

What Did Jesus Christ Claim?

Jesus makes statements about Himself and His mission, that we should take seriously.

Jesus in His personal life was very humble and modest.

Matthew 8:20 [NIV] *“Jesus replied, ‘Foxes have holes and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head.’”*

Jesus possessed no home. Following Jesus is **not** always easy or comfortable. Often it means great cost and personal sacrifice, with no earthly rewards or security.

Jesus was the oldest child of a large working-class family.

Jesus as a wandering teacher after He left His carpentry and construction business had **no** income, and was dependent on the support of His followers.

When it comes to the source from which His authority and appeal derived, the story is very different.

Jesus Christ’s miracles and healings were implicit claims to who He was.

Isaiah 35:3-6 [NIV] *“Strengthen the feeble hands, steady the knees that give way; say to those with fearful hearts, ‘Be strong, do not fear; your God will come, he will come with vengeance; with divine retribution he will come to save you.’ **Then will the eyes of the blind be opened and the ears of the deaf unstopped. Then will the lame leap like a deer, and the mute tongue shout for joy. Water will gush forth in the wilderness and streams in the desert.**”*

This is exactly what happened during the ministry of Jesus Christ.

These miracles of Jesus are windows into who He really was and is today.

Jesus is the One who today opens the eyes of the blind to see their need.

Jesus is the One who opens the ears of the deaf to hear His call to repentance and forgiveness.

Jesus is the One who gives new power to limbs crippled by constant failure.

All these miracles were pointers to who He was, God in our midst.

Matthew 9:1-6 [NIV] *“Jesus stepped into a boat, crossed over and came to his own town. Some men brought to him a paralytic, lying on a mat. When Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralytic, **‘Take heart, son; your sins are forgiven.’** At this, some of the teachers of the law said to themselves, *“This fellow is blaspheming!”* Knowing their thoughts, Jesus said, *“Why do you entertain evil thoughts in your hearts? Which is easier: to say, ‘Your sins are forgiven,’ or to say, ‘Get up and walk’? But so that you may know that **the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins....**”* Then he said to the paralytic, *“Get up, take your mat and go home.”**

The bystanders did not miss the point made by Jesus, for it is only God who can forgive sins.

This was the statement that Jesus was making, He as the Son of Man was also God.

Luke 5:4-8 [NIV] *“When he had finished speaking, he said to Simon, *“Put out into deep water, and let down the nets for a catch.”* Simon answered, *“Master, we’ve worked hard all night and haven’t caught anything. But because you say so, I will let down the nets.”* When they had done so, they caught such a large number of fish that their nets began to break. So they signalled to their partners*

*in the other boat to come and help them, and they came and filled both boats so full that they began to sink. **When Simon Peter saw this, he fell at Jesus' knees and said, "Go away from me, Lord; I am a sinful man!"***

Jesus accepted the worship of Peter as his due! It was right for Jesus as God to accept worship, and He knew it.

John 20:26-28 [NIV] *"A week later his disciples were in the house again, and Thomas was with them. Though the doors were locked, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you!" Then he said to Thomas, "Put your finger here; see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it into my side. Stop doubting and believe." **Thomas said to him, "My Lord and my God!"***

Jesus' response was to calmly accept the worship. This would be mind-blowing in any culture to offer worship to another human being.

In Judaism this had added significance because they were passionate monotheists.

They would **not** offer any kind of worship to any man or statue, only to God above.

The implications of Jesus accepting worship are obvious.

The promises that Jesus Christ made make a clear claim as to who He was.

Jesus made promises so staggering that they are crazy unless they are true.

Matthew 24:35 [NIV] *"Heaven and earth will pass away, but **my words will never pass away.**"*

Well, Jesus Christ's words haven't passed away yet!

The Christian Bible, which contains Jesus Christ's words, has the greatest circulation of any book in the world.

John 3:16 [NIV] *"For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that **whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.**"*

Jesus promises His followers eternal life.

John 10:25-30 [NIV] *"Jesus answered, "I did tell you, but you do not believe. The miracles I do in my Father's name speak for me, but you do not believe because you are not my sheep. My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me. **I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no-one can snatch them out of my hand.** My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all; no-one can snatch them out of my Father's hand. I and the Father are one."*

No-one would be able to pluck his disciples out of His protecting hand.

