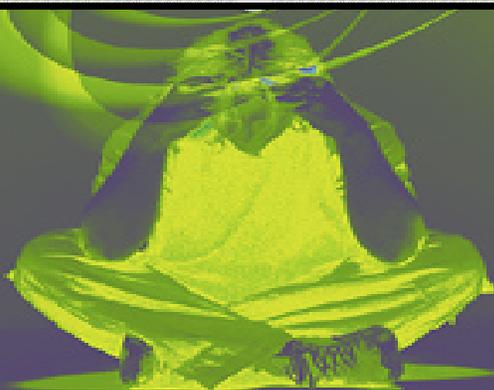


**Note to Facilitators:**

We've heard your concerns about the format and content of the support material page for small groups. We want to give you the kind of support and resources that you need so that you can nourish and grow your small group. This week, we are providing you with a suggested agenda for the evening, information that extends from the sermon on Sunday, as well as support documents you can print and use with your group. Our goal is to better equip you to do the work of God. We value you and want to give you the support and resources you need to thrive in your ministry! Thank you for your continued feedback each week.



**Suggested Agenda**

*We wanted to give you different options that you can use in facilitating your small group. Some of these activities will not take as long as estimated; some may take much longer. You do not need feel that you must “get through” each component. Let your group dig in and linger where there is an interest or a need. Conversely, don’t draw something out that isn’t working for your group. Pick and choose, you know your groups needs – don’t feel like you need to do everything!*

- Opening/Social Time
- Prayer/Worship (estimated time: 20 minutes)
- Small Group Questions (estimated time: 10 minutes)
- Challenge from Pastor Miles (estimated time: 20 - 25 minutes)
- Witnessing Tool activity (estimated time: 20 – 25 minutes)
- Personal Application activity (estimated time: 20 – 25 minutes)
- Closing/Prayer (15 – 20 minutes)

# Who is Jesus Really? Part 5 – Christ



## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### NATIONAL DAY OF PRAYER, THURSDAY 5, MAY 2005:

"God Shed His Grace on Thee."

This is a day when we should take the opportunity to be visible and we are encouraging every small group to prayer walk a business area, school, fire or police station, military base, government building this week. There will be corporate prayer throughout the day at The Rock Church from 7 AM-7 PM. We will have a special worship and a prayer service lead by our Rock Pastor from 7-9 PM in the sanctuary.

**Leadership Development:** Sunday, May 29, 1 – 3 PM in the Sanctuary. New Small Group Training information as well as *Biblical Guidance* and *How to Grow Your Group* breakout sessions. Lunch will be served at 1 PM. R.S.V.P. [melissak@therocksandiego.org](mailto:melissak@therocksandiego.org)

**Rancho San Juan Bosco Orphanage:** If your group would like to donate new toys or books in Spanish for this boys orphanage in Mexico, contact [rebeccahaddock1@yahoo.com](mailto:rebeccahaddock1@yahoo.com)

## SMALL GROUP QUESTIONS

What do the following terms mean

1. Christ
2. Rabbi
3. Lord
4. Messiah

When impacted with Jesus and His message what did the disciples do?

5. Why was the message they taught “foolish”?
6. Give an example on how they relied on His promises?
7. Where do we find events that validate what Jesus said concerning them facing persecution, rejection and violent death?

Answers to questions 1-4

1. Christ = **Χριστός** [*Christos* /khris **tos**/] adj. **1** Christ was the Messiah, the Son of God. **2** anointed. *Additional Information:* Christ = “anointed”.

2. Rabbi = **ῥαββί** [*rhabbi* /hrab **bee**/] n m. **1** my great one, my honourable sir. **2** Rabbi, a title used by the Jews to address their teachers (and also honour them when not addressing them).

3. Lord = **κύριος** [*kuriος* /**koo** ree **os**/] n m. From *kuros* (supremacy); **1** he to whom a person or thing belongs, about which he has power of deciding; master, lord. **1A** the possessor and disposer of a thing. **1A1** the owner; one who has control of the person, the master. **1A2** in the state: the sovereign, prince, chief, the Roman emperor. **1B** is a title of honour expressive of respect and reverence, with which servants salute their master. **1C** this title is given to: God, the Messiah.<sup>1</sup>

4. Messiah = [*mashiyach* /maw **shee** akh/]. **1** anointed, anointed one. **1A** of the Messiah, Messianic prince. **1B** of the king of Israel. **1C** of the high priest of Israel. **1D** of Cyrus. **1E** of the patriarchs as anointed kings.

adj **adj**: adjective  
n **n**: noun or neuter  
m **m**: masculine  
n **n**: noun or neuter  
m **m**: masculine

<sup>1</sup>Strong, J. (1996). *The exhaustive concordance of the Bible : Showing every word of the test of the common English version of the canonical books, and every occurrence of each word in regular order.* (electronic ed.) (H0). Ontario: Woodside Bible Fellowship.

