day” (Matt. 16:21).
 - d. After the Transfiguration event – “And they shall kill him, and the third day he shall be raised again. And they were exceeding sorry” (Matt. 17:23).
 - e. During his final trip to Jerusalem – “Behold, we go up to Jerusalem; and the Son of man shall be betrayed unto the chief priests and unto the scribes, and they shall condemn him to death, And shall deliver him to the Gentiles to mock, and to scourge, and to crucify him: and the third day he shall rise again” (Matt. 20:18-19).
 - f. During his sermon on the Good Shepherd – “Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father” (John 10:17-18).

- g. Following the Triumphal Entry – “Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit” (John 12:24).
 - h. In the Upper Room – “For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins. But I say unto you, I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father’s kingdom” (Matt. 26:28-29).
 - i. En route to Gethsemane – “But after I am risen again, I will go before you into Galilee” (Matt. 26:33).
- C. The Resurrection, doubted – It is ironic and sad that the predicted resurrection of Christ was only remembered by his enemies, the Pharisees, and not by his friends.

“Now the next day, that followed the day of the preparation, the chief priests and Pharisees came together unto Pilate, saying, Sir, we remember that that deceiver said, while he was yet alive, After three days I will rise again. Command therefore that the sepulchre be made sure until the third day, lest his disciples come by night, and steal him away, and say unto the people, He is risen from the dead: so the last error shall be worse than the first” (Matt. 27:62-64).

So much for his enemies. But what about his friends?

1. The women did not remember – “And when the sabbath was past, Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James, and Salome, had bought sweet spices, that they might come and anoint him. And very early in the morning the first day of the week, they came unto the sepulchre at the rising of the sun. And they said among themselves, Who shall roll us away the stone from the door of the sepulchre?” (Mark 16:1-3).
2. Mary Magdalene did not remember – “And they say unto her, Woman, why weepest thou? She saith unto them, Because they have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid him. And when she had thus said, she turned herself back, and saw Jesus standing, and knew not that it was Jesus. Jesus saith unto her, Woman, why weepest thou? whom seekest thou? She, supposing him to be the gardener, saith unto him, Sir, if thou have borne him hence, tell me where thou hast laid him, and I will take him away” (John 20:13-15).
3. Peter and John did not remember – “For as yet they knew not the scripture, that he must rise again from the dead” (John 20:9). “Then arose Peter, and ran unto the sepulchre; and stooping down, he beheld the linen clothes laid by themselves, and departed, wondering in himself at that which was come to pass” (Luke 24:12).
4. The apostles did not remember – “And returned from the sepulchre, and told all these things unto the eleven, and to all the rest. It was Mary Magdalene, and Joanna, and Mary the mother of James, and other women that were with them, which told these things unto the apostles. And their

words seemed to them as idle tales, and they believed them not” (Luke 24:9-11).

5. The two disciples on the Emmaus Road did not remember (Luke 24:13-31) – “Then he said unto them, O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken: ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?” (Luke 24:25-26).
 6. Thomas did not remember (John 20:24-29) – “But Thomas, one of the twelve, called Didymus, was not with them when Jesus came. The other disciples therefore said unto him, We have seen the Lord. But he said unto them, Except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into his side, I will not believe” (John 20:24-25).
- D. The Resurrection, described – By far the most lengthy and detailed overview of Christ’s glorious resurrection from a theological perspective in the entire Bible is found in 1 Corinthians 15. Here Paul describes the following:
1. The prominence of the resurrection of Christ (15:1-4)
 - a. It is the focal point in reference to salvation (15:1-2).
 - b. It is the focal point in reference to the Scriptures (15:3-4).
 2. The proof of the resurrection of Christ (15:5-11) – In these verses Paul lists a twofold proof:
 - a. The resurrection appearances of Christ (15:5-8)
 - b. The conversion experience of Paul himself (15:9-11)
 3. The priority of the resurrection of Christ (15:12-19) – “Now if Christ be preached that he rose from the dead, how say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead? But if there be no resurrection of the dead, then is Christ not risen: And if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain. Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished. If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable” (15:12-14, 18-19).

