

WHY JEWISH & GENTILE CHRISTIANS BELIEVE
JESUS WAS THE MESSIAH OF THE HEBREW BIBLE ©

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1. According to Jewish and Gentile Christians, ever since its first occurrence in Genesis 3:15, the Hebrew Bible has predicted that a Messiah would come. Christians presuppose the existence of an infinite-personal G-d in their worldview. If infinite-personal G-d exists, then it is reasonable to believe that miracles occur.
2. Biblical authors & Christians refer to “*predictive prophecies*” in Hebrew Bible to claim that Jesus Christ historically fulfilled these promises:

| | Old Testament Prophecy: | N.T. Fulfillment: |
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| a. | Genesis 3:15: Messiah would be the seed of a woman: | Galatians 4:4 |
| b. | Genesis 12:3 Messiah would be a descendant of Abraham: | Matthew 1:1 |
| c. | Genesis 17:19: Messiah would be a descendant of Isaac: | Luke 3:34 |
| d. | Numbers 24:17: Messiah would be a descendant of Jacob: | Matthew 1:2, 2:2 |
| e. | Genesis 49:10: Messiah would be from the tribe of Judah: | Luke 3:33 |
| f. | Isaiah 9:7: Messiah would an heir to the throne of David: | Luke 1:32, 33 |
| g. | Psalms 45:6-7; 102:25-27 Messiah would be anointed and eternal: | Hebrews 1:8-12 |
| h. | Micah 5:2: Messiah would be born in Bethlehem: | Luke 2:4, 5, 7 |
| i. | Isaiah 7:14: Messiah would be born of a virgin | Luke 1:26-27, 30-31 |
| j. | Jeremiah 31:15: Messiah’s birth would trigger a slaughter of children: | Matthew 2:16-18 |
| k. | Hosea 11:1: Messiah would also come from Egypt: | Matthew 2:14-15 |

3. The Book of Isaiah makes more references to a coming Messiah than any other OT prophetic book. The Messiah is predicted to be the God-Man (100% deity; 100% perfect humanity) in Isaiah 9:6-7: “*For a child will be born for us, a son will be given to us, and the government will be on His shoulders. He will be named Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace. The dominion will be vast, and its prosperity will never end. He will reign on the throne of David and over his kingdom, to establish and sustain it with justice and righteousness from now on and forever. The zeal of the LORD of Hosts will accomplish this.*”

By means of the words “*yeled*” (child) and “*yullad*” (is born), Isaiah calls attention to the Messiah’s humanity whereas the phrase, “*mighty God*” Isaiah draws upon the Messiah’s deity. The word “*wonderful*” strengthens the concept of deity for the Messiah is a “*wonder*.”

- A1. **Wonderful Counselor:** Messiah is a “Wonder”: The root of the word “*pele*” (wonder) is used to describe the miracles which G-d performed (Psalm 78:12); Angel of the lord replies to Manoah that his name is “*pele*,” i.e., incomprehensible to man. It denotes deity. Position of the word is striking in that His first hear that he is called Wonder. He is a “Wonder of a Counselor”
- A2. Second word is “*Counselor*”: To sit upon the throne of David as the Messianic King; He himself is the counselor unlike mere rulers. Such counseling is characteristic of G-d cf. Isaiah28:29).
- B1. **Mighty God:** “*Mighty*” denotes “*hero*.”
- B2. “*El*” denotes God. This hero’s chief characteristic is that He is G-d: “*a heroic God*.” “He who is born the mighty God is therefore able to save all who put their trust in Him.”¹
- C1. **Everlasting Father:** Eternity is “*ad*” which signifies perpetuity (cf. Isaiah 57:15) denotes , “the no ending of the Messiah’s kingdom.”
- C2. But combined with “*Father*” denotes “One who is eternally a Father, that is, one “who acts toward them like a Father” (Isaiah 63:16; Psalm 103:13): “He is One who eternally is a father to His people.”
- D1. **Prince of Peace:** “*Restoring peace*” to the world He “*reigns*” in peace (vertically & horizontally, cf. Rom. 5:1).
- D2. This One is a Prince who embodies Peace.
- E: Passages that reflect Jesus identified with the predictive prophecy of Isaiah 9:6 by Isaiah:
 - a. Acts 2:22: As a “*Wonderful Counselor*,” Jesus was a doer of “*miracles, wonders, and signs*.”
 - b. John 20:28: Exclaimed, “*My Lord and my God*” in His resurrection.
 - c. Matthew 28:18: Jesus has been given “*all authority... in heaven and on earth*”
 - d. John10:30: Jesus is eternal since He is “*one with the Father*.”
 - e. Revelation 1:18: Jesus is “*alive forever and ever*.”
 - f. Romans 1:3: Jesus is a member of David’s royal line.
 - g. Ephesians 2:14: The Prince who brings peace between Jew and non-Jew.
 - h. Revelation 1:5: Rulership over all kingdoms (cf. Revelation 19-22).

