CITYLIGHT
CHURCH

SERMON NOTES & TRANSCRIPT

Who Is Jesus?

Seven Things the Bible Says You Need to Know About Jesus

If we get Jesus wrong, we get everything wrong. The Jesus we build our lives on has to be the Jesus the Bible defines, not a Jesus of our own imagination.

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SERIES
We're Building Everything on Jesus, Week 1 of 4

MAIN TEXT
Romans 10:9

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01

Sermon Transcript

Amen. Join me in Romans chapter 10. Today we are starting a four-week series called, We Are Building Everything on Jesus. We are building everything on Jesus. This is actually the first of eight core values that I'm going to be sharing with you over the next year. And you're also going to start to hear this mission statement quite a lot, that we are building a Jesus-centric, Spirit-filled church for all people. A Jesus-centric, Spirit-filled church for all people. But there's a key word in there, and the word is building. We are building. We are about to get to work.

We are about to kick this thing into high gear. Saraland is about to be sitting back going, what in the world just hit us? Oh, that was Saraland Church that just came by. Amen. It's going to be a whirlwind in this area. Y'all got to wake up. Y'all know I'll preach three hours if you don't respond. And so we've got to start having some fun now. Okay. So we are building everything on Jesus. For the next four weeks, we're going to be talking about this very crucial point. The reason is, we're going to take four weeks to specifically talk about Jesus, is the Bible is very clear that Jesus is, Ephesians chapter 2 says, the chief cornerstone.

> **EPHESIANS 2:20** ESV
>
> 20 built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone,

In 1 Corinthians chapter 3, it says that no matter what you build, no matter what you plant, Jesus is the foundation. If you do anything, if you build anything on top of a foundation other than Christ, it will not work. It won't work. So some of you are wondering why your promises that you've read in the Bible or the miracle that you got in a service or the little Holy Ghost goosebump you got when the singing was real good, you're wondering why it's not sticking. There's a good chance that it's because it is not built on Jesus Christ. And to be honest with you, that is no fault of your own.

Because we sometimes just go on and we just do our little church thing and we never come back to this foundational thing, this foundational teaching. So Romans chapter 10 verse 9, I'm going to open with this. I am going to read so much scripture today that you will end going, did he just read the Bible to us all morning? And that's about where I'm going to be.

> **ROMANS 10:9** ESV
>
> 9 because, if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.

Romans chapter 10 verse 9, it says, "because if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord," everybody say Jesus is Lord, "and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved."

We're starting there because Jesus is Lord. I feel like that's a good foundation for this message, which I'm calling, Who Is Jesus? Who is Jesus? I know that might sound strange. That might be a bizarre question or a bizarre sermon title to bring up in church. You would assume we would all know, but in the church at large, we have taken for granted the

person, deity, and work of Jesus Christ to the point that it is almost completely ignored and Jesus is entirely misunderstood. But this is something you've got to understand. If we get Jesus wrong, we get everything wrong.

Y'all could let on a little better than that right there. If we get Jesus wrong, we get everything wrong. In fact, it was A.W. Tozer who said this: "What comes into our minds when we think about God is the most important thing about us. The gravest question before the church is always God himself. And the most portentous fact about any man is not what he at any time may say or do, but what he in his deep heart conceives God to be like." A.W. Tozer recognized the importance of this question, but I would even take it a step further to say that it is of equal importance to know that what comes to mind should be shaped by the Bible alone.

Amen? So, if you say in your life, I believe in God, well, is it the God of the Bible? If someone were to say, I believe in Jesus, is it the Jesus of the Bible that you believe in? If what comes to mind isn't defined by the Bible, you might get the right name, but the wrong person. Years ago, I was flying from Birmingham, Alabama to New York City to drive a Mini Cooper back from New York City to Birmingham, Alabama. I'm not telling you the part of the story that the first place that I ever drove a stick shift was in Manhattan, but that is true. I was young.

I was dumb. And to do this trip, I checked a bag on my flight. Don't know why. Could have just carried one on, but I checked a bag. It had all my CDs, had my change of clothes. It was only a two-day trip, but I mean, two days in a car at that time, you need a lot of CDs. How many of y'all remember them books of CDs you traveled around with? You just had them all in there, 850,000 songs, you know. They talk about how much music you can put on the iPad. You put a lot of music in them little CD books, amen. And so I flew up there, and I had my bag with me.

