

Who Is
THE
GREATEST
MAN
ALIVE?

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The Word to the World

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INTRODUCTION

Who is the greatest person who has ever lived? *He is Jesus Christ*, and we want to introduce you to Him. This short course will help you discover Him for yourself. In studying the Bible you will find out who Jesus really is, what He did, why He is “the greatest man alive,” and how you can know Him personally.

This booklet is a modified version of our Study Course called *The Greatest Man Alive*. ECS Ministries publishes over 60 Bible courses, some of which have been translated into more than 120 languages and used in over 100 countries.

This course consists of three chapters of text with a short test for each chapter. The tests consist of multiple-choice questions designed to reinforce what you learn.

Read each chapter carefully. If a verse in the Bible is mentioned but not included in the text, look that verse up in a Bible. Finding a Bible reference is like looking up a street address: the “town” is the book,

the “street” is the chapter number, and the “house number” is the verse number. For example, John 3:16 means the book of John, chapter 3, and verse 16. The location of the book can be found by using the table-of-contents in the Bible you are using.

When you have read the course and completed the tests, mail the entire booklet to the organization or person who gave you the course. Alternatively, send it to the address on the last page. The tests will be graded and returned to you, along with a certificate. We will help you with any incorrect answers and will gladly answer any questions you may have.

Fill in the information below before you begin:

Name: _____

Address: _____

WHO IS JESUS?

Who is Jesus? Ever since Jesus was on earth, people have been asking that question. It is actually the most important question you can ever ask.

Even Jesus' followers (called "disciples") asked who Jesus was. When He calmed a raging storm on the Sea of Galilee just by commanding it to be still, they said, "Who can this be, that even the wind and the sea obey Him!" (Mark 4:41).

The religious leaders of Jesus' day were not so kind. They were jealous of Him. They asked, "Who is this who speaks blasphemies?" (Luke 5:21).

Even after Jesus had been preaching for over three years, people were still asking that question. "And when He had come into Jerusalem, all the city was moved, saying, 'Who is this?'" (Matthew 21:10).

So who is Jesus?

The men who wrote the first four books of the New Testament (the Gospels) help us answer the question. One of them put it this way: "These are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name" (John 20:31).

Read on to find out what God's Book, the Bible, says about Jesus Christ, the Son of God, and how you can "have life in His name."

JESUS WAS A HUMAN BEING

Jesus' earthly life was so amazing that we need to be reminded that He was *human*. Read what the Bible tells us about how He was just as truly human as you are.

"Now after Jesus *was born* in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king..." (Matthew 2:1).

"And the child [Jesus] *grew* and became strong in spirit, filled with wisdom" (Luke 2:40).

"He went down with them and came to Nazareth, and *was subject to them* [Mary and Joseph]" (Luke 2:51).

"For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points *tempted as we are*, yet without sin" (Hebrews 4:15).

"*Being wearied* from His journey, [Jesus] sat thus by the well.... A woman of Samaria came to draw water. Jesus said to her, '*Give Me a drink*'" (John 4:6-7).

"But He [Jesus] was in the stern, *asleep* on a pillow" (Mark 4:38).

"Jesus *wept*" (John 11:35).

We can see from these verses that Jesus was a

real human being in every way. He was born. As a child He depended on His mother and was under the authority of His parents. He grew up the way we all do. He knew what it was to be hungry, thirsty, and tired. He had feelings just as you do—joy, sorrow, anger, and love. He experienced temptation. His body, His mind, and His feelings all hurt. And He died.

ALTHOUGH JESUS WAS HUMAN, HE WAS DIFFERENT

Matthew 1:23 says, “Behold, the virgin shall be with child, and bear a Son, and they shall call His name Immanuel,’ which is translated ‘God with us.’”

A famous Scottish preacher once said, “The question of the virgin birth of Christ is not one of theology, but of fact. Either He was born of a virgin, or He was not. The narratives are either historically true or they are deliberate fiction. The main sources of our information are Matthew and Luke. It is entirely a matter of evidence, and all the evidence goes to show that these records are genuine documents of the Apostolic Age.”

Although Jesus was human, He said and did things that show He was different from you and me. The following Bible verses reveal some of these differences.

Hebrews 4:14–16—He never sinned

John 8:29—He always pleased God

Mark 1:34 and Mark 6:48—He had power over nature, diseases, and demons

Mark 2:6–8—He could read people's minds

JESUS WAS MORE THAN A HUMAN BEING

No person who has ever lived begins to exist until they are conceived by their parents—except for Jesus. He was different from us in that He was not an ordinary human being. God was His Father and He existed *before* He was born of Mary.

