

Review:

Did you gain any insights as you read through Acts 1-14?

Are there any questions with regard to your purpose and God's deep love for you from last week's study?

All of Christianity hinges on the one question, "Who is Jesus?"

It is the most vital question we can ever answer in life, because the implications, either way, are simply staggering. Jesus actually raised this very question for all those who thought they would follow him.

*Matthew 16:13-15 (NLT)*

<sup>13</sup>When Jesus came to the region of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, "Who do people say that the Son of Man is?"

<sup>14</sup>"Well," they replied, "some say John the Baptist, some say Elijah, and others say Jeremiah or one of the other prophets."

<sup>15</sup>Then he asked them, "Who do you say I am?"

If Jesus asked you that question, how do you think you would respond?

## 1) JESUS' CLAIMS ABOUT HIMSELF

Read the following statements about Jesus from the Bible and discuss their importance and the implications regarding who he was.

*John 8:58-59 (NIV)*

<sup>58</sup>"I tell you the truth," Jesus answered, "before Abraham was born, I am!" <sup>59</sup>At this, they picked up stones to stone him, but Jesus hid himself, slipping away from the temple grounds.

Did the Jews pick up stones to kill Jesus simply because he used bad grammar?  
What really motivated this violent reaction to his words?

*Exodus 3:14 (NIV)*

God said to Moses, "I AM WHO I AM. This is what you are to say to the Israelites: 'I AM has sent me to you.' "

What significance does this passage have with regard to Jesus' words?

**John 10:27-33 (NIV)**

<sup>27</sup>My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me. <sup>28</sup>I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one can snatch them out of my hand. <sup>29</sup>My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all; no one can snatch them out of my Father's hand. <sup>30</sup>I and the Father are one."

<sup>31</sup>Again the Jews picked up stones to stone him, <sup>32</sup>but Jesus said to them, "I have shown you many great miracles from the Father. For which of these do you stone me?"

<sup>33</sup>"We are not stoning you for any of these," replied the Jews, "but for blasphemy, because you, a mere man, claim to be God."

Which of the statements Jesus made led the Jews to believe he was claiming to be God?

**Revelation Passages**

**Revelation 1:8 (NIV)**

"I am the Alpha and the Omega," says the Lord God, "who is, and who was, and who is to come, the Almighty."

Who is the one speaking in this passage?

What does he mean by the title Alpha and Omega?

**Revelation 1:17-18 (NIV)**

<sup>17</sup>When I saw him, I fell at his feet as though dead. Then he placed his right hand on me and said: "Do not be afraid. I am the First and the Last. <sup>18</sup> I am the Living One; I was dead, and behold I am alive for ever and ever! And I hold the keys of death and Hades.

What new insights does this passage give regarding the identity of the speaker?

**Revelation 21:6-7 (NIV)**

<sup>6</sup>He said to me: "It is done. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. To him who is thirsty I will give to drink without cost from the spring of the water of life. <sup>7</sup> He who overcomes will inherit all this, and I will be his God and he will be my son.

What new insights does this passage give regarding the identity of the speaker?

***Revelation 22:13-16 (NIV)***

*<sup>13</sup>I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last, the Beginning and the End. <sup>14</sup>"Blessed are those who wash their robes, that they may have the right to the tree of life and may go through the gates into the city. <sup>15</sup>Outside are the dogs, those who practice magic arts, the sexually immoral, the murderers, the idolaters and everyone who loves and practices falsehood. <sup>16</sup>"I, Jesus, have sent my angel to give you this testimony for the churches. I am the Root and the Offspring of David, and the bright Morning Star."*

Who is the one speaking in this passage?

Regardless of what you have ever thought about Jesus, what does Jesus appear to have believed about his own identity?

If Jesus is speaking the truth about himself in each of these passages, what are some implications for us?

## 2) OTHER CLAIMS ABOUT JESUS

***Genesis 1:1 (NIV)***

*In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.*

***John 1:1-3 (NIV)***

*<sup>1</sup>In the beginning was the Word [Jesus], and the Word [Jesus] was with God, and the Word [Jesus] was God. <sup>2</sup>He was with God in the beginning. <sup>3</sup>Through him [Jesus] all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made.*

***Colossians 1:16-17 (NIV)***

*<sup>16</sup>For by him [Jesus] all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things were created by him and for him. <sup>17</sup>He is before all things, and in him all things hold together.*

***Hebrews 1:2 (NIV)***

*but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son [Jesus], whom he appointed heir of all things, and through whom he made the universe.*

Jesus is the \_\_\_\_\_

Is this a new insight and understanding concerning the person of Jesus for any of you?