¹ E. J. Young, *The Book of Isaiah* (3 vols), 1:338.

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| 4. | Jesus fulfills Isaiah's prophecy of the Suffering Servant: | N.T. Fulfillment: |
| a. | Isaiah 52:13: He will be exalted: | Philippians 2:9 |
| b. | Isaiah 52:14; 53:2: He will be disfigured by suffering: | Mark 15:17, 19 |
| c. | Isaiah 53:1, 3: He will be widely rejected: | John 12:37-38 |
| d. | Isaiah 53:4: He will be our sins and sorrows: | Romans 4:25; 1 Peter 2:24-25 |
| e. | Isaiah 53:5: He will make a blood atonement: | Romans 3:25 |
| f. | Isaiah 53:6, 8: He will be our substitute: | 2 Corinthians 5:21 |
| g. | Isaiah 53:7: He will voluntarily accept our guilt & punishment: | John 10:11 |
| h. | Isaiah 53:9: He will be buried in a rich man's tomb: | John 19:38-42 |
| i. | Isaiah 53:10-11: He will justify many from their sins: | Romans 5:15-19 |
| j. | Isaiah 53:12: He will die with transgressors: | Mark 15:27-28; Luke 22:37 |

5. Messianic Prophecies fulfilled in Jesus Christ in Thematic Order:²

| a. | Bible passage: | Subject of Prophecy | Scripture as fulfillment: |
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| 1. | Genesis 3:15 | Born of the seed of a woman | Galatians 4:4 |
| 2. | Genesis 12:2-3 | Born of the seed of Abraham | Matthew 1:1 |
| 3. | Genesis 17:19 | Born of the seed of Isaac | Matthew 1:2 |
| 4. | Numbers 24:17 | Born of the seed of Jacob | Matthew 1:2 |
| 5. | Genesis 49:10 | Descended from the Tribe of Judah | Luke 3:33 |
| 6. | Isaiah 9:7 | Heir to the throne of David | Luke 1:32-33 |
| 7. | Daniel 9:25 | Time for Jesus' birth | Luke 2:1-2 |
| 8. | Isaiah 7:14 | Born of a virgin | Luke 1:26-27; 30-31 |
| 9. | Micah 5:2 | Born in Bethlehem | Luke 2:4-7 |
| 10. | Jeremiah 31:15 | Slaughter of the Innocents | Matthew 2:16-18 |
| 11. | Hosea 11:1 | Flight to Egypt | Matthew 2:14-15 |
| 12. | Isaiah 40:3-5; Malachi 3:1 | Preceded by a forerunner | Luke 7:24, 27 |

² H. Wayne House, *Charts of Christian Theology and Doctrine* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1992), 60-61.

