

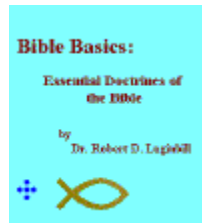
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**Bible Basics:
Essential Doctrines of the Bible**

Part 4A

Christology: the Study of Jesus Christ

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The unique Person and work of the Word of God incarnate, our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Everything in the heavens and on the earth was created by Him (Jesus Christ), things invisible as well as those visible – whether thrones, authorities, rulers or powers, everything was created through Him and for Him. And He Himself is before everything, and everything subsists in Him.

Colossians 1:16-17

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Introduction: Any study of this sort must of necessity fall short of absolute completeness, for the written word of God is in its every particular about the Living Word of God, our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. The better one understands scripture and the completely integrated tapestry of fundamental truth which runs through its entire warp and woof, the more perspicuous this one essential truth becomes, that Jesus Christ is the reason for the Bible, and the Bible is all about Jesus Christ, the Word of God (Jn.1:1-14). The purpose of this study therefore must be limited to explicating the major biblical themes contained in scripture regarding our Savior, His unique Person and His work of salvation on our behalf. For Jesus *is* the truth, the way and the life (Jn.14:6), and the fundamental essence of the testimony of the entire Bible is the divine revelation of Him, who He is and what He has done for us in giving up His very life for us (Rev.19:10). All things were made through our Lord Jesus Christ and for Him (Col.1:15-18). He is thus the cornerstone of the entire plan of God for all of creature history (Eph.3:11).⁽¹⁾ The salvation of all members of the human race who turn to God, as well as the victory over the devil (who had held human beings in his power) have been won through our Lord's sacrifice of Himself on our behalf and could not have been won in any other way (Col.2:14-15).

Therefore Jesus is our ultimate hope (Col.1:27), our highest love (Phil.1:21), and the sole object of our faith (Acts 4:12). Jesus Christ is our life (Col.3:4). Only in Him do we have a full share in the resurrection to come and eternal life (1Pet.1:3-4; cf. Tit.3:6-7), for He is the resurrection and the life (Jn.11:25). Without Jesus we along with the entire human race would be lost, but in Him we have been delivered from the wrath to come (1Thes.1:10). Without Jesus all of human history and our lives in particular would be essentially pointless and meaningless, but in Him we anticipate eternal life and great reward (Rev.22:12). Without Jesus the world is a hard, cold, and bitter place, but in Him we rejoice with boundless joy, for as intimate and everlasting members of His Bride, the Church, we exist for Him (Rom.8:8-39; Eph.1:9-10; cf. 1Cor.8:6; 2Cor.5:14-15; Gal.2:20; Col.1:17-20; Heb.12:2), and will ever be with Him (Jn.14:3). Like all corrupt human flesh we are by nature of our physical birth creatures of wrath, condemned to die, but through the sacrifice of Jesus Christ we have been purchased from our sins and eagerly anticipate an eternity with our Master which will be glorious and exquisite beyond all earthly expression or comprehension (Rev.21-22; cf. Jn.14:1-3). Although we were His enemies, with nothing to recommend us and nothing to give Him, He gave His all for us on the cross (Rom.5:8-10). Thanks be to God for His indescribably wonderful gift of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, sacrificed on our behalf (2Cor.9:15)!

I. The Person of Jesus Christ

1. Jesus Christ is truly Divine: Because our Lord had to become a true human being in order to die in our place, His genuine and undiminished deity has, as a consequence, sometimes been falsely and heretically denied. But this lack of faith on the part of some does not change the fact that Jesus is indeed God as well as man. The ultimate means of refutation for all heresies and heretics who would deny the divinity of Christ is, as always, the Bible. For any impartial observer is forced to admit that regardless of the

opinions of those who think otherwise, scripture loudly proclaims the deity of Christ, so that to deny the deity of Christ is to *ipso facto* contradict the Bible:

a. As God, Jesus is explicitly called God (cf. Is.40:3; Rom.1:4; Matt.22:41-46; 28:19; Lk.1:35; 5:20-21; Jn.1:1-18; 5:18; 2Cor.13:14; Col.1:15-20; 2:9; Heb.1:3):

For a child is born to us, and a Son is given to us. Dominion shall rest on his shoulder, and His name will be called “He whose counsel is wondrous”, “**Mighty God**”, “the Father of Eternity”, “the Prince of Prosperity”.

Isaiah 9:6

“Behold, the virgin will conceive and will bear a Son, and they will call His Name ‘Immanuel’, which is translated ‘**God is with us**’”.

Matthew 1:23

(3) For, [if I could save them thereby] I would wish myself to be accursed [and] separated from Christ on behalf my brethren according to the flesh (4) who are Israelites, to whom belongs the adoption and the [*shekinah*] glory and the covenants and the giving of the Law and the [temple] rite and the promises (5) who are [descendants of] the patriarchs and from whom is the Christ, as far as flesh[ly descent] is concerned, **the [very] One who is God** over all [things], blessed forever. Amen!

Romans 9:3-5

(5) You too should have this attitude which Christ Jesus had. (6) Since **He already existed in the very form of God**, equality with God was [certainly] not something He thought He had to grasp for. (7) Yet in spite of this [co-equal divinity He already possessed], He deprived Himself of His status and took on the form of a slave, [and was] born in the likeness of men. (8) He humbled Himself, becoming obedient to the point of death, even [His] death on [the] cross [for us all].

Philippians 2:5-8

[W]e who are awaiting the blessed hope, namely the glorious and majestic appearance of **our God and Savior, Jesus Christ**.

Titus 2:13

But to the Son [the Father says], “Your throne, **O God**, is forever, and the scepter of your Kingdom is the scepter of integrity”.

Hebrews 1:8

Simon Peter, a servant and apostle of Jesus Christ, to those who have been allotted a faith of equal value to ours in the righteousness of **our God and Savior Jesus Christ**.

2nd Peter 1:1

And we know that the Son of God has come and has given us a mind-set for coming to know the truth. And we are in [the One who is] the Truth, even in [God's] Son Jesus

Christ. ***This One is the true God*** and eternal life.

1st John 5:20

“I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last, the Beginning and the End.”

Revelation 22:13 (cf. Rev.22:16)

b. As God, Jesus is worshiped as God⁽²⁾ (cf. Zech.14:16-17; Matt.2:2; 2:11; 14:33; 28:9; 28:17; Jn.12:41 compared to Is.6:3; Jn.20:28; Heb.1:6; Rev.14:7 compared to Col.1:13-16):

(50) And He led them out as far as Bethany, and He lifted up His hands and blessed them. (51) And it came to pass as He was blessing them that He disappeared from their [sight]. (52) Then, having worshiped Him of their own accord, they returned to Jerusalem with great joy.

Luke 24:50-52

And he (i.e., the blind man whose sight had been restored) said, “I believe, Lord”, and he worshiped Him.

John 9:38

(9) Therefore God exalted Him to the highest place and gave Him the Name that is above every name (10) that at the Name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth (11) and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father.

Philippians 2:9-11

(11) And I looked and heard, as it were, the voice of many angels around the throne and [around] the [living] creatures and [around] the [twenty-four] elders, and their number was myriads upon myriads and thousands upon thousands, (12) [and they were] saying in a loud voice, “The Lamb who has been slain is worthy to take the power and wealth and wisdom and might and honor and glory and blessing (13) and every created thing in heaven and on the earth and in the sea and everything in them.” Then I heard them saying, “To the One who sits upon the throne and to the Lamb [be] the blessing and the honor and the glory and the power for ever and ever!” (14) And the four living creatures were saying, “Amen!”. And the [twenty-four] elders fell [down] and worshiped.

Revelation 5:11-14

c. As the Creator, Jesus is God, for God created the world⁽³⁾ (Heb.1:2; 1:10; cf. Gen.1-2):

Everything came into being through Him, (i.e., “The Word”, Jesus Christ), and without Him, nothing has come into being which has in fact come into being.

John 1:3

He was in the world, and ***the world came into being through Him***, and [yet] the world did not recognize Him.

John 1:10

(15) He (i.e., Jesus Christ; cf. v.13) is the exact image⁽⁴⁾ of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. (16) **Everything in the heavens and on the earth was created by Him**, things invisible as well as those visible – whether thrones, authorities, rulers or powers, everything was created through Him and for Him. (17) And He Himself is before everything, and everything subsists in Him (cf. Heb.1:3).
Colossians 1:15-17

But for us there is [but] one God, the Father from whom all things [have come into being] (i.e., the Father as architect of creation), and we [now live] for Him, and there is [but] one Lord, Jesus Christ **through whom all things** [have come into being] (i.e., the Son as agent of creation), and we [now live] through Him.⁽⁵⁾
1st Corinthians 8:6

d. As One of the Trinity, Jesus is co-equal and co-eternal with the Father and the Spirit (Jn.5:18; 17:5):

Then Jesus came over and said to them, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to Me, so go and make all nations my followers by baptizing them [with the Spirit] into the Person (i.e., “name”) of the **Father** and [into the Person] of the **Son** and [into the Person] of the **Holy Spirit**, and by teaching them to observe everything I have commanded you.”
Matthew 28:18-20a

I and the Father are one.
John 10:30

And now, glorify Me, Father, in your presence, with the [same] glory I possessed in your presence before the world existed.
John 17:5

There are different gifts, but the same **Spirit**, and there are different ministries, but the same **Lord** (i.e., Jesus Christ); and there are different results, but the same **God** who brings about all results in all cases.
1st Corinthians 12:4-6

May the grace of the **Lord Jesus Christ**, and the love of (the [Father]) **God**, and the fellowship of the **Holy Spirit** be with you all.
2nd Corinthians 13:14

There is one body and One **Spirit** – just as when you were called it was in one hope that you were called. There is One **Lord** (i.e., Jesus Christ), one faith, one baptism. There is One **God and Father** of all, who is over all and through all and in all.
Ephesians 4:4-6

Peter, an apostle of **Jesus Christ**, to those who, though outcasts dispersed throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, were yet selected in the foreknowledge of **God the Father**, by means of the **Holy Spirit's** consecration, for the obedience in

and sprinkling of the blood of **Jesus Christ**. Grace and peace be multiplied unto you!
1st Peter 1:1-2

(4) John, to the seven churches which are in Asia [Minor]: Grace to you and peace from the **One who is and was and is coming** (i.e., the Father), and from **the seven spirits** (i.e., the Holy Spirit) which are before His throne, (5) and from **Jesus Christ**, the faithful witness, the firstborn from the dead, and the Ruler of the kings of the earth.
Revelation 1:4-5a

e. Jesus is the one and only Son of God, a title which as it is used in scripture clearly demonstrates His deity (cf. Lk.9:35; Heb.5:5; 1Jn.1:3; 5:20; 2Jn.1:3):

Now once Jesus had been baptized, He immediately came up out of the water, and, behold, the heavens opened for Him, and He saw the Spirit of God coming down like a dove and lighting upon Him. And, behold, a voice from heaven was saying, “This is **My beloved Son**, with whom I am well pleased”.
Matthew 3:16-17

While [Peter] was still speaking, behold, a cloud suffused with light enveloped them, and, behold, a voice [issued forth] from the cloud, saying, “This is **My beloved Son** with whom I am well pleased. Listen to Him!”
Matthew 17:5 (cf. 2Pet.1:16-21)

No one has ever seen God. **God the one and only [Son]** – the One who has always been at the Father's side – He has made Him known.
John 1:18

(16) For God loved the world so much that He gave [up] **His one and only Son**, [with the purpose] that everyone who believes in Him should not be lost [forever], but have eternal life [instead]. (17) For God did not **send His Son into the world** to judge the world, but so that the world might be saved through Him. (18) The one who believes in Him is not being judged, but the one who does not believe has already been judged on the grounds that he has not put his faith in the Name (i.e., the Person) of **God's one and only Son**.
John 3:16-18

For the Son of God, Christ Jesus, the One who was proclaimed among you through us, through myself and Silvanus (i.e., Silas) and Timothy, did not become “yes and no”, but He became “yes!”. (20) For as many promises of God as there are, are “yes!” in Him (i.e., Jesus Christ). And through Him the “amen!” [is said] to God for [His] glory through us.
2nd Corinthians 1:19-20

(4) But when the fullness of time came, God sent His Son, born of a woman, born under the Law, (5) in order that He might redeem those under the Law, in order that we might receive the adoption. (6) And since you are sons, God sent the Spirit of His Son into

your hearts, crying, “Abba, Father!”
Galatians 4:4-6

(5) For to which of the angels did He ever say, “You are my Son. Today I have begotten you (Ps.2:7).” And again, “I will be a Father to Him, and He will be my Son (2Sam.7:14).” (6) But when He brings back the Firstborn into the world, He says, “And let all the angels of God worship Him! (Ps.97:7b)”. (7) And about the angels He says, “The One who makes His angels spirits, and His servants flames of fire (Ps.104:4).” (8) But of the Son He says, “Your throne, **O God**, is from eternity to eternity, and rod of your kingdom is the rod of uprightness. (9) You have loved righteousness and hated lawlessness. For this reason God your God has anointed you with the oil of gladness beyond your companions (Ps.45:6-7)”. (10) And, “From the beginning, Lord, you founded the earth, and the heavens are the works of your hands. (11) They indeed will perish, but you remain. And they will grow old like a garment, (12) and like a cloak you will roll them up, like a cloak, and they will [thus] be changed. But you are the same, and your years will not come to an end (Ps.102:25-27).” (13) And to which of the angels has He ever said, “Sit down at my right hand until I make your enemies the footstool of your feet (Ps.110:1)?”
Hebrews 1:5-13

In this God's love has been revealed in us, that He sent His only Son into the world that we might live through Him. In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son as an atonement for our sins.

1st John 4:9-10

And to the angel of the church in Thyatira write: This is what the Son of God says, the One whose eyes are like a flame of fire and whose feet are like white-hot bronze.
Revelation 2:18

f. Jesus is One with God the Father:

I and the Father are one.
John 10:30

(20) And I do not ask concerning these only [Father], but also concerning all of those who believe in Me through their word, (21) so that all [of them] may be one, as You, Father, are in Me and I also am in You, so that they also themselves may be one in Us, so that the world may believe that You sent Me. (22) And I have given them the glory You have given Me, so that they may be one as We are one.

John 17:20-22

g. As God, Jesus has been “face to face” with the Father since before time began or the world was created, departing from the Father's presence and entering this world only to save us (Jn.6:62; 17:24):

The Word [Jesus Christ] existed at the very beginning, and there was reciprocity (i.e., “face to face” co-divinity) between the Word and God [the Father]. And the Word was God. This One both existed and enjoyed reciprocity (i.e., was “face to face”) with God **from the very beginning** (i.e., from before the beginning of creation).

John 1:1-2

And the Word became flesh and tented among us. And we beheld His glory, a glory like that of a one and only Son from [the] Father, full of grace and truth.

John 1:14

No one has ever seen God. God the one and only [Son] – the One who has always been at the Father's side (i.e., in heaven from eternity past) – He has made Him known.

