

SPRING 2021

# MASTERWORK<sup>®</sup>

ESSENTIAL MESSAGES FROM GOD'S SERVANTS



*Lessons from*

MORE THAN A CARPENTER **by Josh McDowell**  
THE BLESSING OF HUMILITY **by Jerry Bridges**

LifeWay | Adults

# A STEP OF FAITH

In your opinion, what does it take for a person to get to heaven and have eternal life? The Bible answers this question in one word—**FAITH**.

## **F** Is for Forgiveness

- Everyone has sinned and needs God's forgiveness: *"All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God"* (Romans 3:23).
- God's forgiveness is in Jesus only: *"In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace"* (Ephesians 1:7).

## **A** Is for Available

- God's forgiveness is available for all: *"God loved the world in this way: He gave his one and only Son, so that everyone who believes in him will not perish but have eternal life"* (John 3:16).
- God's forgiveness is available but not automatic: *"Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord!' will enter the kingdom of heaven"* (Matthew 7:21).

## **I** Is for Impossible

- It is impossible to get to heaven on our own: *"You are saved by grace through faith, and this is not from yourselves; it is God's gift—not from works, so that no one can boast"* (Ephesians 2:8-9).

## **T** Is for Turn

- Turn means repent. Turn away from sin and self and turn to Jesus alone as your Savior and Lord: *"I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me"* (John 14:6); *"If you confess with your mouth, 'Jesus is Lord,' and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. One believes with the heart, resulting in righteousness, and one confesses with the mouth, resulting in salvation"* (Romans 10:9-10).

## **H** Is for Heaven

- Here . . . Eternal life begins now with Jesus: *"I have come so that they may have life and have it in abundance"* (John 10:10).
- Hereafter . . . Heaven is a place where we will live with God forever: *"If I go away and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to myself, so that where I am you may be also"* (John 14:3).
- How . . . How can a person have God's forgiveness, eternal life, and heaven? By trusting Jesus as your Savior and Lord. You can do this right now by praying and asking Jesus to forgive you of your sins and inviting Jesus into your heart.

Accepting Christ is just the beginning of a wonderful adventure with God! Follow Christ's command in baptism. Join a church where you can worship God and grow in your faith. Get involved in Sunday School and Bible study. Begin a daily personal worship time in which you study the Bible and pray.

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S P R I N G 2 0 2 1

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Biblical Solutions for Life

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## GETTING THE MOST OUT OF MASTERWORK

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Here are a few suggestions to help you get the most out of this resource:

### Group Members

1. Read the daily assignments prior to attending the group time. Complete the personal learning activities in bold type. Record your notes and questions.
2. Review your notes and questions a few moments prior to the group time as a means of preparing to be an active part of the group.
3. In the margins of this book, record insights gained during the group time.

### Group Leader

1. Complete step 1 above.
2. Identify the one main idea and goal for the lesson. The main point of the lesson and the goal are printed on the teaching plan pages at the end of each lesson. (See p. 17.) Focus on the session goal as you lead the session.
3. Read and study the key Bible passages listed in the margin of the teaching plan.
4. Develop a group time plan. Two options are offered in this book. One option is to follow the teaching plan at the end of each lesson. A second option is to use the discussion questions in the margins of the lessons. Some group leaders use a combination of both group time plans.
5. Customize the electronic versions of the suggested teaching plans, available on the Internet at <https://masterworkbylifeway.wordpress.com>, to fit your group.
6. Review and refine your teaching notes as you move toward the group time.
7. Arrive early, praying for the group time.



# More Than a Carpenter

Philosopher Thomas Aquinas writes: “There is within every soul a thirst for happiness and meaning.” I began to feel this thirst when I was a teenager. I became hounded by those three basic questions that haunt every human life: Who am I? Why am I here? Where am I going? I wanted answers, so as a young student, I started searching for them.

I thought I might find my answers in being religious. I inherited a rural practicality that says when something doesn’t work, get rid of it. So I chucked religion. Then I thought education might have the answers to my quest for meaning. Education, I decided, was not the answer. I thought maybe I could find happiness and meaning in prestige. But the thrill of prestige wore off like everything else I had tried.