It was checked in, and I got there, and I'm waiting at the thing, and I'm waiting, and my bag is never showing up. So finally, I go over to the lady at the counter, and I said, hey, my bag never showed up. She said, what's your name? I said, Jason Mayfield. She starts looking around. She said, this is your bag right here. Now, I was young and dumb, but I wasn't an idiot. I knew that wasn't my bag. I said, this isn't my bag. She says, it's got your name on it. It says Jason Mayfield. I said, that's not my bag, and I looked on it. I said, this says it's supposed to go to Israel.

My bag had gone to Israel, and the Israel guy's bag was with me. I should have gone through it. He might have had good stuff. I don't know. But here's what happened. They had the right name and the wrong person. They had the right name and the wrong person. 1 Corinthians 8 says this.

> **1 CORINTHIANS 8:5-6** ESV
>
> 5 For although there may be so-called gods in heaven or on earth—as indeed there are many "gods" and many
> "lords"—6 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.

It says, "for 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."

There is to some degree a way that you could look at this where you could say there's a big G God. Everybody say big G. Sounds like a rapper. Big G. So you got a big G God. That's God, the one true God. Deuteronomy 6, verse 4.

> **DEUTERONOMY 6:4 ESV**
>
> 4 "Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one.

Behold, O Israel, the Lord our God is one. The one true God. That's big G God. But there are also little g gods. These are false gods, but there's little g gods. The Bible calls these the gods of the nations. So there's the big G God. That's the one true God. There's the little g gods that are the gods of the nation. There's also the big J Jesus.

There's the big J Jesus. And then there's the little j Jesus that is the God or the Jesus of our imaginations. It's the God that we kind of make up. It's the right name, but the wrong person. It's who you think Jesus is and not who the Bible says Jesus is. Little j. I don't know if any of y'all have seen these. Have y'all seen these? This is a little Jesus if you can't see. And he's happy. He's smiling. He's got his hands up and this is Jesus. This is Jesus, but it's not Jesus. Do y'all hear what I'm saying? This is Jesus, but it's not Jesus.

This is the little Jesus. Somebody came up with this little guy and made him, but there's no Bible. I promise you ain't no Bible verse that says he's one inch tall. Lord. But so this is not Jesus. It's Jesus, but it's not Jesus. Psalm 115 says this.

> **PSALM 115:4-8 ESV**
>
> 4 Their idols are silver and gold, the work of human hands. 5 They have mouths, but do not speak; eyes, but do not see. 6 They have ears, but do not hear; noses, but do not smell. 7 They have hands, but do not feel; feet, but do not walk; and they do not make a sound in their throat. 8 Those who make them become like them; so do all who trust in them.

It says, "their idols are silver and gold, the work of human hands. They have mouths, but they do not speak; eyes, but they do not see. They have ears, but they do not hear; noses, but do not smell. They have hands, but do not feel; feet, but do not walk. And they do not make a sound in their throat."

Verse eight is the verse that concerns me the most. "Those who make them become like them. And so do all who trust in them." Jesus, big J, Jesus can save. He can heal. He can deliver. He can baptize you in the Holy Ghost. He can pull your life up out of the pit. But little Jesus, little Jesus can't do anything for you. Little Jesus is totally powerless to make any change in your life.

> **1 CORINTHIANS 3:10-11 ESV**
>
> 10 According to the grace of God given to me, like a skilled master builder I laid a foundation, and someone else is building upon it. Let each one take care how he builds upon it. 11 For no one can lay a foundation other than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ.

1 Corinthians chapter 3 says, "according to the grace of God given to me, like a skilled master builder, I laid a foundation and someone else is building upon it. Let each one take care how he builds upon it. For no one can lay a foundation other than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ."

If the God or the Jesus of our mind turns out to be the right name and the wrong person, we risk an ineffectual spiritual supernatural supply. There's no answer to your prayer at the end of that. There is no miracle at the end of your need for breakthrough at the end of the wrong Jesus. If it's not Jesus, big J Jesus, there is nothing for you. So today I want to just share a handful of truths, seven things, and I will be done quickly. It won't be seven things over an hour and 15 minutes,

but seven things that you need to know about Jesus. Now I heard a preacher say one time, he said, you have two choices.