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| 13. | Psalm 2:7 | Declared the Son of God | Matthew 3:16-17 |
| 14. | Isaiah 9:1-2 | Galilean Ministry | Matthew 4:13-17 |
| 15. | Deuteronomy 18:15 | The prophet to come | Acts 3:20, 22 |
| 16. | Isaiah 61:1-2 | Came to heal the brokenhearted | Luke 4:18-19 |
| 17. | Isaiah 53:3 | Rejected by his own (the Jews) | John 1:11 |
| 18. | Psalm 110:4 | A priest after the order of Melchizedek | Hebrews 5:5-6 |
| 19. | Zechariah 9:9 | Triumphal Entry | Mark 11:7, 9, 11 |
| 20. | Psalm 41:9 | Betrayed by a friend | Luke 22:47, 48 |
| 21. | Zechariah 11:12-13 | Sold for thirty pieces of silver | Matthew 26:15; 27:5-7 |
| 22. | Psalm 35:11 | Accused by false witness | Mark 14:57-58 |
| 23. | Isaiah 53:7 | Silent to accusations | Mark 15:4-5 |
| 24. | Isaiah 50:6 | Spat upon and smitten | Matthew 26:67 |
| 25. | Psalm 35:19 | Hated without reason | John 15:24-25 |
| 26. | Isaiah 53:5 | Vicarious sacrifice | Romans 5:6, 8 |
| 27. | Isaiah 53:12 | Crucified with transgressors | Mark 15:27-28 |
| 28. | Zechariah 12:10 | Hands pierced | John 20:27 |
| 29. | Psalm 22:7-8 | Scorned and mocked | Luke 23:35 |
| 30. | Psalm 69:21 | Given vinegar and gall | Matthew 27:34 |
| 31. | Psalm 109:4 | Prayer for his enemies | Luke 23:34 |
| 32. | Psalm 22:18 | Soldiers gambled for his coat | Matthew 27:35 |
| 33. | Psalm 34:20 | No bones broken | John 19:32-33; 36 |
| 34. | Zechariah 12:10 | Side pierced | John 19:34 |
| 35. | Isaiah 53:9 | Buried with the rich | Matthew 27:57-60 |
| 36. | Psalm 16:10; 49:15 | Would rise from the dead | Mark 16:6-7 |
| 37. | Psalm 68:18 | Would ascend to God's right hand | Mark 16:19 |

6. The author of the Gospel of John, the apostle John, offers 7 seven historical signs that Jesus is G-d. In fact, The Gospel of John is written to demonstrate to its readers that Jesus is G-d:

- a. John 2:1-11: Changing water into choice wine
- b. John 4:46-54: Healing a man's son
- c. John 5:1-9: Healing a lame man
- d. John 6:1-14: Multiplying bread and fish
- e. John 6:15-21: Walking on water
- f. John 9:1-7: Healing a blind man
- g. John 11:38-44: Raising Lazarus from the dead.

7. Jesus Christ possessed a human nature and had the sinless infirmities of human nature:

- a. Matthew 1:18-2:11; Luke 1:30-38: He was born a virgin
- b. Luke 2:50, 52: He had a human developed for He continued to grow and become strong.
- c. Matthew 26:12, 38; John 2:21; Mark 2:8: Had the essential elements of human nature (human body, reason, and will).
- d. John 1:30; 4:9; 10:38: Jesus was repeatedly called a man.
- e. Matthew 1:21; Matt. 8:20; 11:18: He had human names: Jesus (Matt. 1:21; Matt. 8:20; 11:18; Matt. 1:1).
- f. John 4:6: Jesus' body grew weary
- g. Matthew 4:2: Jesus become hungry
- h. John 19:28: Jesus became thirsty
- i. Matthew 4; Hebrews 2:18: Jesus was tempted
- j. John 12:27; 13:21: Jesus' soul was troubled
- k. John 11:33: Jesus groans in His spirit

8. Jesus Possessed Divine Office:

- a. John 1:3, Colossians 1:16: Jesus is Creator
- b. Colossians 1:17: He is Sustainer

9. Apostle John offers historical statements by those who believe that Jesus, the G-d-Man, was Israel's Messiah:

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| a. | John 1:41: | Andrew proclaims to the brother, "We have found the Messiah." |
| b. | John 1:49: | Nathaniel concluded, "You are the Son of G-d! You are the King of Israel!" |
| c. | John 4:25-26, 29: | Samaritan woman testified to Jesus' identity. |
| d. | John 4:42; 11:27; 12:13: | Jesus the Messiah was and is the Savior of the world. |
| e. | John 8:58; 10:30; 17:5: | Jesus Himself claims to be G-d. |