John 1:18

(27) For the Father Himself loves you, because you have loved Me and have believed that I have come forth from God. (28) I came forth from [being with] the Father and have come into the world. I am leaving the world again and going back to the Father.

John 16:27-28

(1) Jesus said these things and having lifted up His eyes to heaven said, “Father, the hour has come. Glorify your Son, so that your Son may glorify you, (2) just as You gave Him power over all flesh, so that everything you have given Him might have eternal life. (3) And this is the eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and [Him] whom you sent, Jesus Christ. (4) I have glorified You on the earth, having completed the work you have given Me to do. (5) And now glorify Me, Father, with your own glory, [that glory] **which I had in your presence before the world existed.**”

John 17:1-5

(1) What we have seen from the beginning, what we have heard and seen with our eyes, what we have observed and touched with our hands – this is about the Word of life[, Jesus Christ]. (2) And this life appeared, and we have seen [it], and we bear witness [to it], and we proclaim to you the eternal life which was in the presence of the Father and [then] appeared to us.

1st John 1:1-2

h. As God, Jesus claims, shares, and demonstrates the divine attributes of God
(Matt.28:18; Jn.1:48; 10:31-39):

Jesus said to them, “I am the bread of life. The one who comes to Me shall not hunger, and the one who believes in Me shall not thirst forever”.

John 6:35

And I am giving them eternal life, and they will not perish forevermore, and no one will snatch them out of my hand.

John 10:28

Jesus said to her, “I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in Me will live, even if he dies. And everyone who lives and believes in Me will surely not die forevermore.”

John 11:25-26

I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one can come to the Father except through me.
John 14:6

i. As God, Jesus is described as the “exact image of God” (Col.1:15; cf. 2Cor.4:4):

[Jesus] is the [very] shining forth of [the Father's] glory, the precise image of His essence, the One who sustains the universe by His mighty Word . . .

Hebrews 1:3a

j. As God, Jesus is eternal:

But you, O Bethlehem Ephrathah, too small to be numbered among the clans of Judah, from you I will bring forth the One who is to rule over Israel. His goings forth are from long ago, even from the days of eternity.

Micah 5:2

Jesus Christ, yesterday and today the same, and unto the [end of] the ages.

Hebrews 13:8

k. As the very Word of God, the embodiment of the message and truth from the Father, Jesus is God (Deut.18:18; Jn.8:55; 14:10; 14:24):

Grass withers. Flowers fade. But the Word of our God will stand forever.

Isaiah 40:8

In the beginning, there was the Word.

John 1:1a

For who has known the mind of the Lord, that he might instruct Him? But we possess the very mind of Christ (i.e. the Holy Spirit illuminating the scriptures which are Christ's very thinking).

1st Corinthians 2:16 (cf. v.12-13)

For God who said, “Let light shine forth from the darkness!”, is He who has shone forth [His light] into our hearts to illuminate our knowledge of God's glory in the Person of Jesus Christ.

2nd Corinthians 4:6

(1) God, from antiquity having communicated to our fathers in the prophets at many times and in many ways, (2) has in these last days communicated to us in a Son, [the One] whom He has appointed heir of all things, [the One] through whom He created the

universe. (3) He is the [very] shining forth of [the Father's] glory, the precise image of His essence, the One who sustains the universe by His mighty Word . . .
Hebrews 1:1-3a

1. In accordance with the prophecies that God will judge the world, as God Jesus is the Judge, since all judgment has been handed over to Him:

(13) I kept looking during my vision of that night, and behold – with the clouds of heaven One like a Son of Man was coming up, and He approached the Ancient of Days (i.e., the Father) and they brought Him before Him. (14) And to Him was given dominion and honor and a kingdom, so that all nations and peoples and tongues should serve Him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion which will not pass away, and His kingdom one which will not be destroyed.

Daniel 7:13-14

Then Jesus came over and said to them, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to Me.”

Matthew 28:18

(22) For neither does the Father judge anyone, but he has given all judgment to the Son, (23) in order that all may honor the Son as they honor the Father.

John 5:22-23a (cf. Jn.5:27)

[This examination of Rom.2:11-15 will take place] on the day when God will judge the secret things of men through Jesus Christ according to my gospel.

Romans 2:16

May it never be [that God be considered unrighteous]! Otherwise, how will God judge the world?

Romans 3:6

But you, why do you judge your brother? Or why do you also belittle your brother? For we will all stand before God's tribunal as it is written: “As I live”, says the Lord, “every knee will bow to Me, and every tongue will praise God” [Is.45:23]. So then each of us will give an account to God concerning himself.

Romans 14:10-12

For we must all stand before Christ's tribunal, so that each of us may receive recompense for what he has accomplished through this body, whether it be good or worthless.

2nd Corinthians 5:10

(9) Therefore God exalted Him to the highest place and gave Him the Name that is above every name (10) that at the Name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth (11) and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father.

Philippians 2:9-11

In light of all of the above, whatever anyone may say, it is nonetheless dishonest to claim that scripture at least is not altogether clear on this subject. The Bible clearly proclaims the divinity of Jesus Christ regardless of any other false representations. Indeed, it is really not too much to say that the Bible in effect breathes forth the divinity of Jesus Christ at almost every breath, and that it is only by ignoring or diminishing its testimony that one can come to any different conclusion. Thus Jesus Christ is the great divider between those who are being saved and those who are perishing (Matt.10:32ff; 1Jn.2:22). Unless one confesses “Jesus as Lord”, which necessarily includes acknowledging His divinity and humanity, His whole person and His work on the cross, there can be no salvation (Rom.10:9). He is a true man but He is not only a man; He is also God, for “in Christ all the fullness of Deity lives in bodily form” (Col.2:9). Ultimately, no one who believes the Bible can doubt that Jesus is God, for this we even have from our Lord Himself:

(57) So the Jews said to Him, “You are not yet fifty years old, and you have seen Abraham?!” (58) And [Jesus] said to them, “Truly, truly I say to you, before Abraham existed, **I AM**” (cf. Ex.3:14).
John 8:57-58 (cf. Lk.22:70; Jn.8:24; 8:28)

2. Jesus Christ is truly Human: Perhaps the most profound wonder in universal history – of surpassing glory from the ages to the ages and rivaled only by His dying for our sins on the cross once He had become God in human form – is Jesus' taking on of true humanity in the first place, a necessary step in order to accomplish the Father's plan of redemption. In our present finite and limited condition and until we “know as we are known” (1Cor.13:12), it is impossible even to begin to grasp the wonder and the glory, the graciousness and the mercifulness, the cost and the sacrifice involved in our Lord Jesus becoming a true human being.

You too should have this attitude which Christ Jesus had. Since He already existed in the very form of God, equality with God was [certainly] not something He thought He had to grasp for. Yet in spite of this [co-equal divinity He already possessed], He deprived Himself of His status and took on the form of a slave, [and was] born in the likeness of men. He humbled Himself, becoming obedient to the point of death, even [His] death on [the] cross [for us all].
Philippians 2:5-8

Although we cannot this side of heaven truly understand the depths of it or truly appreciate what He gave up for us, yet we should never fail to willingly accept in faith the truth and reality of it, and to stand in thankful awe of all this glorious act of becoming a man as well as God implies. For the fact that God, our Lord Jesus Christ, has become in addition to deity a genuine, living, breathing human being has changed **everything** in the universe forevermore. For through the incarnation Jesus has in His now absolutely unique Person permanently wed undiminished deity to humanity. The implications of this truth are at once staggering and mind-boggling. When one

considers the transcendent magnitude of the divine and contrasts it with the physical universe which is so pathetically puny and transitory by comparison, the news that God has now irreversibly joined Himself to this material universe in the Person of His one and only Son is breathtaking. While all of the implications are at present impossible to digest, at the very least we who have believed in the Son of God for salvation should never fail to appreciate that while God in His good pleasure could well have constructed a trillion times a trillion universes a trillion times larger and more complex than the one we presently inhabit without the slightest effort, He has in fact now through His Son irrevocably committed Himself to **us**. This is a truth which should never fail to humble and awe each and every one of us, and cause us to fall to our knees in praise and thanksgiving. For now that Jesus has become, in addition to God, one of us in every way only without sin, we can know of a certainty that we are no experiment or afterthought or one of many such developments, but that we instead have always been a part of His unchangeable purpose. We are absolutely unique because **He**, the unique one and only Son of God, has cast His lot with us and for us in this overwhelming, awe-inspiring and unchangeable way.

a. Christ's taking on of true humanity was necessary in order to provide our salvation: Beyond all argument, everything in the plan of God ultimately comes down to Jesus Christ, and nothing in the plan of God can be disaggregated from Him and His sacrificial work on the cross for our salvation. That is why, for example, the “cross of Christ” can serve as an all encompassing symbol for the gospel (e.g., Matt.10:38; 16:24; 1Cor.1:17; Gal.6:14; Eph.2:16; Col.2:14), the good news about salvation and our eternal relationship with Jesus through faith on the basis of His gracious sacrifice (Eph.2:8-9). Simply put, for us who believe “Jesus is everything”, all that He is for us is intimately and inseparably tied up with His death for us on the cross:

(15) [Jesus Christ] is the exact image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. (16) Everything in the heavens and on the earth was created by Him, things invisible as well as those visible – whether thrones, authorities, rulers or powers, everything was created through Him and for Him. (17) And He Himself is before everything, and everything subsists in Him. (18) And He Himself is the Head of the Body[, that is,] the Church. [Even] He who is [its] Ruler, the Firstborn from the dead, [thus resurrected] to the purpose that He Himself might become the One who occupies the first place in all things. (19) For it was [God's] good pleasure for the fulfillment [of His plan] to reside entirely in [Christ], (20) and so through Him to reconcile everything to Himself, having made peace through Him, through the blood of His cross, whether things on earth, or things in heaven.

Colossians 1:15-20

While the wonder and the glory of Jesus in His eternal capacity as God cannot be underestimated nor with our present limitations more than dimly understood, scripture is very clear about the fact that He had to take on true humanity in order to accomplish eternal salvation for us. God cannot suffer; God cannot die; God cannot become a sacrifice for sin or atone for sin or indeed in His perfect holiness have direct contact with sin. Only a human being, a perfect human being, could possibly fulfill the role of

becoming our sin-bearer. As sinful human beings, absent intervention by God on our behalf, we were destined to face the “wrath to come” and the eternal damnation final judgment inevitably entailed. But the indescribably good news of the gospel is that Jesus incurred this judgment for us, bearing all of our sins in His own body on the cross. To accomplish this for us, He had to be a human being, and a perfect one at that, a genuine human spirit in a genuine human body, wherein He would bear the sins of the world on the cross (Jn.2:21; Rom.7:4; 1Cor.11:27; cf. Matt.27:50; Lk.23:46; Jn.19:30-42):

And having taken the bread and blessed it, He broke it and gave it to them, saying, “This is **my body** which is being given on your behalf. Be doing this to remember Me”. Luke 22:19 (cf. Matt.26:26; Mk.14:22; Jn.6:51-59; 1Cor.11:23-25)

The cup of blessing which we bless – is it not fellowship in the blood of Christ? And the bread which we break – is it not fellowship in **the body of Christ**? For one bread, one body we many are, since we all partake of that One Bread.
1st Corinthians 10:16-17

For He Himself is our peace, for He has made both [Jews and gentiles] one, and has broken down the middle wall of partition, that is, the enmity between us, by discharging the Law of the commandments and its requirements **in His [own] flesh**, so that He might re-create the two into one new Man by making [this] peace, and might reconcile both in one Body to God through His cross, having by means of it abolished the enmity [between God and mankind].
Ephesians 2:14-16

You were once alienated from God – your very thoughts were hostile towards Him and your deeds were evil. Yet God has now made peace with you through the death of Christ **in His physical body** so that you may stand before Him as holy, without blemish and free from accusation.
Colossians 1:21-22

For in Him (i.e., Jesus Christ), dwells all of the fullness of deity **in bodily form**.
Colossians 2:9

Therefore since these children (i.e., of v.13) have a common heritage of **flesh and blood**, [Christ] too partook of these same [common elements] in a very similar fashion (i.e., not identical only in that He was virgin born and so without sin), in order that **through His death** He might put an end to the one possessing the power of death, that is, the devil, and might reconcile those who were subject to being slaves their whole lives long by their fear of death.
Hebrews 2:14-15

Unlike the [human] high priests, [Jesus] has no need of making sacrifice day by day, first on behalf of His own sins, and then for the sins of the people. For this [latter] He did once and for all when **He offered Himself** [as a sacrifice].
Hebrews 7:27

(5) Therefore as [Jesus Christ] was coming into the world (i.e., at His birth) He said, “You [Father] did not desire sacrifice or offering, but you have *prepared a body* for Me. (6) In burnt offerings for sin you have taken no pleasure. (7) At that time (i.e., His birth) He [Jesus Christ in His deity] said, ‘Behold, I have arrived (i.e., been born) – in the scroll of a book it is written of Me – to do your will, O God’”. (8) Above when He speaks of sacrifices and offerings and burnt offerings for sins [as things which] “You did not desire nor take pleasure therein”, [these are the things] which are being offered according to the Law. (9) [But] “Then”, He has added, “Behold, I have arrived to do your will”. [God the Father] is [thereby] taking away the first [covenant] in order to establish the second one, (10) [and it is] by [His] will [in this matter] that you have been sanctified, *through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ* once and for all.
Hebrews 10:5-10

He Himself bore our sins *in His body* on the tree, in order that we might die to sins and live to righteousness. By His wound you are healed.
1st Peter 2:24

b. Christ's taking on of true humanity was necessary for victory over the devil:

The one who is committing sin is of the devil, because the devil has been sinning from the beginning. *For this reason* the Son of God appeared, that He might put an end to the devil's deeds.
1st John 3:8

The cross and the crown are integrally related. Jesus had to endure the cross in order to win the Messiah's crown, and the crown was won on the basis of the cross.

[For by means of the cross, God] has stripped [demon] rulers and authorities [of their power] and subjected them to public humiliation, having triumphed over them in [Christ].
Colossians 2:15 (cf. Rom.16:20; Heb.2:14; 1Jn.3:8b)

Our Lord's sacrificial death in a genuine human body on Calvary's hill for us all thus forms the necessary basis for His defeat and coming removal of the devil, and that ultimate victory (along with all the glories it entails for us) is no small part of the purpose of His victory on the cross.

Therefore since these children (i.e., of v.13) have a common heritage of *flesh and blood*, [Christ] too partook of these same [common elements] in a very similar fashion (i.e., not identical only in that He was virgin born and so without sin), in order that through His death He might put an end to the one possessing the power of death, that is, the devil, and might reconcile those who were subject to being slaves their whole lives long by their fear of death.
Hebrews 2:14-15

Evil had to be defeated at the cross in order for it to be removed from God's universe so that the eternity of the New Heavens and New Earth might begin, and only by Jesus' atoning for our sin could this blessed victory be won and reconciliation effected between God and those willing to turn to His mercy.