I noticed a small group of people—eight students and two faculty members—who seemed different from the others. They seemed to know who they were and where they were going. And they had convictions. So I decided to make friends with these intriguing people.

My new friends issued a challenge I couldn’t believe: make a rigorous, intellectual examination of the claims of Jesus.

I accepted my friends’ challenge, mostly out of spite to prove them wrong. I took the challenge seriously. I spent months in research, studied in the historically rich libraries of Europe. And I found evidence I would not have believed had I not seen it with my own eyes. Finally I could come to only one conclusion: To remain intellectually honest, I had to admit the Old and New Testament documents were some of the most reliable writings in all of antiquity. And if they were reliable, I had to admit that Jesus Christ was *more* than a carpenter.



## ABOUT THE WRITERS

**JOSH MCDOWELL** wrote *More Than a Carpenter*. With a master’s degree in theology from Talbot Theological Seminary, the Campus Crusade for Christ international traveling representative has authored or coauthored more than 110 books. The most popular are *The New Evidence That Demands a Verdict*, *Why True Love Waits*, and *Right from Wrong*.

**AMY SUMMERS** wrote the activities, discussion questions, and teaching plan for this study. Amy, a frequent contributor to LifeWay resources, is a graduate of Baylor University with a degree in social work, and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary with a master’s degree in religious education.

# What Makes Jesus So Different?



## DAY ONE

### Unique Jesus

#### Discussion Question

What are taboo topics of conversation at your workplace and/or family gatherings?

I was riding in a cab in London and happened to mention something about Jesus to the driver. Immediately he retorted, “I don’t like to discuss religion, especially Jesus.” I couldn’t help but notice the similarity of his reaction to my own when a young Christian woman told me Jesus Christ had changed her life. The very name Jesus seems to bother people. It embarrasses them, makes them angry, or makes them want to change the subject. You can talk about God, and people don’t necessarily get upset, but mention Jesus, and people want to stop the conversation.

#### **1. Why don’t the names of Buddha, Muhammad, or Confucius offend people the way the name of Jesus does?**

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I think the reason is these other religious leaders didn’t claim to be God. That is the big difference between Jesus and the others. It didn’t take long for people who knew Jesus to realize this carpenter from Nazareth was making astounding claims about Himself, identifying Him as more than



just a prophet or teacher. He was obviously making claims to deity. He was presenting Himself as the only avenue to salvation and the only source of forgiveness of sins—things only God could claim.

For many people today Jesus' claim to be the Son of God is just too exclusive. In our pluralistic culture, it is too narrow and smacks of religious bigotry. We don't want to believe it. Yet the issue is not what we want to believe, but rather, who did Jesus claim to be? And is His claim true?

The New Testament documents tell us about this claim. What exactly is meant in the claim that Jesus Christ is God? Augustus H. Strong, former president of Rochester Theological Seminary, in his *Systematic Theology* defines God as the "infinite and perfect spirit in whom all things have their source, support, and end."<sup>1</sup> This definition of God is adequate not only for Christians but also for all theists, including Muslims and Jews. But Christian theism adds an additional note to the definition: God became incarnate as Jesus of Nazareth.

**2. As you read John 1:1-18 in your Bible, record phrases that:  
Declare Jesus is God**

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**Indicate God became took on human flesh as Jesus**

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**Indicate why Jesus came as God in the flesh**

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The words *Jesus Christ* are not a first and last name; they are actually a name and a title. The name Jesus is derived from the Greek form of the name *Jeshua* or Joshua, meaning "Jehovah-Savior" or "the Lord saves." The title Christ is derived from the Greek word for Messiah (or the Hebrew *Mashiach*, see Dan. 9:26) and means "anointed one." The title affirms Jesus as the promised priest and king of Old Testament prophecies. This affirmation is crucial to a proper understanding about Jesus and Christianity.