10. John focuses on Jesus' claim that He was G-d by including Christ's famous seven "I am statements." These "I am" statements affirms the idea that Jesus equates Himself with the Hebrew concept of G-d as the "I am." To a 1st Century Jewish person, these statements were unmistakable (cf. John 8:58; cf. John 12:41; 8:24, 50-58):

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| a. | John 6:35, 48: | "I am the Bread of life" |
| b. | John 8:12: | "I am the light of the world" |
| c. | John 10:7, 9: | "I am the door" |
| d. | John 10: 11, 14: | "I am the good shepherd" |
| e. | John 11:25: | "I am the resurrection and the life" |
| f. | John 14:6: | I am the way, the truth, and the life" |
| g. | John 15:1: | "I am the true vine." |

11. Jesus Possessed Divine Prerogatives:

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| a. | Matthew 9:2; Luke 7:47: | Jesus forgives sin |
| b. | John 5:25; 11:25: | Jesus raises the dead |
| c. | John 5:22: | Jesus executes judgment |
| d. | Colossians 1:15; Hebrews 1:3: | Jesus expressed the image of God; |
| e. | John 10:31: | He is one with the Father |
| f. | Matthew 14:33; 28:9; John 20:28-29 | Jesus accepted divine worship |
| g. | Matthew 11:27: | Jesus possessed unique knowledge of God |
| h. | John 14:5-7; John 1:18; Matthew 11:27 | Jesus claimed to be the unique & exclusive mediator between humans and God the Father and the unique and exclusive revelation of God to humans. |

12. Jesus Possessed Divine Names:

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| a. | Revelation 22:13: | Alpha and the Omega |
| b. | John 8:58: | I AM |
| c. | Matthew 1:22: | Immanuel |
| d. | Matthew 9:6; 12:8: | Son of Man |
| e. | Matthew 7:21; Luke 1:43: | Lord |
| f. | John 10:36: | Son of God |
| g. | John 1:1; 2 Peter 1:1: | God |

13. Because John believes that Jesus was the Messiah, he claims that people should trust in Jesus for eternal life. This belief presupposes the following ideas:

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| a. | John 10:38; 14:10-11: | The Father is in Christ, and Christ is in the Father |
| b. | John 16:17, 30: | Christ came from G-d |
| c. | John 11:42; 17:8, 21 cf. 6:29: | G-d sent Jesus |
| d. | John 6:69; 11:27; 20:31: | Jesus is the Son of G-d. |

14. The Assyrian Conquests, The Babylonian Conquest of Jerusalem in 586 BC, the Medo-Persian Period (450-333 BC), the Hellenistic Period (330-166 BC), Hasmonean Rule (166-63 BC) especially with the Selucid rulers who sought to force Hellenism upon the Jews, and the Roman Conquest and rulership of Jerusalem in 63 BC by the Roman General Pompey, contributed to the anticipation and longing for a future Messiah. The stage was set for the Messiah to come.

15. The Moral Character of Jesus Christ:

- a. Holy Character: Human nature was created holy (Luke 1:35), committed no sin (1 Pet. 1:22), & always pleased G-d the Father (John 8:29). There is no report or record that Jesus ever offered a sin sacrifice.
- b. Possesses Genuine Love: He laid down his life (John 15:13) & His love surpasses all knowledge.
- c. Truly Humble: Jesus Christ, the Second Person of the one and only Triune God, took the form of a servant (Phil. 2:5-8).
- d. Thoroughly Meek: Matthew 11:29
- e. Perfectly Balanced: He was grave without being melancholy; He was joyful without being frivolous
- f. Lived a Life of Prayer: Matthew 14:23; Luke 6:12.
- g. An Incessant Worker: He worked the works of G-d the Father (John 5:17; 9:4).

