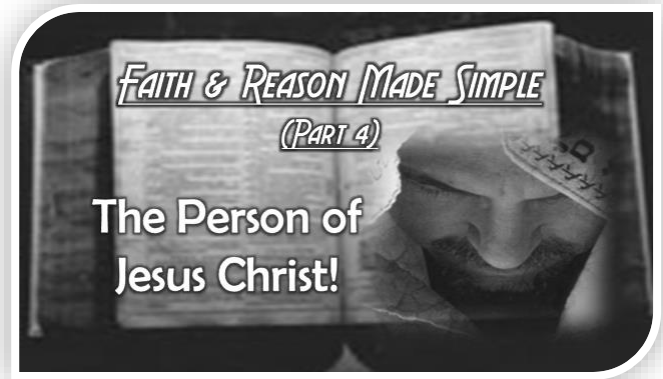


Faith & Reason Made Simple (Part 4)

(Confirming Evidence That Jesus Christ is God the Son!)



Introduction – Seeing the Problem!

THE ATTACKS UPON THE IDENTITY OF JESUS CHRIST

- Challenge #1:** Scholars Are Uncovering a Radically Different Jesus through Ancient Documents (Gnostic Gospels) Just as Credible as the Four Gospels
- Challenge #2:** The Bible's Portrait of Jesus Can't Be Trusted Because the Church Tampered with the Text
- Challenge #3:** New Explanations Have Disproved Jesus' Resurrection
- Challenge #4:** Christianity's Beliefs about Jesus Were Copied from Pagan Religions
- Challenge #5:** Jesus Was an Impostor Who Failed to Fulfill the Prophecies about the Messiah
- Challenge #6:** People Should Be Free to Pick and Choose What to Believe about Jesus

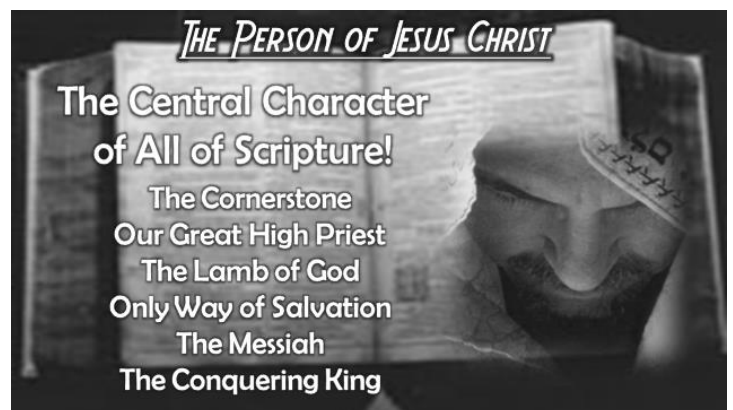
- * The DaVinci Code by Dan Brown (Over 80 Million Copies Sold Worldwide) (Plus 2006 Movie)
- * Bill Maher – "Religulous" (Documentary Movie – 2008) – (Mithras, Horus, Etc.)

* In this lesson we will look at Who the Bible says Jesus Christ is and we will look at the supporting evidences that confirm what the Bible says about Jesus Christ!

Jesus Christ is the Central Character of All of Scripture!

The Old Testament Points to Jesus through many types and Shadows!

- * The Passover Lamb
- * The Ark of Noah
- * The Scapegoat Offering
- * Rahab's Scarlet Cord
- * The Brazen Serpent in the Desert
- * Melchizedek
- * Sin & Guilt Offerings of the Old Testament Law
- * Moses/Joshua – The Promise Land
- * Manna & Water in the Desert



Jesus fulfilled 300 Old Testament Prophecies about the Coming Messiah! (Here are some examples)

- * Seed of a Woman to Conquer the Serpent of Old (Genesis 3:15)
- * His Suffering Upon the Cross (Many Details) (Psalm 22 & Isaiah 53)
- * His Birth in Bethlehem (Micah 5:2) (Also on His Birth – Isaiah 7:14 & Isaiah 9:6-7)
- * He Would Teach in Parables (Psalm 78:2)
- * He Would Ride Into Jerusalem on a Donkey (Zechariah 9:9)
- * He Would Be Betrayed For 30 Pieces of Silver (Zechariah 11:12-13)
- * His Garments Would be Divided by the Soldiers & They Would Cast Lots for His Cloak (Psalm 22:18)

The Deity of Jesus Christ

Part 1 – The Gospel of John

(The Gospel of John is Dedicated to Presenting Jesus Christ as the Divine Son of God!)