**Discussion Question**  
How does even His name and title set Jesus Christ apart as unique among religious leaders?



DAY TWO

## Proclaimed God

The New Testament clearly presents Christ as God. Most of the names applied to Christ are such that they could properly be applied only to One who was God. For example, Jesus is called God: “we look forward with hope to that wonderful day when the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ, will be revealed” (Titus 2:13). The Scriptures attribute characteristics to Him that can be true only of God. They present Jesus as being self-existent (see John 1:2; 8:58; 17:5,24); omnipresent (see Matt. 18:20; 28:20); omniscient (see Matt. 17:22-27; John 4:16-18; 6:64); omnipotent (see Matt. 8:26-27; Luke 4:38-41; 7:14-15; 8:24-25); and possessing eternal life (see 1 John 5:11-12,20).

Jesus received honor and worship only God should receive. In confronting Satan, Jesus said, “For the Scriptures say, ‘You must worship the LORD your God and serve only him’ ” (Matt. 4:10). Yet Jesus received worship as God (see Matt. 14:33; 28:9) and sometimes claimed to be worthy of worship as God (see John 5:23; Heb. 1:6; Rev. 5:8-14). Most early followers of Jesus were devout Jews who believed in one true God. Yet as the following examples show, they recognized Him as God incarnate.

Because of the apostle Paul’s extensive rabbinical training, he would be unlikely to attribute deity to a man from Nazareth and call Him Lord. But this is exactly what Paul did: “Feed and shepherd God’s flock—his church, purchased with his own blood—over which the Holy Spirit has appointed you as leaders” (Acts 20:28).

**1. How did Paul attribute deity to Jesus in:  
Acts 20:28?**

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**Romans 9:5?**

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After Jesus asked His disciples who they thought He was, Simon Peter confessed, “You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God” (Matt. 16:16). Jesus responded to Peter’s confession, not by correcting the man’s conclusion, but by acknowledging its validity and source (v. 17).

Martha, a close friend of Jesus, said to Him, “I have always believed you are the Messiah, the Son of God” (John 11:27). Plainspoken Nathanael, who didn’t believe anything good could come out of Nazareth, admitted to Jesus, “Rabbi, you are the Son of God—the King of Israel!” (1:49). While the first Christian martyr, Stephen, was being stoned, he cried out and said, “Lord Jesus, receive my spirit” (Acts 7:59). Hebrews calls Christ God: “To the Son he says, ‘Your throne, O God, endures forever and ever’ ” (Heb. 1:8).

Then, of course, we have Thomas, better known as “the doubter.” He said, “I won’t believe it unless I see the nail wounds in his hands, put my fingers into them, and place my hand into the wound in his side” (John 20:25). I identify with Thomas. He was saying, “Look, not every day does someone raise Himself from the dead or claim to be God incarnate. If you expect me to believe, I need evidence.” Eight days later, Jesus suddenly appeared. “Peace be with you,” he said. Then he said to Thomas, ‘Put your finger here, and look at my hands. Put your hand into the wound in my side. Don’t be faithless any longer. Believe!’ ‘My Lord and my God!’ Thomas exclaimed.” (vv. 26-28). Jesus accepted Thomas’s acknowledgment of Him as God. He rebuked Thomas for his unbelief but not for his worship.

**Discussion Question**

Identify various ways the New Testament claims Jesus is God. Which of those claims are most compelling to you and why?

**2. Read John 20:26-29. Who did Jesus say was blessed?**

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**Does that describe you?** \_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_ I’m not sure.

**Consult the inside front cover of this edition of MasterWork to discover how to trust in Jesus as your Lord and God.**



## DAY THREE

# Personal Claims

At this point a critic might interject that all these claims are from others about Christ, not from Christ about Himself. People attributed deity to Him, but He didn't really claim it for Himself.

When we delve deeper into the pages of the New Testament, we find Christ did indeed make this claim. The references are abundant, and their meaning is plain. A businessman who scrutinized the Scriptures to verify whether or not Christ claimed to be God said, "Anyone who reads the New Testament and does not conclude that Jesus claimed to be divine would have to be as blind as a man standing outdoors on a clear day and saying he can't see the sun."

Once Jesus had cured a lame man on the Sabbath. (Jews were forbidden to do any work on the Sabbath.) "So the Jewish leaders began harassing Jesus for breaking the Sabbath rules. But Jesus replied, 'My Father is always working, and so am I.' So the Jewish leaders tried all the harder to find a way to kill him. For he not only broke the Sabbath, he called God his Father, thereby making himself equal with God" (John 5:16-18).

