

### The REAL Jesus

We hear a lot about Jesus today; every Christian church reveres and exalts Jesus. But have you noticed that each describes a Jesus which is a little different? Even different congregations within a denomination often paint a radically different picture of Jesus.

Some churches teach a Jesus who did away with His Father's laws, nailing them to the cross. Some teach He was not even human – that He was still God the whole time, just in human form. Others believe He was fully human, but just a normal man – not divine at all. Some say He was a great man, and some even consider Him a prophet, but not the Son of God.

Most believe the Father was the “Lord” of the Old Testament, and Jesus did not exist until His life began in the womb of Mary, while others teach He was created by the Father before the world was created; still others believe He has always existed.

Surely, among all these different beings called “Jesus”, only one can be the TRUE Jesus! Which means all the rest, are about that FALSE Jesus you read about in the last lesson. So how can YOU sort out which Jesus is the real one?

**2 Corinthians 11:3 (ESV)** *But I am afraid that as the serpent deceived Eve by his cunning, your thoughts will be led astray from a sincere and pure devotion to Christ.*

I know I've quoted these scriptures before, but it is CRITICAL that you firmly grasp that which is called Christianity isn't necessarily Christian; and He who is called Jesus isn't necessarily the TRUE Jesus. Paul wasn't worried about them being led into witchcraft – he spends very little time warning them about open paganism. No, his biggest worry was clearly the growing counterfeit Christianity spreading through the church, even while he was still alive!

**Verse 4 (ESV)** *For if someone comes and proclaims ANOTHER JESUS than the one we proclaimed, or if you receive A DIFFERENT SPIRIT from the one you received, or if you ACCEPT A DIFFERENT GOSPEL from the one you accepted, you put up with it readily enough.*

The Bible says clearly that false teachers introduced this false Jesus, with his false gospel, into the Church at a very early date. Paul was afraid for them lest they be **led away from Christ unto A DIFFERENT JESUS**, with a DIFFERENT SPIRIT, who brings a DIFFERENT GOSPEL!

And Paul was right to be worried – for since he penned those words, BILLIONS have been deceived by that other gospel, and are even now worshipping that other Jesus in ignorance. The last lesson was devoted to talking about the imitation Jesus, but now it's time to get to know the REAL Jesus. So go ahead – ask the Bible...

## LESSON 13: WHO IS THE REAL JESUS?

Let's start by saying something that I can't say too often – the Bible is the ONLY source for true information about God. John Calvin and Martin Luther and Eusebius and Origen ALL had the same source you do, and to understand the truth you must bypass the traditions they taught and return to the only SOURCE of truth, and learn what it really says!

If you honestly desire to know the real Jesus, you must be willing to reject all the ideas and opinions of men and start from square one. Faith in God simply means trusting God and believing what He says. That attitude begins and ends in faith in His Word – not faith in the words of men *about God*, but faith in the words God said ABOUT HIMSELF!

If you are to have ANY HOPE of arriving at the truth, you must be willing to discard all of your preconceived ideas and let the Bible ALONE define the personality and nature of the real Jesus from scratch.

The only reason there is confusion today about who Jesus is and what He is like is **because no one does this!** Books written by men, whether written by priests, by doctors of divinity or seminary professors will never lead you to the real Jesus! Only in your Bible will you find the REAL Jesus!

So if you want to know about the nature of Jesus, you MUST ask the Bible. Not commentaries, catechisms or church doctrine, but the BIBLE. It has all the information you need! I say this because today you're going to be introduced to a Jesus you probably have never met before – and you might find Him to be shockingly different from the one you've been taught!

### PRE-EXISTENCE OF CHRIST

For whose pleasure were the worlds made? **Revelation 4:10-11, Revelation 5:5-7.** [Note: since the Lamb (Christ) is before the throne, the one ON the throne must be the Father.] But did the Father do the work Himself? By WHOM were the worlds made? **Hebrews 1:1-2.** Who made ALL things? **John 1:1-3.** What about the things in heaven? **Colossians 1:16-17.**

How old was Jesus? **Luke 3:23.** But how old was He REALLY? **John 8:58.** Where did Jesus come from – the womb of Mary? **John 6:38.** Was Jesus literally IN heaven before His birth? **John 3:13.** How long had Jesus been glorified with the Father? **John 17:5.** Did Jesus voluntarily give up His glory and Godhood and become a puny, weak, human? **Philippians 2:5-8.**

Who was the God of the Old Testament? **Psalms 110:1.** [Note: THE Lord said to *David's* Lord “*sit at my right hand until I make your enemies your footstool*”.] Who was speaking to whom? **Hebrews 1:8-13.** Did Peter tell us that Jesus was the “Lord” of David? **Acts 2:34-36.** Did Jesus Himself say that David was speaking of the Christ as being “his Lord”, the one to whom THE Lord spoke? **Matthew 22:41-45.**

Has anyone EVER seen the Father? **John 1:18.** Or heard His voice? **John 5:37.** Did Israel hear “the Lord”? **Deuteronomy 4:12.** Did Moses SEE Him? **Exodus 33:18-23.** Was Job's “redeemer” alive circa 1700 years B.C.? **Job 19:25.** And what was that redeemer going to do in the “latter days”? (Same verse). And who will that be? **Zechariah 14:4.** And who is that “Lord”? **Acts 1:11-12.**

Who was Enoch's “Lord”? **Jude 1:14.** [Note: Enoch's Lord was “coming with 10,000's of his saints”.] Who is it that rides out of heaven with the 144,000 behind Him? **Mark 13:26. Revelation 19:11-16.**

**Revelation 14:1-4.** Was Jesus Christ with Israel at Sinai? **1 Corinthians 10:1-4.** Was John the Baptist, Jesus' second cousin, six months older than Christ? **Luke 1:36.** And yet did that same John the Baptist testify that Jesus was in fact, much older than he, himself was? **John 1:30.**

You might think that's an overwhelming list, and wonder how ANYONE could misunderstand and think Jesus' existence began in the womb of Mary – but this barely scratches the surface!