### Challenge

For this week's homework, Pastor Miles challenged us to identify Christ's claims for His own deity (continue to do this each week as we read through the New Testament), the titles the Disciples used to refer to Him, and the things they were willing to do for Him. In your group, take some time to go through the gospels and record the Book, chapter, and verse where you found an example that fit each category. You may choose to break into smaller groups, divide up the categories, and share out when you are done.

*(Need help? See the Sermon Extension information that follows)*

<b>Category</b>	<b>Verses</b>
Christ's claims of His own deity	
Titles used by the Disciples to refer to Jesus	
Things the disciples did to follow Christ	

### Sermon Extension

#### **Who did the Disciples say He was?**

*Now when Jesus came into the district of Caesarea Philippi, He was asking His disciples "Who do people say that the Son of Man is?" And they said, "Some say John the Baptist; and others, Elijah; but still others, Jeremiah, or one of the prophets." He said to them, "But who do you say that I am?" Simon Peter answered, "You are the Christ the Son of the living God."*

*- Matthew 16:13-20*

**16:13.** Caesarea Philippi (a city distinct from the usual New Testament Caesarea, which was on the coast) was pagan territory, near a grotto devoted to the worship of the Greek deity Pan; Herod had also dedicated a temple for the worship of Caesar there. Thus it was hardly the most expected site for a divine revelation. The city was some twenty-five miles from the Lake of Galilee and about seventeen hundred feet higher, hence the need to stop along the way (15:21); it lay near the source of the Jordan, at the Old Testament Dan, the northern boundary of ancient Israel.

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**16:14.** All these answers about who Jesus was fall into the “prophets” category; though most Jewish teachers held that prophets had ceased, popular expectation of end-time prophets remained strong. Elijah was expected to return (Mal 4:5), and many of Jesus’ miracles resembled Elijah’s. His judgment oracles (Mt 11:20–24) or downplaying the temple (cf. 12:6; 24:1–2) may have evoked the comparison with Jeremiah.

Remember the issue and the heart of the question is “Who do YOU say that He is?”

### **Who did the Apostles say He was?**

<http://www.risenjesus.com/articles/index.asp?pagea=jesus-god&pagea2=website>

Jesus’ disciples seemed to think of Him as God. Consider doubting Thomas upon seeing the risen Jesus responds, "My Lord and my God!" Consider John who refers to Jesus as the "Word" in the beginning of his Gospel. In the first verse he writes, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God [italics mine]." Consider Paul who writes, "For in Him [Christ], all the fullness of deity dwells in bodily form." The original Greek word for "deity" refers to the one who occupies the divine office and possesses all divine power. This verse states that all the fullness (nothing excluded) of God’s essence dwells in Christ in bodily form. As an engineer visiting from Greece once commented to me, this verse in Greek states that "God came down and put on a body!" Consider Peter who writes of "the righteousness of our God and Savior Jesus Christ . . ." While it is true that the original Greek grammatical structure of this phrase could be referring to two persons (i.e., our God [person 1] and Savior Jesus Christ [person 2]) instead of one (i.e., our God-and-Savior Jesus Christ), this is highly unlikely. Throughout the remainder of 2 Peter, the author uses the same grammatical structure used in this verse four other times. In every case it is clearly referring to one person.

<http://www.spurgeon.org/~phil/creeds/apostles.htm>

### **The Apostles' Creed (as usually recited today)**

BELIEVE in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth: And in Jesus Christ his only Son, our Lord; who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried; he descended into hell; the third day he rose again from the dead; he ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Ghost; the holy Catholic Church; the communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins; the resurrection of the body; and the life everlasting. Amen

### **The Apostles' Creed vs. Gnosticism**

**By James Kiefer, L-Soft list server at ASUACAD**

CREED generally emphasizes the beliefs opposing those errors that the compilers of the creed think most dangerous at the time. The Creed of the Council of Trent, which was drawn up by the Roman Catholics in the 1500's, emphasized those beliefs that Roman Catholics and Protestants were arguing about most furiously at the time. The Nicene Creed, drawn up in the fourth century, is emphatic in affirming the Deity of Christ, since it is directed against the Arians, who denied that Christ was fully God. The Apostles' Creed, drawn up in the first or second century, emphasizes the true Humanity, including the material body, of Jesus, since that is the point that the heretics of the time (Gnostics, Marcionites, and later Manicheans) denied. (See 1 John 4:1-3)