When you preach, you can either proclaim it or you can explain it, but you can't really do both. Got to do one or the other. I like to eat lunch on time. So I'm going to lean towards proclaiming instead of explaining this morning. Let me get a good amen in the house. Okay. Y'all are a little asleep today. We're going to talk about it again on Wednesday. We talked about this Wednesday, team night people. Come on, let's wake up a little bit. Number one, you need to know this. Jesus is fully God. Jesus is fully God.

> **COLOSSIANS 1:15-19** ESV
>
> 15 He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. 16 For by him all things were created, in heaven
> and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created
> through him and for him. 17 And he is before all things, and in him all things hold together. 18 And he is the head of
> the body, the church. He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in everything he might be preeminent.
> 19 For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell,

Colossians chapter 1, starting in verse 15 says, "he is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities, all things were created through him and for him.

And he is before all things, and in him all things hold together. And he is the head of the body, the church. He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in everything he might be preeminent." Verse 19 says, "for in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell." Some of your Bibles say pleased to bodily dwell. Jesus, number one, is God in the flesh. Jesus was God in the flesh before his time on earth. He was God in the flesh during his time on earth. And guess what? He's God in the flesh right now and forevermore. Amen. Everything Jesus did.

Now this is what some people struggle to understand a little bit. Everything Jesus did when he was on earth, he did as God. Jesus was God, is God, will be God. When he was on earth, he was fully God, yet — so just a little theology for you — he voluntarily restrained his privileges of divinity while here on earth. And we call this, the technical term is, the self-limitation of Christ. Now, when we get into this, we are tiptoeing into the Trinity. Now the Trinity — again, I'm going to just kind of tell you what it is. And there's a reason. But the Trinity is this. This is how you can understand it.

God eternally exists as three persons, the Father, the Son, the Holy Spirit, and each person is fully God. And there is one God. Okay. Here's the thing I need to just own. This is an essential doctrine, but it is also incredibly and entirely incomprehensible. This is something that is very difficult to wrap your brain around. In fact, I heard a theologian say recently, he said, we need preachers to stop trying to explain the Trinity and just start accepting it. That might be a little bold in my opinion, but there is some truth to it. You got to get comfortable with some mystery.

Here's the thing. The Trinity is essential. And I used to not feel this way. I will own this. I used to feel like the Trinity was essential, but it is so incomprehensible that it can kind of be one of those things that exist in the ether of your theology and you don't really need to talk about it. But let me just tell you, there is such a rise, especially amongst Pentecostals, which we are. I'm using the phrase Spirit-filled to be safe, but we're Pentecostal and can't help ourselves. Amen. But there is such a rise amongst Pentecostals, as there always have been, of people who embrace a doctrine called Oneness or modalism, which — I will say this because y'all aren't going to give me trouble, but the internet's going to give me trouble.

So let me just say it to the internet. I don't necessarily believe modalism keeps you out of the family of the Lord, but I do believe it is a great error and it brings up some things that are deeply troubling in terms of understanding how God operates and how the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit work in our lives and to know who you're dealing with. You don't want to... How many of y'all know sometimes people talk about the Holy Ghost and call him an it? Well, we're not dealing with it. This is the third person of the Trinity and he shall be honored.

He is the Holy Ghost. He is God. So here's what I'm going to do. In about four weeks, I'm going to do a Sunday on the Trinity. Probably ain't going to be real exciting, but y'all aren't shouting anyway, so I guess it'll be all right. Lord. All right. Number two. Number two, second thing. Jesus is fully human. Jesus is fully human. In the same way Jesus is fully God, Jesus is fully human. The theological term for this is called the hypostatic union. He is fully God, fully man. He's not half God, half man. Fully God, fully man. When you read the Gospels, you will see that it is obvious that Jesus was a human.

He was a real human. He ate, He drank, He worked, He slept. I mean, Lord, He went out on the boat. We just try to keep y'all from doing that on Sunday. Amen? But He was a real man who did real things. When He went to the cross, it was a real price that He paid. It was a real death that He experienced. However, as early as the New Testament writings, there were people that were already saying that Jesus did not have a real body. This is, as long as the church has been around, there have been people trying to deny the fact that Jesus was fully human.

