

## THE LIFE AND TIMES OF JESUS THE MESSIAH WEEK 1 – INTRODUCTION: WHO IS JESUS?

Why are we calling this class *The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah*? Why not call it *Jesus the Messiah*? What's with the "Life and Times"?

We're going to look at history centuries, even millennia, before Jesus. Why? Because it shaped the world into which Jesus was born. Knowing about that world will give us more insight into why Jesus said and taught what He did.

"I am the door," "I am the bread of life"

We tend to spiritualize these comments by Jesus –  
He is the only way to heaven – and that's true  
By Him we are nourished – and that's true

But sometimes when we dig for that spiritual meaning/the deeper meaning, we bypass the literal meaning!

"I am the door" – what would the Jewish people focus on? The blood of the Passover lambs on the doorposts and lintel of the Jewish homes in Egypt at that first Passover.

"I am the bread of life" – the manna that God provided in the wilderness for the children of Israel!

AND, knowing the history of the world – HIS story – will help us better understand the BIG PICTURE of the Bible as we also study the details.

In studying the Bible, always know that context is key. You need to know what's surrounding that passage that you're studying – the verses that come before and that follow. As my friend, Ali Abboud, says, "Our context is the entire Bible. OH MY! That puts things in context, doesn't it?"

CONSIDER: "Jesus' ministry and the kingdom He came to establish has deep roots in the soil of Israel's history. For centuries the strip of land between the eastern side of the Mediterranean Sea and the western boundary of the Arabian Desert has been – and continues to be – ground zero for an ongoing conflict between good and evil. The conflict is – and will be – spiritual/cosmic, not political. Therefore, it is no accident that Jesus was born there or that His destiny is so intricately intertwined with the future of Israel's throne." (Swindoll).

And, what about the culture? Is it important to know about how people lived in that day? (Culture - the behaviors and beliefs that are characteristic of a specific social group, ethnic group, or age group [youth culture; drug culture]). YES!

As we study the life and times of Jesus, my prayer is that we will fall in love with Him – perhaps for the first time – perhaps like never before.

Why did Jesus enter our earth between 6 BC and 4 BC? Why that timeframe?

Enough historical evidence points to this time frame. (Edersheim, Haley's, Unger's) Why don't we know the exact year? Does it matter? He was born!

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And, there's debate re: the exact month: Oct., Dec. - ?  
 Why was He born in Bethlehem Ephrathah?

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The Bible is a history book – it's HIS-story – it's God's story – it's a supernatural history book. It can be viewed as the history of the world that God created and how God relates to the world and everyone in the world. We call this narrative or historical theology as we read how God unfolds His plan to the world!

Aren't we seeing this so graphically today with our world being on the verge of nuclear war as Israel collides with Iran?

AND – as we spend time with Jesus – He opens our eyes and changes our perspective!

Who is this Man? That was the question of the day when Jesus walked on this earth at His first coming! That question remains!

Who is this Jesus?

That question was asked during a survey at a mall in Texas not that long ago.

Responses:

Man 1: "That's a trick question. I don't know how to answer that."

Woman 1: "I mean, I believe that he was a real person and that he died on the cross, but I don't believe that he was God's Son."

Man 2: "He was, you know. . . He was just another person that found religion and all that, so it's. . . I mean. . . He's nothing like. . . He's, of course, a good person and all that, and He's a really big part of religion, so. . . You know. . . All people that find religion are, you know, important. So people have different views."

Man 3: "He is. . . uh. . .help me out here. Jesus Christ is, uh. . .the Son of God?"

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What did the Jewish people of Jesus day believe and upon what was their belief based?