One problem scripture is **Revelation 3:14.** Is Christ the beginning of the creation of God? Yes! Does that mean He is only 2000 years old? No! What IS the creation of God? **Genesis 1:26.** Is Jesus the firstborn of THAT creation? **Colossians 1:12-15.** Does God explain what the "beginning of the creation of God" means? **Colossians 1:18.**

Get that! He is the firstborn FROM THE DEAD! The firstborn HUMAN who made it into the SPIRITUAL kingdom of God! The beginning of that family we spoke of in Lessons 1 and 2, the "firstborn OF MANY BRETHREN"! (**Romans 8:29**). Doesn't that make more sense than ignoring dozens of CLEAR scriptures in order to force such a flawed and inconsistent interpretation upon this single scripture, as so many deceived Christians do?

Always bear in mind the inherent weakness of any doctrine based on a single scripture! And never forget the simple axiom that if it doesn't make sense... it's probably because it simply isn't true!

Another problem scripture is **Deuteronomy 6:4.** But the solution is so easy! **Psalms 110:1.** Our Lord IS one Lord, and Christ serves Him! **John 14:28.** Who is the GOD of Jesus? **Ephesians 1:17.** Who was the Lord of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob? **Acts 3:13.**

Clearly Jesus did not glorify Himself! **John 17:22, John 8:50.** But for now, the Father works through Christ – not with man directly! **Revelation 21:3.** But when this whole plan is finished, then no longer will we work THROUGH Christ! **1 Corinthians 15:24-28.**

But there is another way of proving this; prophecies fulfilled in Christ. Compare these sets of scriptures: **Isaiah 44:24** and **Isaiah 47:4** with **Mark 1:24**; then **Isaiah 8:13-14** with **1 Peter 2:7-8.**

There is a huge pile of verses like those, but that should be enough. And in case it isn't, this final verse is conclusive, beyond all contradiction: **Micah 5:2.**

## THE NATURE OF CHRIST

Let's start by showing Jesus doing things most people would NEVER believe Christ would do. Would Jesus ever get angry? **Mark 3:5.** Is it possible – even good – to be angry and not sin? **Ephesians 4:26.** Would Jesus be sensitive at a funeral – make a big show of sympathy and weeping with the family? **Matthew 8:21-22.**

Those are pretty shocking already, but they are plain scripture; if you believe the Bible at all, you have to believe this is how Jesus acted.

Would He ever call people fools? **Matthew 23:17.** Sons of the devil? **John 8:44.** Liars, snakes, hypocrites, white-washed graves, blind? All in **Matthew 23!** Leaders of the blind? **Matthew 15:14.** Thieves? **Mark 11:17.** Satan? **Mark 8:33,** to name only a few.

We know when someone sins, we should “*restore such a one in the spirit of meekness*” (**Galatians 6:1**). Was Jesus meek? **Matthew 11:29**. Does this sound like restoring someone in meekness to you: **Matthew 16:21-23**?

Pretty harsh wasn't it! Calling Peter “Satan” in front of all his friends just for saying that he didn't want Jesus to die! And **yet that MUST have been in the spirit of meekness, for Jesus WAS meek!** Not only that, but in the same circumstance we are **COMMANDED** to do the same thing! (**1 John 2:6**).

You must allow the Bible to interpret the Bible – if you just stick with interpretations you've always heard, these passages **CANNOT** make sense! All of the questions these verses raised will not be answered today, but in time as you continue studying your Bible, they will. For now, we must stay on the point at hand:

Would Jesus **EVER**, under **ANY** circumstances, refuse to help someone it was in His power to help? **Matthew 15:22-23**. Did He even rudely call this woman with a sick child a **DOG** in **verse 26**, before finally agreeing to help her **SOLELY** because of her humble attitude? **Verses 27-28, Mark 7:29**. But certainly Jesus would **NEVER** resort to physical violence! **John 2:13-17**.

I'm not saying you should start whipping people you disagree with over religion. But Jesus, our perfect example did clearly make a whip and drive them out of the temple. So if He did it, then under those circumstances it was the perfect, righteous thing to do – in fact, it would probably have been a sin for Him **NOT** to do it!

These are plain scriptures which you can see for yourself. Most people just ignore these scriptures or twist them to fit what they want to believe and focus in building a picture of a loving, patient, quiet-spoken, long-haired, milk-sop of a Jesus. But Jesus is not a babe in a manger any more! Nor is He still hanging on a cross!

He is a **RULER**, the **RULER** of the universe, and as such He makes **HARD** decisions all the time! **John 5:27**. Life and death decisions are the day-to-day responsibility of every king, and Jesus is King of Kings – thus responsible for everything that is!

