

The **Bible** Unpacked

Comprehensive Study Series

The Bible's teaching compiled
for established believers

Paul Mallison

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The Bible's teaching compiled
for established believers

3. Jesus Christ

Paul Mallison

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A Quick Word

This series of studies aims to present a compilation of the Bible's teachings in a clear and readable order. There are 40 booklets in the series, based on the 40 chapters of the book *The Bible Unpacked - Comprehensive Edition*. Each booklet has two sections, which can be used for two or more studies.

The material contains Bible verses. Before the verses are headings, which reflect what the verses say – in particular the parts of the verses in *italics*. The verses are sometimes followed by a comment.

The verses often have a brief introduction. Usually these state who is speaking and often who they are speaking to. Apart from God and Jesus Christ, the main speakers are:

- Moses – who lead the Israelites and taught them God's laws;
- David – Israel's greatest king who wrote many of the psalms, most of which are essentially prayers;
- Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel and other prophets – who spoke to the people of Israel on God's behalf; and
- Paul, Peter, John and other leaders of the early church – who spoke to various groups and wrote letters to believers.

Much care has been taken in order to correctly interpret the verses. Nevertheless, if you encounter a verse that is used to teach something that is contrary to or goes beyond your understanding, assess its use by doing such things as: reading the passage it is from; and considering how its teaching fits in with Scripture as a whole (e.g. interpret OT teaching in the light of NT teaching).

For more information on *The Bible Unpacked* and free downloads, go to the website: www.thebibleunpacked.net.

Users are asked to pray regularly for persecuted Christians and, if possible, support them financially. These things can be done through organizations that provide aid to them and/or prayer notices, such as those listed under [Persecuted Christians](#).

Suggestions for Study Groups

Preliminary matters:

- Beforehand the leader should: check the context of any verses they are not familiar with; and review the questions. If need be, they should compose questions more applicable to the group.
- Each person should have a Bible, for things such as checking a verse's context. It would also be helpful to have Bible commentaries on hand.
- Pray before beginning the study. Ask God for help in understanding the meaning of the verses and to affect your lives through them. Also pray together at the end.

Doing the study:

- Ideally, read the material and answer the questions prior to the meeting. Then share answers and discuss any issues arising from the material in the meeting.
- Alternatively, read the material and answer the questions in the meeting – reading either aloud as a group or individually (prior to sharing answers). If reading as a group, **try having one person read the headings, another read the verses and another read the comments.** Additionally, a fourth person could read the Bible references.

General or concluding questions:

If time permits, conclude with one or more of the following questions:

- What is something that you either: **did not know** before; gained **greater insight** into; or **needed reminding** of?
- What verse would be helpful to memorize and bear in mind during the next week?
- In taking the verses seriously, is there anything you should change in:
 - (a) how you relate to God and/or to other people; or
 - (b) any other area of your life (e.g. attitudes, values or behavior)?

If so, are there any specific steps you could take to do this?

I. General

The NT makes remarkable claims about aspects of Jesus Christ's being and his character. In doing so it shows Jesus Christ's nature to mirror that of God, and so points to his deity (his "God nature"). The NT also often refers to Jesus Christ's "name", making it a further concept that is important to grasp.

a) Jesus Christ's Eternity

Jesus Christ is alive

ROM 6:10 [PAUL, SPEAKING OF JESUS:] For the death he died, he died to sin once for all, but *the life he lives, he lives to God*. NET

Jesus Christ existed in the beginning . . .

1JN 2:13A [JOHN, TO BELIEVERS:] I am writing to you, fathers, because you know *him who has existed from the beginning*. GNT

Jesus Christ existed in the beginning, before all time.

. . . Jesus Christ was before all things

JOHN 17:5 [JESUS, TO GOD:] And now, Father, glorify me at your side with *the glory I had with you before the world was created*. NET

Jesus Christ will be alive forever

HEB 7:24–25 But because *Jesus lives forever, he will never stop serving as priest*. ²⁵*So he is able always to save those who come to God through him because he always lives, asking God to help them*. NCV™

Jesus Christ is self-existing – he is “the life”

JOHN 5:26 For as the Father has life in himself, so *he has granted the Son also to have life in himself*. ESV

JOHN 11:25 Jesus said to her, “*I am the resurrection and the life*. The person who believes in me, even though he dies, will live. ISV

Descriptions of Jesus Christ as “the life” reflect the fact that he has life inherent (cf. 5:26 ↑) as part of his essential nature, and as such is self-existing. Primarily they point to Jesus Christ as the source of life – the one who gives life – as the latter part of this verse suggests.