The resurrection of Christ is the Constitution, Bill of Rights, and Declaration of Independence of the Christian faith. The sign of Christianity is really not the cross, but an empty tomb. If one denies the Resurrection, he is forced to six horrible conclusions:

- a. All gospel preaching has been, is now, and always will be, utterly and completely useless.
 - b. All past, present, and future faith is futile.
 - c. All preachers become notorious liars.
 - d. All living Christians are still in their sins.
 - e. All departed Christians are in hell.
 - f. All reason and purpose for life itself is destroyed.
4. The program of the resurrection of Christ (15:20-28) – “For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order” (15:22, 23). The Greek word for “order” here is *tagma*, a military

term referring to troops in order of rank, as in a victorious homecoming parade. This resurrection parade consists of three sections:

- a. First part, the resurrection of Christ – “Christ the first fruits” (15:23b).
The resurrection of Christ is represented here as being the first of its kind, thus indicating that previous miracles, such as the raising of Lazarus, were more on the order of restoring a dead, mortal body to a living, mortal body. True resurrection carries with it *glorification*.
 - b. Second part, the Rapture resurrection – “Afterward they that are Christ's at his coming” (15:23c).
 - c. Final part, the resurrection of Old Testament and tribulational believers at the beginning of the Millennium – “Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power” (15:24).
5. The prompting of the resurrection of Christ (15:29-34) – The resurrection factor should motivate me to pick up the fallen banner of departed believers. This is what Paul is saying in verse 29: “Else what shall they do which are baptized for the dead, if the dead rise not at all? why are they then baptized for the dead?”
 6. The pattern of the resurrection of Christ (15:35-38) – The apostle illustrates the Resurrection by a grain of wheat. “When you sow, you do not plant the body that will be, but just a seed, perhaps of wheat or of something else” (15:37,
 7. The perfection of the resurrection of Christ (15:39-50) – Paul here contrasts the new body to the old body. “It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body” (15:44).

What kind of body did Jesus have after his resurrection? This is of great importance to the believer, for we someday will have a similar body. “Who, by the power that enables him to bring everything under his control, will transform our lowly bodies so that they will be like his glorious body” (Phil. 3:21, NIV). “Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is” (1 John 3:2).

- a. His new body had flesh and bone – “Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself: handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have. And when he had thus spoken, he shewed them his hands and his feet” (Luke 24:39’).
- b. He ate food in this new body – “And while they yet believed not for joy, and wondered, he said unto them, Have ye here any meat? And they gave him a piece of a broiled fish, and of an honeycomb. And he took it, and did eat before them” (Luke 24:41-43). “Jesus saith unto

them, Come and dine. And none of the disciples durst ask him, Who art thou? knowing that it was the Lord. Jesus then cometh, and taketh bread, and giveth them, and fish likewise” (John 21:12-13).

- c. His new body still bore the marks of his crucifixion – “The other disciples therefore said unto him, We have seen the Lord. But he said unto them, Except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into his side, I will not believe. And after eight days again his disciples were within, and Thomas with them: then came Jesus, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, Peace be unto you. Then saith he to Thomas, Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side: and be not faithless, but believing” (John 20:25-27). “And when he had thus spoken, he shewed them his hands and his feet” (Luke 24:40). “And I beheld, and, lo, in the midst of the throne and of the four beasts, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth” (Rev. 5:6).
- d. His new body was not subjected to material laws – “Then the same day at evening, being the first day of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews, came Jesus and stood in the midst, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you” (John 20:19). “And their eyes were opened, and they knew him; and he vanished out of their sight.... and as they thus spake, Jesus himself stood in the midst of them, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you” (Luke 24:31, 36).

Thus: The new body is as superior to the old body as: Man is to beast, heaven is to the earth, and the sun is to the moon.

- 8. The promise of the resurrection of Christ (15:51-53)
 - a. At the Rapture the bodies of living believers will be changed without dying.
 - b. At the Rapture the bodies of departed believers will be raised without corruption.
- 9. The purpose of the Resurrection (15:54-57) – Simply stated, his resurrection assures victory over man’s final enemy, physical death. “So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?” (15:54-55).
- 10. The practical value of the resurrection of Christ (15:57) – But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.”
- E. The Resurrection, documented – The Scriptures offer a number of facts that serve to strongly document the reality of Christ's resurrection.