He handles **ALL** judgments (**John 5:22**). And yes, He's merciful to those who deserve it (**2 Samuel 22:26**), but He is stern and unforgiving to those who don't! (**Nahum 1:2-3, Exodus 34:6-7**). And He said to let the same mind that was in **HIM**, be in **YOU!** (**Philippians 2:5-11**). Why? Because He plans to give you a seat beside Him (**Revelation 3:21**), ruling the universe **WITH HIM!** (**2 Timothy 2:12, Revelation 3:9**). So you **MUST** learn to act like He acted!

Did He then – and does He now – hate **ANYTHING?** **Hebrews 1:8-9, Revelation 2:6, Zechariah 8:17**. So He hates the deeds of certain people, but does He hate any **PERSON?** **Romans 9:13, Hosea 9:15, Psalms 11:5**. Do we, following His example, have the responsibility to hate certain things and certain people? **Psalms 97:10, Psalms 31:6, Proverbs 13:5, Proverbs 8:13**. Does David – a man after Jesus' own heart (**Acts 13:22**) – seem quite pleased with himself for hating everyone who hates God? **Psalms 139:21-22**.

I can't take the time now to explain when, why, and how we should hate; we will get to that eventually. For now, it is enough to show scriptures which establish that hatred is an emotion Jesus felt, God feels, and that it has an appropriate place in the true Christian's heart.

## WHAT WAS HE LIKE?

It's worth taking a few moments to see what Jesus was like, physically. What was a Nazarite? **Numbers 6:2-5**. Was Jesus a Nazarite? Let's see; did He drink wine? **Luke 7:33-34**. Did He have long hair? **1 Corinthians 11:14**. Why then did it say that "He shall be called a Nazarene"? **Matthew 2:23**. Could a Nazarite drink or eat ANY product of the grapevine? **Numbers 6:3-4**. Did Jesus drink "of the fruit of the vine"? **Matthew 26:29**.

Nazarenes were from the city of Nazareth. Nazarites couldn't drink wine, or even eat grapes, but Jesus did both. Therefore, Jesus was not a Nazarite. Further, it was – and is – a shame for a man to have long hair. Hence, it is certain that Jesus did not have long hair, contrary to every supposed picture of Jesus you've ever seen.

Was He popular with other people? **Isaiah 53:2**. Was He respected? **Mark 6:3** (and context). Was Jesus handsome and attractive, or plain? **Isaiah 53:2** [Note: Those two verses in Isaiah should be read in several different translations to get a good sense of the meaning.] Does He look like exactly like the Father? **Hebrews 1:3, John 14:9**.

## WAS HE BORN KNOWING EVERYTHING?

Most suppose Jesus was born remembering past eternity, and knowing everything about everything. Here are a few scriptures to set that straight:

Did Jesus know the date He was to return? **Mark 13:32**. If He knew EVERYTHING, He couldn't have learned ANYTHING, right? **Hebrews 5:8**. It would be equally impossible for Him to INCREASE in wisdom – but did He? **Luke 2:52**. Where did Jesus learn what He knew? **Hebrews 10:5-7**.

"When He came into the world", He said "in the volume of the book it is written of me". This is how He discovered it! Because He READ THE BOOK! And this is also no doubt what He was asking the wise men in the temple and "hearing" their answers. (**Luke 2:46-47**).

The Old Testament is FULL of prophecies fulfilled by Jesus; and someone with understanding could have taken the dozens of prophecies fulfilled by the early life of Jesus and put the pieces together to realize that yes, He really was the Christ. In fact, Jesus was annoyed that the Jews couldn't do that (**John 5:46**).

## IS THE NEW TESTAMENT JESUS' WORDS?

Most people have the idea the Old Testament was all about the Father's message, but Jesus like some know-it-all kid, came and did away with all His Father's laws, and brought His own message, His own gospel that was BETTER than His Father's way. Is that true?

Did Jesus come for His own reasons? **John 7:28**. Whose words did Jesus bring – His own? **John 12:49**. Did Jesus come to do His will? **John 6:38-40**. Did Jesus bring His own doctrine? **John 7:16**. Or did He just do what His Father taught Him? **John 8:28**. Does the New Testament contain ANY words of Jesus? **John 14:24**.

Most people assume the Old Testament was the Father's will, and the New Testament was Jesus' will; but not only was Jesus the "God" of the Old Testament... but the *Father* is the "God" of the New Testament! **Most churches, not bothering to read their Bibles, have it exactly backwards!**

The doctrines Jesus taught in the New Testament were not His own! They came directly from His Father, and He taught NOTHING He did not get from His Father! That's what He Himself said – will you believe Him? I know it's shocking, but it's TRUE!

Did Jesus say we pray to Him, and then He'll pray to the Father for us? **John 16:26-27**. To whom does the New Testament Christian pray? **Matthew 6:9**. And who rewards the New Testament Christian? **Matthew 6:6**. Who forgives our sins when we pray? **Mark 11:25**.

And you may be astounded to learn that Jesus never worked a single miracle in His life!

Did Jesus do the mighty works (miracles)? **John 14:10**. Could Jesus do ANYTHING by Himself? **John 5:19**. Do we have the ability to do even greater miracles than Jesus? **John 14:12**.

Every single miracle that was done was done by the FATHER! Jesus said the works He did, He didn't do with some innate power He had, but with power given to Him FROM His Father!

That's the same way Moses did miracles, the same way Elijah did them, and the same way you and I can do them – only you and I can do them even more powerfully, because we have Jesus in heaven right now, helping God overlook our sins... but wait, I don't want to give away the answers to the next section!