Jesus Christ remains the same

HEB 13:8 *Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever!* NET

How is Jesus Christ associated with "life"?

In what way or ways do you think that "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever" (Heb 13:8)?

How does – or how should – the fact that Jesus Christ is everywhere encourage you?

Pray for persecuted Christians

b) Jesus Christ's Pre-Eminence

See also:

- d) *Jesus Christ as Lord of All*, Ch. 14

Jesus Christ is greater than all people

JOHN 3:31 [JOHN THE BAPTIST, SPEAKING OF JESUS:] *The one who comes from above is superior to all. The one who is from the earth belongs to the earth and speaks about earthly things. The one who comes from heaven is superior to all.* NET

Jesus Christ is greater than all things

COL 1:15–18 *He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation, ¹⁶for all things in heaven and on earth were created by him – all things, whether visible or invisible, whether thrones or dominions, whether principalities or powers – all things were created through him and for him. ¹⁷He himself is before all things and all things are held together in him. ¹⁸He is the head of the body, the church, as well as the beginning, the firstborn from among the dead, so that he himself may become first in all things.* NET

The term “firstborn” (v. 15) points to Christ’s pre-eminence. It alludes to the privileged status of a firstborn son in a Jewish family.

Jesus Christ has divine glory

MATT 25:31 *When the Son of Man comes in his glory and all the angels with him, then he will sit on his glorious throne.* NET

Note that “the Son of Man” was the title Jesus used for himself the most – approximately 80 times. It is a messianic title (cf. Dan 7:13–14), but it also underlines his humanity.

A vision of Jesus Christ, indicative of his surpassing greatness and glory

REV 5:11–13 [JOHN, DESCRIBING A VISION:] *Then I looked and heard the voice of many angels in a circle around the throne, as well as the living creatures and the elders. Their number was ten thousand times ten thousand – thousands times thousands –¹²all of whom were*

singing in a loud voice: “Worthy is the lamb who was killed to receive power and wealth and wisdom and might and honor and glory and praise!”¹³ Then I heard every creature – in heaven, on earth, under the earth, in the sea, and all that is in them – singing: “To the one seated on the throne and to the Lamb be praise, honor, glory, and ruling power forever and ever!” NET

The “Lamb” (vv. 12, 13) is a name for Jesus Christ, alluding to his sacrificial death which in a number of aspects mirrored the offering of a lamb at Passover and/or as a sin offering.

Jesus Christ has mighty, sovereign power

EPH 6:10 [PAUL, TO BELIEVERS:] Finally, build up your strength in union with the Lord and by means of *his mighty power*. GNT

PHIL 3:20–21 [PAUL, TO BELIEVERS:] But our citizenship is in heaven – and we also await a savior from there, the Lord Jesus Christ, ²¹who will transform these humble bodies of ours into the likeness of his glorious body by means of *that power by which he is able to subject all things to himself*. NET

Jesus Christ has superlative knowledge and wisdom

JOHN 16:30 [THE DISCIPLES, TO JESUS:] Now we know that you know everything and do not need anyone to ask you anything. Because of this we believe that you have come from God. NET

LUKE 21:15 [JESUS, TO HIS DISCIPLES:] For *I will give you the words along with the wisdom that none of your adversaries will be able to withstand or contradict*. NET

Jesus Christ has wisdom far superior to that of any adversary that believers may encounter.

Jesus Christ is everywhere

EPH 4:10 So Jesus came down, and he is the same One who went up above all the sky. *Christ did that to fill everything with his presence*. NCV™

MATT 18:20 [JESUS:] For *where two or three are assembled in my name, I am there among them*. NET

Jesus Christ is with all believers everywhere – always.

What does Jesus Christ's glory show about him?

What are some implications of Jesus Christ's sovereign power for believers?

Choose one verse or phrase from Colossians 1:15-18 that you find particularly significant - and say why.