> **1 JOHN 4:2** ESV
>
> 2 By this you know the Spirit of God: every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God,

In fact, in 1 John 4, it says this, "By this you know the Spirit of God.

Every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God." Now, if you have any sense about you, you would know that that seems like a real easy way to introduce heresy into the church. Because if I read that and I was a false teacher, I'd just come in and say a bunch of nonsense and then go, but Jesus came in the flesh, and I'm from God all of a sudden. But this was written for reasons, because John dealt with these people. People who were basically saying — this was a real thing that people were saying — that Jesus went to the cross as a spirit, or like as a projection from heaven, and the price He paid wasn't a real price.

But what Jesus did on the cross was a real payment for our sin. It wasn't some symbolic gesture. Jesus really paid the price. 1 Timothy 2, verse 5 says that Jesus is the mediator between God and man.

> **1 TIMOTHY 2:5** ESV
>
> 5 For there is one God, and there is one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus,

The fully God-man factor allows Jesus to represent the payment of humanity's sin to the Father. Jesus perfectly represents you and me to the Father.

> **ROMANS 8:3-4** ESV
>
> 3 For God has done what the law, weakened by the flesh, could not do. By sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, he condemned sin in the flesh, 4 in order that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.

Romans 3 says this, “For God has done what the law, weakened by the flesh, could not do, by sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin He condemned sin in the flesh, in order that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us.”

Jesus perfectly represents us to the Father. But also in the same way, Jesus perfectly represents the Father to us.

> **HEBREWS 1:3** ESV
>
> 3 He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature, and he upholds the universe by the word of his power. After making purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high,

The Bible says in Hebrews 1, verse 3, “He is the radiance of the glory of God, the exact imprint of His nature.” If you want to know what God is like, look to Jesus. If you want to know what God is like, look to the finished work of the One who came and paid the price and saved you and me. Hallelujah!

> **1 JOHN 4:10** ESV
>
> 10 In this is love, not that we have loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.

The Bible says in 1 John, “In this is love. Not that we have loved God, but that He has loved us by giving His Son as the payment for our sin.” Hallelujah!

I could preach myself happy this morning. Number three, Jesus lived a sinless life. Jesus lived a sinless life.

> **HEBREWS 4:15** ESV
>
> 15 For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin.

Hebrews chapter 4 says, “For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses,” thank you God, “but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin.” You would think sitting in this environment this morning, or at least I would, because I don’t know how many of y’all might be sitting here not knowing this today, that Jesus was a sinless man. Because you would think in our environment everybody would know this.

You would think that Jesus being perfect would be like on the forefront of what people think about when they think about Christian doctrine, whether they’re saved or not. But it turns out in a recent State of the Bible survey from the American Bible Society — this is the most recent, this is 2025, they did this this year, probably a little bit of last year and this year — this is what they found out. This is the statistics of the average American. So they’re cold calling people like a Gallup poll, and this is what they found out. 38% of people in America, not the church, people in America believe that Jesus was sinless.

18% were unsure. They weren’t sure where this... By the way, this isn’t a faith thing. This wasn’t a faith question. This was a what you intellectually know to be true of Jesus Christ. 18% are unsure. 44% of people in America believe that Jesus was a sinner, just like you and me. People do not know that Jesus was sinless. This is absolutely crucial for us to know. If He is not sinless, you are not saved. If Jesus isn’t sinless, we go to hell like a bullet. Not to mention the fact that probably the cosmos would have cracked and fall apart. Because Jesus is God, and God is not a man that He should lie.

> **NUMBERS 23:19** ESV
>
> 19 God is not man, that he should lie, or a son of man, that he should change his mind. Has he said, and will he not do it? Or has he spoken, and will he not fulfill it?

He is utterly holy. He is utterly pure, utterly perfect. So this morning, I'll say something else to the camera just so we can get this clear. America, you need to know that Jesus is perfect. Saraland Church, you need to know that Jesus is perfect. He was completely sinless, totally sinless, a pure and spotless, blameless lamb.

> **1 PETER 1:19** ESV
>
> 19 but with the precious blood of Christ, like that of a lamb without blemish or spot.

Hallelujah. But He was still tempted like we are, and that means that we have a high priest that sympathizes with us. Jesus doesn't sit in an ivory tower. He came down and got in the midst of His creation. Amen. Number four, I got to move quick.