## WHAT IS CHRIST DOING NOW?

We know what He did 2,000 years ago; He died for our sins; but what has He been doing since then? Did you ever wonder? Is He still hanging on a cross somewhere, as most churches picture Him? Has He gone off someplace on vacation? Or is He BUSY, doing something?

After His death and resurrection, He appeared to various people for 40 days (**Acts 1:3**), and then He disappeared (**Acts 1:9**) into heaven. Before that, just after His resurrection, He said “*All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth*” (**Matthew 28:18**). How has He been using that power?

What is His current job? **Hebrews 2:17-3:1**. Did Jesus take this job for Himself, or was it GIVEN to Him by His Father? **Hebrews 5:4-5**. Is there a specific name for His priesthood? **Hebrews 5:6, 10**.

This “order” of Melchizedek; what does it mean? The Williams translation says, “*He had received from God the title of a High Priest with the RANK OF MELCHIZEDEK.*” So the office Jesus now holds is the same office as that held by Melchizedek – but who was that?

**Hebrews 7:1-2**. Notice the titles held by this Melchizedek; “king of righteousness”, and “king of peace”! Whom do you suppose that is? How long had this Melchizedek been alive? **Hebrews 7:3**.

Melchizedek had NO FATHER! No mother! No beginning to His life, nor an end to it – Melchizedek was IMMORTAL! And had existed from past eternity!

How many people could that be? **John 1:1-2**. Does anyone but God have immortality? **1 Timothy 6:16**. And has the Father given that to the Son? **John 5:26**. So according to the Bible, only those two beings – God and Christ – have immortality! Had anyone ever seen or heard the Father? **John 5:37**. But did Abraham both see and talk to this Melchizedek? **Genesis 14:18-20**.



So then Melchizedek WAS CHRIST! Just as “that rock was Christ”! Which is why Christ now has the office of Melchizedek – it was ALWAYS His office, He just took a short leave of absence from it!

In **Hebrews 7:4-10**, Paul talks about how Melchizedek was greater than Abraham, who was father of Levi and the Levitical priesthood; and therefore Melchizedek was greater than Levi.

The Levitical priesthood was established in roughly 1500 B.C., and the high priest was Aaron, brother of Moses; but before then, who was the high priest of God on Earth? **Hebrews 7:1**. Who is the priest of the Most High God now? **Hebrews 3:1**. So for about 1500 years, Melchizedek – Jesus – turned over the job of high priest to physical Levites. But now He has reclaimed His rightful position!

But “high priest” doesn’t really answer our question very well; so that’s His *title*, but what is He DOING? **Ephesians 5:23**. And who put Him in this position? **Ephesians 1:22-23**. So WHERE is He performing this office as the LIVING HEAD of the church? **Hebrews 8:1-2**.

And how does that help US? What is Jesus doing for US now? **Romans 8:34**. Is that the REASON Jesus lives FOREVER – to make intercession FOR US? **Hebrews 7:25**. And what is that doing for us? **Hebrews 12:1**. And what is His plan – how is He going to be working with YOU in your future? **Hebrews 13:20-21**.

Most assume He has gone off somewhere, on vacation; most denominations seem to believe He is still hanging on the cross! But He’s been off that cross for about 1,975 years now! He died, yes, but now He LIVES – and He’s not idle, or busy elsewhere, He is HERE, directly involved with YOU!

He is the HEAD of the church – not Peter, the Pope, or any other man, *Christ* is the HEAD of the Church! Hebrews makes it clear this job is too important to EVER be entrusted to a mortal man again! (**Hebrews 7:28**). No mere *man* is the head of the true church of God! (**Matthew 23:8-10**). God may call apostles and use other offices to teach and direct His work, but Jesus ALWAYS remains the literal, living HEAD of the church!

And in that office, He, through His spirit, actively argues on your behalf in heaven at the right hand of God (**Romans 8:26-27**). He is able to do this because He realizes how hard it can be to resist temptation, and can remember how difficult the sufferings of this life can be (**Hebrews 4:15**). The Father has never been a frail human so He cannot understand how it feels to be tempted as we are! But now Jesus CAN understand, because He has been tempted in ALL points like we are!

## DID JESUS REALLY DIE?

This question is simply a matter of believing the scriptures. Do you believe them, or do you let men twist them around for you? What does **1 Corinthians 15:3** say? Now should you allow some theologian who never met God, who knows no more about God than you do, to make the pronouncement that “Jesus was God, and God CAN’T die”?

How does he know? Was this theologian ever a God? Did he ever see God? Did God personally tell him “God can’t die”? No! He ASSUMED God can’t die. Then he told you, and you perhaps believed him – but WHY? You have the same source for truth that he did, and you can read it as well as he; what does that source for truth say... over and over again?

Did Jesus die, or not? **Romans 14:9, Romans 5:6-8.** (I literally could show dozens of such scriptures, but I won't dwell on that alone). Did Jesus rise from a LIVING state, or from a DEAD state? If His soul had been alive during that time, surely He would have risen from LIFE, not from DEATH!

But some suppose that Jesus' BODY died, but His soul "couldn't die" and therefore, lived on! How do they know? **Make them show you the scriptures that say so!** And if they can't produce them, don't believe them!

Jesus was the "Word" (**John 1:1-3**). And this Word was CHANGED into Jesus – it wasn't just given a body to live in, but was literally CHANGED into mortal flesh! (**John 1:14**). Any spirit, or person, who believes Jesus was NOT literally human flesh is anti-Christ (**1 John 4:3**) – that is, a person *against Christ*, someone who tries to cheapen Christ's sacrifice by saying He wasn't truly human!