Pray for persecuted Christians

c) Jesus Christ's Character

See also:

- c) *Jesus Christ's Personality* [in his mission], Ch. 11

Jesus Christ is holy

ACTS 4:27 [BELIEVERS, TO GOD:] Then they turned against *your holy Servant Jesus*, your chosen Messiah. CEV

HEB 7:26–28 Jesus, then, is the High Priest that meets our needs. *He is holy; he has no fault or sin in him; he has been set apart from sinners and raised above the heavens.* ²⁷*He is not like other high priests; he does not need to offer sacrifices every day for his own sins first and then for the sins of the people.* He offered one sacrifice, once and for all, when he offered himself. ²⁸*The Law of Moses appoints men who are imperfect to be high priests; but God's promise made with the vow, which came later than the Law, appoints the Son, who has been made perfect for ever.* GNT

Jesus Christ is righteous . . .

1JN 2:1B [JOHN, TO BELIEVERS:] But if anyone does sin, we have an advocate with the Father, *Jesus Christ the righteous One* ... NET

. . . Jesus Christ judges in righteousness and with justice

Ps 72:2 *He will judge Your people with righteousness, And Your poor with justice.* NKJV

This is from a messianic passage, understood to be ultimately fulfilled by Jesus Christ.

Jesus Christ is faithful

2THES 3:3 But *the Lord is faithful*, and he will strengthen you and protect you from the evil one. NET

Jesus Christ is loving

EPH 3:18–19 [PAUL, TO BELIEVERS:] And I pray that you and all God's holy people will have the power to *understand the greatness of Christ's love—how wide and how long and how high and how deep*

that love is. ¹⁹*Christ's love is greater than anyone can ever know, but I pray that you will be able to know that love. Then you can be filled with the fullness of God.* NCV™

Jesus Christ shows grace . . .

1TIM 1:14 *And the grace of our Lord was exceedingly abundant, with faith and love which are in Christ Jesus.* NKJV

. . . and Jesus Christ is merciful

JUDE 1:21 [JUDE, TO BELIEVERS:] *Remain in God's love as you look for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ to give you eternal life.* GW

Jesus Christ can display anger

REV 6:16–17 They [people in the end times] said to the mountains and to the rocks, "Fall on us and hide us from the face of the one who is seated on the throne and from *the wrath of the Lamb*, ¹⁷*because the great day of their wrath has come, and who is able to withstand it?"*
NET

In what sense has Jesus Christ "been made perfect" (Heb 7:28)? Hasn't he always been perfect?

What can we do to more fully grasp and experience Jesus Christ's great love?

Choose one attribute of Jesus Christ that if you kept it more in view, would affect your worship and/or your daily living. What affect would it have?

Pray for persecuted Christians

d) Jesus Christ's 'Name'

In biblical times, a person's name represented or embodied their whole person – including their nature, authority and significance. This concept is in view in references to the "name" of a person.

Jesus Christ's "name" signifies Jesus Christ himself

ROM 10:12–13 For there is no distinction between the Jew and the Greek, for the same Lord is Lord of all, who richly blesses *all who call on him*. ¹³For everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved. NET

The fact that Jesus Christ's "name" is synonymous with him is illustrated by the equivalent phrases "call on him" (v. 12) and "calls on the name of the Lord" (v. 13).

Jesus Christ's "name" is correlated with his authority and power

ACTS 3:6–7, 16 But Peter said [to a crippled man], "I have no silver and gold, but what I do have I give to you. *In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk!*" ⁷And he took him by the right hand and raised him up, and immediately his feet and ankles were made strong. ... [PETER, SPEAKING OF JESUS' NAME:] ¹⁶And *his name—by faith in his name—has made this man strong* whom you see and know, and the faith that is through Jesus has given the man this perfect health in the presence of you all. ESV

Peter gave the command in the "name" or by the authority of Jesus Christ, his name representing or incorporating his authority and power – "By the power of Jesus Christ" (NCV).