1. The empty tomb – If Christ did not rise again, what happened to his body?
 - a. His friends did not remove it, for they were as surprised concerning the empty tomb as the rest (John 20:1-9).
 - b. His enemies did not remove it, for they were bribed to tell a lie concerning the empty tomb – “And when they were assembled with the elders, and had taken counsel, they gave large money unto the soldiers, saying, Say ye, His disciples came by night, and stole him away while we slept. And if this come to the governor’s ears, we will persuade him, and secure you. So they took the money, and did as they were taught: and this saying is commonly reported among the Jews until this day” (Matt. 28:12-15).
2. The tremendous and sudden change in the lives of the disciples – Two examples will suffice here:
 - a. That of Simon Peter
 - (1) Just prior to the Resurrection Peter is seen bitterly denying his Savior (Matt. 26:69-74).
 - (2) Just after the Resurrection he is seen boldly declaring his Savior (Acts 2:14-40).
 - b. That of John the apostle
 - (1) Just prior to the Resurrection John displayed total contempt toward the Samaritans – “And when his disciples James and John saw this, they said, Lord, wilt thou that we command fire to come down from heaven, and consume them, even as Elias did?” (Luke 9:54).
 - (2) Just after the Resurrection he displays total compassion toward the Samaritans – “Now when the apostles which were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent unto them Peter and John: And they, when they had testified and preached the word of the Lord, returned to Jerusalem, and preached the gospel in many villages of the Samaritans” (Acts 8:14, 25).
3. The silence from both the Romans and Pharisees – Not once did either of these enemy groups ever attempt to deny Christ's resurrection. They hated it and tried to suppress it, but could not refute it.
4. The change from Saturday to Sunday as the main day of worship – Imagine the following: While visiting a foreign country you are suddenly seized by some terrorists and held hostage in solitary confinement for 90 days, During this time you are permitted absolutely no contact with the outside world. After three months (for no apparent reason) you are released and allowed to return home. Upon arrival however, you learn some incredible news. During your absence all Christian churches everywhere no longer gather for worship on Sunday, but instead assemble on Monday of each week. Your immediate question of course would be what in the world could have happened during those 90 days causing

Christians to abandon their 2,000-year-old custom of worshipping on Sunday.

Yet this is exactly what happened in Palestine shortly after the resurrection of Christ. As ingrained as the Sabbath was in the hearts and history of the apostles, it would have taken some fantastic event to change their thinking here.

5. The existence of the church – In less than 50 years after Christ’s death, the Christian church had become a mighty power, causing the Roman government to view with growing concern its influence upon men and women. Legends and religions do not develop this quickly.
6. The various appearances of Christ following his resurrection – During the 40 days between his resurrection and ascension, our Lord made ten specific appearances before individuals or groups of individuals.
 - a. The first day (Easter Sunday)
 - (1) To Mary Magdalene (Mark 16:9-11; John 20:11-18)
 - (2) To some women (Matt. 28:9-15)
 - (3) To Simon Peter (Luke 24:34; 1 Cor. 15:5)
 - (4) To two disciples en route to Emmaus (Mark 16:12-13; Luke 24:13-35)
 - (5) To ten apostles in the upper room (Mark 16:14; Luke 24:36-48; John 20:19-23)
 - b. The final 39 days
 - (1) To Thomas and the 10 apostles in the Upper Room (John 20:24-31)
 - (2) To seven apostles by the Galilean Sea (John 21)
 - (3) To the apostles and 500 disciples (Matt. 28:16-20; Mark 16:15-18; 1 Cor. 15:6)
 - (4) To James, the half brother of Christ (1 Cor. 15:7)
 - (5) To the 11 apostles on the Mount of Olives (Luke 24:49-50; Acts 1:3-8)

John Walvoord writes: “Taken as a whole, the appearances are of such various character and to so many people under so many different circumstances that proof of the resurrection of Christ is as solid as any historical fact that could be cited in the first century” (*Jesus Christ, Our Lord*, pp. 193 – 195).

- F. The Resurrection, discerned – What are the results of the Resurrection?
 1. In relation to the believer, there are immediate blessings we have because of the Resurrection.
 - a. A guarantee of our justification – How dare the devil tell a person he is not saved if that person has accepted Jesus Christ, because what he is saying is that the Resurrection did not have the power to get a person saved and to keep him saved, and that is a terrible lie.
 - b. A guarantee of present-day power and strength (Eph. 1:18 – 2:10)

- c. A guarantee of fruitful labor – This is a guarantee that the things we do down here for Jesus will not be forgotten in heaven. “Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord” (1 Cor. 15:58).
- d. A guarantee of our own resurrection – “Knowing that he which raised up the Lord Jesus shall raise up us also by Jesus, and shall present us with you” (2 Cor. 4:14).