Luke 24:13-14 – *"Now behold, two of them were traveling that same day to a village called Emmaus, which was seven miles from Jerusalem. And they talked together of all these things which had happened."*

Wasn't it just last week? That's what these two men were probably thinking and talking about. Hadn't Jesus entered Jerusalem on the colt of a donkey on Lamb Selection Day four days before Passover? The donkey – a symbol of peace. The Messiah, the Promised One, is to reign as King from Jerusalem and bring peace to us. The people were hailing Him as King. They paved His path with their cloaks. They cut palm branches and laid them along the stone pavement and shouted, "Hoshana, hoshana, save us, save us!"

The Jewish people had fully expected that He would become their King and that Israel would again be prosperous and free – just as in the days of King Solomon.

What happened? That was last week and on Passover – three days ago, Jesus hung dead on a Roman cross!

Here we have an account from the view of two ordinary people. These two followers of Jesus – one is named Cleopas (unknown to us previously); and, we don't know the name

of the other follower of Jesus – were recounting the past week – searching for answers. Nothing seemed to make sense. Has that happened to you – nothing making sense?

It was Sunday morning after the 14<sup>th</sup> of Nisan on the Jewish calendar – which was Passover – when the lambs were killed in the Temple. That’s the day Jesus hung on the cross – on Passover.

Cleopas and his friend were clearly disillusioned.

There was talk circulating about Jesus’ resurrection on the third day – but the two began their seven-mile journey home to Emmaus – on the THIRD day. . . .

Consider - if these two “followers” had believed that Jesus was alive (based on what Jesus had Himself said re: many of the Jewish people making His Father’s house a house of merchandise - “Destroy this temple and in three days I will raise it up” (John 2:19):

- They would not have left Jerusalem!
- They would not have been disillusioned!

Luke 24:15-16 – *“So it was, while they conversed and reasoned, that Jesus Himself drew near and went with them. But their eyes were restrained, so that they did not know Him.”*

The two followers were divinely prevented from recognizing Jesus! To them, He was just an ordinary man, a stranger joining them on their walk home.

“Restrained” (Gk - “were holden”) – passive voice in the Greek which means the subjects – Cleopas and his friend – are being acted upon – they are receiving the action from an outside source. Someone is restraining them from seeing! God is doing this – for His purposes.

Luke 24:17-18 – *“And He said to them, ‘What kind of conversation is this that you have with one another as you walk and are sad?’ Then the one whose name was Cleopas answered and said to Him, ‘Are You the only stranger in Jerusalem, and have You not known the things which happened there in these days?’”*

If anyone understood what had happened, it was JESUS! And, if anyone was CLUELESS, it was Cleopas!

Jesus appears to play along with them. . . .

Luke 24:19-21 – *“And He said to them, ‘What things?’ So they said to Him, ‘The things concerning Jesus of Nazareth, who was a Prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people, and how the chief priests and our rulers delivered Him to be condemned to death, and crucified Him. But we were hoping that it was He who was going to redeem Israel. Indeed, besides all this, today is the third day since these things happened.’”*

And with that statement, Cleopas revealed the source of his trouble! His expectations for a Messiah as conquering Deliverer, as conquering and reigning King had failed to

materialize. He didn't grasp that the Messiah would come twice – even tho' the OT teaches two comings of the Messiah (He had to die: Psalm 22; Isaiah 53; He was the suffering Servant; He will return: Psalm 2; Isaiah 61; Zech. 12; He will be the conquering King).

Luke 24:21-24 – *“Yes, and certain women of our company, who arrived at the tomb early, astonished us. When they did not find His body, they came saying that they had also seen a vision of angels who said He was alive. And certain of those who were with us went to the tomb and found it just as the women had said; but Him they did not see.”*

Look at Cleopas' lack of focus on God – vv. 19-20 – when Jesus asked “What things?” re: the happenings of the past week, Cleopas answered w/ - “The things concerning Jesus of Nazareth, Who was a PROPHET, MIGHTY in deed and word BEFORE GOD and all the people, and how the chief priests and our rulers delivered Him to be condemned to death and crucified Him.” Look Who Cleopas says Jesus is – in a totally DEFEATED manner! They were in essence declaring that the chief priests and their rulers absolutely thwarted the will of God!