- h. He ministered to those who were marginalized, oppressed, and/or rejected by community: Tax Collector; Prostitutes; Gentiles; Samaritans.]
 - i. Jesus provided an example of servant leadership- calling people to lead by serving, practice humility (forsake pride), serve the least of these, & meet each other's practical needs with one's livelihood (Matthew 5-7; Philippians 2:1-11; 1 John 3:16-17).
16. The historical resurrection of Jesus Christ: 1 Corinthians 15:1-8:
- a. Jesus died from crucifixion and was buried by Joseph of Arimathea in his personal tomb.
 - b. On Sunday following the crucifixion, Jesus' tomb was found empty by women followers.
 - 1. This is significant because women in the period of history were considered to be untrustworthy as witnesses. Thus, if gospel writers were going to fabricate a resurrection appearance, then they would not have included women in the discovery of an empty tomb.
 - 2. The women saw the body being prepared for burial and knew the tomb's location. They noted the tomb's location seventy-two hours earlier.
 - 3. The women did not come looking for an open tomb, but a sealed one. They would have surely bypassed the open tomb if they were unsure of the exact location of the correct tomb.
 - c. On many occasions and under various conditions, different people experienced appearances of Jesus alive from the dead.
 - 1. The church's early practices of the Lord's Supper (1 Corinthians 11:17-34) and baptism (Romans 6:3) presupposed the bodily resurrection of Jesus Christ.
 - d. The original disciples believed that Jesus was resurrected despite their expectations that the Messiah (Christ) would not die and be resurrected.
 - 1. The disciples were not expecting Christ's resurrection even though he offered predictive prophecies in the Gospel of Mark (Passion Predictions) regarding both his death and resurrection.
 - e. Over five hundred different people in different locations with differing degrees of commitment to Jesus, with different understandings of Jesus' teaching had seen the resurrected Jesus Christ.
 - f. The best minds of ancient and modern times from a broad range of perspective have demonstrated beyond reasonable doubt the following:
 - 1. Christ's physical crucifixion was fatal; He could not have medically survived both the scourging and the crucifixion.
 - 2. The empty tomb is one of the best attested facts of ancient history;

3. The followers of Jesus Christ experienced on several occasions tangible post-resurrection appearances of Jesus Christ;
4. Within weeks of the resurrection over 3,000 Jewish people experienced such a radical transformation that they willingly gave up sociological and theological traditions that had given them their national identity.
5. Jews, Roman leaders and guards, disciples, and Joseph of Arimathea could both locate and have brought out Jesus' body if He had not been resurrected.
6. Severe penalties, even death, would be the result of Roman guards sleeping on duty if the disciples indeed stole the body. Moreover, if the guards were sleeping, how did they know that the disciples stole the body? It seems unlikely that the disciples could possibly overcome the guards.

17. Divine Attributes attributed to Jesus Christ as the Messiah:

- a. Eternality: Micah 5:2; John 8:58; Col. 1:16-17; Rev. 1:8
- b. Self-existence (uncaused cause; the self-existent one. As Creator of all things, He Himself is uncreated): John 1:1-3; Col. 1:16-17
- c. Omnipresence: Matt. 28:20 (abide with them forever); Indwelling believer (John 14:18, 20, 23); John 3:13. While on earth (locality), Christ was omnipresent in His deity. At the same time Christ is at the right hand of the Father (Mark 16:19; 1 Peter 3:22), He is indwelling believer.
- d. Omniscience: John 2:25; 6:64; 13:1, 11; 16:30; 18:4; 19:28; 21:17; 1 Cor. 1:30 (declared to have wisdom of God).
- e. Omnipotence: Forgive sins (9:6); all power in heaven & in earth (Matt. 28:18); power over nature (Luke 8:25); power over His own life (John 10:18), power to give eternal life to others

(John 17:2), power to heal physically & cast out demons (Mark 1:29-34), power to transform the body (Phil. 3:21), power to keep people from falling & present them faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy (Jude 24; cf. Eph. 5:27). Omnipotence of Christ is restricted to that which is in conformity to goodness, holiness, & wisdom.
- f. Immutability of divine nature & divine attributes: Heb. 13:8 "same yesterday, and today, and forever." Divine nature remains unchanged: Heb. 1:10-12; cf. Psalm 102:25-27). In the incarnation Jesus added perfect human nature to immutable divine nature.
- g. Fullness of the Godhead (In Jesus Christ is all the fullness of the Godhead): "For in him the the whole fullnes of deity dwells bodily" (Col. 2:9):