Thus the Apostles' Creed is as follows:

- \* I believe in God the Father Almighty,
- \* Maker of Heaven and Earth,

*The Gnostics held that the physical universe is evil and that God did not make it.*

- \* And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, Our Lord,
- \* Who was conceived by the Holy Ghost,
- \* Born of the Virgin Mary,

*The Gnostics were agreed that the orthodox Christians were wrong in supposing that God had taken human nature or a human body. Some of them distinguished between Christ, whom they acknowledged to be in some sense divine, and the man Jesus, who was at most an instrument through whom the Christ spoke. They held that the man Jesus did not become the bearer or instrument of the Christ until the Spirit descended upon him at his baptism, and that the Spirit left him before the crucifixion, so that the Spirit had only a brief and tenuous association with matter and humanity. Others affirmed that there was never a man Jesus at all, but only the appearance of a man, through which appearance wise teachings were given to the first disciples. Against this the orthodox Christians affirmed that Jesus was conceived through the action of the Holy Spirit (thus denying the Gnostic position that the Spirit had nothing to do with Jesus until his Baptism), that he was born (which meant that he had a real physical body, and not just an appearance) of a virgin (which implied that he had been special from the first moment of his life, and not just from the baptism on.*

- \* Suffered under Pontius Pilate,

*There were many stories then current about gods who died and were resurrected, but they were offered quite frankly as myths, as non-historical stories symbolic of the renewal of the vegetation every spring after the seeming death of winter. If you asked, "When did Adonis die?" you would be told either, "Long ago and far away," or else, "His death is not an event in earthly time." Jesus, on the other hand, died at a particular time and place in history, under the jurisdiction of Pontius Pilate, Procurator of Judea from 26 to 36 CE, or during the last ten years of the reign of the Emperor Tiberius.*

- \* was crucified, dead, and buried; he descended into Hades.

*Here the creed hammers home the point that he was really dead. He was not an illusion. He was nailed to a post. He died. He had a real body, a corpse that was placed in a tomb. He was not merely unconscious — his spirit left his body and went to the realm of the dead. It is a common belief among Christians that on this occasion he took the souls of those who had died trusting in the promises made under the Old Covenant — Abraham, Moses, David, Elijah, Isaiah, and many others — and brought them out of the realm of the dead and into heavenly glory. But the creed is not concerned with this point. The reference to the descent into Hades (or Hell, or Sheol) is here to make it clear that the death of Jesus was not just a swoon or a coma, but death in every sense of the word.*

- \* The third day he rose from the dead, he ascended into heaven,
- \* and is seated at the right hand of God the Father Almighty.
- \* From thence he shall come to judge the living and the dead.
- \* I believe in the Holy Ghost,
- \* the holy catholic church,

*The Gnostics believed that the most important Christian doctrines were reserved for a select few. The orthodox belief was that the fullness of the Gospel was to be preached to the entire human race. Hence the term "catholic," or universal, which distinguished them from the Gnostics.*

- \* the communion of saints,
- \* the forgiveness of sins,

The Gnostics considered that what men needed was not forgiveness, but enlightenment. Ignorance, not sin, was the problem. Some of them, believing the body to be a snare and delusion, led lives of great asceticism. Others, believing the body to be quite separate from the soul, held that it did not matter what the body did, since it was completely foul anyway, and its actions had no effect on the soul. They accordingly led lives that were not ascetic at all. Either way, the notion of forgiveness was alien to them.

- \* the resurrection of the body,

The chief goal of the Gnostics was to become free forever from the taint of matter and the shackles of the body, and to return to the heavenly realm as Pure Spirit. They totally rejected any idea of the resurrection of the body.

- \* and the life everlasting. AMEN

### Challenge Helps

Titles for Jesus:

- **Peter** affirms Jesus as the Messiah —“Simon Peter answered and said, ‘You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.’”—Matthew 16:16. See also Mark 8:29.
- Thomas, after seeing the resurrected Christ replies saying, “My Lord and my God!”—John 20:28.
- **James and John**, requesting positions of status, ask Jesus this question in regards to their dwelling in Heaven: “Grant us that we may sit, one on Your right hand and the other on Your left, in Your glory.”—Mark 10:37.
- The Triumphant Entry—“When they saw Him, they worshipped Him; but some doubted.”—Matthew 28:17.
- **Nathanael** recognizes Jesus’ lordship as Messiah by declaring Him as the King of Israel—“Rabbi, You are the Son of God! You are the King of Israel!”—John 1:49.
- In his gospel of Jesus, **John** writes: “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made...And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us...”—John 1:1-14.
- **Paul** writes in a letter to the Colossians: “For in Christ all the fullness of deity lives in bodily form, and you have been given fullness in Christ, who is the head over every power and authority.”—Colossians 2:9-10.
- **Paul**, in a letter to the Philippians, declares: “Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but made himself nothing, taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men.”—Philippians 2:5-7.
- **Jude**, another apostle and arguably also a brother of Jesus, confirms the deity of Christ in his letter to the church warning them against sexual immorality. “For certain men whose condemnation was written about long ago have secretly slipped in among you. They are godless men, who change the grace of our God into a license for immorality and deny Jesus Christ our only Sovereign and Lord.”—Jude 1:4.