John 20:31 NASB but these have been written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing you may have life in His name.

John 1:1 NASB In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

(Note the 23 “I Am” Statements of Jesus in the Gospel of John) (Compare Exodus 3:13-15)
(Included in the “I Am” Statements are these especially significant passages)

John 8:24 NASB "Therefore I said to you that you will die in your sins; for unless you believe that I am *He*, you will die in your sins." (Note – “He” is added by the translators – Same in 18:4-6)

John 8:58 NASB Jesus said to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, before Abraham was born, I am."

John 18:4-6 NASB So Jesus, knowing all the things that were coming upon Him, went forth and *said to them, "Whom do you seek?" (5) They answered Him, "Jesus the Nazarene." He *said to them, "I am *He*." And Judas also, who was betraying Him, was standing with them. (6) So when He said to them, "I am *He*," they drew back and fell to the ground.

Part 2 – Throughout the Remaining New Testament

Joel 2:32 NASB "And it will come about that whoever calls on the name of the LORD Will be delivered ..." (This verse speaks of Jehovah – “LORD”) (Romans 10:13 Quotes it in reference to Jesus!)

Romans 10:13 NASB for "WHOEVER WILL CALL ON THE NAME OF THE LORD WILL BE SAVED."

Philippians 2:5-8 NASB Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus, (6) who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, (7) but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, *and* being made in the likeness of men. (8) Being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.

Titus 2:13 NASB looking for the blessed hope and the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Christ Jesus,

Hebrews 1:6-8 NASB And when He again brings the firstborn into the world, He says, "AND LET ALL THE ANGELS OF GOD WORSHIP HIM." (7) And of the angels He says, "WHO MAKES HIS ANGELS WINDS, AND HIS MINISTERS A FLAME OF FIRE." (8) But of the Son *He says*, "YOUR THRONE, O GOD, IS FOREVER AND EVER, AND THE RIGHTEOUS SCEPTER IS THE SCEPTER OF HIS KINGDOM.

Colossians 2:9 NASB For in Him all the fullness of Deity dwells in bodily form,

Jesus taught with divine authority. At the end of the Sermon on the Mount, “the crowds were astonished at his teaching, for he was teaching them as one who had authority, and not as their scribes” (Matt. 7:28–29) The teachers of the law in Jesus’ day had no authority of their own. Their authority came from their use of earlier authorities. Even Moses and the other OT prophets and authors did not speak in their own authority, but would say, “This is what the Lord says.” Jesus, on the other hand, interprets the law by saying, “You have heard that it was said. . . . But I say to you” (see Matt. 5:22, 28, 32, 34, 39, 44). (Also see Matthew 7:24-29) This divine authority is shown with staggering clarity when he speaks of himself as the Lord who will judge the whole earth and will say to the wicked, “I never knew you; depart from me, you workers of lawlessness” (Matt. 7:23). No wonder the crowd was amazed at the authority with which Jesus spoke. Jesus recognized that his words carried divine weight. He acknowledged the permanent authority of the law (Matt. 5:18) and put his words on an equal plane with it: “For truly, I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not an iota, not a dot, will pass from the Law until all is accomplished” (Matt. 5:18); “Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away” (Matt. 24:35).

Jesus Is Truly a Historical Person!

Some modern critics of Jesus say that He never existed but is a myth made up by early Christians. The Bible certainly presents Jesus as an historical person. We have already seen confirming evidences that the Bible is the Word of God in part 3. Note how Luke gives historical perspective to the life of Jesus in Luke 1:1-5. He says he is compiling an accurate account of public events as witnessed by eyewitnesses. In verse 5 he begins by dating the time to “the days of Herod, king of Judea.” He later will give many other historical details in his account of the life of Jesus.

Luke 1:1-5 NASB Inasmuch as many have undertaken to compile an account of the things accomplished among us, (2) just as they were handed down to us by those who from the beginning were eyewitnesses and servants of the word, (3) it seemed fitting for me as well, having investigated everything carefully from the beginning, to write *it* out for you in consecutive order, most excellent Theophilus; (4) so that you may know the exact truth about the things you have been taught. (5) In the days of Herod, king of Judea, there was a priest named Zacharias, of the division of Abijah; and he had a wife from the daughters of Aaron, and her name was Elizabeth.