There are also future blessings.

- e. Exchanging corruption for incorruption – “So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption” (1 Cor. 15:42).
- f. Exchanging dishonor for glory – “It is sown in dishonour; it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power” (1 Cor. 15:43).
- g. Exchanging weakness for power (1 Cor. 15:43)
- h. Exchanging a material body for a spiritual body – “It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body” (1 Cor. 15:44).

2. In relation to the Savior

- a. It is the mark of his deity – “And declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead” (Rom. 1:4). “Him God raised up the third day, and shewed him openly” (Acts 10:40).
- b. It is the springboard of his exaltation – “The God of our fathers raised up Jesus, whom ye slew and hanged on a tree. Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins” (Acts 5:30-31). “Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father” (Phil. 2:9-11).
- c. It marks the beginning of his headship over the church – “And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come: and hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all” (Eph, 1:19-23).

3. In relation to the sinner, it warns him of a coming judgment day – “Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead” (Acts 17:31).
 4. In relation to the devil, it seals his doom forever – “Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil” (Heb. 2:14). “And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever” (Rev. 20:10).
 5. In relation to the Sabbath, it transfers the worship day from Saturday to Sunday – “And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow; and continued his speech until midnight” (Acts 20:7), “Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come” (1 Cor. 16:2).
- G. The Resurrection, depicted – Both Christ’s death and resurrection are pictured by the ordinance of baptism. “Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection” (Rom. 6:4-5).

XIV. The Ascension of Jesus Christ

A. The prophecies involved

1. As predicted by David, the King of Israel – “Thou hast ascended on high, thou hast led captivity captive: thou hast received gifts for men; yea, for the rebellious also, that the Lord God might dwell among them” (Psa. 68:18).
2. As predicted by Jesus, the King of kings – “What and if ye shall see the Son of man ascend up where he was before?” (John 6:62). “I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world: again, I leave the world, and go to the Father” (John 16:28). “Jesus saith unto her, Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father: but go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God” (John 20:17).

- B. The parting involved – “So then after the Lord had spoken unto them, he was received up into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God” (Mark 16:19). “And it came to pass, while he blessed them, he was parted from them, and carried up into heaven” (Luke 24:51). “And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight” (Acts 1:9).

- C. The promise involved – “And while they looked stedfastly toward heaven as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel; which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven” (Acts 1:10-11).
 - D. The place involved – “Then returned they unto Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which is from Jerusalem a sabbath day’s journey” (Acts 1:12).
- XV. The Present Ministry of Jesus Christ
- A. The place involved: The right hand of God – The place here is in reality a position of highest honor. In essence, the Lord Jesus Christ now occupies the most prominent, privileged, and powerful position in all the universe.
 - 1. This place is verified by many New Testament authors – “So then after the Lord had spoken unto them, he was received up into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God” (Mark 16:19). “Now of the things which we have spoken this is the sum: We have such an high priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens” (Heb. 8:1). “But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God” (Heb. 10:12). “Who is gone into heaven, and is on the right hand of God; angels and authorities and powers being made subject unto him” (1 Pet. 3:22). (See also: Luke 22:69; Acts 2:33; 5:31; Rom. 8:34; Eph. 1:20; Col. 3:1; Heb. 1:3, 13.)
 - 2. This place is viewed by one New Testament martyr – “But he, being full of the Holy Ghost, looked up stedfastly into heaven, and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God, and said, Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God” (Acts 7:55-56).
 - B. The performance involved – Just what kind of ministry does our Lord perform for us at the Father's right hand? In essence, he is there:
 - 1. To be our forerunner – “Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast, and which entereth into that within the veil; whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an high priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec” (Heb. 6:19-20).
 - 2. To prepare a place for us – “In my Father’s house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you” (John 14:2).
 - 3. To give spiritual gifts to his followers – “(He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that he might fill all things.) And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ: that we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried

about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive” (Eph. 4:10-14).

4. To offer encouragement to his followers – “Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession. For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need” (Heb. 4:14-16).

“Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God. For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds” (Heb. 12:1-3).

5. To make high priestly prayers for us – “Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us” (Rom. 8:34). “For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us:” (Heb. 9:25).