Jesus Christ's "name" signifies him in his attainment of forgiveness of sins

1JN 2:12 [JOHN, TO BELIEVERS:] I am writing to you, little children, that *your sins have been forgiven because of his name*. NET

Jesus Christ's "name" signifies him in his attainment of salvation and eternal life

ACTS 4:12 *And there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among people by which we must be saved.*

NET

1JN 5:13 [JOHN:] *I have written these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God so that you may know that you have eternal life.* NET

Jesus Christ's "name" signifies him in his gospel and cause

ACTS 9:15–16 But the Lord said to him, "Go, because this man [Saul] is my chosen instrument to carry my name before Gentiles and kings and the people of Israel. ¹⁶For I will show him how much he must suffer for the sake of my name." NET

Saul (later known as Paul) was to take the message about Jesus Christ to the Gentiles. This would result in him suffering greatly for Jesus Christ and his cause – the cause of spreading the gospel.

Note: God has given Jesus Christ a name that is superior to all others

PHIL 2:9B–11 *God exalted him and gave him the name that is above every name, ¹⁰so that at the name of Jesus every knee will bow – in heaven and on earth and under the earth –¹¹and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father.* NET

Explain in your own words the relationship between Jesus Christ and his "name".

In what ways can we make reference to or use Jesus Christ's "name" (cf. Acts 3:6–7, 16)?

What does the Bible mean by trusting or calling upon the "name" of Jesus Christ?

Pray for persecuted Christians

II. Jesus Christ and God

The claim that Jesus Christ is the Son of God is one of the most central teachings in the NT. In addition to this, the NT says much that associates Jesus Christ with God. This teaching forms the basis of a large portion of what distinguishes Christianity from other religions.

a) Jesus Christ Is the Son of God (I): General

Jesus Christ is the Son of God . . .

HEB 4:14 Therefore since we [believers] have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, *Jesus the Son of God*, let us hold fast to our confession. NET

. . . Jesus Christ is God's only Son

1JN 4:9B *God has sent his one and only Son* into the world so that we may live through him. NET

God is Jesus Christ's Father

COL 1:3 [PAUL, TO THE COLOSSIAN BELIEVERS:] We always thank *God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ*, in our prayers for you. GW

Note that the NT seems to use the term "God the Father" in a different sense to what we do when we use the term in reference to "God the Son" (which the NT does not use). The NT would appear to use "Father" as a title of God, to show or reflect God's relationship to Jesus Christ, his Son. This is reflected here by: "God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ".

Jesus Christ is the image of God

2COR 4:4B ... the glorious gospel of *Christ, who is the image of God*. NET

The assertion that Jesus Christ is the image of God – having the form and fullness of God (as per the following subsection) – reflects and supports the assertion that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.

Jesus Christ has the form and fullness of God – equality in nature

PHIL 2:5–6 [PAUL, TO BELIEVERS:] You should have the same attitude toward one another that Christ Jesus had, ⁶who though *he existed in the form of God did not regard equality with God* as something to be grasped ... NET

COL 1:19 For *God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in the Son* ... NET

The phrase “all his fullness” refers to: the fullness of God’s nature (cf. GNT, NIRV) – “the sum total of the divine perfection, powers, and attributes” (AMP); and/or “all of himself” (NCV; cf. CEV, NLT), meaning that God himself in all his fullness dwells in Jesus Christ.

Note: The Father loves his Son

JOHN 3:35 *The Father loves the Son and has placed all things under his authority.* NET

What does the Bible mean in saying that Jesus Christ is the Son of God? In what sense is he God’s Son?

What do you think Paul means in saying that Jesus Christ “existed in the form of God” (Philippians 2:6)?

Why is the teaching that Jesus Christ is the Son of God so central and significant to Christianity?

b) Jesus Christ Is the Son of God (II): Testimony

God testified to Jesus Christ being his Son

MATT 3:16–17 After Jesus was baptized, just as he was coming up out of the water, the heavens opened and *he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and coming on him.* ¹⁷*And a voice from heaven said, “This is my one dear Son; in him I take great delight.”* NET

Jesus Christ himself testified to being the Son of God

MATT 26:63–64A But Jesus kept silent. And the high priest answered and said to Him, “I put You under oath by the living God: *Tell us if You are the Christ, the Son of God!*” ⁶⁴*Jesus said to him, “It is as you said.*” NKJV

Others also testified to Jesus Christ being the Son of God

MARK 3:11 *When evil spirits saw Jesus, they fell down before him and shouted, “You are the Son of God!”* NCV™

