

Jesus Christ - Son of God

Who is Jesus Christ?

The one says, "He is an idealist".
Another, "A man to follow".

A third sees in Him the first communist - didn't He command anyone who had two articles of clothing to give one to some-one in need?

Still another calls Him a revolutionary-He chased the money-changers out of the Temple and overturned their many tables, didn't He?

But if I want to judge somebody, I shouldn't just look at one of his actions or words.

No, I should examine his whole life. That's what these judges have obviously not done!

Many stories and fables have been written about Jesus Christ, but there is only one biography about Him: the Bible. And that is trustworthy, because it came from God.

In the Bible, Jesus Christ is named in many different ways. One of them is "the Word", or "the Word of God", which indicates in Jesus Christ God comes to us and speaks to us. His activities are God's activities and His words are God's word.

Now let's read the gospel according to John. Remember that wherever we see "the Word" we mean Jesus Christ. Just listen to John for a moment: *"In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God."* So what does it say? This: "in the beginning" i.e. at Creation Jesus Christ was there (He existed).

He was with God (the Father). And He was God Himself.

We'll just read John 1:3 as well: *"through Him (Jesus Christ _ the Word) all things were made. Without Him nothing was made that has been made."* In other words, Jesus Christ was active in the developing of the Almighty God's great plan of creation. He was able to do that, as we heard already - because He was God Himself.

When Man fell into sin, a great change occurred: everything created came under the curse of God. At the same time, however, the Creator was moved by the plight of His creation, and did not want to let it perish. Therefore He came with a new plan for the world. Man had come under the power of Satan but God provided a way of escape. And this was the way, that Jesus Christ would take our place. He was willing to carry His father's wrath, take our burden of debt upon Himself, carry our punishment. By way of a humiliating death He would take upon Himself His Father's wrath against the transgression of Man. Then we could once more be accepted into God's favor and love. He could only go this difficult way because He was God Himself.

To do this divine work of love, Christ had to leave the glorious environment of His Father. He had to live as man among mankind; to speak to them as "the Word of God"; to convince them of their

sin and guilt and to call them to Faith and repentance. And finally, to pay their debt to God for their sins with His own death and to show them that His words were truth.

This was to happen at the time that God had ordained for it. In the Old Testament of the Bible, Christ's coming is announced in many places. Read, for example, the first verses of Isaiah 62 and the gripping chapter, Isaiah 53. Jesus Christ did come to earth. Born as a man of flesh and blood. But not born like us. Every birth is a miracle of God. Incomprehensible although - it seems to us - natural.

The birth of Jesus Christ was, however, not at all natural. HE was born of an unmarried woman, without the intervention of any man. The angel who brought Mary the news of her conception said, *"The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you."* (Luke 1:35) What God does here is something completely new. It calls to mind Genesis 1 where we read that God's Spirit was hovering over the water. In this water every living thing would soon be created at God's command. In the same way, God's Spirit created the Life in Mary's womb; life both human and divine. And the angel adds: *"therefore the one to be born will be called Holy, the Son of God."* At the same time He also received an ordinary name, albeit a beautiful one: Jesus, which means, God is salvation. Another name that he is sometimes called in the Bible is: "Son of Man".

Jesus divinity becomes apparent as He grows up. He is not tainted by sin. When He is twelve years old He amazes learned rabbis with His answers to their profound questions on life.

As an adult He appears in public. His preaching is moved by and filled with love for His people who have lost sight of God's promises and have become spiritually impoverished because of an external show of piety.

"Come to me all you who are weary and burdened and I will give you rest." (Matthew 11:28) *"I am the Good Shepherd. The Good Shepherd lays down His life for the sheep."* (John 10:11) *"I am the way, the truth and the life. None comes to the Father but by me."* (John 14:6)

The sick and feeble are healed, children are blessed, the grieving are comforted. The people flock together to see and to hear, and many believe in Him. His follower Peter attests, *"You are the Christ, the Son of the living God"*

But there is also enmity. Satan - God's great antagonist - finds willing helpers among the self righteous Jewish church leaders. And after a lot of scheming they attack Jesus on the basis of His central claim: that He is the Son of God, and that God is His Father. That is unheard of for a man, it is satanic blasphemy! And, in the end, this is why they condemn Him to death - death on the accursed cross.

But God's plan had called for this. Christ's divine appearance would bring division among the people. Their inner loyalties had to be exposed. They had to choose: for or against Christ. Whoever chose God's way - denying himself, and looking for salvation in Christ - would be saved. Whoever thought he could save himself was lost.

Christ died on the cross for our sins. He was buried. But because death could not hold Him, He rose again, on Easter morning. His work on Earth was complete. He returned to His Father in

Heaven. From there, God's plan of salvation is being finalized. God's Word - the Bible - carries the message to the ends of the earth. Gods Holy Spirit transform hearts - He gives faith and repentance.

On God's great Day, Christ will return to judge the living and the dead; for the believing there is eternal salvation, for the disobedient eternal destruction.

For God's children: a new heaven and a new earth where righteousness dwells.

Further reading: The Gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John.