Here he functions in a twofold manner:

- a. Acting as our intercessor (due to the weakness and frailties of the believer) – While on earth, our Lord once told Peter: “Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat: but I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not” (Luke 22:31-32).

According to many New Testament passages, the Savior continues to perform this blessed ministry for his people from heaven.

“Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them” (Heb. 7:25).

- b. Acting as our advocate (due to the sins of the believer) – “If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness” (1 John 1:9). “My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous” (1 John 2:1). “And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night” (Rev. 12:10).

6. To send the promise of the Father (John 16; Acts 1:4; 2:33) – “And, being assembled together with them, commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which, saith he, ye have heard of me” (Acts 1:4).

Much ink has been used attempting to explain the five words “the promise of the Father.” Various passages of Scripture make it dear that the promise of the Father (Joel 2:28; Acts 2:16) and also the promise of the Son (John 14:16-26; 15:26; 16:7) were references to the arrival of the Holy Spirit of God. “Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear” (Acts 2:33). The exaltation of Christ allows him to sit at the right hand of the Father and thus send the Holy Spirit of God on his believers.

7. To care for his churches (Rev. 1:10-3:22) – In this amazing passage the Apostle John, on the Isle of Patmos, sees the resurrected and glorified Christ standing among seven golden lampstands, dressed in the garb of a high priest. He is told that the lampstands symbolize local churches on earth.
8. To work through his people – “Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father” (John 14:12).
9. To wait until his enemies become his footstool – “But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God; from henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his footstool” (Heb. 10:12-13).

XVI. The Future Twofold Return of Jesus Christ

A. At the Rapture, where he comes *for* his people (thus introducing the great tribulation)

1. As predicted by the Savior himself – “Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also” (John 14:1-3).
2. As predicted by the Apostle Paul – “Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality” (1 Cor. 15:51-53).

“For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught

up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord” (1 Thess. 4:16-17),

B. At the Second Coming, where he comes *with* his people (thus concluding the great tribulation)

1. As foretold:

- a. By Enoch – “And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints” (Jude 14).
- b. By David – “Lift up your heads, O ye gates; even lift them up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in. Who is this King of glory? The Lord of hosts, he is the King of glory. Selah” (Psa. 24:9-10).
- c. By Isaiah – “He will swallow up death in victory; and the Lord God will wipe away tears from off all faces; and the rebuke of his people shall he take away from off all the earth: for the Lord hath spoken it. And it shall be said in that day, Lo, this is our God; we have waited for him, and he will save us: this is the Lord; we have waited for him, we will be glad and rejoice in his salvation” (Isa, 25:8-9).

“And the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together: for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it.... Behold, the Lord God will come with strong hand, and his arm shall rule for him: behold, his reward is with him, and his work before him” (Isa. 40:5, 10).

- d. By Christ himself – “For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels; and then he shall reward every man according to his works” (Matt. 16:27), “And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory” (Matt. 24:30). “Jesus saith unto him, Thou hast said: nevertheless I say unto you, Hereafter shall ye see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven” (Matt. 26:64).
- e. By Paul – “And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels” (2 Thess. 1:7). “And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming” (2 Thess. 2:8).

2. As fulfilled

- a. The wedding involved – “Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready. And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints. And he saith unto me, Write, Blessed are they which are called

unto the marriage supper of the Lamb. And he saith unto me, These are the true sayings of God” (Rev. 19:7-9).

b. The warfare involved

(1) The warrior – “And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war. His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns; and he had a name written, that no man knew, but he himself, And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called The Word of God.... And he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS” (Rev. 19:11-13, 16).

(2) The war – “And I saw the beast, and the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against him that sat on the horse, and against his army. And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast, and them that worshipped his image. These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone. And the remnant were slain with the sword of him that sat upon the horse, which sword proceeded out of his mouth: and all the fowls were filled with their flesh” (Rev. 19:19-21).

