

## JESUS IS GOD

- A. Introduction: Jesus warned that the years leading up to His second coming will be marked by religious deception—specifically false christs and false prophets. Jesus exhorted His followers to be on guard so that they (we) won't be deceived by false christs and false prophets. Matt 24:4-5; 11; 23-24
1. To be deceived means to believe a lie. The Bible is our protection against deception. Ps 91:4
    - a. The Bible is the Truth because it is the Word of Almighty God Who cannot lie, and because it reveals Truth incarnate—the Lord Jesus Christ. John 17:17; John 14:6; John 5:39; John 20:31; etc.
    - b. We are taking time to look at Jesus as He is revealed in the Bible—Who He is, why He came, what He preached, and what He accomplished through His death, burial, and resurrection—so that we can recognize false christs and prophets who preach false gospels.
  2. The Person and work of Jesus is being increasingly undermined, not just in the secular world, but in many parts of the church. Much erroneous teaching has seeped into popular “Christian” teaching.
    - a. The Bible makes it clear that at the time of the second coming of Christ the world will be under the control of a world government, economy and religion presided over by the ultimate false christ, a man commonly known as the Antichrist. Rev 13:1-18; Dan 8:23; etc.
    - b. The conditions that will blossom into this one world system are developing even now. An apostate (false Christian) church is already well under way. It is being hailed as more “tolerant”, “inclusive”, and “less judgmental”
      1. I Tim 4:1—Paul the apostle, who was personally taught the gospel he preached by Jesus Himself (Gal 1:11-12), wrote that in the last days (the days prior to Jesus' return) men will depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils.
      2. We must be able to distinguish the false from the genuine so that we can recognize doctrines of demons and resist seducing spirits.
    - c. In this lesson we're going to continue to examine the genuine Jesus in the only 100% accurate, fully reliable revelation that we have of Him—the written Word of God, the Bible.
- B. Before we talk about Jesus specifically, we need an accurate understanding of Who God is. We need to back up a bit and make some statements about God and the nature of God.
1. The Bible is progressive revelation. God has gradually revealed Himself to mankind through the pages of Scripture. The Bible opens with the creation of the heavens and the earth and the creation of man.
    - a. It moves quickly to mankind's descent into sin, corruption, and death when the first man, Adam, disobeyed God. The Lord quickly promised that a Redeemer (the Lord Jesus Christ) would one day come to deliver men and women from this deplorable condition. Gen 3:15
    - b. The rest of what we call the Old Testament is primarily the history of the people group through whom God chose to bring the Redeemer—the descendants of a man named Abraham (the Hebrews, Israelites, or Jews).
    - c. One of the primary ways God has revealed Himself to men is through His various names which convey His different qualities and characteristics. Jehovah (Yahweh) is the name of God most frequently used in the Hebrew Scriptures (Old Testament).
      1. Jehovah means the eternal, Self-existent One. Jehovah is not essence or energy. Nor is He the Universe. He is a Being Who created the universe.
      2. The root idea of His name is that of underived existence. He is eternal, having no beginning and no end. He was, He is, and He always will be. There is no other being like Him. He is infinite (without limits of any kind). Jer 23:24; II Chron 6:18; Ps 90:2; Ps 102:25-27
      3. Jehovah is sometimes compounded with another word to describe the character of the Lord in greater detail. He is the Self-existent One Who reveals Himself. Gen 22:14; Ex 17:15; etc.