So because we are flesh and blood, did HE *become* flesh and blood, so He could be JUST LIKE US? **Hebrews 2:14.** When He was made flesh, was He just like any other man? **Philippians 2:8.** Was He made into a Being LOWER than the angels, SO THAT He *could* die? **Hebrews 2:9.** Did He, personally, say HE HAD BEEN DEAD? **Revelation 1:18.** Could God have LOOSED death from Him, *if He had not been dead??* **Acts 2:23-24.**

Because Jesus had never sinned, God COULD NOT *leave* Him dead; it was not POSSIBLE for God to reward such obedience with eternal death! But the fact that He wasn't LEFT dead, means that He WAS literally dead!

If Jesus didn't die, you have no Savior! Jesus died to pay the price for YOUR sins, in YOUR place – and the wages of sin is DEATH! So if Jesus didn't die, your sins have not been paid for and you have no salvation!

And finally, the Bible plainly says that Jesus' **soul** was IN THE GRAVE! Speaking of Jesus, Peter quoted the Psalm saying:

**Acts 2:27** *Because thou wilt not leave my [Jesus'] soul in hell, neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption.*

Jesus' soul was in hell – the Greek word "*hades*" should be translated "*grave*", as it was in **1 Corinthians 15:55.** But Jesus' soul was not LEFT in the grave, as the Philips version translated it "...you do not abandon my soul to the grave..." – and a few verses later, Peter wraps it up and says...

**Acts 2:31 (Philips)** *And he foresaw, and spoke of the resurrection of Messiah, that he [His soul] was not LEFT in the grave, neither did his body see corruption.*

The fact that His soul was not LEFT in the grave long enough for His BODY to see corruption, proves that His *body* AND His **SOUL** WERE THERE! They just weren't LEFT there, because God *resurrected* Jesus, **body, soul and all!** Resurrected Him FROM THE DEAD!

## WHY DID JESUS BECOME A MAN?

It is commonly supposed that Jesus came to die for our sins – and for no other reason. But that is only a tiny fraction of the reason Jesus came! Once you understand it, this scripture alone tells the whole story: **Romans 8:3.** But by itself, it doesn't make much sense – but in a moment you'll find it makes a great deal of sense!



For now, let's focus on the last half of that verse – Jesus came to “condemn sin in the flesh”. What does that mean? How do you condemn sin?

One way is obvious; **John 7:7**. But those are just words – is there another way to condemn something? **Hebrews 11:7**.

So Noah's WORKS condemned the world – by building a boat, he showed it was possible to obey God and have faith in Him – and thereby condemned anyone who didn't!

Is it possible to condemn yourself? **Titus 3:11**. How? **Mark 7:6**, **Luke 6:42**. So when you say “sin is bad!” but then YOU sin, the person you really condemn is yourself? **Romans 2:1**. Also **Romans 2:17-24**.

So you condemn someone by doing something they failed to do – in this case, by being obedient to the law of God.

See, Man's excuse for sinning from the very first day has been a simple one – they say “Oh yeah? Let's see YOU do better, God! After all, God, you can't be tempted to sin (**James 1:13**) – You don't know what it's like to FEEL temptation and try to say “no” to it! So how DARE You judge me! You've never been in my shoes!”

To justify sinning, Man reasons something like this: “So what's the big deal if God can follow His OWN laws – *laws which are simply an expression of His own nature!* It's His NATURE to follow those laws, so OF COURSE He follows them! But it's not OUR nature to follow them! (**Romans 8:7**). And so equally of COURSE we **can't** follow them!”

Right? That's been Satan's excuse, and Adam's excuse, from the start. So Jesus came to CONDEMN sin – condemn it in a way that, as a divine Being wholly above temptation, He could not do! Jesus came to condemn sin by living as a man JUST LIKE US, under the exact same rules, with the exact same burdens, and the exact same doubts, unknowns, and fears as we have! And thereby to PROVE it CAN be done – that man, even though burdened with a weak, selfish, temptable carnal nature, CAN resist temptation, CAN OBEY GOD!

To do anything else would be to ruin the proof. It would actually validate Satan's excuse and man's excuse for rebellion against God! If Jesus had ANY leg up – if He remembered past eternity, if He knew every answer to every question, if He never skinned His knee or had a mosquito bite Him, ANYTHING AT ALL that made Him different from us, it would be, in sporting terms, a foul!

And that would immediately disqualify Him from condemning sin in the flesh! Think about it! How could He condemn sin **in the flesh** if He were NOT Himself **in the flesh**!

Was Jesus JUST like us in ALL things? **Hebrews 2:17**. Does our spirit, the one we're born with, LUST? **James 4:5**. How are we tempted? **James 1:14**. Was Jesus tempted in ALL POINTS like we are? **Hebrews 4:15**.

This is very important. It is perhaps THE most important scripture in the Bible – Jesus was tempted in ALL POINTS like we are. Not some points – not tempted only from outside, but tempted *from within JUST like us!*

Not “tested”, as some would tell you it “should” read, but TEMPTED – really, truly, TEMPTED, JUST LIKE YOU AND ME! He was made IN ALL POINTS like His brethren – and for that to be true, and for Him to be on even footing with us, He HAD to adopt the SAME NATURE we have, that carnal nature that is the ENEMY of God!