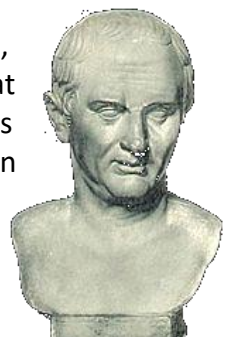
Jesus has impacted our world like no other person in history!
(Even our calendars point to Him!)

The Historical Life of Jesus is confirmed by a number of historical sources outside the Bible! (Here are a few)

Tacitus (Roman Historian)

(While speaking of Nero’s response to the fire of Rome)

Consequently, to get rid of the report, Nero fastened the guilt and inflicted the most exquisite tortures on a class hated for their abominations, called Christians by the populace. Christus, from whom the name had its origin, suffered the extreme penalty during the reign of Tiberius at the hands of one of our procurators, Pontius Pilatus, and a most mischievous superstition, thus checked for the moment, again broke out not only in Judaea, the first source of the evil, but even in Rome, where all things hideous and shameful from every part of the world find their centre and become popular. ... Accordingly, an arrest was first made of all who pleaded guilty; then, upon their information, an immense multitude was convicted, not so much of the crime of firing the city, as of hatred against mankind. Mockery of every sort was added to their deaths. Covered with the skins of beasts, they were torn by dogs and perished, or were nailed to crosses, or were doomed to the flames and burnt, to serve as a nightly illumination, when daylight had



expired. Nero offered his gardens for the spectacle, and was exhibiting a show in the circus, while he mingled with the people in the dress of a charioteer or stood aloft on a car. Hence, even for criminals who deserved extreme and exemplary punishment, there arose a feeling of compassion; for it was not, as it seemed, for the public good, but to glut one man's cruelty, that they were being destroyed. (Annals 15.44)

(Josephus) Antiquities 20.9.1

But the younger Ananus who, as we said, received the high priesthood, was of a bold disposition and exceptionally daring; he followed the party of the Sadducees, who are severe in judgment above all the Jews, as we have already shown. As therefore Ananus was of such a disposition, he thought he had now a good opportunity, as Festus was now dead, and Albinus was still on the road; so he assembled a council of judges, and brought before it the brother of Jesus the so-called Christ, whose name was James, together with some others, and having accused them as law-breakers, he delivered them over to be stoned.



(Josephus) Antiquities 18.3.3

Now there was about this time Jesus, a wise man, if it be lawful to call him a man, for he was a doer of wonderful works, a teacher of such men as receive the truth with pleasure. He drew over to him both many of the Jews, and many of the Gentiles. He was the Christ, and when Pilate, at the suggestion of the principal men among us, had condemned him to the cross, those that loved him at the first did not forsake him; for he appeared to them alive again the third day; as the divine prophets had foretold these and ten thousand other wonderful things concerning him. And the tribe of Christians so named from him are not extinct at this day.

Pliny the Younger

(a Lawyer, Author & Magistrate of 1st Century Rome) speaks of Jesus & His followers

Pliny the Younger, in Letters 10:96, recorded early Christian worship practices including the fact that Christians worshiped Jesus as God and were very ethical, and he includes a reference to the love feast and Lord's Supper.

Writings of the Sanhedrin speak of Jesus' crucifixion

The Babylonian Talmud (Sanhedrin 43a) confirms Jesus' crucifixion on the eve of Passover and the accusations against Him of practicing sorcery and encouraging Jewish apostasy –

"On the Eve of Passover, they hung Jesus of Nazareth for sorcery and enticing Israel [to idolatry]."

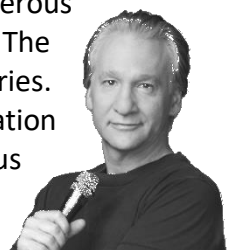
Lucian of Samosata

(a second-century Greek writer who speaks of Jesus)

Lucian admits that Jesus was worshiped by Christians, introduced new teachings, and was crucified for them. He said that Jesus' teachings included the brotherhood of believers, the importance of conversion, and the importance of denying other gods. Christians lived according to Jesus' laws, believed themselves to be immortal, and were characterized by contempt for death, voluntary self-devotion, and renunciation of material goods.

The Biblical Account of Jesus is Not the Retelling of Ancient Deity Myths!

