**“WOULD YOU BELIEVE"**

**#1B: “God the Son**

**is Who He says He Is”**

A

psych class is bracing for a lengthy final. Instead, the exam has only ONE question. At first the students look relieved, but relief turns to panic. Except for one kid who hastily jots something on the test paper and leaves. The surprised prof checks the answer, then scratches "100%" at the top of the page. The exam question was “What is courage?” The kid's answer …… “**THIS IS!”**

Besides courageous, Americans want leaders to be who they say they are, and do what they promise. Most critical is the decision we make about God. In her book, *Believing God,* Beth Moore offers this “pledge of faith” to believe or to reject:

1. God is who He says He is.
2. I am who God says I am.
3. God will do what He says He will do.
4. With Jesus, I can face anything.
5. God’s Word is active and alive in me.

Author/speaker Graham Cooke writes, “Confidence in God comes when we understand two things: who He is, and who we are.”

We’ve already explored “Who does God the Father say He is?” Those study notes are at [www.HisDeal.com/archives/index.html](http://www.HisDeal.com/archives/index.html) Now we turn to history’s most controversial, divisive, yet unifying person.

**“What’s the Buzz about the Superstar?”**

The name “Jesus” is from the Hebrew, “Yeshua,” meaning “God is salvation.” Was He a philosopher, prophet, social activist, rabbi, lunatic, demon or just a man (John 9:1-41)? Or did He ever exist? This is certain: “It is appointed unto man once to die, and after death, the judgment” (Hebrews 9:27-28).

We find this Galilean carpenter asking his mentees two pivotal questions. First: “Who do people say the Son of Man is” (Matthew 16:13-20)? They reply, “Some say John the Baptist, Jeremiah or one of the prophets.” The Carpenter drills deeper. “But who do *you* say that I am?” Simon Peter blurts, “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God!” Jesus responds, “Blessed are you, Simon, son of Jonah, for this was not revealed to you by man, but by my Father in heaven.”

Never was there a birth announcement like this! Let’s read Luke 2:6-21 (p. 762, NIV).

God the Father checks in when His Son is baptized by cousin John. Let’s read Matthew 3:1-3, 13-17 (p. 718, NIV).

Moses and Elijah, by then gone 1400 and 900 years respectively, get a curtain call. Let’s read Matthew 16:24-17:9 (p. 731 NIV).

DISCUSS: Had you heard God speak, how would you respond?

In 1876 Lew Wallace met atheist Robert Ingersoll, prompting Wallace to examine Jesus further. The result was his epic novel, *Ben Hur*. Says Wallace, “After six years given to the impartial investigation of Christianity as to its truth or falsity, I have come to the deliberate conclusion that Jesus Christ was the Messiah of the Jews, the Savior of the world and my own personal Redeemer.”

Long *before* Jesus came to earth God’s prophets made more than 300 predictions about Him: His birthplace (Micah 5:2), His warm-up act, John the Baptist (Malachi 3:1), His Palm Sunday entrance (Zechariah 9:9), even the price of His betrayal (Zechariah 11:12), His crucifixion (Isaiah 53) and resurrection (Psalm 16:10, 49:15).

God the Son has *always* existed with the Father and the Holy Spirit (John 8:58; 17:5). Let’s read John 1:1-3, 14-18 (p. 788, NIV).

New Testament writer Paul paints an Imax-sized picture of the Savior. Let’s read it in Philippians 2:5-11 (p. 873, NIV).

Insightful author Michael Wells writes, “We find out who God is from Jesus, or we never find out.”

DISCUSS: If you had met Jesus as a man, what would it have taken to convince you that HE is God?

**Who is the Jesus YOU Know?**

Cooke in *The Nature of God* describes the Jesus he knows:

• Scandalously forgiving, *never* keeps a record of our sins

• Outrageously shocking to the religious mindset

• Sees, speaks to and promotes our highest potential

John Piper, in *Desiring God,* lists how others viewed Jesus:

• He defied political correctness to help women (John 4), foreigners (Mark 7:24-30), lepers (Luke 17:11-19), harlots (Luke 7:36-50), tax collectors (Matthew 9:9-13) and beggars (Mark 10:46-52).

• He disappointed Jews who expected Messiah to end Roman occupation (John 1:43-50).

• He was executed for our sins after religious leaders plotted to kill Him (Mark 3:4-6, 10:45).

• He invited people to follow Him to have eternal life. Let’s read Mark 10:17-31 (p. 753, NIV).

When Judas escorts some 600 soldiers to arrest Him, our Lord again flashes His ID. Let’s read John 18:1-11 (p. 806 NIV).

As Christ hangs on the cross, the sky goes totally black at 3:00 pm. Earthquakes shake open graves, releasing their resurrected occupants. And a Roman officer hears Christ’s game-changing words: “Father, forgive these people. They don’t know what they’re doing!” At this the soldier admits, “Surely, this was the Son of God.”

DISCUSS: If you’d been that soldier, what would you do next?