Think about it! Your biggest trial in this life isn’t from the rest of the world. Satan isn’t your biggest enemy. Satan has no power over you at all if you obey God correctly! (**Job 1:9-12**). No, your biggest enemy is YOUR NATURE – the one that lusts to envy. It’s the one that draws your attention to the slick deal, the pretty girl, the fast car – the things you lust after.

But is that initial, instinctive lust sin? **James 1:15**. When a cow conceives, does it IMMEDIATELY have a calf? Of course not! It takes months and months of gestation for that fertilized egg to become a calf, and so the cow AFTER it has conceived, brings forth a CALF. Likewise, the calf isn’t born a mature adult – it’s born an infant! And yet eventually, it ALWAYS grows into an adult – it never grows back into an infant, but always bigger and stronger!

In the same way, when lust has conceived, it doesn’t IMMEDIATELY bring forth sin; you can still have an “abortion” of that lust, so to speak. You can rule it, squashing the lust before it hatches into sin. Yet once sin is born, while it doesn’t IMMEDIATELY bring death – it ALWAYS ends there!

So when you see a hundred dollar bill laying on a counter and no one watching, you’ll probably think “Hey, free money! I want it!”, or in some way have a brief lust after it. This is instinctive, that part of nature that “lusteth to envy”, James talks about. The one that is the ENEMY of God. Yet that is not sin! That is lust trying to “conceive”. You still have a chance to stop it before it becomes sin!

And is EVERY MAN tempted this way? **James 1:14**. So EVERY MAN is enticed of “his own lust” – and wasn’t Jesus a man? **Philippians 2:7**. Did He keep His Godhood while He was a man? Or was He FULLY human? **Philippians 2:8**. Did Jesus keep His perfect nature, or take on the same flawed nature that Abraham had? **Hebrews 2:16**. [Note: Philip’s translation has it “*he assumed a nature from the seed of Abraham.*”] Did He voluntarily take on the nature we have – the nature that lusts to envy? **Hebrews 4:15**.

## HOW LUST WORKS

When you’re hungry, you desire food; that isn’t necessarily wrong. If you lust after your own loaf of bread, that’s perfectly fine. So you go and eat it. But if you lust after your neighbor’s piece of bread, that is wrong – and if permitted to continue, will lead to you stealing that loaf of bread, when that lust CONCEIVES and brings forth SIN – the breaking of the 8<sup>th</sup> commandment.

But whether that desire, that lust, is wrong or not, the desire itself **must exist before it is judged!** The first thought that says, in effect “I WANT THAT!” ... is *NOT* sin! EVERY man is tempted by his own lusts! But it BECOMES sin if it is against the law of God and your conscious mind CONDONES it!

Go back and read **James 1:14-15** again. He lays out a clear, unbroken pattern that says EVERY MAN – sinner and righteous alike – are “enticed” by their own lust! He then says lust, WHEN IT CONCEIVES, brings forth SIN. It isn’t sin UNTIL it conceives! Just as sin doesn’t bring forth death UNTIL it is finished working!

So that temptation which you feel, that “drawing” towards the workings of sin, that “lust” which EVERY man feels, IS NOT SIN. It is a part of your carnal nature that helps **to encourage you to be evil**. That is why Paul said there was NO GOOD THING in his flesh! (**Romans 7:18**).

But that doesn't mean you HAVE to be evil. It just means you have MOTIVATION to be evil. It is fully in your power to resist it, which is precisely what Jesus came to prove.

But aren't most people governed by their impulses, rather than ruling them? **Philippians 3:19**. Every man seeks his own things, not the things of God? **Philippians 2:21**. But can such people still put on a show of godliness? Still appear righteous? **Romans 16:18**. But can you choose to follow a different path? **Romans 8:5-6**.

Our job isn't to eliminate those subconscious lusts! It would be nice, and it is what will happen when we are resurrected into the family of God (**1 John 3:9**), because we will be “like Him” (**1 John 3:2**), and will not be tempted to sin (**James 1:13**). But for now, not having them is not the point – the point is having them, BUT RULING THEM PROPERLY! (**Proverbs 16:32**).

Having those initial thoughts isn't wrong – encouraging them, dwelling on them, letting them flourish in your mind until it DOES bring forth sin IS wrong! When that first lustful thought comes into your mind, you immediately slap it down and say “No! That's wrong!” – then you didn't sin. You stopped lust *before* it could conceive!

It is necessary to firmly understand this so you can clearly grasp that Jesus REALLY WAS tempted JUST like we are; He had the same subconscious desires for food, power, glory, and reproduction that we have; He had the same trials, the same grief as us. And yet He DID NOT SIN! Why? Because He ALWAYS controlled His lusts – and that's what you must learn to do if you want to be like Him!

**Hebrews 4:15** *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.*

You have to either believe the Bible, or not; most of the world absolutely HATES the idea that Jesus was tempted like we are; they call it blasphemy, and “belittling” to Jesus. But in fact it makes His sacrifice SO MUCH more meaningful! It means His life was SO MUCH harder! See for yourself by comparing A, the option most of the world believes, and B, the truth.

**A.** Jesus was fully God the whole time; He came down to Earth in human form, appeared to grow, always had all the answers, remembered every answer to every question that had ever been asked in the history of the universe. He never had the slightest inclination to sin – didn't even feel tempted to sin. Oh sure, someone might have offered him some marijuana once and TRIED to tempt him, but He politely declined! Because He never even WANTED to sin! He knew every step He was ever going to make, and then went through the motions of dying, even though He didn't actually die (because God can't die!).