For it was [God's] good pleasure for the fulfillment [of His plan] to reside entirely in [Christ], and so through Him to reconcile everything to Himself, having made peace through Him, through the blood of His cross, whether things on earth, or things in heaven.

Colossians 1:19-20

Satan's rebellion had set in motion the string of events that necessitated the creation of mankind, and, with our corporate fall in Adam, the necessity of the Last Adam's substitutionary death in our place as well. Only as a true human being could Jesus win the victory of the cross, and it is as a true human being that He will rule forever as a result of His ultimate victory over the devil when our Lord Jesus Christ returns in glory at the second advent (Rev.11:15; cf. Heb.10:11-13).

These will make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb will conquer them, because He is Lord of Lords and King of Kings, and called, and elect – and faithful are those with Him. Revelation 17:14

It is as a result of His victory and His descent to Hades and subsequent ascension into the presence of the Father in His resurrected and thoroughly genuine human body that we, the Body of Christ, share in that victory and the gifts and rewards that flow from it.

(7) And to each of us this grace has been given according to the measure of the gift of Christ. (8) For it says, "When He ascended on high, He led captivity captive (i.e., He brought pre-cross believers to heaven). He gave gifts to men." (9) Now [as to] this [phrase] "He ascended", what can it mean except that He had also [previously] descended into the lower reaches of the earth (i.e., Hades, from whence He brought the pre-cross believers to heaven)? (10) The One who descended is also the One who ascended above all the heavens (i.e., into the third heaven, the place of the Father's residence), in order to fulfill all things (i.e., complete the victory won at the cross; cf. Ps.110:1).

Ephesians 4:7-10

Although it is doubtful if the devil and his angels realized it, from the very moment of the incarnation, salvation was assured and Satan's defeat a certainty. Satan had corrupted a third of angelic kind through their desire to know the pleasures of having physical bodies,⁽⁶⁾ but Jesus took on a human body not for sensual experience but, after having experienced the sorrows of this world beyond measure, to suffer and die for us on the cross in order to save us (Is.52:13 - 53:12). This is the great victory upon which

our salvation and our adversary's dethronement depends, one which necessitated our Lord coming to earth in the flesh.

The seventy returned and said with joy, "Lord, even the demons obey us in your Name!" And Jesus said to them, "I was watching Satan fall from heaven like a star".

Luke 10:17-18

Now the God of peace will quickly crush Satan under your feet.

Romans 16:20

[God the Father], who rescued us from the power of darkness and delivered us into the kingdom of His beloved Son.

Colossians 1:13

(31) Now is the judgment of this world. Now will the prince of this world be driven out.

(32) And when I am lifted up from the earth, I will draw everyone to Myself.

John 12:32 (cf. Jn.16:11)

(21) For since death [came] through a man, resurrection of the dead also [had to come] through a man. (22) For just as in Adam, all die, so also in Christ, shall all be made alive. (23) But each [will be resurrected] in his own echelon. Christ [is the] first-fruits (i.e., the initial person and echelon of resurrection). Next [will be] those belonging to Christ at His coming (i.e., all believers at the 2nd Advent). (24) Then the end [of human history – the resurrection of millennial believers], when He will hand the Kingdom over to the Father, after He has brought an end to all rule, all power, and all authority (i.e., hostile human and angelic control). (25) For He must rule until He has placed all His enemies under His feet.

1st Corinthians 15:21-25 (cf. Psalm 110:1)

c. Christ's taking on of true humanity was necessary for fulfilling God's prior promises and prophecies: In respect to the fulfilment of all of God's promises to us it was also necessary for our Lord to take on true humanity. For indeed, all of God's promises to us are dependent upon the ultimate promise of salvation in Jesus Christ.

For I tell you that Christ became a servant to the circumcision for the sake of God's truth, that is, **to confirm the promises** (i.e., covenants) made to their ancestors – and also so that the gentiles might glorify God for His mercy (i.e., in providing salvation through Jesus).

Romans 15:8-9b

As many promises of God as there are, **in Him**, [Jesus Christ, they are] "Yes!" So also through Him the "Amen!" [we say] to God results in [His] glory through us (i.e., our faith in His promises ratified in Christ).

2nd Corinthians 1:20

God's promises are abundant, and they never fail (Josh.21:45; Rom.9:6; Tit.1:2;

Heb.13:5-6), because our Lord has empowered them through His death for us as a true human being on the cross. For all of the promises of God are based upon what Jesus did for us: grace of every sort is a result of Christ's work on the cross (Rom.3:24; 5:15-21; Eph.2:5-8; Tit.3:7; cf. Jn.1:16-17). Time would fail us if we attempted to relate here all of the promises of the Word of God (cf. Jn.21:25; Heb.11:32ff.), for there is a promise on every page of the Bible. What concerns us here is how those promises, predictions, and prophecies of the Word relate to the incarnation of our Lord. Herein we may focus on three particular areas of promise that require the provision of a person who must of necessity be God as well as man, but true man nonetheless: 1) to fulfill the promise of a prophet greater than Moses whose words would be perfect in leading to salvation; 2) to fulfill the promise of a priest greater than any prior high priest, all of whom were all unable to do any more than represent the sacrifice which would cleanse us from our sins; 3) to fulfill the promise of a king who would rule forever, a son of David who would somehow be greater than David and be David's Lord as well. Only by Jesus Christ, true God come to earth by taking on true humanity, could these promises be fully realized, for each represents one of three critical aspects of God's plan of salvation, announced through prophecy, effected through priestly sacrifice, and realized in all its blessedness in the coming reign of the Messiah.

1) Jesus fulfills the promise of the Prophet to come, embodying in His Person the entire message of God's prophetic revelation of salvation (He is **the** Prophet):

“The Lord Your God will raise up from your midst, from among your brothers, a Prophet like me (i.e., the Lord Jesus Christ). You must give heed to Him, just as you requested from the Lord your God at Horeb (i.e., Sinai) on the day of your assembly [there], when you said, ‘May I not hear the voice of the Lord My God any longer, nor see this great fire lest I die!’ Then the Lord said to me, ‘They have done well in what they have said. I will raise up for them from the midst of their brothers a Prophet like you. And I will put My words in His mouth, and He will tell them everything I command Him. And it will come to pass that the person who does not listen to My words which He will speak in My Name, that I will require it of that person’ (i.e., hold him responsible for rejecting salvation).”

Deuteronomy 18:15-19

Philip found Nathaniel and said to him, “We have found the One whom Moses wrote about in the Law and [whom] the prophets [wrote about too], Jesus, the son of Joseph from Nazareth.”

John 1:45

If you had believed Moses, you would have believed in Me. For He wrote about Me.
John 5:46

So the people who saw the sign He had performed were saying, “This is truly the Prophet who is [prophesied to be] coming into the world.”

John 6:14 (cf. Matt.21:11; Jn.7:40)

(19) So repent and turn back [to God] for the blotting out of your sins, (20) so that times of refreshment may come from the Lord, and so that He may send to you the One

acknowledged as the Christ [Messiah], [namely] Jesus, (21) who must remain in heaven until the times of the restoration of all things of which God has spoken through the mouths of His holy prophets from of old. (22) For Moses said, “The Lord God will raise up for you from among your brothers a Prophet like me”.
Acts 3:19-22b (cf. Acts 7:37)

The prophets spoke the Word of God, but Jesus **is** the Word of God and the fulfillment of this and all of the rest of God's promises prophesied in the scriptures.

2) Jesus fulfills the promise of the High Priest to come, along with all of the prophecies and rituals which taught and proclaimed the need for a “better sacrifice” (He is **the** High Priest in the order of Melchizedek):

When He had accomplished the cleansing of [our] sins, He took His seat (i.e., beyond the veil) at the right hand of the Majesty on high.
Hebrews 1:3b

For this reason He had to be like His brothers in every way, in order to become a merciful and faithful High Priest in the things relating to God in order to propitiate the sins of the people (i.e., through the sacrifice of Himself).
Hebrews 2:17

Since we have, therefore, a Great High Priest who has passed through the heavens (i.e., as through the veil), [even] Jesus, the Son of God, let us hold fast to our profession [of faith in Him].
Hebrews 4:14

(19) And this hope [truly] is what “anchors” our lives, a secure and solid [anchor of hope] which penetrates [behind] the veil (i.e., the heavens) into the inner place (i.e., the heavenly holy of holies) (20) where our vanguard, Jesus, has entered on our behalf, having become a High Priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek.
Hebrews 6:19-20

(23) Now the others who have become priests are [of necessity] many since they are prevented from remaining [in office] because of their mortality. (24) But He, [Jesus Christ], because He abides forever, possesses the priesthood irrevocably. (25) For this reason He is able to save completely those who come to God through Him, since He lives forever making intercession for them. (26) This is just the sort of High Priest we needed, holy, without fault, without imperfection, completely separated from sinners, and having ascended higher than the heavens [into God's presence]. (27) Unlike the [human] high priests, [Jesus] has no need of making sacrifice day by day, first on behalf of His own sins, and then for the sins of the people. For this [latter] He did once and for all when He offered Himself [as a sacrifice].
Hebrews 7:23-27

The sum of what we have said is this: we have a High Priest of such [amazing] quality that He has [actually] taken His seat at the right hand of the throne of Majesty in

heaven, a Minister of the holy things and of the true tabernacle which the Lord has pitched, not man. For every priest is appointed to present offerings and sacrifices. Wherefore it was necessary for Him also to have something to offer. Now if He were [ministering] on earth, He would not have been a priest, inasmuch as there are already those who present offerings according to the law [of Moses]. These minister in [what is a] copy and a shadow of the [actual] heavenly [tabernacle], just as command was given to Moses as he was about to complete the tabernacle. For He says, “See to it that you make everything according to the pattern shown to you on the mountain (i.e., Sinai).”
Hebrews 8:1-5

But Christ has already arrived [in heaven] as [the true High] Priest of the good things to come, [having passed] through the [veil of the] greater and more perfect tabernacle, that is, the one which is not of this creation (i.e., through the heavens and into the third heaven). Nor was it through the blood of goats and bullocks, but through His own blood (i.e., His death) that He entered once and for all into the [heavenly] holy of holies, having wrought eternal redemption.
Hebrews 9:11-12

(23) For this reason (i.e., the inability of the blood of animals to cleanse us from sin) it was necessary for the heavenly exemplars of these earthly representations to be cleansed with better sacrifices than these [earthly ones]. (24) For Christ did not enter into a man-made sanctuary that was only a copy of the true one. Rather, He entered into heaven itself, so as to present Himself before God [the Father] on our behalf.
Hebrews 9:23-24

A priest ministers to God, but only Jesus in His humanity could present Himself as the ultimate sacrificial offering and so fulfill the promise of the High Priest according to the order of Melchizedek.

3) Jesus fulfills the promise of the King and all of the prophecies of the messianic kingdom (He is **the** King):

And the Lord declares to you that the Lord will produce a house for you. When your days are fulfilled and you sleep with your fathers, I will raise up your Seed after you, [One] who will come from your own loins, and I will establish His kingdom.
2nd Samuel 7:11-12

(12) And He said to me, “Thus says the Lord of Hosts: Behold a Man – ‘Branch’ is His name (i.e., the Messiah; cf. Is.4:2; 11:1; 53:2; Zech.3:8). And He will branch out from His place and will build [up] the temple of the Lord. (13) For it is He who will build [up] the temple of the Lord. And He will raise up [its] glory. And He will sit and rule [as King] upon His throne. And He will [also] be Priest upon His [kingly] throne. For there will be a [unity of] consultation between the two [offices].”
Zechariah 6:12-13

(1) Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, magi from the east arrived in Jerusalem, (2) saying, “Where is the One who has

been born King of the Jews? For in the east [where we live] we saw His star, and we have come to worship Him.”

Matthew 2:1-2

(37) And as soon as He was nearing the descent of the Mount of Olives the entire crowd of His disciples began to rejoice and praise God, (38) saying, “Blessed is the One who is coming, the King [who is coming] in the Name of the Lord”.

Luke 19:37-38b (cf. Jn.12:13)

Nathaniel replied to Him, “Rabbi, you are the Son of God, you are the King of Israel!”

John 1:49

Then Pilate said to Him, “So you are a king then?” Jesus replied, “You say [rightly] that I am a King. For I have been born for this purpose, and have come into the world in order to bear witness to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth listens to my voice.”

John 18:37

These will make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb will conquer them, because He is Lord of Lords and King of Kings, and called, and elect – and faithful are those with Him.

Revelation 17:14

And He has a Name on His robe and on His thigh: King of Kings and Lord of Lords.

Revelation 19:16

Kings rules in God's stead, but only God's very own Son is qualified to be His Regent over the entire world when He returns in glory at the Second Advent.

d. Christ's taking on of true humanity was necessary for Him to become our Mediator:

For as God is One, so there is [only] One Mediator between God and Man, Christ Jesus in His humanity, who gave Himself as a ransom for all [mankind] . . .

1st Timothy 2:5-6a

The idea of a third party intervening to mediate a dispute between two estranged parties is one to which we can all relate. Thus the biblical concept of Christ the Mediator is inextricably linked to the doctrine of reconciliation, where by Christ intervenes to dissolve the barrier of enmity that separates God from sinful mankind (Eph.2:14-18; cf. Col.2:14). But there are three points in which the mediation accomplished by our Lord is vastly different from the resolution of most human conflicts. First, God and Man are nothing like equal parties, with mankind moreover being entirely at fault in this “dispute” so that the satisfaction required for resolution must be directed toward God alone (i.e., we have no basis whatsoever for complaint against God, something Job would have done well to remember: Job 9:33). The role of Mediator between the King and His offending subjects can only be played by someone who is on a par with both the Father-King and His creature-subjects: only a Son (incarnate) can be sent on such a

mission of reconciliation (cf. Matt.21:33-40). Second, since the problem requiring resolution is the universal sinfulness of mankind, and, further, since mankind, flawed because of sin, has absolutely no way of paying off the least part of the debt for sin, the Mediator Himself had to be the one to provide satisfaction to the offended party if reconciliation were to occur. This our Lord did on our behalf when He was judged for all our sins in the darkness on the cross. Thus, thirdly, in order to accomplish the payment of this “ransom”, Jesus had to become a true human being, since only a true human being, and one sinlessly perfect at that, could pay the price for all of humanity's sins. It is by His work for us on the cross that Jesus has fulfilled His role of mediation, opening up the offer of reconciliation for every human being, an offer that is accepted through faith in the One who made the offer possible through His blood (Rom.5:10-11; 2Cor.5:18-21; Eph.2:16-17; Col.1:20-23). For it is by faith in His Son who died for us that we accept and receive God's “peace offer” (Lk.2:14; Jn.14:27; Rom.5:10; Eph.2:12-14; 2:17; Col.1:20; cf. Rom.5:1).⁽⁷⁾

e. Christ's taking on of true humanity is proven by scripture: The Bible's testimony as to this important teaching of Jesus' advent in true human flesh is unmistakably clear. Despite heresies to the contrary, if we put our faith in scripture, we are left in no doubt as to the genuine humanity of our Lord, possessing a truly human body (Heb.10:5-10) and spirit (Matt.27:50; Mk.2:8; 8:12; Lk.23:46; Jn.11:33; 13:21; 19:30) just as all of us have (though in His case apart from sin).