You might say, "Jesus called God His Father. So what? Christians call God their Father, but this doesn't mean they are claiming to be God." The Jews of Jesus' time heard in Jesus' words a meaning that is easily lost to us now. Whenever we study a document, we must take into account the language, culture, and especially the person or persons the document addresses. In this case, the culture is Jewish, and the persons addressed are Jewish religious leaders. Something about what Jesus said really got under their skin. "So the Jewish leaders tried all the harder to find a way to kill him. For he not only broke the Sabbath, he called God his Father, thereby making himself equal with God" (v. 18).

Their problem was that Jesus said "*my* Father," not "*our* Father." By the rules of their language, Jesus' use of this phrase was a claim to be equal with God. The Jews did not refer to God as "*my* Father." Or if they did, they

"Anyone who reads the New Testament and does not conclude that Jesus claimed to be divine would have to be as blind as a man standing outdoors on a clear day and saying he can't see the sun."

added “in heaven.” However, Jesus did not add the phrase. He made a claim the Jews could not misinterpret when He called God “my Father.”

To make matters worse, with “My Father is always working, and so am I,” Jesus was putting His own activity on an equal plane with God’s. Again the Jews understood He was claiming to be God’s Son. As a result, their hatred of Jesus grew. Until this point they sought only to persecute Him, but soon they began to plan to kill Him.

**1. Read John 5:24-29 in your Bible. Why is it essential to believe Jesus’ claim of equality with God?**

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Not only did Jesus claim equality with God as His Father, but He also asserted He was one with the Father. During the Feast of the Dedication in Jerusalem, some Jewish leaders approached Jesus and questioned Him about whether He was the Christ. Jesus concluded with, “The Father and I are one” (John 10:30). “Once again the people picked up stones to kill him. Jesus said, ‘At my Father’s direction I have done many good works. For which one are you going to stone me?’ ” (vv. 31-32).

The Jews clearly heard Jesus claiming to be God. Thus, Leon Morris, former principal of Ridley College, Melbourne, writes,

the Jews could regard Jesus’ word only as blasphemy, and they proceeded to take the judgment into their own hands. It was laid down in the Law that blasphemy was to be punished by stoning (see Lev. 24:16). But these men were not allowing the due processes of law to take their course. ... In their fury they were preparing to be judges and executioners in one.<sup>2</sup>

The Jews threatened Jesus with stoning for “blasphemy,” which tells us they definitely understood His claim to be God.

**2. Have you faced hostility for your claims about Jesus? Explain.**

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**Discussion Question**

In what specific ways did Jesus claim to be God?



## DAY FOUR

# Forgiving Sin

Jesus continually spoke of Himself as one in essence and nature with God. He boldly asserted, “If you knew me, you would also know my Father” (John 8:19). “For when you see me, you are seeing the one who sent me” (12:45). “Anyone who hates me also hates my Father” (15:23). “Everyone will honor the Son, just as they honor the Father. Anyone who does not honor the Son is certainly not honoring the Father who sent him” (5:23). These references definitely indicate Jesus looked at Himself as being more than just a man; He claimed to be equal with God.

While I was lecturing in a literature class at a university in West Virginia, a professor interrupted me and said the only Gospel in which Jesus claimed to be God was John’s Gospel, and it was the latest one written. He asserted that Mark, the earliest Gospel, never once mentioned that Jesus claimed to be God. In response I turned to Mark’s Gospel.

### **1. Read Mark 2:1-12 in your Bible. How did Jesus claim to be God?**

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### **How did He verify that claim?**

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Jesus claimed to be able to forgive sins. “Seeing their faith, Jesus said to the paralyzed man, ‘My child, your sins are forgiven’” (Mark 2:5). According to Jewish theology, only God could say such a thing; Isaiah 43:25 restricts forgiveness of sin to the prerogative of God alone. When the scribes heard Jesus forgiving the man’s sins, they asked, “What is he saying? This is blasphemy! Only God can forgive sins!” (v. 7). Jesus then

asked which would be easier to say to a paralyzed man, “Your sins are forgiven” or “Stand up, pick up your mat, and walk”?