**You Know *About* Him. But Is That Enough?**

David writes, “The fool says in his heart, ‘There is no God’” (Psalm 19:1-4a; Romans 1:19-20). That mindset will come to know Jesus not as Savior but as Judge (John 5:22). Showing His spear wounds to Thomas, Jesus said, “Stop doubting and believe” (John 20:24-29).

“Let not the wise man boast of his wisdom or the strong man boast of his strength or the rich man boast of his riches, but let him who boasts boast about this: that he understands and knows me, that I am the LORD …” (Jeremiah 9:23-24)

“Before a crucifixion,” Wells explains, “Romans would take a whip of twelve strands of leather (glass embedded on each side with a hook on the end) and strike the victim 39 times across the back and once across the face, completely disfiguring him. Jesus was marred beyond recognition … Because sin has been dealt with, all God requires is our belief in and receiving of the marred Jesus who sits at His right hand. Unbelievers will not perish because of sin but because of the pride they hold dear that denies the Son of God …”

We can ask endless questions, but transformation, not information, is what we need -- a personal encounter with the Savior. Please pray with me: “God, I want to know the real You. With my small faith, I accept Your forgiveness of my sin. Thank You, Jesus, for Your great sacrifice for me. From now on, I am Yours. Amen.”

His Deal

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*Focus on forever.*

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The Son of God is referred to by many names in the Bible. Here are a few.

TITLE MEANING BIBLE VERSE

Adam, The last Vis a vis Adam in Eden 1 Corinthians 15:45

Advocate Reps us to the Father 1 John 2:1

Almighty There is none higher Revelation 1:8

Alpha and Omega First and Last Revelation 1:8

Amen He is and has the last word Revelation 3:14

Apostle of our Profession God’s special Messenger Hebrews 3:1

Author of Life Creator of all living things Acts 3:15

Author/Finisher of our Faith Our Source and Destination Hebrews 12:2

Bread of Life Only He sustains and satisfies John 6:32

Bright and Morning Star Illuminates all Revelation 22:16

Christ Greek for “anointed One” Matthew 16:16

Cornerstone The Stabilizer Psalm 118:22

Creator All things were made by Him John 1:3

Door, The Gateway to the Father John 10:7

Good Shepherd He gave His life for us sheep John 10:11

Head of the Church Leader of all who follow Him Ephesians 5:23

I Am No past tense in Christ John 8:58

Immanuel “God with us: Isaiah 7:14

King of kings/Lord of lords Supreme Authority over all Revelation 19:16

Lamb of God Sacrifice for man’s sins John 1:29

Life, The Only Source of life John 14:6

Light, The He dispels sin’s darkness John 1:9, 14:6

Lion of Judah Ruler over all Revelation 5:5

Man of Sorrows Bore all the sins of the world Isaiah 53:3

Mediator Only access to the Father 1 Timothy 2:5

Messiah One who destroys evil Daniel 9:25

Prince of Peace Will bring peace on earth Isaiah 9:6

Rabbi/Teacher He taught about the Father John 1:38

Redeemer Traded His life for ours Job 19:25

Savior Rescues man from sin/death Luke 2:11

Son of God His relationship to the Father Mark 1:1

Son of Man The human identity of Jesus Matthew 8:20

Son of the Highest Father’s only begotten Son Luke 1:32

Son of David Descendant of King David Matthew 15:22

Truth, The No deceit or sin in Him John 14:6

Way, The Lone route to eternal life John 14:6

Word, The Jesus revealed God to man John 1:1

**The Odds of Jesus Fulfilling Prophecy**

"The following probabilities are taken from Peter Stoner in Science Speaks (Moody Press, 1963) to show that coincidence is ruled out by the science of probability.  Stoner says that by using the modern science of probability in reference to eight prophecies, ‘we find that the chance that any man might have lived down to the present time and fulfilled all eight prophecies is 1 in 1017."  That would be 1 in 100,000,000,000,000,000.  In order to help us comprehend this staggering probability, Stoner illustrates it by supposing that "we take 1017 silver dollars and lay them on the face of Texas.  They will cover all of the state two feet deep.  Now mark one of these silver dollars and stir the whole mass thoroughly, all over the state.  Blindfold a man and tell him that he can travel as far as he wishes, but he must pick up one silver dollar and say that this is the right one.  What chance would he have of getting the right one?  Just the same chance that the prophets would have had of writing these eight prophecies and having them all come true in any one man."

Stoner considers 48 prophecies and says, "We find the chance that any one man fulfilled all 48 prophecies to be 1 in 10157, or 1 in 10,00,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000, 000,000,000,000,000, 000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000, 000, 000,000,000,000,000,000,000, 000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000 000,000,000." [1](http://carm.org/christianity/christian-doctrine/christianity-one-true-religion#footnote1_1h5xfp5)

The estimated number of electrons in the universe is around 1079.  It should be quite evident that Jesus did not fulfill the prophecies by accident. He was who He said He was: the only way ([John 14:6](http://biblia.com/bible/nasb95/John%2014.6)).