Jesus didn't see the events that way! In His trial before Pilate, He said, “You would have no authority over Me, unless it had been given you from above.” (John 19:11) The crucifixion was according to God's plan:

On the day of Pentecost, in his sermon to the crowds that gathered in Jerusalem, Peter proclaimed, *“Men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a Man attested by God to you by miracles, wonders, and signs which God did through Him in your midst, as you yourselves also know— Him, being delivered by the determined purpose and foreknowledge of God. . . .”* (Acts 2:22-23) This was GOD'S doing – His plan – His decree for the world!

In Acts 4:27-28 we see Peter stating, Acts 4:27-28 - *“For truly against Your holy Servant Jesus, whom You anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles and the people of Israel, were gathered together to do whatever Your hand and Your purpose determined before to be done.”*

This is God's eternal plan of redemption for the world!

This is the divine perspective – GOD'S perspective which we so need to have moment-by-moment in our walk with the Lord!

Continuing to speak as an anonymous stranger walking with Cleopas and his friend, Jesus peeled away the first layer – *wrong perspective*. . . which was *their* perspective – not God's perspective.

Luke 24:25-27 – *“Then He said to them, ‘O foolish ones, and slow of heart to believe in all that the prophets have spoken! Ought not the Christ to have suffered these things and to enter into His glory?’ And beginning at Moses and all the Prophets, He expounded to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself.”*

Cleopas had told this “stranger” – “We were hoping that it was He (the Messiah) Who was going to redeem Israel” (Luke 24:21). We see so clearly Cleopas’ expectations.

What does the Bible teach? The Messiah would indeed liberate Israel and rule the world from Jerusalem – but He would first come as a suffering servant to liberate all people – both Jews and Gentiles – from bondage to sin.

Are we clinging to expectations? Do our expectations color our view of Jesus?

If we’re not careful, those expectations can trip us up and we may fail to see the hand of God in the ordinary events of life. Even more tragic, we might fail to recognize His gentle teaching in the midst of life’s most PAINFUL trials!

The two on the road to Emmaus were most likely feeling that God had forsaken them.

How we respond to what God is teaching us hugely impacts us! If we don’t like what God is doing and we dig in our heels – who loses? WE do!

Matthew 11:6 – “Blessed (happy/fortunate/blissful) is he who is not offended in Me” – in what I do, in what I allow in your lives, in what I teach you perhaps through discipline.

Am I offended re: what Jesus is doing in my life?

“Blessed is he who is NOT offended in Me.”

What does Jesus reveal to Cleopas and his friend? He reveals to them an ETERNAL perspective – God’s perspective – which transcends their personal agendas and expectations. Eternal perspective – might be tough now – but God promises to deliver on His promises AND to never leave us nor forsake us (Heb. 13:5). So we can boldly say the Lord is my helper, I will not fear, what can man do to me? (Heb. 13:6)

Jesus does this by teaching them from the Scriptures.

Jesus taught them from the Torah, the first five books of Moses, and then the prophets, and the writings. . .

Jesus asked them, “Ought not the Christ – the Messiah – to have suffered these things and to enter into His glory?”

He most likely spoke to them of the sacrificial death of the perfect Passover Lamb – the Messiah.

He very likely reminded them of the “Servant Songs” in the book of Isaiah (Isaiah 42-53). These songs focus on Jesus Who is “the Servant of the Lord” throughout these chapters in Isaiah. This Servant of the Lord Who will. . .

- Bring justice to the world (Isa. 42:1-4)
- Lead His people into a right relationship with God (Isa. 49:5)
- Enlighten the nations and bring salvation to Jew and Gentile (Isa. 49:6)
- Endure unjust humiliation (Isa. 50:6)
- Bear the divine punishment others deserve (Isa. 52:13-Isa. 53:12)

Didn’t Cleopas and his friend realize this? Their eyes remained closed to what Jesus was sharing!