"in him" (Greek, *en autoi*) stands first, thus emphasizes the person of Jesus Christ; The Greek word "dwell" (*katoikei*) means "permanently dwells."
- h. Sovereignty: Matthew 28:18: "All authority in heaven and on earth is given to me"; 1 Peter 3:22, "angels, authorities, and powers subject to him"; Rev. 19:16, "KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORD"; see also John 5:27; Acts 2:36; 1 Cor. 12:3; Phil. 2:9-10; Col. 1:18.
- i. Other qualities of Deity:

1. John 17:5; Rev. 1:12-18: Divine Shekinah Glory of Jesus Christ;
 2. John 14:6: "Jesus is "the way, the truth, and the life"
 3. Jer. 23:5-6: Jesus is the "righteous Branch... Jehovah of righteousness":
 4. Luke 1:35: "He is the holy Son of God;
 5. John 1:17: Jesus Christ is the manifestation of grace, divine love, and righteousness combined.
 6. There is not an attribute of Deity which is not directly or indirectly ascribed to Jesus Christ
18. Jesus Christ coheres with God's plan of redemption: Romans 8:28-30; Ephesians 1:4-11, 3:11; 2 Thess. 2:13; 2 Tim. 1:9; James 2:5; 1 Pet. 1:1-2.
- a. Many come to believe in Jesus being the G-d-Man in that Jesus, who is in the order of God, came down and suffered with us. He experienced temptations, our pain, our suffering, and loss of what it matters to us. He experienced a loss of fellowship with G-d the Father on Calvary. In other words, in Jesus, we have a G-d who pitched His tent in our midst and lived among us and experienced what we experience.
19. Jesus Christ in Hebrew Bible:
- a. Christ is associated with the name Jehovah. This is significant because Jesus is ascribe worthiness of the most ineffable name of G-d in Scripture: Zechariah 12:10b cf. Revelation 1:7: "They shall look unto me whom they have pierced"; Christ is declared to be "Jehovah our righteousness": Jer. 23:5-6 cf. 1 Cor. 1:30; Other comparisons: Psalm 68:18 cf. Eph. 4:8-10; Ps. 102:12, 25-27 cf. Heb. 1:10-12; Isa. 6:5; cf. John 12:41).
 - b. Christ is the Jehovah of the temple: Mal. 3:1; Matt. 12:6; 21:12-13;
 - c. Christ is the Jehovah of the Sabbath: Matt. 12:8.
20. Jesus Christ predicted his execution in Jerusalem and that He would rise from the dead on the third day: Matthew 16:21-22; 20:18-19.
21. Jesus Christ & Comparative Mythology: Tolkien & C.S. Lewis: Jesus is the myth that is true. Consider this overview by Dr. Louis Markos, English scholar and authority on C. S. Lewis:
- a. Like many educated men of his age, Lewis, guided by his reading of Sir James Frazer's *The Golden Bough* (1890-1915), considered the gospel story to be a myth.
 1. Frazer, like the later Joseph Campbell, was a comparative anthropologist who cataloged such persistent archetypal myths/rites as the god or demigod who dies and rises again.
 2. This archetype—known as the Corn King because of its link to the seasonal cycle—appears in many cultures under many names: Osiris, Adonis, Tammuz, Mithras, Balder.
 3. As the gospels depict Christ as a "demigod" who was slain as a ritual scapegoat to expiate taboo guilt and who subsequently rose, he must be read in mythic (not historic) terms.
 4. Lewis simply assumed that modern anthropology had "proven" Christ a myth.
 - b. A long talk with his friend J. R. R. Tolkien changed his mind about Christianity:

1. Tolkien, author of *The Lord of the Rings*, suggested to Lewis that the reason Christ resembled so closely the myths of the pagans was that Christ was the myth that came true.
 2. Inspired by Tolkien's suggestion, Lewis came to view myths as glimpses, road signs, pointers to a greater truth that would be revealed literally and historically in Christ.
 3. "The heart of Christianity is a myth which is also a fact. The old myth of the Dying God, *without ceasing to be myth*, comes down from the heaven of legend and imagination to the earth of history. . . . We pass from a Balder or an Osiris, dying nobody knows when or where, to a historical Person crucified (it is all in order) *under Pontius Pilate*."
 4. The presence of so many Corn King myths *strengthens* the case for Christ, for it shows that Christianity is not a foreign thing but the answer to a deep human need.
 5. Until the coming of Christ, Lewis writes, God spoke through our conscience, through a historical people group (the Jews), and through the "good dreams" of the pagans.
 6. Just as Christ fulfilled all the Messianic prophecies recorded in the Old Testament, so, Lewis argues, he fulfilled all the highest yearnings of the pagans.
 7. What makes the gospel of Christ so compelling is that it appeals not only to our reason but to our imagination; yes, Christ is more than Balder, but he is not less.
- c. Building on Lewis's apologetic, Dr. Louis Markos argues that though Christianity is not the only truth (bits of truth can be found in all cultures and religions), it *is* the only *complete* truth.
1. Yes, truth is at the top of the hill and there are many ways around that hill, but the Truth that lies at the top is Christ himself: he who is the Way, the Truth, and the Life.
 2. The Magi offer a powerful symbol of pre-Christians pagans who trusted to their limited knowledge of the stars and followed it until it led them to the full revelation of Christ.
 3. Medieval Christians recognized Plato and Virgil as proto-Christians used by God to prepare the pagan world; Paul even quotes pagan poets as pointers to Christ (Acts 17:28).³

22. The Evaluation of Jesus' Staggering Claims:

- a. Assuming the historical accuracy of Gospel literature, Jesus Christ was either:
 1. Intentionally deceiving others about His identity (Liar);
 2. Self-deceived, believing that He was G-d but in fact He is not (Lunatic);
 3. Truthful in both His claims & entailments (LORD).
- b. C. S. Lewis famously stated the "trilemma" argument this way:

A man who was merely a man and said the sort of things Jesus said would not be a great moral teacher. He would either be a lunatic-on the level with the man who says he is a

³ Louis Markos, "C. S. Lewis: Apologist For The 21st Century." Handout.

poached egg-or else he would be the Devil of Hell. You must make your choice. Either this man was, and is, the Son of God: or else you can spit at Him and kill Him as a demon; or you can fall at His feet and call Him Lord and God. But let us not come up with any patronising nonsense about His being a great human teacher. He was not left that open to us. He did not intend to.⁴

c. Stephen T. Davis', "Was Jesus Mad, Bad, or God?" article, he contends for the rationality of belief in the incarnation:⁵

1. Jesus claimed, either explicitly or implicitly, to be divine.
2. Jesus was either right or wrong in claiming to be divine.
3. If Jesus was wrong in claiming to be divine, Jesus was either made or bad.
4. Jesus was not bad.
5. Jesus was not mad.
6. Therefore, Jesus was not wrong in claiming to be divine.
7. Therefore, Jesus was right in claiming to be divine.
8. Therefore, Jesus was divine.

23. Conversion and changes of unlikely people:

- a. The Zealous Saul becomes the Apostle Paul (Acts; 2 Corinthians);
- b. James, the half-brother of Jesus (a family member; The Book of James);
- c. Roman Centurion Cornelius of Caesarea and his household;
- d. Change in Peter's mindset following the bodily resurrection. Peter boldly confronts the Sanhedrin following resurrection when before he denied being a follower of Christ on the eve of Jesus' crucifixion.

⁴ C. S. Lewis, *Mere Christianity* (New York: MacMillan Publishing Company, 1996; orig. pub. 1943), 55.

⁵ Stephen T. Davis, "Was Jesus Mad, Bad, or Good?" in Stephen T. David, Daniel Kendall, and Gerald O'Collins, eds., *The Incarnation* (Oxford University Press, 2002), 221-245.