Lewis Sperry Chafer, founder and first president of Dallas Theological Seminary, writes

none on earth has either authority or right to forgive sin. None could forgive sin save the One against whom all have sinned. When Christ forgave sin, as He certainly did, He was not exercising a human prerogative. Since none but God can forgive sins, it is conclusively demonstrated that Christ, since He forgave sins, is God.<sup>3</sup>

**2. When is the only time you have the right to say “I forgive you” to someone? Why?**

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This concept of forgiveness bothered me for quite a while because I didn’t understand it. One day in a philosophy class, answering a question about the deity of Christ, I quoted Mark 2:5. A graduate assistant challenged my conclusion that Christ’s forgiveness of sin demonstrates His deity. He said he could forgive people without the act’s demonstrating any claim to be God. People do it all the time. Suddenly I knew why the religious leaders reacted so strongly against Christ. Yes, one can say, “I forgive you,” but only if he is the one who has been sinned against. If you sin against me, I have the right to forgive you. But if you sin against someone else, I have no such right. The paralytic had not sinned against the man Jesus; the two had never seen each other before. The paralytic had sinned against God. Then Jesus, under His own authority, said, “Your sins are forgiven.” Yes, we can forgive sins committed against us, but in no way can anyone forgive sins committed against God except God Himself. Yet that is what Jesus claimed to do.

It’s no wonder the Jews reacted so violently when a carpenter from Nazareth made such a bold claim. This assertion He could forgive sin was a startling exercise of a prerogative that belongs only to God.

**Discussion Question**

Why did Jesus have to be God in order to be able to forgive sin?



## DAY FIVE

# His Trial

Another situation in which Jesus claimed to be the Son of God was at His trial (see Mark 14:60-64). Those trial proceedings contain some of the clearest references to Jesus' claims of deity. "Then the high priest stood up before the others and asked Jesus, 'Well, aren't you going to answer these charges? What do you have to say for yourself?' Jesus made no reply. Then the high priest asked him, 'Are you the Messiah, the Son of the Blessed One?' Jesus said, 'I AM. And you will see the Son of Man seated in the place of power at God's right hand and coming on the clouds of heaven' " (vv. 60-62).

At first Jesus wouldn't answer, so the high priest put Him under oath. Under oath, He had to answer. He responded to the question, "Are you the Messiah, the Son of the Blessed One?" by saying, "I AM."

Jesus' reference to "the Son of Man ... coming on the clouds of heaven," was an allusion to Daniel 7:13-14. Despite the common misperception, "Son of Man" was not a reference to the humanity of Jesus, but to His divinity.

**1. Read Daniel 7:13-14 in your Bible. List indications of the Son of Man's divinity.**

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When Jesus referred to Himself as the Son of Man He was referring to His divinity. In *Putting Jesus in His Place*, Rob Bowman and Ed Komoszewski explain how this applies to Daniel's vision:

In Daniel's vision, the humanlike figure possesses all judgment authority and rules over an everlasting kingdom.



The notion of frailty and dependence is absent. The description of the figure as coming with the clouds also identifies him as divine, since elsewhere in the Old Testament the imagery of coming on clouds is used exclusively for divine figures.<sup>4</sup>

Thus, in His allusion to Daniel 7:13, Jesus was claiming to be a divine, heavenly figure who would sit at God's right hand, exercising supreme authority over all people for eternity. No wonder the Jewish authorities were so upset—Jesus had committed blasphemy by claiming to be God! Clearly, Jesus had a divine self-consciousness.

An analysis of Christ's testimony shows He claimed to be (1) the Son of the blessed God; (2) the One who would sit at the right hand of power; and (3) the Son of Man, who would come on the clouds of heaven. Each affirmation is distinctly messianic. The cumulative effect of all three is significant. The Sanhedrin, the Jewish court, caught all three points, and the high priest responded by tearing his garments and saying, "Why do we need other witnesses?" (Mark 14:63). They had finally heard it for themselves from Jesus' own mouth. He was convicted by His own words.