You too should have this attitude which Christ Jesus had. Since He already existed in the very form of God, equality with God was [certainly] not something He thought He had to grasp for. Yet in spite of this [co-equal divinity He already possessed], He deprived Himself of His status and took on the form of a slave, [and was] born in the likeness of men. He humbled Himself, becoming obedient to the point of death, even [His] death on [the] cross [for us all].
Philippians 2:5-8

1) This is shown by His genuinely physical birth:

(22) And all this has happened to fulfill what was said by the Lord through the prophet [Isaiah], saying, (23) “Behold, the virgin will conceive and will give birth to a Son, and you shall call His Name ‘Immanuel’”, which translated means ‘God [is] with us’.
Matthew 1:22-23

And the Word became flesh and tented among us, and we saw His glory, a glory like that of a father's one and only child, full of grace and truth.
John 1:14

(10) And the angel said to them, “Don't be afraid! For behold, I am giving you a message of great joy which will belong to all the people. (11) ‘Today in David's city a Savior has been born for you, [even Him] who is [the] Messiah (i.e., “Christ”) [the] Lord’”.
Luke 2:10-11

(3) [The gospel] which is about [God's] Son, the One who was born of the seed of David according to His flesh, (4) and marked out as God's Son by the power of the Spirit of Holiness through resurrection from the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord.

Romans 1:3-4

For to which of the angels did He ever say, “You are my Son. Today I have given begotten you.”?

Hebrews 1:5a

2) This is shown by normal human experiences of His life and death:

And having fasted for forty days and forty nights later (i.e., since being led into the wilderness by the Spirit), [Jesus] was **hungry**.

Matthew 4:2

And [Jesus] Himself was in the stern [of the boat], **sleeping** on the cushion.

Mark 4:38

"But the Son of Man has come **eating** and **drinking**, and you say . . .

Luke 7:34

And having taken [**Jesus' body**] down [from the cross], [Joseph] wrapped it in linen and placed Him in a tomb [which has been] carved out [of the rock] where no one had [ever] yet been lain.

Luke 23:53

And Jacob's well was in that place. So Jesus, **having become fatigued** from the journey, accordingly sat down at the well.

John 4:6

Jesus **wept**.

John 11:35

(33) And next, [the soldiers] came to Jesus. [But] when they saw that He was already dead, they did not break His legs. (34) But one of the soldiers pierced His side with a lance, and there came forth immediately **blood and water** (i.e., “serum”).

John 19:33-34

3) This is shown even in His resurrection:

“Behold, my hands and my feet, [and see] that it is [really] me. Touch me and see that a spirit does not have **flesh and bones** as you see that I have”.

Luke 24:39

Jesus thus not only is truly human, having become a genuine man in order to die for our sins on the cross, but He also knows precisely what we are going through in this world,

having endured the worst of it and having drunk its tears by the bucket full (Is.53:3), yet without sin:

For we do not have a High Priest who is not able to sympathize with our weaknesses, since He too was put to the test in all things just as [we are], [only] without sin.

Hebrews 4:15

(7) [Jesus our High Priest] who in the days of His flesh[ly life] (i.e., while He was on earth prior to the resurrection), having offered up prayers and petitions with powerful shouting and with tears to the One who was able to save Him from death, and having been hearkened to on account of His devoutness, (8) although being [God's one and only] Son, nevertheless came to understand [firsthand in His humanity] from what He suffered [what] obedience to God [truly is] (i.e., what it takes for a human being to be obedient to God), (9) and, once He was perfected (i.e., perfectly completed His course), became the source of eternal salvation for all who are obedient to Him (i.e., believers).

Hebrews 5:7-9

3. Jesus Christ is truly Unique:

At the end of these times (i.e., of verse one), God spoke to us by a Son, whom He appointed heir of everything, and through whom He [the Father] made the ages.

Hebrews 1:2

Here we see the uniqueness of our dear Lord unimpeded. He is God's one and only Son, a title that at once embraces all of the human and divine facets of His unique Person. And He is in His humanity the heir of all things as a result of His victory at the cross, having won the battle over Satan (Col.2:15; Rev.5:5), having won the hand of His Bride, the Church (Eph.5:25), and having won eternal redemption for all mankind, all who are willing to accept it (Heb.9:12). And He is in His deity the One through whom the Father brought about the creation of the universe, space and time. In His unique Person, therefore, Jesus Christ, God incarnate, binds all things together, whether they be of this creation or transcend it.

(19) For it was [God's] good pleasure for the fulfillment [of His plan] to reside entirely in [Christ], (20) and so through Him to reconcile everything to Himself, having made peace through Him, through the blood of His cross, whether things on earth, or things in heaven.

Colossians 1:19-20

Jesus is the unique “bridge” between all that is material and all that is immaterial, and one can scarcely comprehend or appreciate the graciousness of the Father in offering His own dear Son for this role or our Lord's incomparable and ineffable sacrifice in accepting it. Suffice it to say that through His becoming truly human forever at the same time that He remains divine in an undiminished way, Jesus has wed Himself and therefore has wed the divinity to saved mankind forever, having poured out His life on

the cross to accomplish this merciful deliverance of us all. Thus the fundamental transformation of what was before creation, what creation meant (because of what in the grace of God it was going to entail in terms of Jesus' sacrifice), and what now will endure to the ages of the ages is completely bound up in the unique Person and work of Jesus Christ, through whom we have become partakers of the divine nature (2Pet.1:4), and because of Him God will forever, on that blessed day of days when time ends and eternity begins, make His abode with saved humanity forevermore (Rev.21:3).

For in Him (i.e., Jesus Christ), dwells all of the fullness of deity ***in bodily form***.
Colossians 2:9

Here we see deity and humanity combined in an absolutely unique way. Jesus Christ is truly a man (since His incarnation: Phil.2:6-11). Jesus Christ is also truly God (Col.2:2 Greek). Only by having a body could our Lord deliver us from our sins, because only in this way could God die for our sins. This is the mystery of the gospel (Col.2:2), the plan and power of God for saving sinful mankind (Rom.1:16). Therefore Jesus ***is*** the plan of God, the Cornerstone of all that God has purposed to accomplish (Matt.21:42; Eph.2:20; 1Pet.2:6-7; cf. Rom.5:6; 8:29-30; 1Cor.8:6; Col.1:17-20; Heb.9:26).

. in all wisdom and understanding [God] has made known to us the mystery He has willed (***according to His own benevolent purpose which He determined in [Christ]***) for administering this [present] fulfillment of the epochs: namely ***the incorporation of all things in Christ***, things in heaven, and things on earth –
Ephesians 1:8b-10

As the ages were designed ***for*** our Lord Jesus Christ as well as ***through*** Him (Col.1:16-17), there is scarcely any respect in which the scriptures do not reflect this distinctive uniqueness of the One who saved us through His death. While it is thus not possible to comprehensively delineate every single way in which our Lord's uniqueness is essential to the plan of God, the mention here of a sample of some prominent areas in which that uniqueness is critical is appropriate:

a. That uniqueness is shown by the fact that only by being God and man could Jesus be the ***Firstborn***, the One who would ***earn*** the ***privileges*** of rulership, priesthood, and double portion (Rom.8:29; Col.1:18; Heb.1:6; Rev.1:5; cf. section I.5.f.4.c below):

He is the exact image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation.
Colossians 1:15

Since Jesus is the ***one and only*** Son of God (Jn.1:14; 1:18; 3:16; 3:18; 1Jn.4:9), His status of firstborn refers not to any order of birth but rather to the privileges that fall to the lot of the firstborn, namely, rulership (Dan.7:13-14; Matt.22:41-45; 28:18; Col.1:18; Heb.2:10; 3:1-6; Rev.2:27), priesthood (Heb.5:6; 7:13-14), and double portion of inheritance (Rev.19:9; cf. Deut.21:15-17). As with His priesthood and His Messiahship,

Jesus' status of "firstborn" is a privilege *earned* through His sacrificing of Himself for us all on the cross, for He is the "firstborn *from the dead*" (Col.1:18; Rev.1:5), indicating that it is His death for us that forms the basis for His receiving all of the rights and privileges of firstborn status (cf. Gen.49:4; and Heb.12:16, where it is made clear that this privilege is based upon merit).

I will also **appoint** Him my firstborn, the most exalted of the kings of the earth.
Psalm 89:27 NIV

We have discussed above Jesus' rulership and priesthood, the first two benefits of firstborn status (and it a wondrous thing to contemplate that we, His Church, share in all of these by virtue of our sharing in His status of "firstborn": Heb.12:23). As to the third, the firstborn's double-portion of inheritance, in our Lord's case, this consists of His dearest possessions, the Bride (i.e., the Church consisting of all pre-second advent believers: Rev.21:9; cf. Eph.5:22-33; Rev.19:7-8; 21:2; 22:17), and "the Friends of the Bride (i.e., the equal number of millennial believers: Ps.45:14-15; Rev.19:9). Our Lord's uniqueness is thus pellucidly clear in His unprecedented rulership of the world which only the Messiah can attain (Matt.22:41-45; Heb.3:1-6; Rev.1:5-7; 5:4-5; 11:15), the eternal priesthood "according to the order of Melchizedek" which required the sacrifice which only God's Son could provide (Heb.7:26; cf. Heb.2:15-17), and in the fulfillment and possession of the Bride and her Friends, which only the God-Man will achieve (Rom.8:29; Heb.2:13).

b. That uniqueness is shown by the fact that only by being God and man could Jesus be our **Sin-bearer**, the One who would pay the **penalty** for our sins on the cross
(Matt.16:21; 17:12; Mk.8:31; 9:12; Lk.9:22; 17:25; 22:15; 24:26; 24:46; Acts 1:3; 3:18; 17:3; 26:23; Rom.8:17; 2Cor.1:5; Phil.3:10; 1Pet.4:1):

My God, My God, why did You forsake Me?
Psalm 22:1

(3) He was despised and rejected by men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with suffering. Like a person people hide their faces from, He was despised, and we did not hold Him of any account. (4) For He bore our sicknesses and He carried our weaknesses. And yet we considered Him as [the One who had been] punished, smitten and afflicted by God. (5) But [in fact] He was made subject to torment on account of our transgressions, and He was crushed because of our collective guilt (lit., "guilts"). The punishment [required] for making peace [with God] on our behalf [fell] upon Him. Because of His wounding, we have been healed.

Isaiah 53:3-5

(9) But now we do see Jesus crowned with glory and honor on account of **the death He suffered**, even Him who became "a little lower than the angels" [for a brief span] so that by the grace of God He might **taste death on behalf of us all**. (10) For it was fitting for [the Father] to make complete **through sufferings** Him on whose account all things exist and through whom all things exist, namely, the Captain of their salvation,

even Him who has led many sons to glory, [our Lord Jesus Christ].
Hebrews 2:9-10

For because He has suffered, He is able to help those who are being tested, since He Himself was [also] put to the test.
Hebrews 2:18

For we do not have a High Priest who is not able to sympathize with our weaknesses, since He too was put to the test in all things just as [we are], [only] without sin.
Hebrews 4:15

(7) [Jesus our High Priest] who in the days of His flesh[ly life] (i.e., while He was on earth prior to the resurrection), having offered up prayers and petitions with powerful shouting and with tears to the One who was able to save Him from death, and having been hearkened to on account of His devoutness, (8) although being [God's one and only], nevertheless came to understand [firsthand] from what He suffered [what] obedience to God [truly is] (i.e., what it takes for a human being to be obedient to God), (9) and, once He was perfected (i.e., perfectly completed His course), became the source of eternal salvation for all who are obedient to Him (i.e., believers).
Hebrews 5:7-9

Therefore Jesus also suffered outside of the gate, in order to sanctify the people through His blood (i.e., His death on the cross).
Hebrews 13:12

For it is to this [sharing in the sufferings of Christ] that you have been called, for Christ also died on your behalf, leaving you an example so that you might follow in His footsteps: He committed no sin, nor was any guile found in His mouth. He did not return slander when He was slandered, did not threaten when He suffered, but entrusted Himself to the One who judges righteously.
1st Peter 2:21-23

But to the degree that you are [truly] participating in Christ's sufferings, be joyful about it, so that at His glorious revelation, you may also rejoice with great gladness.
1st Peter 4:13

c. That uniqueness is shown by the fact that only by being God and man could Jesus be the **Messiah**, the One who fulfills the **duties** of the Father's mission:

At that time (i.e., His birth) He [Jesus Christ in His deity] said, 'Behold, I have arrived (i.e., been born) – in the scroll of a book it is written of Me – to do your will, O God'.
Hebrews 10:7 (Ps.40:7)

Jesus is the One whom the Father sent into the world to save it (Lk.2:25-35; Jn.3:16; 3:34; 7:18; 7:28-31; 17:18; Rom.8:3; Heb.3:1; 1Jn.4:9-10; cf. Gen.49:10; Is.8:6; Zech.2:9; 2:11; 4:9; 6:15), the Messiah (Hebrew: *Meshiach*, משיח), the One prophesied to come

into the world and deliver it from sin by dying in its place (the cross: Is.52:13 - 53:12), and to deliver it from evil by reigning over it in perfect righteousness (the crown: Ps.2; 45; 72; 110). The Hebrew title Messiah, translated into Greek as “Christ” (*Christos*, Χριστός), means “Anointed One”, and reflects the Hebrew custom of demonstrating through an anointing with oil that a person had been officially commissioned into an extraordinary office (as in Samuel's anointing of Saul: 1Sam.10:1; of David: 1Sam.16:13; or Moses' anointing of Aaron: Ex.28:41). In all such cases, this anointing with oil is symbolic and represents divine empowerment through the anointing of the Holy Spirit (Num.11:17-29; 1Sam.10:6; 10:9-10; 11:6; 16:13). While never symbolically anointed with oil, Jesus was symbolically “anointed” with our sins (the meaning behind His unique water-baptism: cf. Mk.10:38-39; Lk.12:50), after which He immediately received a special and dramatic symbol (i.e., the Spirit descending upon Him in the form of dove) of the unction of the Holy Spirit He possessed from birth by virtue of His unique status as **the** Anointed One.

His status of anointing is unique both in terms of its exceptional degree (Is.11:2-3; Jn.3:34; cf. Matt.3:16; Mk.1:10; Lk.3:22; Jn.1:32), and also in that it demonstrates the Father's pleasure with Him in the undertaking of His earthly mission (Matt.3:17; Mk.1:11; Lk.3:22; cf. Matt.17:5; Mk.9:7; Lk.9:35; Jn.12:28). And it was essential for the Messiah, the Anointed One, to be both God and man to fulfill His mission because 1) only the God-man can be the sin-bearer who redeems mankind; 2) only the God-man can be the Father's regent to rule over redeemed mankind forever; and 3) only the God-man can mediate between the Father and sinful mankind as high-priest. Thus our Lord was Ruler, Redeemer, and Mediator by right of birth as the firstborn, won the right for us to share with Him in His rulership by being our sin-bearer, and discharged (redeeming us at the cross), is discharging (mediating for us even now), and will discharge (ruling the world at His return) each of these offices in fulfillment of the Father's mission in His status as Messiah, with each accomplished in its proper time.

