



# Jesus

## 03 | Who is Jesus?

This study guide is meant to be used as a simple tool to help your Small group dive deeper into god's word, nurture conversation, And draw your group nearer to Christ. As a leader, begin your Group in prayer by asking the Holy Spirit to lead your discussion.







# reflect

*What famous person in history really inspires you?*

*Why do they inspire you?*



There is fascinating historical evidence that Jesus actually lived in Palestine in the first century AD:

**Josephus** The Jewish historian Josephus confirms that Jesus was known to be a wise teacher and that he had a large following of both Jews and Greeks. He records that Jesus was executed by Pilate by crucifixion and that His resurrection from the dead was widely reported.

**Tacitus** The Roman historian Tacitus describes how Nero persecuted Christians, who were followers of Christ. He notes that Jesus Christ was executed by Pilate, and that many people had become Christians in both Israel and Rome.

**Pliny the Younger** The Roman governor Pliny reports that Christians worshipped Jesus and that they committed themselves to living according to high moral values.

We have a large number of early manuscripts of New Testament documents that originate close to when the documents were first written. The number is staggering in comparison to other ancient documents:

MANUSCRIPTS

AUTHOR	DATE WRITTEN	EARLIEST COPY	TIME SPAN (YRS)	NUMBER OF COPIES
Pliny	61 - 113 AD	850 AD	750	7
Plato	427 - 347 BC	900 AD	1200	7
Herodotus	480 - 425 BC	900 AD	1300	8
Suetonius	75 - 160 AD	900 AD	1300	8
Caesar	100 - 44 BC	900 AD	1000	10
Tacitus	100 AD	1100 AD	1000	20
Aristotle	384 - 322 BC	1100 AD	1400	49
Homer (Iliad)	900 BC	400 BC	500	643
New Testament	50 - 95 AD	130 AD	50	5800

THIS PROVIDES STRONG CONFIRMATION THAT THE BIBLE WE HAVE TODAY MATCHES THE ORIGINAL DOCUMENTS THAT WERE WRITTEN BY JESUS' CLOSE FRIENDS AND FOLLOWERS. HOW DO THESE HISTORICAL RECORDS IMPACT YOUR UNDERSTANDING OF JESUS?





# search

## 1 HEBREW PROPHECIES

Jesus did not just appear on the scene performing miracles. There were many prophecies in the Hebrew Scriptures that pointed to Him as God's chosen Messiah. These ancient prophecies accurately predicted:

**JESUS' MIRACULOUS CONCEPTION** ISAIAH 7:14

**THE TIMING OF HIS BIRTH** DANIEL 9:24-27

**HIS BIRTHPLACE** MICAH 5:2

**THE REGION OF HIS MINISTRY** ISAIAH 9:1-2

**HIS HEALING MINISTRY** ISAIAH 35:1-7

**THE TYPE OF DEATH HE DIED** PSALMS 22, ISAIAH 53

**THE REASON FOR HIS DEATH** ISAIAH 53

**JESUS' RESURRECTION FROM THE DEAD** PSALMS

16:8-11, ISAIAH 53:10-11

## 2 THE NAMES THAT JESUS USED

JOHN 8:58

Jesus used a number of names for Himself that revealed who He really was and His relationship with God:

- **Son of Man** This was Jesus' favourite name for Himself. It refers to the divine being described in the prophecy of Daniel 7 (e.g. Mark 14:62).
- **I Am** This is the name God used when He was going to free the Israelites from slavery, under the leadership of Moses. Jesus used the same name because He is God and the Person who has the power to deliver all people from spiritual slavery to sin.
- **Messiah** Jesus said that He was the Messiah, God's chosen ruler (e.g. John 4:25,26).
- **Son of God** This name shows that Jesus has a unique relationship with God (e.g. John 11:4,25-27).

## 3 THE TEACHINGS OF JESUS

Jesus revealed who He was through His teachings. He told people:

- "I am the light of the world." John 8:12
- "Those who hear my words and believe in him who sent me have eternal life." John 5:24
- "The Father and I are one." John 10:30
- "I am the resurrection and the life." John 11:25







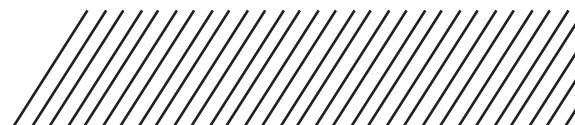
- “No one can come to the Father except through me.” John 14:6
- “Whoever has seen me has seen the Father.” John 14:9
- “Come to me, all of you who are weary and carry heavy burdens, and I will give you rest.” Matthew 11:28

#### 4 THE LIFE OF JESUS


Jesus not only revealed who He was through what He said—He also demonstrated it through the way He lived:

- Jesus had compassion on people who were suffering and helpless. Matthew 9:35-36
- His supernatural ministry of healing and casting out demons. Matthew 4:23-25
- His ability to forgive sins. Mark 2:1-12, John 8:1-11
- His willingness to forgive others when they caused Him pain. Luke 23:34
- His morally perfect and sinless life. Luke 23:39-43, John 8:46

I AM THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD JOHN 8:12







# JESUS STILL TRANSFORMS PEOPLE TODAY!

FOUR

## 5 EVIDENCE FOR JESUS RESURRECTION

There are four pieces of evidence that Jesus actually rose back to life from the dead, on the Sunday morning after He died on the Cross:

ONE

**THE EMPTY TOMB** The women who followed Jesus arrived at the tomb early on Sunday morning to find the stone rolled away and the tomb empty. Other close followers of Jesus came to the tomb and also found it empty. Luke 24:1-12

TWO

### **PERSONAL EXPERIENCES OF MEETING JESUS ALIVE AGAIN**

Many people in Jerusalem reported they saw Jesus alive again at different times and different places just a few days after His crucifixion. Luke 24:13-53

THREE

**DISCIPLES PREACHED THAT JESUS HAD RISEN FROM THE DEAD** All of Jesus' disciples were willing to die for their belief that they had actually seen Jesus alive again. Acts 4:5-12

FOUR

**THE GROWTH OF THE CHRISTIAN MOVEMENT** The movement that Jesus started has continued to grow down through the centuries. Millions of Christians have experienced the life-transforming power of Jesus in their own lives. Jesus still transforms people's lives today!





**Q1.** Why do you think people were drawn to Jesus?

**Q2.** What about Jesus inspires you?

**Q3.** If you could meet Jesus personally, what would you like to say to Him or ask Him?

**Q4.** What historical evidence for the life of Jesus do you find the most interesting?





# reimagine

Search for images of Jesus on the web and choose the one that resonates with you to share with someone.

"Jesus went around saying he was the Messiah. That is why he was crucified. He was crucified because he said he was the Son of God. So, he either, in my view, was the Son of God or he was nuts. And I find it hard to accept that whole millions and millions of lives, half the Earth, for 2,000 years have been touched, have felt their lives touched and inspired by some nutter. I just... I don't believe it."

BONO - IRISH BAND U2



## Further Study

Genesis 1, 3, Revelation 12:7-12,  
Ephesian 3:10, 6:12, 1 Peter 5:8,  
Revelation 21:3-4, Ezekiel 28:15

## Resources for further reading

- *More Than a Carpenter* - Josh McDowell & Sean McDowell
- *The Case for Christ* - Lee Strobel
- *Basic Christianity* - John Stott
- *The Essential Jesus: The Man, His Message, His Mission* - Bryan Ball & William Johnson

**NEXT STEP** Would you like to discover more about Jesus and what He is like through the Bible?