Sir Robert Anderson, who was once head of criminal investigation at Scotland Yard, points out:

No confirmatory evidence is more convincing than that of hostile witnesses, and the fact that the Lord laid claim to Deity is incontestably established by the action of His enemies. We must remember that the Jews were not a tribe of ignorant savages, but a highly cultured and intensely religious people; and it was upon this very charge that, without a dissenting voice, His death was decreed by the Sanhedrin—their great national Council, composed of the most eminent of their religious leaders, including men of the type of Gamaliel, the great first century Jewish philosopher and his famous pupil, Saul of Tarsus.<sup>5</sup>

It is clear, then, that this is the testimony Jesus wanted to bear about Himself. We also see that the Jews understood His reply was His claim to be God. At this point they faced two alternatives: that His assertions were outlandish blasphemy or that He was God. His judges saw the issue clearly—so clearly, in fact, that they crucified Him then taunted Him because "he trusted God. . . . For he said, 'I am the Son of God' " (Matt. 27:43).

#### **Discussion Question**

Why would it have been extremely foolish for Jesus to have claimed to be God if that were not a true and valid claim?

The Jews understood His reply was His claim to be God. At this point they faced two alternatives: that His assertions were outlandish blasphemy or that He was God.

This was no ordinary trial. As lawyer Irwin Linton points out,

Unique among criminal trials is this one in which not the actions but the identity of the accused is the issue. The criminal charge laid against Christ, the confession or testimony or, rather, act in presence of the court, on which He was convicted, the interrogation by the Roman governor and the inscription and proclamation on His cross at the time of execution all are concerned with the one question of Christ's real identity and dignity. "What think ye of Christ? Whose son is he?"<sup>6</sup>

New York Supreme Court Justice William Jay Gaynor, in his address on the trial of Jesus, takes the position that blasphemy was the one charge made against Him before the Sanhedrin. Referring to John 10:33, he says: "It is plain from each of the Gospel narratives, that the alleged crime for which Jesus was tried and convicted was blasphemy: ... Jesus had been claiming supernatural power, which in a human being was blasphemy."<sup>7</sup>

In most trials the accused are tried for what they are alleged to have done, but this was not the case in the trial of Jesus. He was tried for who He *claimed to be*.

The trial of Jesus should be sufficient to demonstrate convincingly that He confessed to His divinity. His judges attest to that claim. But also, on the day of Christ's crucifixion, even His enemies acknowledged He claimed to be God come in the flesh (Matt. 27:41-43).

**2. Read Matthew 27:41-54 in your Bible. What confirmed Jesus' claim to the soldiers guarding Him?**

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**What confirms to you Jesus' claim to be God come in the flesh?**

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1. Augustus H. Strong, *Systematic Theology* (Philadelphia: Judson Press, 1907), 1:52.
2. Leon Morris, "The Gospel According to John," *The New International Commentary on the New Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1971), 524.
3. Lewis Sperry Chafer, *Systematic Theology* (Dallas: Dallas Theological Seminary Press, 1947), 5:21.
4. Robert M. Bowman and J. Ed Komoszewski, *Putting Jesus in His Place: The Case for the Deity of Christ* (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel, 2007), 246-47.
5. Robert Anderson, *The Lord from Heaven* (London: James Nisbet, 1910), 5.
6. Irwin H. Linton, *The Sanhedrin Verdict* (New York: Loizeaux Bros., 1943), 7.
7. Charles Edmund Deland, *The Mis-Trials of Jesus* (Boston: Richard G. Badger, 1914), 118-19.

# LEADER GUIDE



## Before the Session

Read and be prepared to summarize John 5:1-15 (Step 4).