That is a fair approximation to what most people believe. Naturally, they all bicker about the details but that's close enough. Now this is what the Bible teaches:

**B.** Jesus gave up His Godhood entirely, and was fully human during His life on Earth; He didn't have any power at all except what God gave Him through faith – the exact same way we can have that same power. He knew NOTHING about His former life or His future except what He learned through the scriptures. He was tempted in ALL points like we are; He liked pretty girls

and fast cars (err, chariots) too, but HE NEVER GAVE IN TO THOSE THOUGHTS! Never pursued them in a direction which was sinful!

Now I ask you, which exalts Jesus more – which way was harder for Him to accomplish? And therefore, which **REALLY** gives Him more glory since He DID accomplish it? The one which says He was utterly above temptation, or the one which says He was tempted just like we are?

Which degrades His sacrifice completely by saying He was “different” and “not subject to the feeling of our infirmities”? The one which says He never even WANTED to sin, or the one which said He had a carnal nature to overcome **JUST LIKE YOU AND ME?**

This means when Satan TEMPTED Him to turn stones into bread (**Matthew 4:3-4**), then after not eating for 40 days (**Matthew 4:2**), HE HAD TO WANT IT! Imagine the hunger after no food for almost six weeks! For it to **BE** a temptation, IT HAD TO BE **TEMPTING TO HIM!** A loaf of bread had to sound MIGHTY GOOD to Him about then! But He knew it was WRONG, so He RESISTED the temptation!

And again, when Satan offered to make Him emperor of the world (**Matthew 4:8-10**), for it to be a temptation – the best one Satan could offer – IT had to be DESIRABLE TO HIM! Imagine if the devil offered to make YOU emperor! How flattering, how appealing to your vanity that would be! How MUCH your carnal nature would LOVE that position, that wealth, that power, that respect!

Jesus was tempted just like us, which means that idea had to be APPEALING to Him, or else it wasn't a temptation as the Bible clearly said it was! (**Matthew 4:1**). The whole point of His life on Earth was to walk in our shoes and prove you CAN do right even in the face of a carnal nature and the temptations of the devil himself! **And so it must have not only been tempting, but MORE tempting than ANY temptation ANY man has EVER faced in the HISTORY of the WORLD!**

He had to have DESIRED that, and other things in His life, with a strength of will and a fervor MORE than you desired the girl that got away, the next rung up that ladder of success, or the respect of your peers, **OR ELSE HIS SACRIFICE WAS UNFAIR!**

But He ruled that desire and conquered it before it became sin; He governed His spirit, and He took those temptations head on and then did the right thing anyway. Now that's impressive. **THAT** exalts Jesus!

## THE ANTICHRIST

I briefly referred to the spirit of antichrist earlier. And now in closing it's time to tell you just what that spirit is, and what it believes.

Is Antichrist one prophetic person? **1 John 2:18**. Were these Antichrists once part of the true church? **Verse 19**. What does Antichrist do? **Verse 22**. But does Antichrist still want to have the Father? **Verse 23**.

Notice that clearly; you can read right over it and miss the whole thing if you're not watching. “Christ” isn't the last name of Jesus. It is His title, meaning “the anointed one”. So to say “Jesus Christ” isn't technically correct; we do it all the time, as does the Bible, but properly speaking you should say “Jesus THE Christ”. In English, it would be “Jesus The Anointed” – the One anointed to be King and Savior of mankind.

So this spirit of Antichrist doesn't necessarily deny that Jesus existed; nor even that He was the Son of the Father; nor, necessarily, even the message Jesus brought *about* His Father. Antichrist denies that Jesus *was the Christ*. **Antichrist denies that Jesus was the Savior of mankind!** It says He was not a fit Savior for us! But how does it do that? Keep reading.

Should we believe every spirit? **1 John 4:1**. So how can we know the difference? **Verse 2**. And does this distinction define who is, and who is not, of the spirit of antichrist? **Verse 3**.

For years, that answer disappointed me; here John promises to give me a holy spirit detector – something that will tell me, point-blank, if someone is of God, or not. And then He says *“Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God”*. But I know atheists that believe Jesus Christ existed. They deny He was God, but they believe there was a person called Jesus Christ. Does that mean they are of God?

I know many outright heretics who will say “Jesus Christ is come in the flesh”. And yet I know they aren't of God. So either John let me down, or we aren't understanding what John said there.

The word “flesh” is translated from the Greek word *sarx* and means, according to Strong's Greek Lexicon, “body, meat,” etc, “or by implication *human nature* with its **frailties [physically or morally] and passions”**.

Are you starting to see it yet? **The question isn't whether or not Jesus actually existed**; heathen historians believe that. The question is **whether Jesus came with “human nature with its frailties (physical and moral), and passions”!**

We studied above, and made it clear, that Jesus had all of our frailties; the Bible said so quite clearly. Yet if you tell practically ANYONE in ANY church that “Jesus was morally frail, like us”, they will call YOU a heretic and put you out of their church. I know this from personal experience.