JOHN 1:32–34 *And John gave this testimony: “I saw the Spirit come down like a dove from heaven and stay on him. ³³I still did not know that he was the one, but God, who sent me to baptize with water, had said to me, ‘You will see the Spirit come down and stay on a man; he is the one who baptizes with the Holy Spirit.’ ³⁴I have seen it,” said John, “and I tell you that he is the Son of God.”* GNT

Jesus Christ’s deeds are evidence that he is the Son of God

JOHN 20:30–31 *Now Jesus performed many other miraculous signs in the presence of the disciples, which are not recorded in this book. ³¹But these are recorded so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.* NET

The phrase “these are recorded” (v. 31) refers to the miraculous signs that John did record as testimony to Jesus Christ being the Son of God, his miraculous deeds giving credence to his miraculous claim.

Other events of Jesus Christ's incarnation are further evidence

MATT 27:50–52, 54 *Then Jesus cried out again with a loud voice and gave up his spirit. ⁵¹Just then the temple curtain was torn in two, from top to bottom. The earth shook and the rocks were split apart. ⁵²And tombs were opened, and the bodies of many saints who had died were raised. ... ⁵⁴Now when the centurion and those with him who were guarding Jesus saw the earthquake and what took place, they were extremely terrified and said, "Truly this one was God's Son!"* NET

ROM 1:3–4 It [the gospel] is about his Son, our Lord Jesus Christ: as to his humanity, he was born a descendant of David; ⁴as to his divine holiness, he was shown with great power to be the Son of God by being raised from death. GNT

Jesus Christ's resurrection is a powerful testimony to him being the Son of God.

Why do you think that evil spirits shouted out that Jesus is the Son of God (cf. Mark 3:11)?

If you believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, why do you?

Is there anything that you could add to your previous answer (e.g. further evidence), in testifying to a non-believer that Jesus Christ is the Son of God?

Pray for persecuted Christians

c) Jesus Christ Is Identified with God

See also:

- d) *Jesus Christ Is Treated like God Is*, p. 22
- II. *God, Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit*, Ch. 4

Jesus Christ and the Father are one – each is in the other

JOHN 17:11B, 21 Holy Father, keep them safe in your name that you have given me, so that they may be one just as *we are one*. ... ²¹that that they will all be one, just as *you, Father, are in me and I am in you*. I pray that they will be in us, so that the world will believe that you sent me. NET

This speaks of an inseparable unity, including a unity of purpose.

To know or see Jesus Christ is to know or see the Father

JOHN 14:7-9 [JESUS, TO HIS DISCIPLES:] *If you have known me, you will know my Father too. And from now on you do know him and have seen him.* ⁸Philip said, “Lord, show us the Father, and we will be content.” ⁹Jesus replied, “Have I been with you for so long, and you have not known me, Philip? *The person who has seen me has seen the Father!* How can you say, ‘Show us the Father’? NET

Jesus Christ is called “God” . . .

JOHN 20:28 *Thomas replied to him* [Jesus], “*My Lord and my God!*” NET

JOHN 1:1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and *the Word was God*. ESV

Jesus Christ is understood to be “the Word” – with the man Jesus being the manifestation of “the Word” (cf. v. 14). Note that the phrases in view here (i.e. in italics) may have a qualitative sense (cf. REB; NET text note).

. . . and Jesus’ usage of “I am” quite possibly alludes to God’s name

JOHN 8:57-59 So the Jews said to him, “You are not yet fifty years old, and have you seen Abraham?” ⁵⁸*Jesus said to them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I am.”* ⁵⁹So they picked up stones

to throw at him, but Jesus hid himself and went out of the temple.

NET

Jesus uses the phrase “I am” (v. 58) in a manner that may well be a reference to the name God gave for himself to Moses – “I am who I am” and its shortened form “I am” – in Exodus 3:14.

OT references to God are applied to Jesus Christ

EPH 4:7–8 [PAUL, TO BELIEVERS:] *But to each one of us grace was given according to the measure of the gift of Christ. ⁸Therefore it says, “When he ascended on high he captured captives; he gave gifts to men.”* NET

Verse 8 quotes Psalm 68:18 and Philippians 2:9–11 below alludes to Isaiah 45:23b. Both of the OT verses contain references to God which are applied to Jesus Christ in these NT verses.