Faithful followers:

- **Matthew** suffered martyrdom in Ethiopia, killed by a sword wound.
- **Mark** died in Alexandria, Egypt, after being dragged by horses through the streets until he was dead.
- **Luke** was hanged by idolatrous priests on an olive tree in Greece as a result of his tremendous preaching to the lost.
- **John** faced martyrdom when he was boiled in a huge basin of boiling oil during a wave of persecution in Rome. However, he was miraculously delivered from death. John was then sentenced to the mines on the prison island of Patmos. He wrote his prophetic Book of Revelation on Patmos. The apostle John was later freed and returned to serve as Bishop of Edessa in modern Turkey. He died as an old man, the only apostle to die peacefully.
- **Peter** was crucified upside down on an x-shaped cross because he told his tormentors that he felt unworthy to die in the same way that Jesus Christ was crucified.
- **James the Just**, the leader of the church in Jerusalem, was thrown over a hundred feet down from the southeast pinnacle of the Temple when he refused to deny his faith in Christ. When they discovered that he survived the fall, his enemies beat James to death with a fuller's club. This was the same pinnacle where Jesus went to during his Temptation.
- **James the Greater**, a son of Zebedee, was a fisherman by trade when Jesus called him to a lifetime of ministry. As a strong leader of the church, James was ultimately beheaded at Jerusalem. The Roman officer who guarded James watched amazed as James defended his faith at his trial. Later, the officer walked beside James to the place of execution. Overcome by conviction, he declared his new faith to the judge and knelt beside James to accept beheading as a Christian.
- **Bartholomew**, also known as Nathanael, was a missionary to Asia. He witnessed to our Lord in present day Turkey. Bartholomew was martyred for his preaching in Armenia when he was flayed to death by a whip.
- **Andrew** was crucified on an x-shaped cross in Patras, Greece. After being whipped severely by seven soldiers they tied his body to the cross with cords to prolong his agony. His followers reported that, when he was led toward the cross, Andrew saluted it in these words: "I have long desired and expected this happy hour. The cross has been consecrated by the body of Christ hanging on it." He continued to preach to his tormentors for two days until he expired.
- **Thomas** was stabbed with a spear (lance) in India during one of his missionary trips to establish the church in the subcontinent.
- **Jude**, the brother of Jesus, was killed with arrows when he refused to deny his faith in Christ.
- **Matthias**, the apostle chosen to replace the traitor Judas Iscariot, was stoned and then beheaded.
- **Barnabas**, one of the groups of seventy disciples, wrote the Epistle of Barnabas. He preached throughout Italy and Cyprus. Barnabas was stoned to death at Salonicia.
- **Paul** was tortured and then beheaded by the evil Emperor Nero in Rome in A.D. 67. Paul endured a lengthy imprisonment which allowed him to write his many epistles to the churches he had formed throughout the Roman Empire. These letters, which taught many of the foundational doctrines of Christianity, form a large portion of the New Testament.

### Witnessing Tool

Below are just two common objections that people make concerning the Deity of Jesus. Use the information you have been given these past few weeks, the text support, and your sermon notes to construct a strong response to each objection. What are some additional questions you can come up with as a group? (Spend some time formulating your questions and back up your responses with Scripture!)

<b>Objection</b>	<b>Verses</b>	<b>Response</b>
Since the New Testament writers were biased, can we trust their testimony?		
What about other people whose lives are changed by their “saviors” and people from other faiths that are martyred for what they believed?		

**Personal Application**

So what does all this mean for me? How does the belief that Jesus is God impact my life on a daily basis? Take some time in quiet meditation, small group discussion, or discussion to “make it real” and consider how the deity of Jesus changes our lives.

<b>Moments of</b>	<b>Verses</b>	<b>Significance in my life</b>
How has He revealed Himself to you?		
Who do YOU say He is?		
What have you sacrificed in order to follow Him?		
What is your next step as you continue to follow Him?		