

## Week Three: Jesus/Christ

### Scripture references:

Acts 2:22-36  
John 3:16  
Ephesians 1:15-19  
Matthew 1:1-17  
John 1:1-10;  
John 14:7, 20-23  
John 20:31



### Points to take away:

1. The power of God working in and through Jesus persuades, heals, rescues, transforms, and defies death.
2. Jesus was fully human (e.g. male, flesh and blood, in the Middle East, an observant Jew, etc.).
3. Jesus is divine (e.g. exists concurrently with God, contains the “divine DNA”, etc.)
4. Jesus is Christ (i.e. the Messiah of the ancient scriptural promise, salvation for any and all)
5. Jesus is incarnation itself — God bursting into human history and personal presence.
6. Jesus is the face of God — if you know Jesus fully you know God fully.
7. Jesus taught and teaches us how to love God and neighbor.

### A prayer for strength of faith in Jesus:

Jesus, in your face I can see the face of God. In your love, I can feel God's love for me. I want to know you better. I want to walk with you as a friend, and trust you as my God. Heal my hurts and resentments. Save me from my own self-destructive and controlling ways. Restore my broken relationships. Transform me into a peaceful, strong, and trusting person. Inspire in me the desire to share what I have found in you with others. I am calling you, Jesus; take my hand and lead me into a truly abundant life. Amen.

### A very few resources for further exploration:

**The source:** Scripture — *The Bible*. Its most important contribution? First- and second-hand testimony to the life of Jesus, and his effect on human life and living.

**Three of the great mystics:** Julian of Norwich, *Showings* (14<sup>th</sup> Century), Teresa of Avila, *Interior Castle* (16<sup>th</sup> Century), and Rebecca Cox Jackson, *Gifts of Power* (19<sup>th</sup> Century). These three women, two medieval Europeans, one African-American, experienced God in Christ directly, through the power of visionary prayer. Their most important contributions? Vivid description of the believer's intimate relationship with Jesus/Christ.

**A couple of recent writers:** Brian McLaren, *A Generous Orthodoxy* (Zondervan: 2004). The beginning of this book is an excellent description of seven major aspects of Jesus. His most important contribution? Embracing the diverse streams of Christian revelation about Jesus as authoritative and informative, while never discounting both the power and the purpose of Christ.

Philip Yancey, *The Jesus I Never Knew* (Nelson Books: 1995). Yancey explores the life of Jesus to understand and absorb what it might have been like for the first disciples. His most important contribution? Applying a good mind to a deep faith and historical fact, and inviting us to discover Jesus with him.