“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” (John 1:1–3).

John wrote that before the world was created, Jesus—who he calls “the Word”—existed. He existed before His human birth. In fact, there never was a time when He did not exist! John goes on to say that “the Word became flesh and dwelt among us” (John 1:14), meaning that He became a human being when He came to earth, having pre-existed with God (see John 1:2).

Of course, only God has always existed. The Jewish leaders were ready to stone Jesus to death because Jesus claimed to have existed before He was born (John 8:48–59).

John 3:16 tells us that Jesus is God's only *begotten* Son; by nature, Jesus was God's Son. Think of the difference between something you make and something you give birth to. If you create a table (out of wood) or a sweater (from yarn), you make something that is different from you. It is not human. But if you have a child, he or she is the same kind of being that you are. He or she is human because you are human.

God *made man*, who is not divine. But Jesus is *begotten* of God. He is divine. He is the same nature as God. He is God's only Son.

The Old Testament predicted the coming of Jesus hundreds of years before He was born. Matthew 1:20–23 quotes the prophet Isaiah, who said in Isaiah 7:14, “Behold, the virgin shall conceive and shall bear a Son and shall call His name Immanuel.” He was referring to Jesus.

After His disciples had watched Him and heard His teaching, Jesus asked them who they thought He was (see Matthew 16:13–20). Peter answered by saying, “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.” By this he meant that he believed Jesus was the one whom God had promised to send to be His people's King. Read what Isaiah said in Isaiah 9:6: “Unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given; and the government will be upon His shoulder. And His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting

Father, Prince of Peace.” This is a description of Jesus Christ.

When the Jewish leaders arrested Jesus, the only charge they could bring against Him was that he claimed to be God.

“And the high priest stood up in the midst and asked Jesus, saying, ‘Do you answer nothing? What is it these men testify against You?’ But He kept silent and answered nothing. Again the high priest asked Him, saying to Him, ‘Are You the Christ, the Son of the Blessed?’ Jesus said, ‘I am. And you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Power, and coming with the clouds of heaven.’ Then the high priest tore his clothes and said, ‘What further need do we have of witnesses? You have heard the blasphemy! What do you think?’ And they all condemned Him to be deserving of death” (Mark 14:60–64).

Jesus’ claim was blasphemy (that is, being irreverent to God by claiming to be equal with God) unless He really was who He claimed to be!

According to what Jesus Himself told Satan (the devil) in Matthew 4:10, the only one we should worship is God: “You shall worship the Lord your God, and Him only you shall serve.”

The apostle Peter did not accept worship from a prominent Roman centurion called Cornelius (Acts 10:19–33). An angel refused to accept worship from the apostle John (Revelation 22:1–9).

However, Jesus did accept worship from His disciples: “Then those who were in the boat came and worshipped Him, saying, ‘Truly You are the Son of God’” (Matthew 14:33).

Jesus is also different from us in that death could not hold Him. As God, He had to take on a physical body to be able to die (because God cannot die), but once He had experienced death, He rose out from among the dead.

“The angel answered ... ‘You seek Jesus who was crucified. He is not here; for He is risen, as He said’” (Matthew 28:5–6).

C. S. Lewis, well-known author of *The Chronicles of Narnia*, once wrote, “A man who was merely a man and said the sort of things Jesus said wouldn’t be a great moral teacher. He’d either be a lunatic ... or else He’d 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 ... or you can fall at His feet and call Him Lord and God.”

WHO IS THE GREATEST MAN ALIVE?

CHAPTER ONE TEST



In the blank space on the right side of the page write the letter that gives the correct answer.

1. When Jesus came to earth, people

- A. knew all about Him
- B. understood all that He said
- C. questioned who He was
- D. rejected Him

2. We know Jesus was truly human because

- A. He was born as a baby
- B. He acted just like other boys
- C. He was perfect
- D. He was supernaturally strong

3. One thing that shows that Jesus was more than human is

- A. He obeyed His parents
- B. He never sinned
- C. He pleased the religious authorities
- D. He was baptized

4. The Lord Jesus

- A. came into existence when He was born
- B. began to exist shortly before He was born
- C. began to exist when God created Him and called Him "the Word"
- D. has always existed, because He is God _____

5. The high priest tore his clothes when he heard Jesus claim to be the Son of God because

- A. he was jealous of Jesus
- B. he knew Jesus was not telling the truth
- C. he rejected Jesus' claim to be God
- D. he tripped over his long robe in anger _____

WHAT DO YOU SAY?

Who is Jesus Christ? Give a reason for your answer.