How do these verses change the way we view the person of Jesus?

***Matthew 4:10 (NIV)***

*Jesus said to him, "Away from me, Satan! For it is written: 'Worship the Lord your God, and serve him only.'"*

Who is allowed to receive worship and why?

***Hebrews 1:6 (NLT)***

*And then, when he presented his honored Son to the world, God said, "Let all the angels of God worship him."*

***Revelation 5:11-14 (NIV)***

*<sup>11</sup>Then I looked and heard the voice of many angels, numbering thousands upon thousands, and ten thousand times ten thousand. They encircled the throne and the living creatures and the elders. <sup>12</sup>In a loud voice they sang:*

*"Worthy is the Lamb, who was slain, to receive power and wealth and wisdom and strength and honor and glory and praise!"*

*<sup>13</sup>Then I heard every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth and on the sea, and all that is in them, singing:*

*"To him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb be praise and honor and glory and power, for ever and ever!"*

*<sup>14</sup>The four living creatures said, "Amen," and the elders fell down and worshiped.*

Jesus receives \_\_\_\_\_

**John 1:1-2 (NIV)**

*<sup>1</sup>In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. <sup>2</sup>He was with God in the beginning. (See John 1:14 to see that this is referring to Jesus)*

**John 1:14 (NIV)**

The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.

**John 20:26-28 (NIV)**

*<sup>26</sup>A week later his disciples were in the house again, and Thomas was with them. Though the doors were locked, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you!" <sup>27</sup>Then he said to Thomas, "Put your finger here; see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it into my side. Stop doubting and believe."*

*<sup>28</sup>Thomas said to him, "My Lord and my God!"*

**Isaiah 9:6 (NLT)**

*For a child is born to us, a son is given to us. And the government will rest on his shoulders. These will be his royal titles: Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.*

Jesus is called \_\_\_\_\_

Is there any doubt, at least from the Bible's perspective, that Jesus is God in human form?

What do you think about this perspective? Is it new to you? Is it difficult to believe?

**John 20:29 (NLT)**

*Then Jesus told him, "You believe because you have seen me. Blessed are those who haven't seen me and believe anyway."*

Other relevant passages to look up on your own

Authority to forgive	Mark 2:1-12
Jesus' Glory	John 12:41, Mathew 17:2
The Good Shepherd	John 10:14 (see Psalm 23)
Meets Spiritual Needs	John 14:1, John 17:3, Acts 4:12, John 14:6-11, Matthew 11:25-27

What do you think about the Biblical perspective concerning the identity of Jesus?  
Does this viewpoint raise some questions for you?

If Jesus truly is God who took on human form and came to earth, what are some of the implications for us?

### 3) THE HUMANITY OF JESUS

If Jesus were really God in human form, wouldn't that give him an unfair advantage over all the rest of us? Can we really identify with Jesus? Can Jesus really identify with us?

*Hebrews 4:15-16 (NIV)*

*<sup>15</sup>For we do not have a high priest [Jesus] who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are--yet was without sin. <sup>16</sup>Let us then approach the throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.*

How might these verses give us comfort?

*Philippians 2:6-7 (NIV)*

*<sup>6</sup>Who [Jesus], being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, <sup>7</sup>but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness.*

In the original Greek language, the phrase translated "made himself nothing" literally means, "he emptied himself".

What exactly did Jesus empty himself of when he took on human form?

List all the things you can think of Jesus doing on earth that we would normally have credited simply to the fact that he is God.

Read the following verses:

*Matthew 4:1 (NIV)*

*Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the desert to be tempted by the devil.*

*Matthew 12:28 (NIV)*

*But if I drive out demons by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God has come upon you.*

*Luke 4:18 (NIV)*

*"The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to release the oppressed,*

What was the power and the drive behind all that Jesus did?

How should we then interpret all these things in light of Philippians 2:7?

If Jesus, through his humanity, chose to restrict his divine attributes and rely on "his" Spirit for all he did, then what are the implications for us if we have his same Spirit within us?

*John 14:12 (NLT)*

*"The truth is, anyone who believes in me will do the same works I have done, and even greater works, because I am going to be with the Father.*

In what ways does this excite you to know God can work in you in a similar way as you develop an intimate relationship with him?

HOME STUDY: Read: Acts: Chapters 15-28