4. The Names of Jesus Christ reflect His perfect Person and His perfect Work:

a. The Three Primary Names: “Lord Jesus Christ”:

1) Lord: This primary name is the Greek word *kyrios* (κύριος) which translates what is often called the “tetragrammaton”, that is, the unpointed four consonant Hebrew name “LORD” (YHVH; i.e., יהוה) as explained at Exodus 3:13-15. ⁽⁸⁾ Therefore this title is clearly expressive of Jesus' divinity (Matt.22:41-46; Jn.20:28; cf. Ps.110:1).

2) Jesus: This primary name is a transliteration of the Hebrew name often vocalized “Joshua” (יהושע), meaning “The LORD saves”, and is the name which Joseph and Mary are instructed to use “because He will save His people from their sins” (Matt.1:21; Lk.1:31). Therefore this name is clearly expressive of the work which our Lord accomplished on the cross in dying for the sins of the entire world. As such, it represents Him as both human and divine, since only God could remit our sins, and only

3) Christ: This primary name is the Greek word *christos* (Χριστός) which translates the Hebrew name “Messiah” or “Anointed One” (*meshicah*: משיח), thus referring to our Lord's special commissioning by the Father as the unique One who will fulfill prophecy and accomplish salvation. Therefore this title is evocative of Jesus' unique Person, the God-man, the very Son of God, who has been sent into the world to save it (Jn.3:16; 1Jn.4:9-10; cf. Matt.3:16-17; Acts 4:27; Heb.1.8-9).

b. Other Names: This list makes no pretense at being complete. To make such an attempt would require a separate study of its own, and a lengthy one at that. For example, since Jesus is God, all of the various and sundry names, appellations and unique descriptions of God occurring in the Old Testament would need to be considered in such a study (e.g., *El, Elohiym, Yah, El `Elyon, El Ro `i, El Shaddai, Jehovah-nissi*, etc.), not to mention specifically Messianic passages which refer uniquely to Jesus and His coming millennial reign:

For a child is born to us, and a Son is given to us. Dominion shall rest on his shoulder, and His name will be called “He whose counsel is wondrous”, “Mighty God”, “the Father of Eternity”, “the Prince of Prosperity”.
Isaiah 9:6

In the New Testament as well, since Jesus is the revealed person of the Trinity and the focal point of all scripture, one finds innumerable descriptions of Him which, even if they fall short of being a “name” or “title” in some precise sense of those words, are certainly worthy of inclusion in any comprehensive treatment (as, for example, where He is called in Hebrews 3:1 “the Apostle . . . of our faith”, in Hebrews 2:10 the “Captain of their salvation”, and in Hebrews 12:2 “the originator and completer of our faith”), not to mention the various self-descriptions our Lord uses for Himself in His address to the seven churches of Revelation alone:

To the angel of the church in Ephesus, write: “This is what the One who has the mastery over the seven stars (i.e., churches) in His right hand says, the One who walks in the midst of the seven golden lampstands.”
Revelation 2:1

And to the angel of the church in Smyrna write: “This is what the One who is the first and last says, He who died and came to life.”
Revelation 2:8

And to the angel of the church in Pergamum write: “This is what the One who has the sharp two-edged sword says.”
Revelation 2:12

And to the angel of the church in Thyatira write: “This is what the Son of God says, the One whose eyes are like a flame of fire and whose feet are like white-hot bronze.”
Revelation 2:18

And to the angel of the church in Sardis write: “This is what the One who has the seven spirits of God and the seven stars says.”

Revelation 3:1

And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write: “This is what the One who is holy and true says, the One who has the key of David, the One who opens and no one will lock, who locks and no one opens.”

Revelation 3:7

And to the angel of the church in Laodicea write: “This is what the Amen says, the reliable and truthful Witness, the origin of God's creation.

Revelation 3:14

In addition to the fact that a number of these names and titles are covered elsewhere in this study, since many such appellations only occur once or twice, or are largely expressive of doctrinal principles which will be explained elsewhere, and are also in any case deserving of a full-treatment best left to commentary on the specific verses in which they occur, the list which follows will restrict itself to some of the more common names and titles of our Lord. As this standard of exclusion and inclusion is necessarily subjective, the reader's indulgence is requested for any and all cases of omission that may be deemed inappropriate.

1) Advocate: As the One who bought us by giving up His precious life for us through His death on the cross on our behalf, Jesus has earned the right to advocate on our behalf, interceding with the Father before the throne of grace (Rom.8:34; Heb.7:25; cf. Jn.14:13-14).

My children, I am writing these things to you so that you won't sin. But if anyone does sin, we have an Advocate to [approach] the Father [on our behalf], Jesus Christ the righteous.

1st John 2:1

2) Alpha and Omega: This title, used of our Lord at Revelation 22:13, is also used for the Father (i.e., at Rev.1:8 and 21:6), a fact which constitutes no contradiction since Father and Son are “one” (Jn.10:30). Being the first and last letters of the Greek alphabet respectively, the name Alpha and Omega stresses the fact that Jesus is “the first and the last” (Rev.1:17), the One who comprises all things from one end of the universe and from one end of eternity to the other (Col.1:16-19; 2:3; 2:9).

3) Arm of the Lord: As the second person of the Trinity, Jesus is the One who carries out the plan of God directly and personally (Lk.1:51): He is the One who made the universe (Jer.27:5; 32:17; cf. Ps.8:3), and He is the One who has saved us from eternal condemnation by personally coming into the world as a human being and dying in our place for our sins (Is.53:1 in the context of chapter 53; cf. Jn.12:37-38). He will also be the One through whom the Father will retake direct control of the earth at the second advent (Ps.98:1; Is.30:30; 40:10; 51:5; 51:9; 52:10; 59:16-20; 63:5-6; cf.

Is.48:14-15; Ezek.20:33-34). As the instrument by which the Father carries out His plan, the title “Arm of the Lord” is very descriptive and appropriate (Ps.89:13). It shows, moreover, how inextricably linked the purpose and the action of the Trinity are as three Persons sharing a single essence, especially visible in the redemption of the people of Israel from Egypt, an action highly symbolic of our redemption from death (cf. Deut.7:19; 9:29; 2Kng.17:36; Ps.89:10; Ps.136:10-15; Jer.32:21; Acts 13:17; cf. Ps.44:3).

Where is He [the **Father**] who brought them (i.e, the Israelites) up from the [Red] Sea with the leaders of His people? Where is He [the Father] who set among them His **Holy Spirit**, who [also] made His Glorious **Arm** of power [Jesus Christ (cf. Heb.11:27)] to go [along with them] at Moses' right hand?
Isaiah 63:11b-12a

4) **Branch**: This is essentially a Messianic title which identifies our Lord as the promised offspring of David destined to rule the world in righteousness (Is.53:2; Jer.23:5; 33:15; Zech.3:8; 6:12; cf. Ezek.17:22ff.; Rom.1:3; Rev.5:5), unappreciated in His first advent (Is.11:1), but glorious in His second coming (Is.4:2).⁽⁹⁾ Since the title is primarily Messianic, we should understand it also to be connected to the use of the palm branch as a symbol of the victorious Messiah as implied in the festival of *Sukkoth*,⁽¹⁰⁾ our Lord's final first advent entry into Jerusalem (cf. Ps.118:25-27 with Matt.21:8-9; Mk.11:8-10; Jn.12:13; cf. Lk.19:37-38), and the martyrs with palm branches in hand at Revelation 7:9. Finally, it is also important to see this title as tying our Lord to the symbolism of the menorah, the seven branched lampstand which illuminated the Holy Place in the Tabernacle and Temple. Jesus is the light of the world and life itself (Jn.1:4; Jn.14:6). Since the menorah connects the coming Messiah with the original tree of life, it is likely that we are meant to see this symbolism of light and life shining through in the title “Branch” as well.⁽¹¹⁾

5) **Bridegroom**: Jesus is the Last Adam, and we, the Church, are, so to speak, His “Eve” (1Cor.15:45; 2Cor.11:2-3; cf. Rom.5:14). Jesus died for us, purchasing us from death with His blood, His sacrificial work in dying for our sins on the cross (1Cor.15:3; 2Cor.5:21; 1Pet.2:24). Having been purchased in this unique way (1Pet.1:18-19), we belong to Him forever and will be “wedded” to Him as His Bride forever on His return (Matt.9:15; Matt.25:1-13; Mk.2:19; Lk.5:34; Jn.3:29; 2Cor.11:2-3; Eph.1:22-23; 5:22-33; Rev.21:2-4; 21:9ff.; 22:17; cf. 1Cor.15:23).

“Let us rejoice and be jubilant, and let us give glory to [God], because the wedding of the Lamb has come, and His Bride has prepared herself. And it has been given her to wear a pure, resplendent [gown] of the finest material (now this fine material represents the righteous acts of His holy ones [believers]).” And [the angel] said to me, “Write this down: Happy are those who have been called to the wedding of the Lamb”.
Revelation 19:7-9

6) **Builder**: In the Trinity's assumed roles, the Father is the Architect of creation, and our Lord Jesus Christ is the Creator or Builder through whom all things come to

have their being and in whom all things subsist (Col.1:16-17; Jn.1:3; see section I.1.c above). We find a similar attribution in Hebrews applied to the Church of Jesus Christ, whose building we are:

(3) This One [Jesus Christ] is worthy of greater glory than Moses inasmuch as the One who builds the house has greater honor than the house itself. (4) For every house is built by someone, but God is the One who has built all things (i.e., creation). (5) And while Moses was faithful as a servant in all of his house as a witness to the [truths] that would be spoken [in the future], (6) Christ [was faithful] as a Son over His house – whose house we are, if indeed we hold fast to the hope [in which we] boast firm until the end.

Hebrews 3:3-6

7) Firstborn: [see section I.3.a above]

8) Gift of God: This name needs little explanation. Without God the Father giving us the inestimable gift of His own dear Son to die in our place, instead of the eternal life we anticipate, we would have only judgment in prospect. And Jesus agreed to have Himself given over to be judged in our place (Gal.1:4; Ep.5:2; 5:25; 1Tim.2:6; Tit.2:14; cf. Rom.3:24; 6:23; Eph.4:7). Only because of the glorious gift of Him do we have eternal life.

Thanks be to God for His inestimable gift!

2nd Corinthians 9:15

(15) But the offense [of the former, Adam] is not at all like the *favor* [of the Latter, Christ]. For though it is true that the human race is perishing on account of the offense of that one man [Adam], how much more has the grace of God and His gracious *Gift* of the one Man, Jesus Christ, abounded to this same human race! (16) Indeed, the *Gift* is not at all like [the universal death that came] through [that] one person who sinned. For [in the former case] the [divine] judgment [that resulted] from one [person led] to [universal] condemnation, but the [divine] *favor* [based upon the sacrifice of the One has led] to the accomplishment of [universal] justification in response to many offenses. (17) For though it is true that on account of the offense of the one death reigned through that one (i.e., by Adam passing down his sin to his progeny), how much more will those who receive this abundance of grace, even this *Gift* of righteousness [through justification] rule in [eternal] life through [the sacrifice of] the One, Jesus Christ!

Romans 5:15-17

For you have been saved by (God's) grace through faith (in Christ); and this did not come from you – it is God's gift. Nor did it come from what you have done, lest anyone should boast.

Ephesians 2:8-9

9) Head of the Body, the Church: The Church is often referred to in the New

Testament as “the Body of Christ” (e.g., 1Cor.12:12), of which our Lord Jesus is “the Head” (1Cor.11:3; 12:21; Eph.4:15-16; 5:22-33; Col.1:18; 2:10; 2:19). This name stresses the intimate connection between Jesus and those He loves, being so close to Him as to be just as indistinguishable from Him as the head is from the body.

(22) And [the Father] subordinated all things under [Christ's] feet and gave Him [as] Head over all things in the Church (23) which is His Body, the fullness of the One who fills up all things in all ways.

Ephesians 1:22-23

10) High Priest after the Order of Melchizedek: [see section I.2.c.2 above]

11) The Holy One of God: This title, one used of Christ even by the demons (in Mk.1:24; Lk.4:34), identifies Jesus as the one and only specially sanctified One ordained by the Father (cf. Ps.16:10; Is.5:19 with Is.6:1 compared to Jn.12:41), and sent into the world by Him to save the world through faith in Him (cf. Lk.1:35; Acts 4:27; 1Jn.4:9-10; Rev.3:7).

(67) Then Jesus said to the twelve, “You don't wish to leave too, do you?” (68) Simon Peter answered Him, “Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life, (69) and we have believed and have come to know that you are the Holy One of God”.
John 6:67-69

12) Immanuel: This name, meaning “God is with us”, demonstrates that Jesus is the fulfillment of Isaiah's prophecy of the virgin birth of the Messiah, who is in every way “God with us” (Is.7:14; cf. Is.8:8):

(22) And all this has happened to fulfill what was said by the Lord through the prophet [Isaiah], saying, (23) “Behold, the virgin will conceive and will give birth to a Son, and you shall call His Name ‘Immanuel’”, which translated means ‘God [is] with us’.
Matthew 1:22-23

13) Judge: In anticipation of His sacrifice and victory on the cross (Lk.10:22; Jn.3:35; 17:2; cf. Matt.9:6; Mk.2:10; Lk.5:24), and as a result of that sacrifice and victory (Eph.1:22-23; Phil.2:8-11), all authority has been handed over to Jesus Christ (Matt.28:18; cf. Dan.7:13-14; 1Cor.15:27). He is therefore “the Judge”, both of the Church in time and in eternity (Rom.14:10-12; 2Tim.4:8; cf. Jas.4:12; Rev.2:5-6; 3:1-3; 3:19-20), and, at the last judgment, of all mankind, saved or unsaved (Acts 10:42; Rom.2:16; 2Tim.4:1; 1Pet.4:5).

Brothers, do not grumble against one another so that you may not be judged [for it]. Behold, the Judge [Jesus Christ] is standing in front of the door (i.e., His return and our final judgment are imminent)!

James 5:9

For we must all stand before Christ's tribunal, so that each of us may receive recompense for what he has accomplished through this body, whether it be good or worthless.

2nd Corinthians 5:10

14) King of Kings and Lord of Lords: As in the case of “Alpha and Omega” this title found at Revelation 19:16 for our Lord is also used of the Father (1Tim.6:14-16). Variations on this title occur rather frequently in scripture (e.g., Deut.10:17; Ps.136:2-3; Dan.2:47; Rev.17:14), a title which emphasizes the totality of our Lord's authority over all human and angelic authority as He returns to rule the world with a “rod of iron” (Ps.2:9; Rev.2:27; 12:5; 19:15; cf. Ps.2:1-12; 110:1-2; Phil.2:9-11).