- d. God is both transcendent and imminent. Transcendent means separate from or beyond, surpassing. Imminent means close at hand. There is much about Him that is incomprehensible to our minds, yet He is knowable. He has chosen to reveal Himself to us so that we can know Him.
  - e. Jer 9:23-24—“Let not the wise man boast of his wisdom or the strong man boast of his strength or the rich man boast of his riches, but let him who boasts boast about this: that he understands and knows me, that I am the Lord, who exercises kindness, justice and righteousness on earth, for in these I delight,” declares the Lord (NIV).
2. The Bible further reveals that God is one God (one Being) who simultaneously manifests as three distinct Persons—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. (We could do an entire series on this aspect of God’s nature, but aren’t. I make reference to it because it has to do with understanding Who Jesus is.)
- a. This truth is known as the doctrine of the Trinity. Although the word trinity is not found in Scripture, the doctrine is. (The Greek word translated doctrine means instruction or teaching). Our word trinity comes from two Latin words—*tri* and *unis*—meaning three and one.
    - 1. These three Persons—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—are distinct, but not separate. They co-inhere or share one Divine nature. Inhere means to belong by nature.
    - 2. These are not three separate persons (limited and separated from another). They are persons in the sense of being self aware, aware of and interactive with each other.
    - 3. All three possess and demonstrate qualities, characteristics, and abilities of God—Eternality, Omnipresence, Omniscience, Omnipotence, holiness. In other words, they all are and do what only God is and can do: The Father (Jer 23:23-24; Rom 11:33; I Pet 1:5; Rev 15:4); the Son (Matt 18:20; Matt 28:20; Matt 9:4; Matt 28:18; Acts 3:14); the Holy Spirit (Ps 139:7; I Cor 2:10; Rom 15:19; John 16:7-14).
  - b. God is not one God who manifests three ways, sometimes as the Father, sometimes as the Son, and sometimes as the Holy Spirit. You can’t have one without the other.
    - 1. Where the Father is, so is the Son and the Holy Spirit. The Son is the visible incarnation of everything the Father is. The Holy Spirit is the invisible presence of everything Jesus is.
    - 2. All efforts to explain the Godhead fall short. People sometimes try to describe the triune nature of God as an egg (or three parts in one). This is incorrect because the yolk isn’t the shell or the egg white, the shell isn’t the yolk or the white, and the white isn’t the shell or the yolk,
    - 3. This is beyond our comprehension because we (finite beings with definable limits) are talking about the Omnipotent (all powerful) Omnipresent (Present everywhere at one), Omniscient (all-knowing God) Who is invisible. We can only accept and rejoice in the wonder of Almighty God.
  - c. These three Persons work in cooperation with each other. All participated in creation and all played a role in redemption. Difference in function does not mean difference in nature.
    - 1. Consider a few verses that reveal their respective roles: The Father (Gen 2:7; Ps 102:25; Heb 10:5; Acts 2:32; Acts 13:30; Eph 1:19-20); the Son (John 1:3; Col 1:16; Heb 1:2; Heb 2:14; John 2:19; John 10:17-18); the Holy Spirit (Gen 1:2; Job 33:4; Ps 104:30; Luke 1:35; Rom 1:4; Rom 8:11).
    - 2. Everything comes from God the Father through the Son by the Holy Ghost. The Father planned redemption. The Son purchased it through the Cross. The Holy Spirit performs it or makes what the Father provide through the Son a reality in our experience.
3. I realize that this sounds like theological instruction for ministers and not relevant topics for real people. But this information is vital to understanding Who Jesus is so that you can recognize counterfeits.
- a. Here are just a few popular (but false) ideas about Jesus that are leading many people astray. Jesus is a created being, an angel. He is inferior to the Father. He is a human who attained true Christ consciousness or discovered God within. He’s an ascended master, time traveler, or a space being.

- b. If ever there was a time to know the real Jesus—the One Who is revealed in the Scripture—it’s now. Jesus is God—God become man without ceasing to be God. While on earth He did not live as God. He lived as a man in dependence on God as His Father.
1. Jesus was and is the fulfillment of a prophecy given to Isaiah that a virgin would bring forth a child called Emmanuel or God with us. Isa 7:14; Matt 1:23
  2. Emmanuel literally means the God-man. “According to orthodox interpretation the name denotes the same as God-man (*theanthropos*) and has reference to the personal union of the human nature and the divine in Christ” (*Unger’s Bible Dictionary*).
- C. The Gospel of John, more than the other three gospels, emphasizes the deity of Jesus. In John 1:1-18 we find one of the clearest presentations of the fact that Jesus is God become man without ceasing to be God.
1. By contrasting two Greek words for the verb was, the Bible clearly shows that Jesus had no beginning. He has always existed because He is God.
    - a. One Greek verb is *en*. The tense expresses continuous action in the past (i.e. no beginning point). The other Greek word is *egeneto*. The tense denotes a time when something came into existence. In this passage, *en* is used for the Word (Jesus), and *egeneto* is used for created things.
      1. In other words, use of this verb *en* tells us, that in contrast to things that have a definite beginning, there was never a time that the Word (Jesus) did not exist.
      2. John 1:1-3—In the beginning was (*en*) the Word and the Word was (*en*) with God and the Word was (*en*) God. The same was (*en*) in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was (*egeneto*) made (KJV).
    - b. Without going into detail, it is important to point out that the way this passage is written in Greek, John was careful not to make God and the Word interchangeable. The Father is not the Word and the Word is not the Father. They are of the same nature, but they are distinct Persons.
      1. When all things began, the Word already was. The Word dwelt with God, and what God was, the Word was. (NEB)
      2. In the beginning the Word was existing. And the Word was in fellowship with God the Father, and the Word was as to His essence absolute deity. (Wuest)
        - A. Note that v3 states that all things were made (created) by the Word. All three Persons of the Godhead were participants in creating the heavens and the earth. Gen 1:1-2
        - B. The term Godhead is used in the New Testament (Acts 17:29; Rom 1:20; Col 2:9). The Greek word translated Godhead is from the word *theos* or God. The word is used of God’s power and nature, the Divine nature. According to *Vine’s Dictionary*, Godhead “denotes that which proceeds from Himself”.
    - c. John 1:14 tells us that the Word was (*egeneto*) made flesh and dwelled among us. At a definite point in time (two thousand years ago) the Word became man.
      1. Jesus took on a human nature in the womb of the Virgin Mary, a body prepared by the Father and the Holy Spirit. Jer 31:22; Isa 7:14; Luke 1:35; Heb 10:5
      2. Jesus is the only begotten of the Father. The Greek word (*monogenes*) has the idea of unique. Jesus is the only God-man. He is the only man who existed before He was born. His birth did not mark His beginning. He is the only one qualified to pay for the sins of an entire race because He is God and He had no sins of His own (lessons other days).
  2. Some mistakenly believe that because Jesus is called the Son of God, He is less than the Father or He is a created being. That is not the case.
    - a. In Bible times, the phrase “son of” did sometimes mean offspring of, but it more often meant “of the order of”. The ancients used the phrase to mean sameness of nature and equality of being. The Old Testament uses the phrase this way. I Kings 20:35; II Kings 2:3;5;7;15; Neh 12:28