One of the accusations being promoted today by skeptics like Bill Maher is that the Biblical account of the birth, life, miracles, death and resurrection of Jesus is simply the retelling of one of numerous ancient deity myths that supposedly referred to the same details hundreds of years earlier. The idea that Jesus is a copy-cat deity was promoted by a few authors in the 18th & 19th centuries. Other authors have repeated these accusations in the 20th & 21st centuries. A careful examination of these claims reveals that many of the proposed details of myths regarding Mithras, Horus and others simply are not accurate. Also, many of the writings that show some details that are comparable to Jesus were written hundreds of years after the oldest New Testament



manuscripts, showing that any striking similarities would actually indicate that pagan writers copied details of Jesus' life, not the other way around.

It is important to be aware of these accusations regarding the Biblical accounts of Jesus, since they are used by many critics of Christianity. Numerous helpful articles can be found on these subjects by going to searchcreation.org and typing in "Jesus vs. Mithras" or "Jesus vs. Horus".

The Bodily Resurrection of Jesus is Confirmed in Many Ways!

1 Corinthians 15:3-8 NASB (3) For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received, that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, (4) and that He was buried, and that He was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures, (5) and that He appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve. (6) After that He appeared to more than five hundred brethren at one time, most of whom remain until now, but some have fallen asleep; (7) then He appeared to James, then to all the apostles; (8) and last of all, as to one untimely born, He appeared to me also.

- * 1 Corinthians is believed to be one of the first New Testament books written (apx. 55 A.D.) and this description of Christ's death, resurrection and appearance to many was written while there were still many living witnesses who would have controverted it if it had not been true.
- * Obviously, the Bible speaks much of the bodily resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead!
- * Paul, Mark, Luke and John all speak of eye witnesses who beheld the risen Christ!
- * According to Romans 10:9-10, believing that God has raised Christ from the dead is a key part of salvation and being declared righteous by God!
- * If those who wanted to deny the resurrection of Jesus would have just produced His body, they would have stopped any spreading of a rumor of His resurrection. They could not do so!

*** Women Witnesses!**

The Bible speaks of the fact that women were the first witnesses of the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. Mary Magdalene is spoken of in more detail as a witness of the resurrection of Jesus on that first day than any other person. (John 20:1, 11-18)

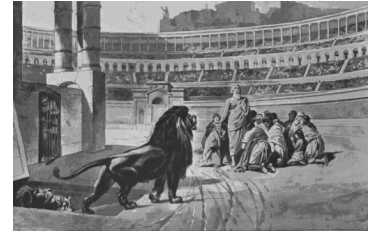
At the time that Jesus rose from the dead, and at the time the Bible was written, women were not allowed to even testify in a court of law. Certainly, in a culture like that, if people were attempting to make up a story about the resurrection of Jesus they would not have written that women were the first to witness His resurrection. Furthermore, they certainly would not have made the star witness, a former prostitute who had been previously delivered from demonic possession. The fact that the Bible records Mary Magdalene, along with other women as the first witnesses shows that the Bible is simply recording historical facts, not a made up story!

*** The Changed Lives of the Disciples of Jesus!**

The radically changed lives of the disciples of Jesus testify to the validity of the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead! These men were at first running scared, discouraged, confused and disillusioned. Within a few weeks of the crucifixion of Jesus they became bold, courageous, powerful witnesses of Jesus Christ! What changed them so drastically? The most obvious answer is that they beheld Jesus, risen from the dead! Eleven of the twelve died martyr's deaths for proclaiming the Gospel of Jesus Christ and the other was exiled to isolation for the same reason. They changed the world forever! Christianity is a modern day reality that goes back to these 12 simple men. Only the bodily resurrection of Jesus Christ can account for their radical change, powerful and effective witness, and their willingness to die for a crucified Savior!

* The Rise of Christianity Despite Great Persecution!

Not only were the first disciples of Jesus radically changed but so were the many who were transformed by responding to their message about Jesus Christ! In the first 250+ years of the Christian faith, Christians were persecuted greatly! Many were crucified, burned alive, torn apart by wild beast, stoned, etc. for being Christian, yet Christianity continued to grow! I have personally been to the catacombs near Rome where many early Christians lived under the ground to escape the vicious persecution against Christians at that time. Only the resurrection of Jesus Christ can account for this, especially in the early years when many who accepted Christ were alive at the time He was crucified and resurrection. They would have known if He had not risen from the dead! There is no historical reason for the rise of Christianity other than the truth of the crucifixion and bodily resurrection of Jesus Christ!