Regarding what Jesus was sharing with the two men, have you heard of the Jewish teaching method of “stringing pearls”? Here is an example of the culture of the day.

Ben Azzai, a Rabbi from the early second century, while teaching, explained that he was linking up the words of the Torah with one another, and then the words of the Prophets, and the Prophets with the Writings. Ben Azzai was said to be “stringing pearls” – bringing together passages from different places in order to explore their great truths. This is what Jesus was doing when He taught Cleopas and his friend from the entire Hebrew Scriptures about Himself.

As Cleopas and his friend and Jesus approached Emmaus, they urged the stranger to stay the night. This was in keeping with ancient Near Eastern rules of hospitality. Jesus accepted the offer. They did not recognize Him as yet. Can you picture this? It’s so natural – it’s part of the ordinary.

*Luke 24:30-31 – “Now it came to pass, as He sat at the table with them, that He took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them. Then their eyes were opened and they knew Him; and He vanished from their sight.”*

The Greek phrase translated “their eyes were opened and they recognized Him” literally means “their eyes were completely opened and they came to fully comprehend Him.”

Strong’s lexicon for “opened” – to open thoroughly (what had been closed) – the eyes and the ears, to open the mind – to cause to understand – to open one’s soul – to rouse in one the faculty of understanding or the desire of learning.

“Opened” – aorist tense in Gk. – one time action

Passive voice – the action came from an outside source; the action happened to them.

GOD caused them to recognize Jesus in all His glory as the Messiah, the Suffering Servant, the Son of God, and their risen Lord!

Luke doesn’t tell us why or how the breaking of bread opened their eyes.

- Perhaps they saw the nail prints in His hands when He held up the bread to offer thanks.
- Perhaps they were present at the feeding of the 5,000 men and their families and recognized the manner in which He broke the bread.

We do know that God opened their eyes!

We read in the Luke account that Jesus vanished from their physical sight as soon as they recognized Him and fully comprehended!

*Luke 24:32-35 – “And they said to one another, ‘Did not our heart burn within us while He talked with us on the road, and while He opened the Scriptures to us?’ So they rose up that very hour and returned to Jerusalem, and found the eleven and those who were with them gathered together, saying, ‘The Lord is risen indeed, and has appeared to Simon!’ And they told about the things that had happened on the road, and how He was known to them in the breaking of bread.”*

Upon seeing Jesus – upon recognizing Him fully – they couldn't remain where they were. They left their home – in the dark – and traveled seven miles back to Jerusalem! No street lights. No paved roads. God impassioned them – He strengthened them in His truth – in the reality of the resurrection of Jesus! Their eyes had been opened. Their perspective had been changed.

Until we get to glory - as we live in this world where God has us for His purposes – let's look for abundance in the ordinary events of life! Let's look for God to do exceedingly abundantly beyond all that we ask or think (Eph. 3:20). And, let's be passionate about our walk with the Lord!

In Francis Chan's book, "Crazy Love," he shares that we in the Church are missing something. He suggests that the core problem is that we have an inaccurate view of God. We have too low a view of God and too high a view of ourselves. He then goes on to say that we tend to see God as a benevolent Being Who is satisfied when people manage to fit Him into their lives in some small way. So – we're doing God a favor!?! -- when we \_\_\_\_\_ - you fill in the blank – when we study the Bible, engage in service for Him. . . .

Jesus never begs us to give Him some small part of ourselves. He commands everything from His followers. (Take up your cross and follow me – die to self [Matt. 16:24]). He commands a RESPONSE.

With any response – there's a choice. We can adjust/change how we live daily – or we can stay the same!!!

As we look at the life of Jesus, I pray that it will drive us to MAKE MUCH OF GOD! That's what we want to focus on in this class – making MUCH of God!

John the Baptist – He must increase and I must decrease.