Hundreds of millions of people have tested this promise of eternal life and found it to be true. Jesus does give new life.

John 17:1-3 [NIV] *"After Jesus said this, he looked towards heaven and prayed: "Father, the time has come. Glorify your Son, that your Son may glorify you. For you granted him authority over all people that he might give eternal life to all those you have given him. Now this is eternal life: **that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent.**"*

To "know", that is to have an intimate relationship with Jesus Christ, is eternal life.

How do we have this intimate relationship with Jesus Christ now?

John 14:15-18 [NIV] *“If you love me, you will obey what I command. And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Counsellor to be with you for ever, the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you. **I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you.**”*

By allowing the Holy Spirit into our lives to direct our lives we then have eternal life in us right now.

The Holy Spirit is eternal, and we have Jesus Christ living in us now.

Eternal life is **not** something that only starts when we are dead.

Eternal life is something that can start right now.

Jesus’ promise of the Holy Spirit being available to all human beings, **not** just a selected few as under the Old Covenant that God made with Israel.

On the day of Pentecost after Jesus Christ’s death, resurrection and ascension, this promise was fulfilled.

Acts 2:1-4 [NIV] *“When the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place. Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting. They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them. **All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit** and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them.”*

This enabling by the Holy Spirit continues in the lives of all who request His active presence in their lives.

John 7:37-39 [NIV] *“On the last and greatest day of the Feast, Jesus stood and said in a loud voice, **“If anyone is thirsty, let him come to me and drink. Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, streams of living water will flow from within him.”** By this he meant the Spirit, whom those who believed in him were later to receive. Up to that time the Spirit had not been given, since Jesus had not yet been glorified.”*

If we thirst after Jesus Christ, the Word, we will be satisfied, and out of our inner being will flow rivers of life-giving water, God’s Word, the Christian Bible.

What you are now reading, and I hope meditating on, is living proof of this promise being fulfilled.

The four books that relate the life and words of Jesus Christ are full of many more promises that each of us can claim.

The important thing is, will we believe these promises and live by them or not?

More than 50 times in the four accounts of the life of Jesus Christ and 280 times in the rest of the New Testament, Jesus is referred to as the Messiah or Christ [the anointed one].

But Jesus **never** claimed that title for Himself.

Far and away the most popular self-designated title was “*Son of Man*”.

This is mentioned over 80 times in the four accounts of Jesus’ life and always on the lips of Jesus Himself.

Jesus used this title in three ways.

Mark 2:27-28 [NIV] *“Then he said to them, **“The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath. So the Son of Man is Lord even of the Sabbath.”***

Jesus was the very one who ordained the Sabbath under the Old Covenant so He had the right to change what He had ordained concerning the Sabbath.

Matthew 9:4-6 [NIV] *“Knowing their thoughts, Jesus said, “Why do you entertain evil thoughts in your hearts? Which is easier: to say, ‘Your sins are forgiven,’ or to say, ‘Get up and walk’? **But so that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins...**” Then he said to the paralytic, “Get up, take your mat and go home.”*

Jesus had power as the Son of Man to forgive sins. It was through His present life being sacrificed as a substitute for our deserved death as sinners that He would confirm this power.

Jesus had to become a human being, a Son of Man, to be able to shed blood to atone for our sins.

Luke 9:22 [NIV] *“And he said, “The Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders, chief priests and teachers of the law, and he must be killed and on the third day be raised to life.”*

Jesus depicted Himself as the suffering servant of all humanity.

Mark 9:9 [NIV] *“As they were coming down the mountain, Jesus gave them orders not to tell anyone what they had seen until the Son of Man had risen from the dead.”*

It was the Son of Man who rose from the dead.

Mark 14:62 [NIV] *“I am,” said Jesus. “And you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Mighty One and coming on the clouds of heaven.”*

To sit again on the right hand of God the Father.

Mark 13:26-27 [NIV] *“At that time men will see the Son of Man coming in clouds with great power and glory. And he will send his angels and gather his elect from the four winds, from the ends of the earth to the ends of the heavens.”*

Jesus Christ’s return as the Son of Man.

Another title Jesus used was simply “Son”.