15) The Lamb of God: The title “Lamb of God” reminds us of the Old Testament sacrifices regarding sin (which all speak of our Lord's death on the cross), and calls attention to Jesus as the only perfect substitute and sacrifice for our sins, a “lamb without blemish” (1Pet.1:19; cf. Is.53:7) who took away “the sins of the world” (Jn.1:29). Jesus, of course, offered up His life, not literally His blood (cf. Heb.8:3: “something to offer”). For “the blood of Christ” is a symbol of Jesus' sacrifice just as “the Lamb of God” is a title symbolic of His sacrifice in being judged for our sins in the darkness on the cross (2Cor.5:21; 1Pet.2:24). This title figures prominently in the book of Revelation because it is through His sacrificial death on our behalf that He has won the right to rule the world (Rev.5:6; 5:8; 5:12-13; 6:16; 7:9-10; 7:14; 12:11; 13:8; 14:1; 14:4; 14:10; 15:3; 17:14; 19:7; 19:9; 21:9; 21:14; 21:22-23; 21:27; 22:1; 22:3).

16) The Last Adam: Through the first Adam, sin entered the world, but through the Last Adam, grace for salvation has been made available for all who believe in Him (Rom.5:12-14; 1Cor.15:21-22; cf. Gen.3:15; Gal.3:19). For Jesus is “a life-giving spirit” for all who place their trust in Him for eternal life (1Cor.15:45). Thus the name “Last Adam” not only calls attention to our Lord's true humanity, but also to the fact that through His own sacrificial death on our behalf He has solved the universal problem plaguing humanity ever since Adam's fall, namely, the problem of sin and resultant death. For only through faith in the Last Adam, will we live forever and avoid the common heritage of our race of eternal death following spiritual and physical death.⁽¹²⁾ Jesus Christ, the Last Adam, is the One who has taken away the curse upon the first Adam and upon us his progeny, and made it possible for us to reenter Eden, not a temporary, worldly Eden, but the New Jerusalem where we shall live with Him forever (cf. Rev.22:1-5).

17) Life: As our Creator and Savior, the giver of life and the only One in whom we have eternal life, Jesus Christ is Life itself, the very source of the life we enjoy now and shall forever enjoy in union with Him (Jn.5:26; 6:33-35; 6:48; 6:51; Acts 3:15; Rom.5:10; 8:2; 2Cor.4:10-11; 1Jn.5:11; cf. Deut.30:20b; Ps.36:9; Jer.10:10; 1Thes.1:9). Because He gave Himself unto death for our sakes, we have life eternal in Him, having

been born again through the Spirit by obedience to the gospel of life in Jesus Christ (Matt.19:28; Jn.1:13; 3:3-8; 1Cor.4:15; Gal.4:29; Tit.3:5; Heb.12:9; Jas.1:18; 1Pet.1:3; 1:23; 1Jn.2:29; 3:9; 4:7; 5:1; 5:4; 5:18).

(3) Everything came into being through Him, [Jesus Christ], and without Him, nothing has come into being which has in fact come into being. (4) In Him was life, and this life was the light of men.

John 1:3-4

(25) Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in Me will live, even if he dies. (26) And everyone who lives and believes in Me will surely not die forevermore."

John 11:25-26a

I am the way: the truth and the life.

John 14:6

For you are already dead, and your [eternal] life has been hidden away with Christ in God. When Christ – your [eternal] life – is revealed, then you too (i.e., with your new eternal life) will be revealed in glory with Him.

Colossians 3:3-4

What we have seen from the beginning, what we have heard and seen with our eyes, what we have observed and touched with our hands – this is about the Word of life[, Jesus Christ]. And the Life appeared, and we have seen and testify to and proclaim to you the Eternal Life who was face to face with the Father and appeared to us.

1st John 1:1-2

And we know that the Son of God has come and has given to us a means of thinking to know the truth. And we are in the Truth, in His Son Jesus Christ. This One (i.e., Jesus Christ) is the true God and Life Eternal.

1st John 5:20

It is I, the First and the Last, even the Living One. And although I died, behold, I am alive forever and ever! Indeed, I possess the keys to death and Hades.

Revelation 1:17b-18

18) Light: As God, Jesus **is** light (1Jn.1:5; cf. Jas.1:17; Rev.22:5). Light is a very important biblical symbol because it stands for life, for holiness, and for truth, and does so in a way to which we human beings can easily and thoroughly relate (cf. Jn.3:19-21). When the devil rebelled, darkness, which had previously had no part in God's creation, came into being. In contrast to darkness which symbolizes death, evil, and the absence of truth, Jesus is the Light (Matt.4:16; Lk.2:32; Acts 26:13; 1Jn.2:8; Rev.21:23), because He is the holy One (Mk.1:24; Lk.1:35; 4:34; Jn.6:69; Acts 4:27; Rev.3:7; compare Jn.12:40-41 with Is.6:1-10), and He is truth itself and life itself (Jn.8:12; 9:5; 12:46).

In Him was life, and this life was the light of men. And this light is shining in the darkness, and the darkness has not quenched it.

John 1:4-5

In Jesus, the true Light (Jn.1:9), as “children of light” (Jn.12:36; Eph.5:8; cf. Lk.16:8; Matt.5:14), we enter the kingdom of light and exit the kingdom of darkness (Col.1:12-13; cf. Acts 26:18), having put our faith in the life-giving truth of the One who came into a world of darkness to bring us safely into the light of eternal life (1Pet.2:9; cf. Acts 26:23).

I am the light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.

John 8:12b

I have come into the world as a light, in order that everyone who believes in Me may not abide in darkness.

John 12:46

19) Lord of Hosts: As with the titles “Alpha and Omega” and “King of Kings and Lord of Lords”, “Lord of Hosts” is also a designation which may be applied to both the Father and the Son. For while at times this title seems clearly to represent the Father (Is.9:7; Zech.6:12-13), at other times we see it clearly referring to our Lord Jesus Christ as the Father's visible representative (Zech.2:8-9). At John 12:41, for example, John attributes to Jesus Isaiah's vision of the Lord surrounded by the Seraphs who cry out “holy, holy, holy” (Is.6:1-13). Along with being Head of the Church (Eph.1:22; 4:15; Col.1:18), the Lord Jesus Christ is also Head (and Creator) of all angelic kind (Eph.1:21; Col.1:15-20; 2:10; Heb.1:1-4), and this title emphasizes our Lord's status as Commander in Chief of the angelic armies (“host” being a translation of the Hebrew *tsabhadh*, צבחה, “army”; cf. Ps.84:3; Is.6:5; Am.5:14-16; Zech.1:3-17).

I saw the Lord sitting on his throne with all the host of heaven standing around him on his right and his left.

1st Kings 22:19 NIV

20) Mediator: [see section I.2.d above]

21) Messiah: [see section I.3.c above]

22) Mystery: Jesus Christ is the linchpin of human history on which everything depends, but the full reality of this was concealed before His first advent (cf. 1Pet.1:10-12), a “mystery” before the cross, but revealed after the cross (Eph.1:9-10; 3:9-10; Col.1:26-27). For although predictions of the coming Messiah are frequent in the Old Testament, the exact *nature* of the Messiah (i.e., that He would be human and divine), and the exact *manner* of His coming (i.e., that He would come twice, first as the

Servant to expiate sin, second as the King to eradicate evil), were shrouded in mystery until Jesus came in the flesh. The mystery of God's solution to sin, and all of the other mysteries about which scripture speaks (the mystery of the Church preeminently: Eph.3:1-11; 5:25-32), are all revealed in the face of Jesus Christ come in the flesh, having died for us on the cross for our redemption, and having been resurrected on the third day for our justification (cf. Rom.4:25).

(1) I want you to know what a great struggle I am engaging in on your behalf and on behalf of those in Laodicea and [on behalf of] as many as have not seen my face in the flesh, (2) [struggling] that your hearts may be encouraged, being strengthened by love and [led] into all the [spiritual] wealth which confident understanding [of the truth brings], [led, that is,] into the full acknowledgment (i.e., *epignosis*, “knowledge made real through faith”) of the **mystery** of God the Father, [namely] Christ, (3) in whom all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are hidden.
Colossians 2:1-3

23) The Prophet: [see section I.2.c.1 above]

24) Rock: Jesus is the bedrock of all creation, the Founder and Foundation of the universe and of our salvation. The tangible qualities of solidity and dependability inherent in the name “Rock” are obvious, and our Lord is the one and only Rock upon which a secure foundation for eternity can be built (Matt.7:24-27; Lk.6:47-49). The frequency with which this particular title and metaphor is used in scripture of God in general and of Jesus in particular highlights its importance (cf. Ex.17:6; Num.20:8; Deut.32:4-37; 1Sam.2:2; 2Sam.23:3; Ps.18:2; 18:46; 19:14; 144:1; Is.8:14; 17:10; 44:8; 51:1; Matt.7:24; Hab.1:12). We must understand that everything depends and rests upon Jesus Christ. He is the Rock upon which the Church is founded (Matt.16:18),⁽¹³⁾ and, individually, He is the Cornerstone of our existence, of our faith, and of all our hopes.

The Stone which the builders rejected has become the Cornerstone.
Psalm 118:22

(44) And in the days of those kings (i.e., in the end times), the God of Heaven will establish a Kingdom which will not be destroyed forever. Nor will that kingdom be surrendered to another people. It will crush and put an end to all those other kingdoms, but this [Kingdom] will endure forever. (45) And in that you saw that a Stone was cut out without [human] hands from the [living] Rock [of a mountain] and that it crushed the iron and the bronze and the clay and the silver and the gold [of the statue], the Great God has made known to the king what will happen after this [in the future] (i.e., when Christ crushes the kingdom of antichrist).
Daniel 2:44-45a

And I tell you that you are Peter [the little rock] (*petr-os*), and upon this [mighty] Rock (*petr-a*, i.e., upon Christ Himself; cf. 1Cor.3:11) I shall build My Church (cf. Dan.2:44-45), **and the gates** (i.e., the fortified defenses) **of Hades** (i.e., the devil's kingdom)

will not [be able to] **resist it.**

Matthew 16:18

Thus it has been written: “Behold, I am placing in Zion a Stone of stumbling and a Rock of tripping up. But he who puts his faith in Him will not be put to shame.”

Romans 9:33 (Is. 28:16; cf. Is.8:13-15)

For no one can lay [any] other foundation (i.e., for salvation, spiritual growth and production) [other] than the One which has [already] been laid, namely, Jesus Christ.

1st Corinthians 3:11

And all of them (i.e., the Exodus generation) drank the same spiritual drink (i.e., divinely provided water). For all of them drank from the spiritual[ly significant] Rock which followed them – for that Rock was Christ.

1st Corinthians 10:4

[It is Jesus] to whom you have come, a Living Stone, rejected by men, but with God elect and highly honored.

1st Peter 2:4

25) Savior: In Greek, “Savior” is the word *soter* (σωτήρ, cf. Soteriology), a word whose root means “safe” and whose Latin adjectival equivalent is *salvus* (cf. “salvation”). The key idea in the agent noun “Savior” is “He who makes safe/delivers”. This Greek word (found at, e.g., Lk.2:11; Jn.4:42; Tit.3:6) is thus a nominal equivalent to what we find where the English word “Savior” is used in the Hebrew Old Testament (found at, e.g., Ps.106:21; Is.60:16; 63:8; Hos.13:4) to translate the word *moshia'*, (i.e., the hiphil participle of *yasha'*, יָשָׁא). All this is a roundabout way of saying that the name “Jesus” (also transliterated from the hiphil of *yasha'*, יָשָׁא) and the word “Savior”, while completely different in English, are nearly identical in their ultimate derivation. For “Jesus” means “He will save” in Hebrew, while the Hebrew participle translated “Savior” in the English versions of the Old Testament (and represented by the Greek *soter*, σωτήρ in the Greek New Testament and also translated “Savior”) means “One who saves”. The main difference is that while “Jesus” is a prophetic name, “Savior” attributes the ability to save directly to our Lord. Jesus is the One who **has** saved us from the lake of fire, from eternal death and condemnation, and who has opened the gate to eternal life for all willing to enter by faith in Him. In Jesus we have been saved from our sins and their eternal consequences, rescued from death by His sacrificial life and atoning death in our place. A greater act of salvation and a greater Savior are truly unimaginable.

26) The Servant of God: This title for our Lord demonstrates the height and the depth and breadth of the love God has for us, for it focuses upon our Lord's self-accepted humiliation in coming into this world as a genuine human being, without glory, to drink to His fill the tears of this world and to suffer for us in our place, even to

His death for us on the cross, that we might not die but live forever with Him (Is.49:3-11; 52:13 - 53:12; Rom.15:8-9).

You too should have this attitude which Christ Jesus had. Since He already existed in the very form of God, equality with God was [certainly] not something He thought He had to grasp for. Yet in spite of this [co-equal divinity He already possessed], He deprived Himself of His status and ***took on the form of a slave***, [and was] born in the likeness of men. He humbled Himself, becoming obedient to the point of death, even [His] death on [the] cross [for us all].

Philippians 2:5-8

(1) Behold ***my Servant*** – I will support Him. My chosen One – my soul (i.e., heart) takes pleasure in Him. I have placed my Spirit upon Him. He will bring forth justice for the nations. (2) He will not cry out nor will He lift up His voice in the street. (3) He will not shatter a reed [which is already] crushed (i.e., He will be merciful to the faint of spirit), nor will He extinguish a smouldering wick (i.e., He will encourage the weak of faith). [But] He will bring forth justice in truth. (4) He will not lose His ardor, nor will He proceed too hastily until He establishes justice on the earth. And in His teaching the islands will put their hope. (5) Thus says God the Lord, who creates the skies and stretches them out, who fashions the earth and its produce, who gives breath to the people upon it, even a spirit to those who walk upon it. (6) I, the Lord, have called You in righteousness, and shall take You by the hand, and guard You, and appoint You a covenant for the nations and a light for the gentiles, (7) to open the eyes of the blind, to bring forth the prisoner from the dungeon, and those who dwell in darkness from their place of captivity (i.e., physical and spiritual redemption).

Isaiah 42:1-7

27) The Good Shepherd: We are all like sheep who have gone astray (Ps.119:176; 1Pet.2:25), but our God has mercifully gone out of His way to bring us back to Himself through the Good Shepherd He has appointed to care for us and guide us. The powerful image conveyed by the picture of the Shepherd who guards and guides us is ubiquitous in the scriptures, conveying the truth that our Lord is our merciful protector and provider, ever present to comfort and take care of us (Gen.48:15; Ps.28:9; 80:1; Eccl.12:11; Jer.31:10; 49:19; 50:44; Ezek.34:23; 37:24; Zech.13:7; Matt.2:6; 25:32; 26:31; Mk.14:27; Jn.10:2-16; 1Pet.5:2-4), even to point of laying down His life in our behalf (Jn.10:11).

“[Joseph's] bow remained steady, his strong arms stayed limber, because of the Shepherd, the Rock of Israel.”