Are we often placed in circumstances where we know we cannot - whatever (we don't have the strength/resources, etc.)– fill in the blank. Where we know only HE CAN – fill in the gap. In those circumstances God powerfully demonstrates His ability to provide everything His people need in ways they could never have mustered up or imagined. And, in the end, He makes much of His own name!

Jesus was born into a Jewish family. WHY? Is this important?

The Messianic prophecies in the Hebrew Scriptures/OT/Tanakh teach that the Messiah – the Anointed One (Psalm 2:2; Isaiah 61) would be a descendant of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (Gen. 12:3) – that He would be Jewish.

And - specifically that He would come from the tribe of Judah – from King David's lineage (II Sam. 7; Gen. 49:10).

AND – He's returning as the Lion of the Tribe of Judah – the root of David (Rev. 5:5).

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**WHO IS THIS MAN?**

Jesus the Messiah, the Anointed One, the Son of God, Emmanuel – God in the flesh, entered our world at a specific time and place.

He wasn't born in Michigan or in Southern California or in the Texas panhandle. He was born in a land that was a hotbed of political and religious turmoil – a country that had been the crossroads of the world for centuries.

Jesus was born into a race of people chosen by God to bear His name to the world – a people who had made a covenant with God and had broken it – had broken the Mosaic Covenant.

We need to consider this - Israel was the vehicle that God used to bring Jesus into this world and God will use Israel to bring Him back at the consummation of the age. We read in Matt. 23:39, that Jesus told the Jewish people – you won't see Me again until you say, Blessed is He Who comes in the name of the Lord. Jesus did not come in a vacuum. He came in a context so that He could declare in Jerusalem, “As Isaiah said. . .” and “As David said. . .” Jesus had Messianic credentials. The Jews were the ones who were looking for the Messiah! Israel provided the context for His arrival. She birthed Him into the world and He will come back when God pours out His Spirit upon Israel and they realize Who He is (Hosea 5:15; Zech. 12:10ff; Matt. 23:39).

Yes – Jesus is God – always was and always will be. He is eternally God! As Emmanuel – God in the flesh – He lived a perfect life and provided the final sacrifice for sin.

But He entered this world to identify with man. Jesus was a Rabbi. He was a stonemason and carpenter (builder). He knew what it meant to tend sheep, to catch fish, and to live in the shadow of the kings and empires of this world.

He wore tassels on the hem of His garment. He attended weddings. He experienced life in the everyday household of a Galilean community and sat in Moses' seat in the synagogue.

Jesus' Bible was the OT – the Hebrew Scriptures – the Tanakh.

His sandaled feet got dusty and dirty. He perspired and got thirsty in the burning sun of the Judean wilderness.

Recognizing all this doesn't diminish our Savior! Recognizing all this makes the fact that God was willing to experience life in a fallen world for us more astounding and overwhelming.

As you've read and studied the Bible, did you ever wonder. . .

- Why Mary & Joseph took Jesus to Egypt?
- Why Jesus was called a Nazarene (Matt. 2)?
- Why disciples dropped everything and followed Jesus?
- Why John proclaimed “REPENT!”? (Matthew 3:3; Mal 3; Isa. 40) to the Jewish people gathered at the Jordan River?
- What would REPENT have meant to the Jewish people?
- Why did John wear what he wore and eat what he ate?
- Why did both John and Jesus preach “The Gospel of the Kingdom”? What's with the “Kingdom” emphasis attached to “Gospel”? I thought it was just “the Gospel” - ?
- Why were Jewish people coming to John to be immersed?
- What were the Jewish people believing at the time of Jesus?

So many questions. Where are the answers? GOD’S WORD – His entire word – OT and NT.

Who is this Jesus?

The four Gospels present the record of His birth, life, death, resurrection and ascension.  
(Gospel – old English term, “Godspell” good news. . . .)