24. As reflected as early as Genesis 15 with Abraham receiving righteousness by faith, the path to salvation is simply placing one's trust in Jesus Christ for salvation.
- a. The gift of grace: Grace is undeserved favor. Past, present, and future sins are completely forgiven.
 1. The only human condition for receiving eternal life and having one's sins forgiven is by placing his or her faith in Jesus Christ for salvation. Salvation is open to anyone who is willing to believe that Jesus is G-d, who died the cross for one's sin and rose bodily from the dead. This invitation for salvation is open to anyone is willing to believe, no matter race, gender, background, past wrongs, economic situation, or sexuality.
 - a. No rituals needed for salvation
 - b. No self-beatings needed for salvation
 - c. No asceticism needed for salvation
 - d. No financial contributions to the church needed for salvation
 - e. No steps are required in an effort to secure salvation.
 - f. No memorization required for salvation
 - g. Education not necessary for salvation.
 - h. No good deeds necessary to secure salvation.
 2. Faith alone in Christ alone: Salvation is a gift of grace, that is, it is undeserved favor; no one can be good enough to earn salvation (Romans 1-3; 5:12). Thus, receiving G-d's love gift of salvation in the open arms of faith is the only condition for salvation.

25. Results of Christ's atonement:⁶

- a. **Substitution for sinners:** Jesus took our place; he bore the penalty for our sins (Luke 22:19; John 3:36; 6:51; 15:13; Eph. 1:3; Heb. 2:9; 1 Peter 3:18; 1 John 5:11-12).
- b. **The fulfillment of the law:** Jesus' imputed righteousness becomes the believer's righteousness before God as perfect fulfillment of the law (Acts 15:10; Rom. 1:16-17; 3:21-22, 31; 4:5, 11, 13-16, 23-24, 5:19; 10:4; 2 Cor. 5:21; Gal. 3:8; 4:19-31; 5:1).
- c. **Redemption from sin:** God himself paid the ransom of human sin through the death of his Son (Acts 20:28; Rom. 3:23-24).
- d. **Reconciliation of Man to God:** God's attitude toward the world has changed completely (Rom. 5:10-11; 2 Cor. 5:18-20; Eph. 2:16; Col. 1:20-22).
- e. **Propitiation toward God:** God's righteousness and law have been vindicated (satisfied); (Rom. 3:25; Heb. 4:16; 1 John 2:2; 4:10).
- f. **Forgiveness and cleansing:** The believer in Jesus has forgiveness and cleansing to both justification and sanctification through Christ's blood and continuing advocacy in heaven (1 John 1:1-2:2).
- g. **The Avoidance of Divine Judgment:** God's view of sin as judged in the death of his son. The believer is sheltered under the redeeming blood of Christ (Rom. 2:4-5; 4:17; 9:22; 1 Peter 3:20; 3 Peter 3:9, 15).

⁶ House, *Charts of Christian Theology and Doctrine*, 108.

- h. **Took away Sins Covered by Sacrifice before the Cross:** Sins committed between the time of Adam and Christ's death on the cross were covered by sacrifice. In Christ they were taken away (Acts 17:30; Rom. 3:25; Heb. 9:15; 10:2-26).
- i. **National Salvation of Israel:** The future Israel of faith will have its sins removed (Rom. 9-11; esp. 11:25-29).
- k. **Millennial and Eternal Blessings Upon the Gentiles:** Millennial earthly blessings, which are assured to Israel, will be shared by the Gentiles (Matt. 25:31-45; Acts 15:17; Rev. 21:24).
- l. **The Spoiling of Principalities and Powers:** Christ gained direct legal victory at the cross over Satan and his hosts (John 12:31; 16:11; Eph. 1:21; Col. 2:14-15).
- m. **The Ground of Peace:** The cross brought peace between God and man (Rom. 5:1; Eph. 2:13-14a; Col. 1:20), between Jew and Gentile (Eph. 2:14-18; Col. 3:11), and universal peace (1 Cor. 15:27-28; Eph. 2:14-15; Col. 1:20).
- n. **The Purification of Things in Heaven:** Heavenly "things" were purified on the ground of Christ's blood (Heb. 9:23-24).
- o. **Judgment of the Sin Nature:** The Sin nature was judged at the cross is now able to be controlled by the Spirit in the believer's life. The believer positionally shares with Christ his crucifixion, death, burial, and resurrection (Romans 6-8; Ephesians 1-3).