Genesis 49:24 NIV

The Lord is the One shepherding me. Therefore I will not be lacking [anything I need].
Psalm 23:1

See, the Sovereign Lord comes with power, and his arm rules for him. See, his reward is with him, and his recompense accompanies him. He tends his flocks like a shepherd: He gathers the lambs in his arms and carries them close to his heart; he gently leads

those that have young.
Isaiah 40:10:11 NIV

(2) But you, O Bethlehem Ephrathah, too small to be numbered among the clans of Judah, from you I will bring forth the One who is to rule over Israel. His goings forth are from long ago, even from the days of eternity. (3) For He will give them over until the time when she who is about to give birth gives birth (i.e., His mother, Mary: the first advent), and the rest of His brothers return to the sons of Israel (i.e., Jewish repentance at the second advent). (4) Then He (i.e., the Messiah) will arise and will shepherd His flock in the strength of the Lord, in the majesty of the Name of the Lord His God. And they will dwell [in peace], for then He will be great to the ends of the earth. (5) And He will be their peace.

Micah 5:2-5a

I am the Good Shepherd. The Good Shepherd lays down His life for the sake of the sheep.

John 10:11

(20) And the God of peace, the One who led up from the dead the Great Shepherd of the sheep in the blood of the eternal covenant, our Lord Jesus, (21) will fit you out with every good thing in order that you may do His will, [even] as He produces in us what is well-pleasing through Jesus Christ. To Him be the glory forever and ever. Amen!

Hebrews 13:20-21

For you were once like sheep going astray, but you have now turned back to the Shepherd and Overseer of your lives.

1st Peter 2:25

“Because the Lamb who is in the midst of the throne will **shepherd** them and will lead them to fountains of living water, and God will wipe away every tear from their eyes.”

Revelation 7:17

28) The Son of David: Jesus is David's literal “son” as a direct descendant through the mother of His humanity (Luke's genealogy: Lk.3:23-38), and legal heir as a direct descendant through His step-father Joseph (Matthew's genealogy: Matt.1:1-17). Jesus is also the prophetic “greater Son” of David, the Messiah, the promised coming King who would provide the ultimate fulfillment of the promises made to David by the Lord, the “Davidic Covenant” (Ps.89:13-37). In His capacity of “Son of David”, Jesus is David's “seed” (Rom.1:3) and the “Lion” of the tribe of Judah, and “the root of David” (Rev.5:5; cf. “Branch” above #4).

“The Lord declares to you that the Lord himself will establish a house for you: When your days are over and you rest with your fathers, I will raise up your offspring to succeed you, who will come from your own body, and I will establish his kingdom. He is the one who will build a house for my Name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever.”

2nd Samuel 7:11b-13 NIV

29) The Son of God: This title bespeaks our Lord's divinity [see section I.1.2 above, "Jesus is the one and only Son of God"]. The title "Son of God" also expresses Jesus' unique role in human history of being the Trinity's visible Person, the One sent into the world to rescue and redeem sinful mankind, and to win the victory of the cross whereby eternal life and the eternal kingdom to come are provided for all who believe.⁽¹⁴⁾

30) The Son of Man: This title hearkens back to Genesis 3:15 and *protoevangelium*, the first promise of the gospel in the prophecy of the coming Seed who would crush the devil's head. Jesus is that Seed (Gal.3:16-19; cf. Lk.1:55; Acts 3:25; Rom.4:13-18), the "Last Adam" (Rom.5:12-14; 1Cor.15:21-22; 15:45; cf. Gal.3:19), and the title is a clear indication of His perfect and genuine humanity (Mk.8:31), coming into the flesh in Adam's line. The specific name under consideration here, "The Son of Man", marks out Christ as **the** Seed and **the** unique "Son" (as opposed to all other human beings). As such, the title is clearly prophetic of the Messiah (as was clearly recognized by our Lord's contemporaries when He used this title for Himself (Jn.9:35-38).

(13) I kept looking during my vision of that night, and behold – with the clouds of heaven One like a Son of Man was coming up, and He approached the Ancient of Days (i.e., the Father) and they brought Him before Him. (14) And to Him was given dominion and honor and a kingdom, so that all nations and peoples and tongues should serve Him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion which will not pass away, and His kingdom one which will not be destroyed.
Daniel 7:13-14

And [God the Father] has given Him[, Jesus Christ,] authority to render judgment [on the world] because He is [**the**] Son of Man.
John 5:27

31) The Truth: Jesus not only speaks the truth, He **is** the truth:

I am the Way: the **truth** and the life. No one can come to the Father except through me.
John 14:6

As this verse makes clear, Jesus is the only real truth worth knowing (cf. Heb.13:8), and all that is genuinely true is at its core fundamentally subordinate to Him who is the ultimate and all-encompassing **truth**. For this reason, Jesus Christ and His words are ubiquitously and regularly described in terms of truth (Matt.14:33; 27:54; Mk.15:39; Lk.4:25; 12:44; 21:3; Jn.1:17; 4:42; 6:14; 6:32; 6:55; 7:40; 8:16; 8:40; 8:45; 15:1; 16:7; 18:37; 1Jn.2:8; 5:20; Rev.3:7; 3:14; 19:11):

The **true** Light which illuminates every human being was coming into the world.
John 1:9

And the Word became flesh and tented among us, and we beheld His glory, glory as of a one and only Son of His Father, full of grace and **truth**.
John 1:14

For the Law was given through Moses, but grace and **truth** came through Jesus Christ.
John 1:17

32) The Vine: This highly descriptive image teaches us about our organic connection to our dear Lord Jesus from the point we first put our faith in Him (cf. Ps.80:8-11). We live in Him and He lives in us so long as we continue to walk in faith.

(1) I am the true vine and my Father is the vine-dresser. Every branch [that is] in Me which does not bear fruit (2) He removes, and every branch which does bear fruit He prunes so that it might bear more fruit. (3) You have already been pruned because of the Word I have spoken to you. (4) Stay part of Me, and I will [stay] part of you. Just as the branch cannot bear fruit by itself unless it remains part of the vine, so you too cannot [bear true fruit] unless you stay part of Me. (5) I am the vine, you are the branches. If a man remains in Me and I in Him, he will bear much fruit; apart from Me you can do nothing. (6) If anyone does not remain in Me, he is like a branch that is thrown away and withers; such branches are picked up, thrown into the fire and burned.
John 15:1-6

33) The Way: Jesus is the only “way” to get to God. In fact, He is **the** Way:

I am the **Way**: the truth and the life. No one can come to the Father except through me.
John 14:6

Comparing salvation to physical progress along a route is common in scripture (e.g., Ps.84:5-7; 118:19-27; 119:176; Matt.7:13-14; 21:32; 22:16; Mk.12:14; Lk.13:24-25; Jn.14:4; Acts 9:2; 19:9; 19:23; 22:4; 24:22). But what all of these travel metaphors have in common is the gospel: only through Jesus Christ can we approach God (Eph.2:14-18; 4:7-10; Col.2:13-15; Heb.9:24). He is Gate through which those who are truly His sheep enter (Jn.10:7-9). He is the only true Door which leads not to death but to eternal life (Rev.3:21; 4:1). Only through Him, and in Him, and by following Him where He has gone (Heb.6:19-20; cf. Heb.2:10 [Greek]; 12:2), can we too enter into the heavenly holy of holies for fellowship eternal with the Father, the Son, and the Spirit forevermore (Matt.27:51; Lk.23:43; Heb.10:19-20).

34) Word of God: Jesus Christ is the living Word of God:

The Word [Jesus Christ] existed at the very beginning, and there was reciprocity (i.e., co-divinity) between the Word and God [the Father]. And the Word was God.
John 1:1

What this means is that there is absolutely no discrepancy or disparity between Jesus and the Father, or between Jesus and any of the “words of God”. For He is the embodiment of the truth, God's Word, and is the Truth, manifest in God's written Word. For this reason, the ministry of the Spirit to believers is described by our Lord as one where the Spirit will “take what is mine and will make it known to you” (Jn.16:15), and by Paul as the very “mind of Christ” (1Cor.2:16). To know Jesus is know the Word of God; to know the Word of God is to know Jesus Christ (Jn.5:39; cf. Jn.1:1-14; Heb.1:1-4; 1Jn.1:1-4; Rev.1:2). Praise God for that blessed day of days to come when we shall “know, even as we are known” (1Cor.13:12).

And He was clothed in a cloak splattered with blood, and His Name stands [forever]:
“The Word of God”.
Revelation 19:13

5. The Life of Jesus Christ

a. Introduction:

Jesus is God, a co-equal, co-eternal, con-substantial member of the Trinity. Jesus is also the Word of God, the Mind of Christ, God's entire revelation meant for us in this life contained in the completed canon of scripture and revealed to us through the ministry of the Holy Spirit (1Cor.2:16). Therefore it is important to point out at the commencement of this section that by “the life of Christ” we are concerned not primarily with the deity of Jesus Christ but with His humanity as it was foreshadowed in the Old Testament and became a reality with His incarnation in the form of a genuine human being in the New Testament. Few subjects in scripture are more important than attention to our Savior's life, because it is only through Him, through faith and faithful following of Him, that we realize the promise of eternal life. And Jesus' life is, among many other things, the ultimate exemplar for all Christians (Matt.8:22; 9:9; 10:38; 11:29; 16:24; 19:21; Mk.1:17; Lk.9:23; Jn.1:43; 13:15; 21:19-22; Eph.4:15; Phil.2:5; Heb.6:20; 1Pet.2:21-25; Rev.14:4). Jesus is, after all, the archetypical perfect human being who did God's will to the full without fail, and in this way was qualified to bear our sins on the cross:

For just as through the disobedience of the [first] man[, Adam,] the human race found itself sinful, so through the obedience of the One[, Jesus Christ,] the human race will find itself [accounted as] righteous (i.e., justified), [through faith in Him].
Romans 5:19

b. Old Testament Appearances of Jesus Christ:

Jesus Christ is the revealed member of the Trinity. As such, just as He is the One who is revealed in the flesh from the incarnation onward, He is also the One who manifests the Person and presence of God to believers before the incarnation (cf. Heb.1:1-2). Old Testament appearances of God are often termed “Theophanies”, whereas those Old Testament appearances which can clearly be shown to be of Jesus are called “Christophanies”. Much of what we now know about the Trinity was purposely veiled during Old Testament times for a variety of reasons,⁽¹⁵⁾ however, as the following passage shows, many such appearances of God in the Old Testament which one might assume on a casual reading are of the Father were, in fact, of Jesus Christ representing the Father:

(37) Even though He had performed so many [miraculous] signs in their presence, they did not believe in Him, (38) in order that the word of **Isaiah the prophet** might be fulfilled which he spoke: “Lord, who has believed our report? And to whom has the Arm of the Lord been revealed?” (39) For this reason they were not able to believe, because [as] Isaiah also says, “He has blinded their eyes and disabled their heart so that they might not see with their eyes and understand in their heart and turn and I would heal them.” (41) These things **Isaiah said** because **he saw His glory** (i.e., “holy, holy, holy” in Isaiah 6:1-3) and spoke about Him (i.e., in Is.6:1-10 since this second quote is from Is.6:10).

John 12:37-41

Perhaps the most common Christophany is the appearance of “**the** angel of the Lord”, where the word “angel” is used to express a manifestation of Christ rather than an angelic creature per se.⁽¹⁶⁾ This can be clearly seen, for example, in passages such as Exodus 14:19 where the angel is called “**the** angel of God”, or Judges 2:1-5 where the angel speaks of “My covenant”, or Zechariah 1:20 where the angel of the Lord who has been speaking with Zechariah is described as “the Lord”. Without indications to the contrary we should generally understand appearances of God in the Old Testament, as in the case of the “Lord God” speaking with Adam and Eve in the garden of Eden in Genesis chapter three, to be Christophanies, that is, appearances of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father's representative and the revealed member of the Trinity.⁽¹⁷⁾ Jesus has always been the Savior of the world, and His centrality to God's plan of salvation was just as crucial in the Old as it is in the New Testament economy, despite the fact that before our Lord took on true humanity and was thus revealed in the flesh many of the particulars of salvation were obscured from view (Lk.24:25-27; Acts 2:23; 3:18; 7:52; 17:3; 26:23; Eph.3:5; 3:9; 1Pet.1:11; 1:20; cf. Rom.3:25-26).

c. Old Testament Typology:

In addition to the Old Testament appearances discussed immediately above, the coming of our Lord, His incarnation, and His work for us on the cross were foreshadowed in a variety of ways in Old Testament times. Jesus has, in fact, always been the heart and soul of prophecy (Rev.19:10), **the** message of God as the Word of God (Jn.1:1-3).

God, from antiquity having communicated to our fathers in the prophets at many times and in many ways, has in these last days communicated to us **in a Son**, [the One] whom He has appointed heir of all things, [the One] through whom He created the universe. He is the shining forth of [the Father's] glory, the precise image of His essence, the One who sustains the universe by His mighty Word . . .

Hebrews 1:1-3a

In addition to specific scriptures and prophecies which taught about or foreshadowed the Messiah and His two advents (see section I.5.d immediately below), the coming of the Messiah and the sufferings of the Christ were also taught via what we call “typology”, that is, symbolic representations of the Person and the work of Jesus, occurring occasionally in the lives of special individuals (e.g, the kingship of David and of Solomon being symbolically applicable to the millennial reign of Christ; cf. Zech.3:8-10), and ubiquitous in the symbols behind the paraphernalia and practice of the Mosaic Law, especially where sacrifices are concerned (as these always relate to our Lord's death on the cross for our sins).⁽¹⁸⁾ One instance in which both of these two sorts of typology come together is the sacrifice of Isaac, where Isaac represents or “is a type of” Christ, being sacrificed for our sins (where Isaac's impending physical death through the shedding of his physical blood on the altar represents Christ's spiritual death in dying for our sins in the darkness as He is judged for them in our place on the cross):

(6) Then Abraham took the wood for the burnt offering and placed it on [the back of] Isaac his son. And he took in his hand the fire and the knife. And the two of them went [up Mount Moriah (i.e., the future place of Jerusalem)] together. (7) And Isaac said to Abraham his father, “Father.” And Abraham replied, “Yes, my son.” And [Isaac] said, “Look, here is the fire and wood, but where is the lamb for the burnt offering?” (8) And Abraham replied, “God will provide for Himself (lit., “see for Himself”) the lamb for the burnt offering, my son.” And [so] the two of them went [up] together.

Genesis 22:7-8

Later in this passage, Abraham is stopped by the angel of the Lord, the pre-incarnate Jesus Christ, from actually sacrificing Isaac. But the dramatic and poignant story in these verses of the father about to sacrifice his one and only son gives us some small idea of the sacrifice the Father actually did make in giving over unto death His one and only beloved Son on our behalf, something at once so terrible and marvelous that it could not even be contemplated were it not absolutely essential to secure the salvation of all of His other children.