- b. When Jesus said He was the Son of God, He was saying that He was God. That is how the people of His day (first-century Jews) would have understood the phrase. The Jewish leadership wanted to stone Him for saying that He was the Son of God, or equal with God. In their eyes, Jesus committed blasphemy by what He said. John 5:18; John 10:31-33; John 19:7; Lev 24:16
3. John 1:1—In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God, and the Word was God (KJV).
- a. According to John, who not only walked and talked with Jesus (in other words, he was an eyewitness), and who was inspired by the Holy Spirit to record the words found in his gospel, at the time of creation, Jesus, Who is God, existed with God the Father and the God the Holy Ghost.
1. The Greek word translated with (*pros*) has the idea of intimate, unbroken, face-to-face fellowship. Before there was anything there was God (the Father, the Word, and the Holy Spirit). They were (and are) perfect and perfectly complete—in loving fellowship with one another.
  2. We have been invited into that relationship, that fellowship. In I Cor 13:12, Paul referred to the fact that there is coming a day when we will see things clearly, in a way we do not now (lessons for another day). But the point for our present discussion is that face-to-face in the Greek is the word *pros*.
- b. Jesus became man so that He could die for our sins and bring us to God. Heb Heb 2:14-15; I Pet 3:18
1. Sin cut us off from God, making relationship with Him impossible. Through His sacrificial substitutionary death, Jesus paid the price we owed for our sin.
    - A. He did this so that we can be justified (declared not guilty) and made righteous (restored to right relationship with God) when we put faith in Him and His sacrifice. Once we are justified, we can receive eternal life.
    - B. John 17:3—Now this is eternal life: that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent (NIV).
  2. Remember that God is the Self-existent One who reveals Himself. Jesus came into this world to show us the Invisible God so that we can know Him. (More on this in upcoming lessons)
4. We could do entire lessons on the relationship that God planned for us to have with Him. Consider one passage from the prayer that Jesus prayed the night before He was crucified. Jesus prayed first for His twelve disciples. Then He prayed for all who would come to faith in Him through them.
- a. John 17:20-21—It is not for them only that I make this request. It is also for those who through their message come to believe in me. Let them all be one. Just as you, Father, are in union with me and I am with you, let them be in union with us, so that the world may believe that you sent me. (Goodspeed)
- b. John 17:22-23—I have given them the glory that you gave me, so that they may be one just as we are, I in union with them and you with me, so that they may be perfectly unified, and the world may recognize that you sent me and that you love them just as you loved me. (Goodspeed)
- D. Conclusion: We have much more to say about who Jesus is, why He came to earth, and the message that He preached, but consider these thoughts as we close this lesson.
1. We were created to know God and then to reflect His glory as we show Him to the world around us. Without accurate knowledge of who God is—who Jesus is—according to the Bible, you will not fulfill your created purpose.
  2. Anything we learn and know about God—as He is revealed in and through Jesus—will enrich our lives as it protects us from the darkness all around us. II Pet 1:2