Mark 12:1-7 [NIV] *“He then began to speak to them in parables: “A man planted a vineyard. He put a wall around it, dug a pit for the winepress and built a watchtower. Then he rented the vineyard to some farmers and went away on a journey. At harvest time he sent a servant to the tenants to collect from them some of the fruit of the vineyard. But they seized him, beat him and sent him away empty-handed. Then he sent another servant to them; they struck this man on the head and treated him shamefully. He sent still another, and that one they killed. He sent many others; some of them they beat, others they killed. “He had one left to send, a son, whom he loved. He sent him last of all, saying, ‘**They will respect my son.**’ “But the tenants said to one another, ‘This is the heir. Come, let’s kill him, and the inheritance will be ours.’”*

The religious leaders of Israel knew exactly who this “Son” was.

It was Jesus claiming to have this unique relationship with God, something unheard of in Israel under the Old Covenant.

Jesus was claiming for Himself things that are attributed to the God of the Old Covenant.

Hosea 13:14 [NIV] *“I will ransom them from the power of the grave; **I will redeem them from death.** Where, O death, are your plagues? Where, O grave, is your destruction? “I will have no compassion,”*

Ezekiel 37:11-12 [NIV] *“Then he said to me: ‘Son of man, these bones are the whole house of Israel. They say, ‘Our bones are dried up and our hope is gone; we are cut off.’ Therefore prophesy and say to them: ‘This is what the Sovereign LORD says: O my people, I am going to open your graves and bring you up from them; I will bring you back to the land of Israel.’”*

The God of the Old Testament was the Redeemer of Israel.

Matthew 20:28 [NIV] *“just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.”*

Jesus claimed to do the same thing.

Isaiah 42:8 [NIV] *“I am the LORD; that is my name! I will not give my glory to another or my praise to idols.”*

God said He would not give His glory to another.

John 17:24 [NIV] *“Father, I want those you have given me to be with me where I am, and to see my glory, the glory you have given me because you loved me before the creation of the world.”*

Jesus claimed He had the same glory as the God of the Old Testament.

Isaiah 40:8 [NIV] *“The grass withers and the flowers fall, but the word of our God stands for ever.”*

God’s Word is eternal.

Matthew 24:35 [NIV] *“Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away.”*

Jesus made the same claim about His words.

Isaiah 46:8-10 [NIV] *“Remember this, fix it in mind, take it to heart, you rebels. Remember the former things, those of long ago; I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is none like me. I make known the end from the beginning, from ancient times, what is still to come. I say: My purpose will stand, and I will do all that I please.”*

“I am” is the most Holy name of God Himself in the Old Testament. The simple translation is “I will be what I will be” indicating total power, sovereignty, holiness perfection.

Deuteronomy 32:39-40 [NIV] *“See now that I myself am He! There is no god besides me. I put to death and I bring to life, I have wounded and I will heal, and no-one can deliver out of my hand. I lift my hand to heaven and declare: As surely as I live for ever,”*

Eternal God.

John 8:58-59 [NIV] *“I tell you the truth,” Jesus answered, “before Abraham was born, I am!” At this, they picked up stones to stone him, but Jesus hid himself, slipping away from the temple grounds.”*

When Jesus said “I am” they knew exactly what He was claiming.

Mark 14:62-63 [NIV] *“I am,” said Jesus. “And you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Mighty One and coming on the clouds of heaven.” The high priest tore his clothes. “Why do we need any more witnesses?” he asked.”*

No wonder the chief priest rent his clothes and cried out blasphemy!

Matthew 16:13-15 [NIV] *“When Jesus came to the region of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, “Who do people say the Son of Man is?” They replied, “Some say John the Baptist; others*

say Elijah; and still others, Jeremiah or one of the prophets.” “But what about you?” he asked. “Who do you say **I am**?”

Jesus wanted, above all else, for His followers to be sure of His identity, the “*I am*”.

John 14:6-7, 10 [NIV] “Jesus answered, “**I am** the way and the truth and the life. No-one comes to the Father except through me. If you really knew me, you would know my Father as well. From now on, you do know him and have seen him.” ... “Don’t you believe that I am in the Father, and that the Father is in me? The words I say to you are not just my own. Rather, it is the Father, living in me, who is doing his work.”

Again Jesus uses the title “*I am*” and links Himself with the Father God of the Old Testament.

You have seen now exactly what Jesus Christ claims about Himself.

How do you react to these positive claims of the divinity of Jesus Christ the Son of Man?