Number four, Jesus died on a cross. He died on a cross. He says that after being found in human form, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.

> **PHILIPPIANS 2:8** ESV
>
> 8 And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.

> **1 PETER 2:24** ESV
>
> 24 He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. By his wounds you have been healed.

1 Peter 2 says, "He Himself bore our sins in His body on the tree," the cross, "that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. By His wounds, you have been healed." His death on the cross was the payment required for our sin to be completely forgiven. Number five, Jesus rose from the dead three days later.

> **ROMANS 6:5-6** ESV
>
> 5 For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his. 6 We know that our old self was crucified with him in order that the body of sin might be brought to nothing, so that we would no longer be enslaved to sin.

Romans chapter 6 verse 5 says, "if we have been united with Him in a death like His, we will certainly be united with Him in a resurrection like His.

We know that the old self was crucified with Him in order that the body of sin might be brought to nothing, so that we would no longer be enslaved to sin." His resurrection, Jesus rising from the dead, makes us partakers of His divine nature.

> **2 PETER 1:4** ESV
>
> 4 by which he has granted to us his precious and very great promises, so that through them you may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped from the corruption that is in the world because of sinful desire.

Let me say it to you this way. The cross is what got it for you. The cross paid for it. What Jesus did on the cross secured the payment, the bill is finaled, everything is good. The resurrection got it to you. Because Jesus lives, you get to be free. Because Jesus lives, you get to experience deliverance. Because Jesus lives, you get to be healed.

Because Jesus lives, you get to go to heaven. Amen. Somebody ought to say amen in this house. So the cross gets it to you, but the resurrection — or I'm sorry, the cross gets it for you, the resurrection gets it to you. I was asked recently, this is just for free, but I was asked recently where Christianity gets its authority. They said if you believe that Christianity — and this person did as well — but they said if you believe that Christianity is the one true religion in the world, what gives it its authority? And then he did what I always enjoy, he gave me options.

And he said, is it the Pope like the Catholic Church believes, or is it the Bible like the Protestant Church believes? And I looked at him and I said neither. The resurrection gives the church its authority. We serve a risen, living Savior right now. That's a good place to give the Lord a praise. Number six, Jesus will come again. Jesus will come again. Hebrews chapter 9 says that He will appear a second time.

> **HEBREWS 9:28** ESV
>
> 28 so Christ, having been offered once to bear the sins of many, will appear a second time, not to deal with sin but to save those who are eagerly waiting for him.

Titus chapter 2 calls His appearing our blessed hope.

> **TITUS 2:13** ESV
>
> 13 waiting for our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ,

> **1 THESSALONIANS 4:16-17** ESV
>
> 16 For the Lord himself will descend from heaven with a cry of command, with the voice of an archangel, and with the sound of the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. 17 Then we who are alive, who are left, will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we will always be with the Lord.

And 1 Thessalonians says, "for the Lord Himself will descend with a cry of command, with the voice of an archangel, and with the sound of the trumpet of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first.

Then we who are alive, who are left, will be caught up together with Him in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will always be with the Lord." Jesus is coming back, and He's coming back for you and me. Amen. And we look forward to His soon-coming return. But nobody knows the day or the hour, but He is coming.

> **MATTHEW 24:36 ESV**
>
> 36 "But concerning that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but the Father only.

There was subtext in there to say stop buying them books when people say they know when the end of the world's coming. Don't do that no more. Number seven. Number seven. This is the last one. Jesus will judge all people. Jesus will judge all people.

I feel like we need to hear this today, in this time, in this era of the world.

> **REVELATION 20:11-15 ESV**
>
> 11 Then I saw a great white throne and him who was seated on it. From his presence earth and sky fled away, and no place was found for them. 12 And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne, and books were opened. Then another book was opened, which is the book of life. And the dead were judged by what was written in the books, according to what they had done. 13 And the sea gave up the dead who were in it, Death and Hades gave up the dead who were in them, and they were judged, each one of them, according to what they had done. 14 Then Death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death, the lake of fire. 15 And if anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.