Each of the four writers proclaims the greatest and most important event in history – the coming of the God-man, Jesus – from different perspectives:

- Matthew looks at Him through the perspective of His Kingdom. Matthew presents Jesus as King – the long-awaited Jewish Messiah, the King of Israel! Matthew explains why the deliverance of the Kingdom of God to Israel is postponed.
  - John MacArthur – “The Jewish flavor of Matthew is remarkable.”
- Mark looks at Jesus through the perspective of His servanthood. Jesus is seen as a servant in Mark’s Gospel – tirelessly teaching, healing, encouraging – a selfless servant Who “did not come to be served, but to serve” (Mark 10:45).
- Luke looks at Jesus through the perspective of His humanness. Luke speaks of Jesus as fully man - “The Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost.” (Luke 19:10).
- John looks at Jesus through the perspective of His deity. John presents Jesus deity – He is GOD! “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God” (John 1:1)

Matthew, Mark, Luke, John write for different audiences:

The Gospel of Matthew is written for a Jewish audience.

John MacArthur has stated that the Jewish flavor pervades Matthew’s gospel.

Matthew uses Jewish terminology:

- “Kingdom of heaven” – not “kingdom of God. Matthew guards against Jewish sensitivities (the name of God was is too holy for them to speak it; “Ha Shem” [the name] is used for God by more Orthodox Jewish people)
- “Son of David” – Matthew continually refers to Jesus as the “Son of David,” emphasizing that He is indeed the Messiah, in the lineage of David, Who will be ruling and reigning from King David’s throne in Jerusalem during the Millennial/Messianic Kingdom.
- Matthew presents Jesus as the King of the Jews – the King of the Messianic/Millennial Kingdom.
- Mark writes to the Romans
- Luke addresses the Greeks
- John writes to MANKIND!

Matthew, Mark & Luke are called the synoptic Gospels – syn/optic – together seeing; same view. We note the similarities in the synoptic Gospels.

The Gospel of John of the most theological of the four gospels. John 20:31 tells us why the Holy Spirit inspired John to write this gospel – “these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ/Messiah, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name.” Jesus’ “name” – all Who He is – His reputation, His character. John organizes his gospel around 8 signs/proofs that reinforce Jesus’ true identity leading to faith:

1. Water turned into wine (2:1-11)
2. The healing of the royal official’s son (4:46-54)
3. The healing of the lame man (5:1-18)
4. The feeding of a multitude (6:1-15)
5. Walking on water (6:16-21)
6. Healing of the blind man (9:1-41)
7. The raising of Lazarus (11:1-57)
8. The miraculous catch of fish (21:6-11) after Jesus’ resurrection.

All the gospel writers were inspired by God (II Pet. 1:20-21) and wrote independently of each other. As we study the various viewpoints recorded by these authors, it becomes clearer how well they harmonize and lead to a more complete picture of the event or message about which they are writing. The accounts are not contradictory; they are complimentary.

Luke 10:38-42 – *“Now it happened as they went that He entered a certain village; and a certain woman named Martha welcomed Him into her house. And she had a sister called Mary, who also sat at Jesus’<sup>[k]</sup> feet and heard His word. But Martha was distracted with much serving, and she approached Him and said, ‘Lord, do You not care that my sister has left me to serve alone? Therefore tell her to help me.’ And Jesus<sup>[l]</sup> answered and said to her, ‘Martha, Martha, you are worried and troubled about many things. But one thing is needed, and Mary has chosen that good part, which will not be taken away from her.’*

The Jews of Jesus’ day greatly prized the study of the Scriptures. The Rabbis walked from town to town teaching. It was customary for rabbis to sit on low pillows or chairs while they were teaching. Their followers would sit on the ground or on mats around them. That’s how the phrase “sit at his feet” became an idiom for learning from a Rabbi.

In Acts 22:3 we read Paul’s words about his background, “I am indeed a Jew, born in Tarsus of Cilicia, but brought up in this city at the feet of Gamaliel (a noted Rabbi), taught according to the strictness of our fathers’ law, and was zealous toward God. . . .”