What was seen in the commitment of the early Christians to their faith in Christ, has continued in true believers throughout the centuries and it continues today. Many Christians have endured persecution for their faith and many have died for their faith throughout the past nearly 2,000 years.

Jesus Christ is the Central Character of the Bible!

Jesus Christ is the central character of the Bible! As the book of Hebrews says in Hebrews 12:2, He is “the author and finisher (or perfecter) of faith!” It is good for us to be aware of some of the main titles and descriptions given to Jesus in the Bible that help us to understand Who He is!

The Only Way of Salvation!

John 14:6 NASB Jesus *said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me.

Acts 4:12 NASB "And there is salvation in no one else; for there is no other name under heaven that has been given among men by which we must be saved."

The Messiah (The Christ)

“Messiah” is the Hebrew word for “Anointed One”. “Christ” is the equivalent Greek word for “Anointed One”. The word “Messiah” is only found thirty nine times in the Old Testament and is usually translated “anointed”. It is only translated Messiah twice in the Old Testament (Daniel 9:25 & 9:26). Still, the message of the coming Messiah was clearly transmitted throughout the Old Testament in many ways. The word “Christ” is found in the New Testament over 500 times, referencing Jesus of Nazareth as the “Anointed One” Who has come in fulfillment of all the Old Testament messianic prophecies.

Examples of Old Testament Messianic Passages – Psalm 2:2, Isaiah 53; Isaiah 9:6-7; Psalm 22; Isaiah 7:14; Daniel 9:25-26; Daniel 7:13

Jesus is clearly and boldly presented as “The Christ” in the New Testament in many passages.

John 20:31 NASB but these have been written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing you may have life in His name.

Matthew 16:13-18 NASB Now when Jesus came into the district of Caesarea Philippi, He was asking His disciples, "Who do people say that the Son of Man is?" (14) And they said, "Some say John the Baptist; and others, Elijah; but still others, Jeremiah, or one of the prophets." (15) He *said to them, "But who do you say that I am?" (16) Simon Peter answered, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God." (17) And Jesus said to him, "Blessed are you, Simon Barjona, because flesh and blood did not reveal *this* to you, but My Father who is in heaven. (18) "I also say to you that you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build My church; and the gates of Hades will not overpower it.

* One of the strongest images of the Messiah in the Old Testament is found in Daniel 7:13 where Daniel sees "One like a Son of Man" coming to the Ancient of Days. He is given a kingdom and everlasting dominion. Because of this passage the title "Son of Man" became synonymous with "Messiah" to the Jews who were waiting for their victorious Messiah to come and establish His kingdom. As we will see here, Jesus is referred to many times in the New Testament as "Son of Man", including when He is judged by the religious leaders for saying " ... and you shall see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of power, and coming with the clouds of heaven." (Mark 14:62)

Daniel 7:13-14 NASB "I kept looking in the night visions, And behold, with the clouds of heaven One like a Son of Man was coming, And He came up to the Ancient of Days, And was presented before Him. (14) "And to Him was given dominion, Glory and a kingdom, That all the peoples, nations and *men of every* language Might serve Him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion Which will not pass away; And His kingdom is one Which will not be destroyed.

Mark 14:62 NASB And Jesus said, "I am; and you shall see THE SON OF MAN SITTING AT THE RIGHT HAND OF POWER, and COMING WITH THE CLOUDS OF HEAVEN."

Acts 7:55-56 NASB But being full of the Holy Spirit, he gazed intently into heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God; (56) and he said, "Behold, I see the heavens opened up and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God."

JESUS IS THE CHRIST (MESSIAH)

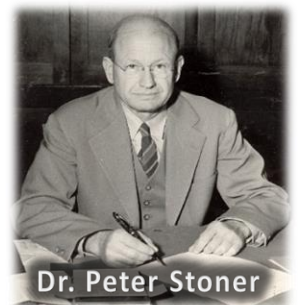
Jesus is Referred to "Son of Man"
(85 Times in the Gospels & Acts)

MATTHEW (31XS) - MARK (14XS)
LUKE (26XS) - JOHN (13XS)

Important to Remember "Son of Man" Refers to the Messiah

*** Jesus fulfilled approximately 300 Old Testament prophecies about the coming Messiah! This proves, without question that He is the Messiah, the Christ!**

In his book "Science Speaks", Dr. Peter Stoner explains a research project that he and students at Pasadena City College, where he was a professor, did to estimate the probability of one person fulfilling various Old Testament Messianic prophecies. "When multiplied together it was found that even using these very conservative estimates, there would be a 1 in 1028 chance of someone fulfilling just these 8 Messianic prophecies." "That number looks like this when written out. 10,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000."