PHIL 2:9–11 As a result God exalted him and gave him the name that is above every name, ¹⁰so that *at the name of Jesus every knee will 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.* NET

Some actions are attributed to both God and Jesus Christ

LUKE 8:38–39 The man from whom the demons had gone out begged to go with him, but Jesus sent him away, saying, ³⁹*Return to your home, and declare what God has done for you.* So he went away, *proclaiming throughout the whole town what Jesus had done for him.*

NET

MARK 2:5–7 *When Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralytic, “Son, your sins are forgiven.”* ⁶Now some of the experts in the law were sitting there, turning these things over in their minds: ⁷*“Why does this man speak this way? He is blaspheming! Who can forgive sins but God alone?”* NET

Although the teachers of the law were mistaken in thinking that Jesus could not forgive sins, they were correct in asserting that the authority and capacity to forgive sins belongs to God.

Note: There is one God, the Father – and one Lord, Jesus Christ

1COR 8:4–6 Therefore, as to the eating of food offered to idols, we know that “an idol has no real existence,” and that “*there is no God but one.*” ⁵For although there may be so-called gods in heaven or on earth—as indeed there are many “gods” and many “lords”— *‘yet for us there is one God, the Father, from whom are all things and for whom we exist, and one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom are all things and through whom we exist.* ^{ESV}

Verses that refer to the Father alone as being God, may be using “God” to refer to the position of sovereign over all (cf. 1Tim 6:15) – i.e. they may be using “God” to refer to an exclusivity of position rather than exclusivity of divine nature. (This may also be the case with other verses that speak of there being only one “God”.) Such a meaning is: consistent with the words translated as “God”/“god” in the OT originally speaking primarily of strength; consistent with the references to the Father being Jesus Christ’s God (cf. *God is both Jesus Christ’s God and his Father*, p. 24); and not contrary to Jesus Christ being fully divine. However, such an interpretation is not standard Christian theology.

Explain: “I am in the Father and the Father is in me” (John 10:38)?

In what sense is Jesus Christ God?

How do you understand 1 Corinthians 8:6 (in the last subsection)?

d) Jesus Christ Is Treated like God Is

The fact that Christians relate to (or treat) Jesus Christ in ways in which they relate to God, further reflects Jesus Christ's identification with God and that he is God's Son. Thus the teaching in this section supplements the teaching in the previous sections.

Jesus Christ is worshiped

MATT 14:33 *And those in the boat worshiped him, saying, "Truly you are the Son of God."* ESV

The disciples worshiped Jesus as the Son of God.

Jesus Christ is honored and glorified

JOHN 5:22-23 Furthermore, the Father does not judge anyone, but has assigned all judgment to the Son, ²³so that *all people will honor the Son just as they honor the Father. The one who does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent him.* NET

2PET 3:18 [PETER, TO BELIEVERS:] *But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Glory be to him now and forever! Amen.* NCV™

People pray to Jesus Christ

JOHN 14:14 [JESUS, TO HIS DISCIPLES:] *If you ask me anything in my name, I will do it.* NET

ACTS 7:59-60 They continued to stone Stephen while *he prayed, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit!"* ⁶⁰*Then he fell to his knees and cried out with a loud voice, "Lord, do not hold this sin against them!"* When he had said this, he died. NET

People obey and serve Jesus Christ

MATT 28:19-20A [JESUS, TO HIS DISCIPLES:] *Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, ²⁰teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you.* NET

JAMES 1:1A *From James, a servant of God and of our Lord Jesus Christ.* CEV

People have faith in Jesus Christ

JOHN 14:1 Jesus said to his disciples, “Don’t be worried! *Have faith in God and have faith in me.* CEV

People put their hope in Jesus Christ

1THES 1:3B [PAUL, TO THE THESSALONIAN BELIEVERS:] And we thank him that you continue to be strong because of *your hope in our Lord Jesus Christ.* NCV™

In worship and prayer, should we be conscious of whether we are addressing God or Jesus Christ (or both)? Does it matter?

Is there anything we should do differently in relating to Jesus Christ in comparison to relating to God?

Why is honoring Jesus Christ also honoring to God (cf. John 5:23)?

e) Jesus Christ Is Under God's Authority

See also:

- d) *Epilogue: God Works through Jesus Christ*, Ch. 11

This section looks at the concept of Jesus Christ being subordinate to God in regard to authority – which involves “functional subordination” – as opposed to subordination or inferiority in regard to essence or being.