(17) By Faith Abraham offered up Isaac when he was tested, and was on the point of offering up [in sacrifice] his one and only son, the one who [about whom he] had received the promises, (18) about whom it had been said, “In Isaac shall your seed be called”, (19) [for Abraham was] reckoning that God was able to raise [him] from the dead, whence (i.e., from the dead) he did receive [Isaac] back even metaphorically (i.e., Isaac was as good as dead but God delivered him through the substitute of the ram, a

type of Jesus Christ).
Hebrews 11:17-19

For in the sequel, as Hebrews recalls, after preventing the sacrifice of Isaac, the Lord provides a ram for Abraham to sacrifice in Isaac's stead (Gen.22:13-14), and here we have a very clear picture of Jesus, the Lamb of God, being sacrificed in Isaac's place (and in the place of all mankind for the sins of all mankind). For this reason it is said "On the mountain of the Lord (i.e., Mt. Moriah, the same exact place as the future Jerusalem where our Lord died for us) [God] will provide" (Gen.22:14). This same essential symbolism, namely, of an animal shedding its physical blood representing Christ being judged and dying for our sins, is behind all animal sacrifice in the Bible (cf. Judg.13:19-20), from the sacrifice of righteous Abel (Gen.4; Heb.11), to the millennial sacrifices which will memorialize Jesus' work for us on the cross (e.g., Ezek.40-48). The Old Testament is, in fact, replete with types to such a degree that it would require several additional books to exhaust the study. To take but a few prominent examples which are overtly referenced as types in the New Testament, the tree of life in the Garden is a picture of our Lord who died on Calvary's tree to give us life (cf. Rom.11:11-24); Noah's ark is a picture of Christ in whom we are saved (cf. 1Pet.3:18-22); Jonah in the whale presents a picture of our Lord's resurrection (cf. Matt.12:39-41); Melchizedek is a type of Christ as we have already seen (Heb.7:11-17). And these and similar types are all notwithstanding the voluminous typology of everything related to the Tabernacle, its furniture, its sacrifices, and all of the other aspects of the Law (Rom.15:4; cf. Rom.10:6-7; 1Cor.9:9-10; 1Tim.5:18).⁽¹⁹⁾

d. Old Testament Prophecies:

It is fair to say that the great majority of Old Testament prophecies about our Lord coming in the flesh are focused on His Messiahship and therefore at the very least include His second advent in their purview. For this reason, the first advent of Jesus Christ as distinct from the second was a matter of some mystery, even to the inspired writers who penned the words given by God which do in fact predict the first advent:⁽²⁰⁾

The prophets diligently investigated and inquired about this salvation, when they prophesied about this grace [that was to come] to you. For they were eager to discover the precise time the Spirit of Christ within them was signifying as He predicted the sufferings of Christ and the glories that would follow. For it was revealed to them that in prophesying these things, they were not so much serving themselves as they were you – and these same things have now been proclaimed to you through those who gave you the gospel through the Holy Spirit, sent from heaven – even angels want to look into these things.

1st Peter 1:10-12

Not unrelated to this issue of our Lord's coming to die on the cross before He comes to take up the crown of world rulership is the fact and necessity of His becoming a genuine human being in order to be able to die in our place. The need to take on true humanity

might possibly be argued as not theoretically necessary for a glorious appearance of God's Messiah to rule the world, but our Lord most certainly could not die for our sins without a human body in which to bear them (1Pet.2:24; 4:1; cf. 2Cor.5:21; Heb.9:26-28). This is the “stumbling block” which many Jews and the “folly” which many gentiles have been unable to accept to their eternal harm (1Cor.1:23; Matt.21:42 cf. Ps.118:22-23). But of the fact that the Messiah would be a true human being (as emphasized in His first advent) at the same time as He is truly God (seen so clearly in His second advent) our Lord Himself made abundantly clear:

As the Pharisees were gathering together, Jesus put a question to them, saying “What do you think about the Messiah? Whose son is he?” They answered Him, “David's son.” Then He said to them, “Well then, how can David, speaking in the Spirit, call Him Lord? For he says,

The Lord said to My Lord,
‘Sit down at my right hand,
until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet.’
[Psalm 110:1]

So if David calls Him Lord, how is He his Son?” And no one was able to answer Him a word, nor did anyone dare to question Him any longer from that day forward.
Matthew 22:41-46

Indisputably, if the Messiah is literally a “son” of David, then He must be a human being, while if He is “Lord”, as David calls Him in Psalm 110:1 which Jesus quotes, then He must be God as well. Both elements of our Lord's unique nature, divine and human, are essential for the accomplishment of God's plan to redeem humanity and restore eternal peace to the universe. For the rulership of the world on the part of the Messiah depends upon His prior removal of the problem of sin, that is, His victory over death on the cross which opens the way for the devil's removal and for our redemption and salvation. That the Messiah's suffering – something which is of course impossible without the fact of His possession of true humanity – is taught in the Old Testament, is put beyond all question by, for example, by Isaiah in chapters 52-53 (of which this excerpt will suffice here to make the point):

(4) For He bore our sicknesses and He carried our weaknesses. And yet we considered Him as [the One who had been] punished, smitten and afflicted by God. (5) But [in fact] He was made subject to torment on account of our transgressions, and He was crushed because of our collective guilt (lit., “guilts”). The punishment [required] for making peace [with God] on our behalf [fell] upon Him. Because of His wounding, we have been healed. (6) We have all gone astray like sheep. Each of us has turned to his own way. And the Lord caused the guilt of us all to strike Him. (7) Though He was oppressed and afflicted, like a lamb led to slaughter He did not open His mouth, and like a ewe before her shearers He did not open His mouth. (8) By repressive judgment He was taken away, and who gave any thought to His posterity? For He was cut off from the land of the living. He was punished for the transgression of my people. (9) And they

assigned Him a grave with the wicked (pl.) and with a rich [man] in His deaths (*sic*). Not for any violence that He had done. Nor was there any deceit in His mouth. (10) For it was the Lord's good pleasure (i.e., "will") to crush Him, to subject Him to torment. But though you make His life a guilt offering, He will see His seed, He will lengthen His days, and the good pleasure (i.e., "will") of the Lord will prosper in His hand. (11) [Released] from the trouble [inflicted] upon His life, He will [again] see [the light of life] and be satisfied (i.e., in resurrection). My righteous Servant will provide righteousness for the great [of heart] (i.e., believers) through the[ir] acknowledgment of Him, and He Himself will carry their guilt (lit., "guilts"). (12) Therefore I will allot to Him [the plunder] among [His] many [brothers], and He will apportion plunder to the mighty [among them]. Because He lay bare His life unto death, and was dealt with as transgressors [are], so that He bore the sin of the many, and substituted [Himself] for the transgressors.

Isaiah 53:4-12

Indeed, the entire message of the gospel and the necessity for the Christ to suffer on behalf of the sins of the world was taught in various ways throughout the Old Testament, even if that message was reluctantly received and insufficiently understood before the cross. Our Lord Jesus Himself makes this very point to the disciples on the road to Emmaus (cf. Lk.24:25-27; Acts 2:23; 3:18; 7:52; 10:37; 17:3; 26:23; Eph.3:5; 3:9; 1Pet.1:11; 1:20):

(25) Then He Himself said to them "O you ignorant men, and slow to believe all the things which the prophets spoke. (26) Wasn't it necessary for the Christ to suffer these things [first], and [then] come into His glory?" (27) And taking His start with Moses and all of the prophets, He thoroughly explained to them the things [written] about Himself in ***all the scriptures***.

Luke 24:25-27

For the sake of illustration, a few more of the more well-known passages prophesying the coming of the Messiah are included below, but an all-inclusive treatment would require its own separate study nearly as voluminous as in the case of Old Testament typology (cf. Jn.21:25).

1) His incarnation foretold:

For a Star will march forth from Jacob, and a [Ruler's] scepter [will arise] from Israel. Numbers 24:17b (Matt.2:1-13; cf. Gen.49:8-12; Deut.33:7; Lk.1:78; Rev.12:5)

(6) You have taken no pleasure in sacrifices and offerings, [but instead] You have pierced My ears (i.e., "given Me a body and marked Me as a voluntary Servant"; cf. Ex.21:5-6; Deut.15:16-17). You have not asked for burnt offerings or sin offerings. (7) [But] then I said, behold, I have come [into the world (i.e., as the true sacrifice)]. In the scroll of the Book it has been written about Me. (8) It is My good pleasure to do what pleases You, My God. For your Law is in My inmost parts.

Psalms 40:6-8 (cf. Heb.10:5-10)

Therefore the Lord will Himself give you a sign. Behold, the virgin will conceive and will give birth to a Son, and you shall call His Name “Immanuel” (i.e., “God is with us”).
Isaiah 7:14 (Matt.1:23)

(6) For a child is born to us, and a Son is given to us. Dominion shall rest on his shoulder, and His name will be called “He whose counsel is wondrous”, “Mighty God”, “the Father of Eternity”, “the Prince of Prosperity”. (7) To His dominion and its prosperity there will be no limit or end. He will establish it and lay its foundation on David's throne and over his kingdom, in justice and righteousness, now and forevermore. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will accomplish this.
Isaiah 9:6-7

But you, O Bethlehem Ephrathah, too small to be numbered among the clans of Judah, from you I will bring forth the One who is to rule over Israel. His goings forth are from long ago, even from the days of eternity.
Micah 5:2

2) His suffering foretold:

“And I shall place hostility between you and the woman, that is, between your seed and her Seed. He will attack you head-on, but you will attack Him from behind” (lit., “crush His heel”, a reference to the cross).
Genesis 3:15

(12) [Like] many bulls they have encircled Me. [Like] strong bulls from Bashan they have surrounded Me. (13) They open their mouths against Me [like] roaring lions about to pounce on their prey. (14) I am poured out like water, and all My bones are being stretched apart. My heart has become like wax. It is melting inside of Me. (15) My strength is evaporating like a broken piece of pottery, and My tongue is sticking to the roof of My mouth [with thirst]. For You (cf. vv.1-2) have set Me ablaze in the dust of death. (16) For they have surrounded Me [like] dogs. [This] congregation of evil-doers has encompassed Me. They have pierced My hands and My feet. (17) I can count all My bones. [While] they look on and stare at Me, (18) they are dividing up My clothes for themselves, and for My garments they are casting lots.
Psalm 22:12-18

For they mixed gall with what they gave Me to eat, and for My thirst they gave Me vinegar to drink.
Psalm 69:21 (Matt.27:34; 27:48; Mk.15:23; 15:36; Lk.23:36; Jn.19:29)

Thus says to the Lord, “To Him who despised His own life, to Him who became an abomination to His own nation, to the Servant of rulers – kings will rise up when they see You, even high officials will bow down [before You], on account of the Lord who is faithful, even the Holy One of Israel, for He has chosen You.
Isaiah 49:7

Marshal your troops, O city of troops, for a siege is laid against us. They will strike Israel's ruler on the cheek with a rod.
Micah 5:1 NIV (Lk.22:63; Jn.18:22)

3) His resurrection foretold:

For You will not abandon My soul (i.e., “life”) to hell (lit., *sheol*). You will not give your Holy One over to see decay.
Psalm 16:10 (cf. Acts 2:31; 13:35)

[The Lord] will restore us, [Israel], after two days (i.e., after the Church age), and will raise us up on the third day (i.e., the Millennium), that we may live in His presence (i.e., with the Messiah, who personifies this prophecy in His resurrection on the third day).
Hosea 6:2 (cf. Lk.24:46; 1Cor.15:4)

4) His second advent foretold:

(1) Why are the nations forming into a mob and the peoples [of the earth] grumbling idly. (2) The kings of the earth are assembling and its princes are gathering together – against the Lord and His Anointed One, (3) [saying] “Let us pull off Their chains, and cast Their cords from us!”
Psalm 2:1-3

But as for Me, I have anointed My King upon Zion, My holy mountain.
Psalm 2:6

The Lord said to My Lord, “Sit down at my right hand, until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet.”
Psalm 110:1

And He said, “It is too small a thing for you to be My servant, to establish the tribes of Jacob and to restore the sanctified ones of Israel. Therefore I have appointed you as a Light for the nations, to be My [instrument of] salvation to the ends of the earth.
Isaiah 49:6

In those days and at that time, I will make a Branch of righteousness sprout forth for David, and He will accomplish justice and righteousness on the earth.
Jeremiah 33:15

Thus says the Lord: I will return to Zion and dwell in the midst of Jerusalem. And Jerusalem will be called “the City of Truth”, and “the Mountain of the Lord, the Mountain of Holiness”.
Zechariah 8:3

Rejoice greatly, daughter of Zion. Shout [for joy], daughter of Jerusalem. Behold, your King will come to you. Righteous and victorious He is; humble and riding on a donkey,

even on a colt, a donkey's foal.
Zechariah 9:9

And the Lord will be king over all the earth. On that day the Lord will be the only One and His Name the only Name.
Zechariah 14:9

When we combine the Christophanies or appearances of our Lord in the Old Testament with the ubiquitous typology which teaches about His Person and His work, and with the specific prophecies of His Messiahship, incarnation, suffering, resurrection and second advent, we see clearly that Jesus Christ has been the true message of scripture since the very beginning of the Bible.

“We have found the One about whom Moses wrote in the Law and all the prophets as well, Jesus, the son of Joseph, the One from Nazareth!”
John 1:45

(24) By faith, Moses, when he grew up, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, (25) and chose instead to suffer maltreatment with the people of God rather than to enjoy the transitory pleasures of sin, because he considered the reproach [suffered **on behalf**] of **Christ** greater riches than the treasure vaults of Egypt. (26) For he was looking to his reward.
Hebrews 11:24-26

e. The Hypostatic Union and *Kenosis*:

Since the point of His birth, Jesus Christ, who has always **been** true God, has also **become** a true human being. The proper, orthodox understanding of the fact that Christ now possesses both of these natures, divine and human, without any diminution of the quality or quantity of either, and is yet a single, absolutely unique Person, is often called in theology “the hypostatic union”. The first word in this somewhat unhelpful phrase is taken from Hebrews 1:3 where our Lord's unique Person composed of two natures, human and divine, is described as “the [very] shining forth of [the Father's] glory, the precise image of His **essence**”. In this verse, “essence” is the Greek word *hypostasis* from which the adjective “hypostatic” is derived. In Hebrews 1:3, since Jesus is the “shining forth of the glory” of God, He is God and possessed of the identical **essence** which the Father and the Spirit share. As a true human being, however, Jesus is the “precise **image**” (Greek *character*, χαρακτήρ) of that essence, and by this is meant that our Lord's humanity is a perfect mirror or representation of that divine essence (the Greek word *character* meaning the exact stamp or impression of a minted coin, for example). Thus Hebrews 1:3 teaches that between the divinity of Christ and the humanity of Christ there is complete harmony and integrity with no rift of personality whatsoever in the One undivided Person of Jesus Christ despite the fact that He now possesses two natures, human and divine. While somewhat technical, this description is nevertheless important, since failures to accept various parts of this complex truth have resulted in many deadly heresies, past and present (and no doubt to come in the future