XVII. The Millennial Reign of Jesus Christ

A. As foretold

1. By David and the Psalm writers (47:7-8; 93:1; 96:10; 97:1; 98:8-9; 99:1; 103:19; 145:13; 146:10)
2. By Isaiah (9:6-7; 24:23; 32:1; 52:7)
3. By Micah (4:7; 5:2)
4. By Joel (3:20-21)
5. By Daniel (2:44; 4:3, 17, 32; 7:14, 18, 22, 27)
6. By Jeremiah (23:5-6)
7. By Gabriel (Luke 1:32-33)
8. By Christ himself (Matt. 8:11; 13:43; 25:34; 26:29)
9. By James, the half brother of Christ (Acts 15:15-17)
10. By Peter (Acts 3:19-21)
11. By Paul (Rom. 8:16-23; 15:11-12)

B. As fulfilled – “And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the

second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years” (Rev. 20:4, 6).

XVIII. The Old Testament Witnesses of Jesus Christ – The Bible is a Christ-centered book. Jesus himself said the Old Testament spoke of him. “Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me” (John 5:39).

The following is a brief panorama of his story in history, as demonstrated by some Old Testament men and women. Events in their lives remind us of some aspect in the Savior’s New Testament ministry.

- A. Adam – His headship over a new creation (Gen. 1:28; Rom. 5:17-19; 1 Cor. 15:22, 45, 47; Heb. 2:7-9)
- B. Moses – His prophetic ministry (Deut. 18:15-18; Heb. 3:5-6)
- C. Melchizedek – His priestly ministry (Gen. 14:18-20; Psa. 110:4; Heb. 5-8)
- D. David – His kingly ministry (2 Sam. 7:1-17; Mark 11:10; Rev. 5:5; 22:16)
- E. Jeremiah – His sorrows (Jer. 3:20; 5:1-5; 8:20-22; 9:1; 10:19; 11:19)
- F. Joseph – His sufferings (the most perfect type of Christ in the Old Testament)
 - 1. Hated without a cause (Gen. 37:4, 8; John 15:25)
 - 2. Ridiculed (Gen. 37:19; Luke 22:63)
 - 3. Plotted against (Gen. 37:20; John 11:53)
 - 4. Stripped of his robe (Gen. 37:23; John 19:23-24)
 - 5. Sold for silver (Gen. 37:28; Matt. 26:14-16)
 - 6. Lied about (Gen. 39:14; Matt. 26:61)
 - 7. Placed in captivity with two guilty men (Gen. 40:1-3; Luke 23:32-33)
 - 8. Unrecognized by his own (Gen. 42:8; John 1:11)
- G. Isaac – His death (Gen. 22:2, 8, 10; Matt. 26:36, 42-43)
- H. Jonah – His resurrection (Jonah 1:17; Matt. 12:40; 16:4; Luke 11:29)
- I. Joshua – His victorious life (Joshua 1:3, 5-6, 8-9; John 10:17-18; 19:30)
- J. Noah – His saving life (Gen. 6:13-14, 17-18; 1 Pet. 3:18-22)
- K. Abraham – His father (Gen. 22:7-8; Matt. 26:36, 42-43)
- L. Daniel – His acceptance by the Father (Dan. 9:23; 10:11, 19; Matt. 3:17; 17:5)
- M. Elijah – His forerunner (Isa. 40:3-4; Matt. 17:11-12)
- N. Elisha – His miracles (2 Kings 2:9; John 3:2): Elisha performed 14 miracles, nearly double those of any other Old Testament man, except Moses.
- O. Ezekiel – His parables (Ezek. 17:2; 20:49; Matt. 13:3): There are 69 parables in the Old Testament; 23 are to be found in Ezekiel’s book alone.
- P. Ruth – His church (Ruth 2&; 2 Cor. 11:2)
- Q. Boaz – His love for the church (Ruth 2-4; Eph. 5:25-27)
- R. Ezra – His zeal for the Scriptures (Neh. 8; Matt. 21:42; 22:29; Mark 12:10, 12:24; Luke 4:21; 24:27; John 10:35)
- S. Nehemiah – His zeal for the Holy City (Neh. 1 – 2; Matt. 23:37-39; Luke 19:41)
- T. Absalom: His opposition

1. From Judas – Absalom was a betrayer and member of David's inner circle, as was Judas of Jesus' inner circle (2 Sam. 15; Matt. 26:14).
 2. From the coming Antichrist – Absalom plotted against the Davidic throne, as will the Antichrist (2 Sam. 15; Rev. 13)
- U. Solomon – His wisdom (1 Kings 3:11-13; Luke 4:22; John 7:46)
- V. Lot – His backslidden followers (Gen. 19; 2 Pet. 2:7)