Dr. Peter Stoner

JESUS CHRIST – THE CENTRAL CHARACTER OF ALL SCRIPTURE

4c – Our Great High Priest

In the book of Hebrews Jesus Christ is presented as our Great Eternal High Priest! He is seen as both the blood sacrifice and the High Priest Who offers His blood for us in heaven. He is author of our faith & of the New Covenant between God & His people!

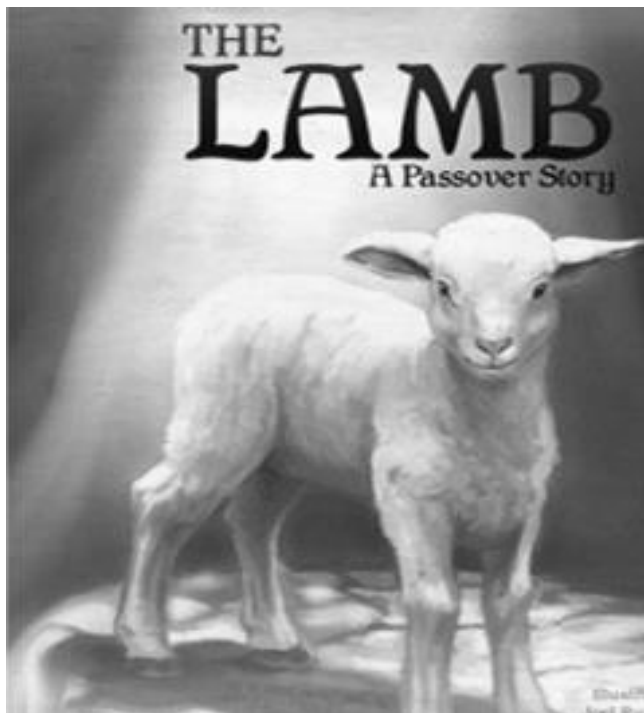
The Book of Hebrews



Jesus is Our Great High Priest!

The book of Hebrews presents Jesus as our Great High Priest! It shows Him to be superior to the angels, to Moses, and to the Levitical priests. It also shows that the new covenant He has come to establish is superior to the old covenant! Jesus is seen to be a priest after the order of Melchizedek.

Hebrews 7:24-25 NASB but Jesus, on the other hand, because He continues forever, holds His priesthood permanently. (25) Therefore He is able also to save forever those who draw near to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them.



Jesus is the Lamb of God!

John 1:29 NASB The next day he *saw Jesus coming to him and *said, "Behold, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!"

1 Corinthians 5:7 "...For Christ our Passover also has been sacrificed."

1 Peter 1:18-19 NASB knowing that you were not redeemed with perishable things like silver or gold from your futile way of life inherited from your forefathers, (19) but with precious blood, as of a lamb unblemished and spotless, the blood of Christ.

Jesus is the Cornerstone! (Psalm 118:22-23; 1 Peter 2:6-8; Acts 4:10-12; Luke 20:17-18)

Jesus is the Conquering (Victorious) King! - Hebrews 2:14; Col. 2:13-15; Rev. 19:11-21;
1 Cor. 15:23-28; Eph. 1:20-22

Jesus is God Incarnate! (Matthew 1:23; Philippians 2:5-8; Hebrews 2:14-18; Isaiah 9:6-7)

We must believe in Jesus to be Saved! (John 20:31; Romans 10:9-10; Acts 16:31; John 3:16)
(The Emphasis of the Gospel of John)

("Believe" – found 55 Xs) ("Believes" – 14 Xs) ("Believed" – 24 Xs) ("Believing" – 5 Xs)

A Total of 98 times the Gospel of John speaks of the need to "believe" in who Jesus is!

(Matthew, Mark & Luke only have 3 total references to the need to believe in Jesus)

The Deity, Historicity & Bodily Resurrection of Jesus Christ are Confirmed in Many Ways!