The concept of Jesus Christ being eternally subordinate to God (rather than only during his incarnation) is a historical doctrine that is still debated by Christian scholars. As such, some would disagree with or wish to qualify propositions put forward in this section.

God is both Jesus Christ's God and his Father

JOHN 20:17 Jesus replied, “Do not touch me, for I have not yet ascended to my Father. Go to my brothers and tell them, ‘I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.’”

NET

EPH 1:3, 17 [PAUL, TO BELIEVERS:] Blessed is *the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ*, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly realms in Christ. ... ¹⁷I pray that *the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory*, may give you spiritual wisdom and revelation in your growing knowledge of him, ... NET

The expression “the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ” (v. 3) also occurs in Romans 15:6, 2 Corinthians 1:3 and 1 Peter 1:3. 2 Corinthians 11:31 uses the similar expression, “The God and Father of the Lord Jesus ...”

Jesus Christ is described as being subordinate to God

1COR 11:3 [PAUL:] But I want you to know that Christ is the head of every man, and the man is the head of a woman, and *God is the head of Christ*. NET

1COR 15:28 But when everything has been put under him, then *the Son himself will also become subject to the one who put everything under him, so that God may be all in all*. ISV

Jesus Christ was chosen and sent by God

LUKE 9:35 A voice came from the cloud, saying, “*This is my Son, whom I have chosen. Listen to him!*” NCV™

JOHN 8:42 Jesus replied, “If God were your Father, you would love me, for *I have come from God* and am now here. *I have not come on my own initiative, but he sent me.* NET

Jesus Christ is God’s servant

ACTS 4:30 [THE EARLY BELIEVERS, PRAYING TO GOD:] Stretch out your hand to heal, and grant that wonders and miracles may be performed through the name of *your holy Servant Jesus.* GNT

HEB 8:2 *He [Christ] serves as High Priest* in the Most Holy Place, that is, in the real tent which was put up by the Lord, not by human hands. GNT

God’s seniority is reflected by the things that he has done for Jesus Christ

JOHN 5:26 For as the Father has life in himself, so *he has granted the Son also to have life in himself.* ESV

COL 1:19 For *God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in the Son ...* NET

HEB 1:1–2 Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets, ²but in these last days he has spoken to us by *his Son, whom he appointed the heir of all things,* through whom also he created the world. ESV

What do think the Bible means in describing the Father as the “God” of Jesus Christ?

How is God the Father's seniority is reflected by the things that God has done for Jesus Christ?

Do you think that Jesus Christ functions or acts in any way that is subordinate to God? Explain your answer.

Pray for persecuted Christians

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Persecuted Christians

Over 200 million Christians in at least 60 countries are denied basic human rights solely because of their faith. (Source: World Evangelical Alliance) Every year many Christians are killed because of their faith.

Through prayer, encouragement and practical assistance we can assist and fellowship with persecuted Christians in their suffering. You can play a vital part in this through contacting one of the organizations listed below. Most produce regular news/prayer letters.

Barnabas Fund – www.barnabasfund.org

It provides material and spiritual support based on locally identified needs.

Christian Solidarity International – csi-usa.org

CSI works to defend religious liberty and help persecuted Christians.

Christian Solidarity Worldwide – www.csw.org.uk

It advocates for freedom of religion and justice for persecuted believers.

Open Doors – www.opendoors.org; www.opendoors.org.au

It equips believers for persecution and maintaining a witness to the Gospel.

Religious Liberty Commission – www.worldevangelicals.org/commissions/rlc

RLC defends and aids persecuted Christians. See also www.idop.org.

Religious Liberty Prayer Bulletin – rlprayerbulletin.blogspot.com

This site provides weekly prayer bulletins.

The Bible League – bl.org.au/get-involved/bibles-for-the-persecuted

It supplies Bibles to persecuted Christians and provides training.

Voice of the Martyrs – www.persecution.com

VOM helps persecuted Christians spread the gospel. It also gives material aid.

World Watch Monitor – www.worldwatchmonitor.org

It reports the story of Christians under pressure for their faith.

Then the King will answer, 'I tell you the truth, anything you did for even the least of my people here, you also did for me.' Matthew 25:40 NCV

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