



# LANDER, WYOMING *church of Christ*

## JESUS

The greatest personality of human history who has affected the lives of millions of people, was born in the humble environment of a Bethlehem manger two thousand years ago. This is Jesus of Nazareth, the Son of God. He is the only begotten Son of the God. The explosion of Christianity into history, and the rapid growth of the church of Jesus' disciples could not have been the invention of mere men. The only answer for the phenomenal growth of Christianity in the first century is that it had a Supernatural beginning. As a historical character, Jesus is who He said He was, the Son of God. Nothing else answers the questions as to why Christianity has grown to the point of captivating the hearts of millions of people for centuries. Jesus fulfilled hundreds of prophecies. He proved the divine origin of His teachings by the evidence of His miracles. He taught a way of life that has been unmatched by any man-made religion. And finally, He was proved to be the only Son of God by His resurrection from the dead in order to now reign in heaven. The existence, work and character of Jesus Christ could not have been dreamed up by over zealous disciples. He was God revealed in the flesh, and thus demands and deserves the obedience of all people. Understanding that Jesus is not an invented historical personality by a group of men, but the actual Son of God, should move all of us to serve Him.

## THE PERSON OF JESUS

Our attraction to Jesus is caused by who He is. Since He is truly the Son of God and all that the Bible says He is, then He can be and is the solid foundation for the faith of millions of people who have believed on Him for their salvation.

- A. Jesus was indwelt by the fullness of God (Cl 1:19; 2:9).
- B. Jesus is the incarnate Word of God (Jn 1:1,14; 1 Jn 1:1,2; 2 Jn 7).
- C. Jesus is the only Son of God (Jn 1:14,18; 3:16,18).
- D. Jesus is one with God (Is 9:6; Jn 1:1,2; 10:30; Ti 2:13; 1 Jn 5:20).
- E. Jesus is eternal in existence (Rm 9:5; Hb 7:3; Rv 1:8).
- F. Jesus is all-knowing (Mt 9:4; Lk 5:22; Jn 2:25).

## THE PROOF OF JESUS

The Bible and history are both evidences that Jesus is who He said He was. If one believes in the Bible, he must believe in Jesus as the Son of God (Jn 20:30,31). If one believes historical documents, he must believe that Jesus existed.

A. The proof of prophecy: There are over 300 prophecies in the Old Testament concerning Jesus and His work. These prophecies were written hundreds of years before Jesus lived.

1. He would be a descendant of Abraham (Gn 12:1-3; see Gl 3:16).
2. He would be a descendant of Isaac (Gn 21:12; see Hb 11:18).
3. He would be born of Judah (Gn 49:10; see Lk 3:33).
4. He would be a descendant of David (2 Sm 7:12-16; see Rv 22:16).
5. He would be born in Bethlehem (Mc 5:2; see Mt 2:1,3; Jn 7:42).
6. He would be betrayed (Ps 41:9; 55:12-14; see Mk 14:66-72).
7. He would be raised from the dead (Ps 16:10; see At 2:32).

B. The proof of His existence: Many ancient historical documents refer to Jesus and events surrounding His ministry.

1. Julius Africanus quoted Thallus, who lived in Rome around A.D. 52. Thallus was familiar with the darkness that came over the earth at the time Jesus was crucified (Mt 27:45).
2. Mara Bar-Serapion in a letter to his son referred to the Jews' execution of "their king", a reference to Jesus.
3. Tacitus, who was born around A.D. 52-54, referred to "Christus" (Christ) who was executed during the reign of Tiberius.

4. C. Plinius Secundus (Pliny, the younger), governor of Bithynia around A.D. 112, wrote to Caesar Trajan concerning the problem of "Christians" in his province.
5. The Jewish Talmud (Jewish teachings that were compiled from A.D. 70 - 200) makes many references to "Yeshu'a of Nazareth", though the references are made in a negative context.
6. Josephus, a Jewish historian at the end of the first century refers to "Jesus, a wise man, ... a doer of marvelous deeds."

C. The proof of His miracles and resurrection: If Jesus were who He said He was, then we would expect Him to have control over the supernatural and natural world. He would not be subject to a death without a resurrection. While religions of men focus on the tombs of their founders, Christians focus on the reign of a resurrected Savior. The rapid growth of the church in the first century in only a few years is answered in the fact that Jesus was actually raised from the dead.

D. The proof of persecuted disciples: The suffering and death of the early Christians can be answered only in the fact that they believed Jesus was the resurrected Son of God.

1. The disciples willingly suffered for Jesus (At 4:18,19; 14:22; 2 Tm 3:12).
2. The disciples willingly died for Jesus (At 8:1-3; 12:1-4; 1 Pt 4:16; Rv 2:10).

E. The proof of the New Testament documents: The existence of the ancient New Testament documents proves that Christianity was a powerful movement in the first century. Because these documents were written without contradiction by several men over a period of many years, proves that neither Jesus nor the church were the invention of men (See Jn 20:30,31).

## THE POWER OF JESUS

No man on earth ever claimed to be God as Jesus claimed to be (Jn 10:30-33). Therefore, He was either the greatest liar and deceiver who ever lived, or truly the One He claimed to be with the authority and power He now has over all things. Who Jesus claimed to be makes Him greater than all men.

- A. Jesus was the creator of all things (Cl 1:16; Hb 1:2).
- B. Jesus is now head of all things (Mt 28:18; Jn 13:3; Ep 1:20-22).
- C. Jesus is King of all earthly rulers (1 Tm 6:15; Rv 19:16).
- D. Jesus now reigns over all things (Rm 5:17; Ph 2:9-11; 1 Pt 3:22).
- E. Jesus is our Savior and Redeemer (Jn 14:6; At 4:12; Ep 1:7; Ti 2:14).
- F. Jesus is our High Priest before God (Hb 3:1; 4:14; 7:26).
- G. Jesus is the foretold Prophet (Lk 13:33; Jn 1:21; At 3:22-26).
- H. Jesus is our only Mediator with God (1 Tm 2:5; Hb 8:6; 9:15; 12:24).
- I. Jesus will be the final judge of all (Jn 12:48; 2 Co 5:10).

## THE PLEA OF JESUS

Because Jesus has universal authority, He is the only one who has a right to make a universal plea to all men to come to Him for eternal existence in the presence of God.

- A. Jesus says He is the only way, truth and life (Jn 14:6).
- B. Jesus pleads that all come to Him (Mt 11:28,29).
- C. Jesus says that all people must believe in Him (Jn 8:24).
- D. Jesus says that everyone must believe and be baptized in order to be saved (Mk 16:15,16).

The reason for God's coming in the flesh of Jesus was to become the atoning sacrifice for our sins (Jn 3:1-21). Through His sacrifice one can be reconciled to God (2 Co 5:16-21). All those who obey His death and resurrection through baptism will live forever in the presence of God (Jn 5:24,25; Rm 6:3-6; 2 Th 1:6-9; 1 Pt 3:21).

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