Remember back to **Romans 8:3**; Jesus came *“in the likeness of sinful flesh”* – that is, He was made JUST like us, the same susceptibility to temptation, the same moral and physical frailties – “and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh”. Jesus came to condemn sin by overcoming sin **IN THE FLESH – WITH A CARNAL NATURE!**

But Antichrist, while pretending to “exalt” and “worship” Jesus, has said Jesus wasn't truly human; He wasn't really tempted; He didn't really die; He knew all the answers. And He certainly didn't have a carnal nature! By saying so, they in effect say Jesus was NOT the Christ – because His sacrifice was unfair, because He “cheated” by not playing by the same rules!

Some even say He was never even a man, just divine the entire time. And certainly, none would concede there was ever a time when any part of Jesus wanted to sin! And yet if He was tempted like me, His heart HAD to want to sin – but to be my Savior, He also had to **CONQUER** that, as I must, and **RULE** that instinctive lust **so it cannot CONCEIVE and THEN bring forth sin!**

By saying Jesus was different from us in ANY way – when the Bible plainly says He wasn't – the spirit of antichrist *always* concludes that He may have come “in the likeness of flesh”, but NOT “in the likeness of SINFUL flesh”! Not with a carnal nature! And thus, not **IN THE FLESH, with its frailties, physical and moral!**

By saying that, they say He really wasn't like us at all! That He did NOT come in the likeness of sinful flesh! And therefore, He did NOT condemn sin IN THE FLESH, for HE HAD NO FLESH! He was simply God, and "God cannot be tempted"! And therefore, Jesus was not the Christ! (**1 John 2:22**). Now do you see how the attitude of antichrist denies that Jesus is the Savior?

They deny it by denying the very purpose of His human existence – which was to prove mankind CAN obey God, which He proved once and for all by obeying God perfectly, despite having every moral and physical frailty we have! And since they deny He had any frailties whatsoever, they teach against the most important part of Jesus' life!

Jesus did not come to this Earth as God! He EMPTIED Himself of power; of authority; yes, even of divinity. He became a MAN, just like you and me. Made in the likeness of sinful flesh, **with the same sinful nature you and I must battle**. The difference is, He never gave into it as you and I have. That's why He was our Savior, and why you and I need saving.

## SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

The Jesus you've "met" in this lesson is different from the one you've always known. That's because the one you've always known is the false Jesus; that "other Jesus" who Paul warned us about, the one who teaches that "other gospel" you learned about in the last lesson, and who is worshiped by a false – innocently deceived, knowing no better, but nonetheless false – Christianity.

I didn't tell you about this Jesus, you read about Him in your own Bible. The other Jesus you only heard about from other books or preachers or friends, because that other Jesus is a fiction.

This lesson is THE most important thing you have learned so far. Because this lesson, this one single bit of understanding, is what separates someone with the spirit of Christ, and someone with the spirit of Satan – the originator of the idea of Antichrist.

But even more importantly, **this lesson gives you hope**. How? You've been learning a lot about God, and at times He may seem strict to you; you may wonder how you can ever overcome, how you can ever defeat that carnal nature inside of you. You have looked at the example of Christ and said "well sure, HE did it, but HE was Jesus; HE was God" – but that was the spirit of antichrist talking.

Yes, HE did it – but He was no different from you. Yes, He overcame, but not because He had been alive for eternity – He remembered none of that. Not because He had no inherent lust, but because He RULED those lusts, just as He now commands YOU to do.

Not only this, but Jesus made sure He had it harder than anyone else ever did. He was put in tougher situations than anyone who ever had to overcome sin. Jesus faced temptations that He would NEVER let you encounter, because you wouldn't be able to handle them. (**1 Corinthians 10:13**).

**And that should give you hope that yes, you really CAN obey God; that it really CAN be done, and done by frail humans like you and me.** God promised He would see to it that it will be possible for you to obey Him and God keeps His promises! Jesus was at no time endowed with special powers, or anything beyond our own comprehension. He simply believed God and obeyed God, which is all you or I have to do. And when you really, truly, make the decision that NOTHING ELSE MATTERS... then it actually is easy.



You have anguish and stress and confusion only when you try to serve two masters – your own heart and God at the same time; your mate and God; your job and God; the devil and God. The fretting over who to obey on THIS point, who to please NOW and who to please later... this is what upsets you.

Do you take your daughter to soccer practice on Sabbath or do you obey God's command? Whom do you serve? Whom do you struggle to keep happy? Do you accept Christmas presents from your unconverted relatives or tell them Christmas is pagan? Do you keep the angel statues your sister gave you or keep the commandment about idolatry?

It is these decisions that cause stress in the Christian life. Jesus said "*my yoke is easy, and my burden is light*" (**Matthew 11:30**) – and it really is! **But only when you're pulling the same direction as Jesus is!** When you're pulling another way, it gets mighty heavy!

When you're trying to drag along all of your worldly possessions and fifty unconverted people AND carry that yoke, it's downright impossible! But when you have firmly decided deep in your soul that you are going to serve God, and the rest of the world can go up in smoke if necessary, but you are going to put God FIRST... well...

**Matthew 6:33** *But seek ye FIRST the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.*

This work is completely non-denominational and is meant to fulfill Christ's great commission to "*preach the gospel to every creature*" (**Mark 16:15**). **This publication is not to be sold;** "*freely ye have received, freely give*" (**Matthew 10:8**).

The Bible tells us to PROVE ALL THINGS, and The Simple Answers encourages people to do just that. If you cannot PROVE what you believe, you have no right to believe it! Many of the things we print are shocking because they are different from what you've heard, but if something we say offends or upsets you, we hope you will take the time to set aside your preconceived ideas and PROVE your point from the Bible to see if you truly have been right all these years.

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