And so when Mary is described as “sitting at Jesus’ feet,” she is noted as a follower of Jesus. Clearly, Jesus welcomed her as such.

Who is this Man? There is no middle ground!

Many try to take what they consider to be an intellectually balanced position. They readily accept that Jesus existed, that He was a Galilean Jew Who lived and taught during the first century, that He was martyred for His teachings, and that those teachers were both radical and influential. But they deny Jesus' miracles and reject even the suggestion that He is deity. Unfortunately this view of Jesus fails to explain why so many were willing to follow Him, even to a martyr's death, and why He continues to impact the world so profoundly.

C.S. Lewis wrote, in *Mere Christianity*:

“I am trying here to prevent anyone saying the really foolish thing that people often say about Him: ‘I’m ready to accept Jesus as a great moral teacher, but I don’t accept His claim to be God.’ That is the one thing we must not say. 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’s a 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 a madman or something worse. You can shut Him up for a fool, 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 with any patronizing nonsense about His being a great human teacher. He has not left that open to us. He did not intend to.”

Even Jesus' disciples struggled to comprehend Who He was? What an incredible thought – God becoming man. YET – that's what the Hebrew Scriptures taught (Micah 5:2; Isa. 7:14; Isa. 9:6).

Ray Stedman wrote: “But if we find it difficult, how much more did His own disciples! They, of all people, would be least likely to believe that He was God, for they lived with Him and saw His humanity as none of us ever has or ever will. They must have been confronted again and again with a question that puzzled and troubled them, “Who is this man? I have often pictured them sleeping out under the stars with our Lord on a summer night by the Sea of Galilee. I can imagine Peter or John or one of the others walking in the night, rising up on an elbow, and as he looked at the Lord Jesus sleeping beside him, saying to himself, “Is it true? Can this man be the eternal God?”

Who is this Man? If we are to believe the Man Himself – He is God. He told us. . . .

John 14:7-11 - “*If you had known Me, you would have known My Father also; and from now on you know Him and have seen Him.*’ Philip said to Him, ‘*Lord, show us the Father, and it is sufficient for us.*’ Jesus said to him, ‘*Have I been with you so long, and yet you have not known Me, Philip? He who has seen Me has seen the Father; so how can you say, ‘Show us the Father’? Do you not believe that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me? The words that I speak to you I do not speak on My own authority; but the Father who dwells in Me does the works. Believe Me that I am in the Father and the Father in Me, or else believe Me for the sake of the works themselves.*”

John 10:30-33 – “ ‘I and My Father are one.’ Then the Jews took up stones again to stone Him. Jesus answered them, ‘Many good works I have shown you from My Father. For which of those works do you stone Me?’ The Jews answered Him, saying, ‘For a good work we do not stone You, but for blasphemy, and because You, being a Man, make Yourself God.’”

This is how Jesus presented Himself to the world, and, in the end, how we must either accept or reject Him.

In the person of the Son, the timeless, all-powerful God voluntarily exited eternity and stepped into time to become a helpless human being. The Creator became as a creature to suffer the same pains we suffer, to endure the same heartaches and disappointments, struggles and temptations that afflict us, to bear the same injustices that plague human existence, and even to subject Himself to the awful consequences of sin. Identifying with man. . . .

Jesus came into this world knowing what it would cost Him. He bore in His body the marks of evil and hatred that we deserve. The weight of our sin was upon Him so that we could be forgiven.

Jesus took on our disfigurement – forever.

We will see His scars in heaven!

Who is his Man?

Who do YOU say that He is?

### HOMEWORK

As you read through your handout, identify:

- God’s grace
- God’s truth
- “new to me” points; V8 moments
- key point for you
- application for your life!

Read Daniel 2 in preparation for next week

Read Matthew 1 and Luke 3:23-38