## During the Session

1. Ask: *How you do feel about apologizing? Why might some Christians be uncomfortable with a theological discipline called “apologetics?”* Explain the Greek term *apologia* refers to a speech of defense. Apologetics is not apologizing for our faith in Christ; rather it is making a defense of our faith. Many Christians don’t feel confident about defending their faith because they’ve bought into this world’s claims that their faith won’t stand up to serious investigation and rational analysis. They think they must choose between their faith and God-given mind. This study emphasizes the Christian faith is not unreasonable, illogical, or anti-intellectual. Relate from the introduction (p. 5) how the author accepted the challenge to make an intellectual examination of the claims of Christ in order to prove Christians were wrong. Read the last paragraph of the introduction. Today’s lesson examines what makes Jesus so different from every other historical religious figure.
2. Invite responses to Day One, activity 1 (p. 6). Read the Day One paragraph (p. 7) beginning, “For many people ....” Evaluate what is meant by the claim that Jesus Christ is God. Discuss Day One, activity 2 (p. 7).
3. Use the first paragraph of Day Two (p. 8) to emphasize that the New Testament clearly presents Jesus Christ as God. Note that Jesus was completely humble and acknowledged God alone deserved worship, yet He did not rebuke others when they worshiped Him. Encourage learners to identify people in the New Testament who claimed Jesus was God (consulting Day Two, pp. 8-9, if desired). Analyze why their claims are worth believing. Explain devout monotheistic Jews such as Paul would be highly unlikely to attribute deity to a mere man. Discuss Day Two, activity 1 (pp. 8-9). Ask: *If there were any people who might logically doubt the deity of Jesus, why might it have been the ones who*

**The main point of this lesson is:** Jesus is unique among religious figures—He is God!

**Focus on this goal:** To help adults acknowledge that the New Testament presents Jesus as God

**Key Bible Passage:**  
John 10:30

**To the Leader:**  
This teaching plan suggests reading numerous Scripture passages. The objective is not to do an intense study of each passage, but to pull out implications of Jesus’ divinity. Even then, time might not permit you to read each passage. Prayerfully choose which verses you will have the group read and discuss, and which you will summarize and explain.

*spent the most time with Him? Yet what did Jesus' disciples and closest friends declare about Him? What was it about Jesus that could compel devout Jews and people who spent day after day with Him to declare He was God? Draw attention to Day Two, activity 2 (p. 9) and urge anyone who would like to know more about putting their faith in Jesus to talk with you after the session.*

4. Read and discuss the Day Three pull quote (p. 10). Summarize John 5:1-15. Invite a volunteer to read John 5:16-18. Analyze how Jesus was making Himself equal with God, using the Day Three remarks (pp. 10-11) to add to the discussion. Explain from the CSB Study Bible, "Jewish rabbis agreed that God continually upheld the universe, yet without breaking the Sabbath. If God was above Sabbath regulations, so was Jesus" (p. 1676). Ask a volunteer to read John 5:19-23. Determine additional ways Jesus made Himself equal with God. Discuss Day Three, activity 1 (p. 11). Invite a volunteer to read John 10:24-33. Ask: *Do you think the Jewish leaders were sincere in wanting to know if Jesus was the Christ? What leads you to that conclusion? What did Jesus claim about Himself in His response to them? How would you describe the Jews' response to Him?* Invite responses to Day Three, activity 2 (p. 11).
5. Relate the author's experience with a professor who asserted Mark's Gospel never mentions Jesus' claim to be God (p 12). Discuss Day Four, activity 1 (p. 12), using Day Four remarks and activity 2 (p. 13) to add to the discussion.
6. Ask: *What did Jesus have to gain and to lose by claiming to be God?* Assert it was Jesus' claim to be God that led to His arrest. Yet, while on trial for His life, Jesus continued to affirm that claim. Direct a volunteer to read Mark 14:60-64. Ask: *Why do you think the Jewish leaders got so angry when Jesus called Himself the Son of Man—wasn't that a reference to His humanity?* Discuss Day Five, activity 1 (p. 14). Direct a volunteer to read the Day Five paragraph (p. 15) beginning with "An analysis of Christ's testimony ...." Discuss Day Five, activity 2 (p. 16).
7. Read the Day Five pull quote (p. 15). Ask: *What alternatives does every person face when confronted with Jesus' claim to be God?* Invite learners to recall (or consult Matt. 16:17) how Jesus responded when Peter declared He was the Christ and Son of the living God. Declare: *If we are struggling to believe Jesus Christ really is God in the flesh, or if we know someone who cannot or will not believe that truth, we can pray that God will clearly reveal that truth.* Close in prayer.

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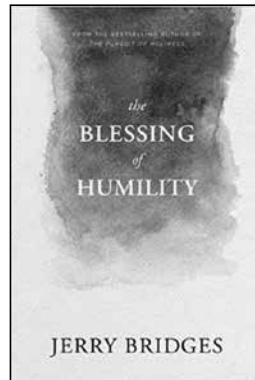


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