Revelation chapter 20 says this in verse 11, "Then I saw a great white throne and Him who was seated on it. From His presence earth and sky fled away, and no place was found for them. And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne, and books were opened. Then another book was opened, which is the book of life. And the dead were judged by what was written in the books, according to what they had done. And the sea gave up the dead who were in it. Death and Hades gave up the dead who were in them, and they were judged, each one of them, according to what they had done. Then Death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death, the lake of fire. And if anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire."

So this is what we know from Revelation — which is quite a statement, because let me tell you, most people who say they know what Revelation is talking about, go read the stuff they're explaining to you and you'll go, there's no way you're getting that from that. It is a very complex text. But this is what we do know. We know that every person, living, dead, who is, who will be, who has been, every person for all time and eternity will be judged before what this text calls, and what we've called in the body of Christ, the great white throne judgment.

Every person will be judged according to what they have done. Whether you're a Christian or not, there will be a moment that you will stand and everything that has ever happened in your life and any contribution you have made through behavior will be judged. Everything you've done. Every time you've messed with the tax man, every time you've lied, every time you've taken something, every time you've looked at something you shouldn't have, everything. You will be judged. You will stand and you will be judged for everything that you have ever done. That's bad news for all of us.

But after this painful moment is done, there are two groups of people, because He's going to open up His little black book, the Lamb's Book of Life. And everybody's name who is written in the Lamb's Book of Life will live for eternity with the Lord. They will go to heaven. They will reap eternal rewards. Every person whose name is written in the Lamb's Book of Life is going to heaven, and everybody's name who isn't will be cast into the lake of fire.

This is why we're doing what we're doing right now. This is why we're making some of the changes that we're making. This is why I'm being a little bold with you on Sundays and Wednesdays. This is why I'm not messing around. Is because there are people in this region. There are about 320,000 people within 20 miles of this church. How many of those people do not have their name written in the Lamb's Book of Life?

> **REVELATION 21:27** ESV
>
> 27 But nothing unclean will ever enter it, nor anyone who does what is detestable or false, but only those who are written in the Lamb's book of life.

And I will just be doggone if I'm going to sit back and not do something about it.

We are building a Jesus-centric, Spirit-filled church for all people, because all people need Jesus Christ. There's a heaven to gain and a hell to shun. I really believe this, and I just want to make it real difficult for people in South Alabama to go to hell. When they meet you, when they meet me, when they pass the building, see the church sign, see an ad on the internet, get a card, we're praying that the Holy Ghost will anoint it in such a way that people just become responsive to the gospel. We're going to get people's names written in the Lamb's Book of Life. Amen.

02

Preaching Notes

Before You Preach

This message opens a four-week series on building everything on Jesus, the first of the church's core values. It reads a lot of Scripture. Tell the congregation that up front, and lean toward proclaiming rather than explaining: seven short truths, each anchored in a text, moving quickly.

Two things to prepare. First, the message uses a prop: a small, smiling Jesus figurine, about an inch tall, to picture "little j" jesus. Any small trinket version of Jesus will work. Second, the survey numbers in point 3 and the local population figure in the conclusion should be checked and updated for your setting before you use them.

Introduction

The Bible is very clear that Jesus is the foundation. Paul calls the church a household built on the apostles and prophets, "Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone" (Ephesians 2:20). And 1 Corinthians 3 says that whatever you build, whatever you plant, Jesus is the foundation. Build anything on top of a foundation other than Christ, and it will not hold.

Some people wonder why the promise they read in the Bible, or the miracle they received in a service, or the goosebumps they felt in worship is not sticking. There is a good chance it is because it is not built on Jesus Christ. That is often no fault of their own: we do our church routine and never come back to the foundational teaching.

> ROMANS 10:9 ESV
>
> 9 because, if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.

Have the congregation say it: Jesus is Lord. That is the foundation for this message.

THE QUESTION OF THE AGES

The title may sound strange for a church: Who is Jesus? You would assume everyone in the room knows. But in the church at large, we have taken for granted the person, deity and work of Jesus Christ to the point that it is almost completely ignored, and Jesus is entirely misunderstood.

If we get Jesus wrong, we get everything wrong.

A. W. Tozer wrote in *The Knowledge of the Holy*:

> What comes into our minds when we think about God is the most important thing about us. The gravest question before the Church is always God Himself, and the most portentous fact about any man is not what he at a given time may say or do, but what he in his deep heart conceives God to be like.

Tozer saw the importance of the question. Take it one step further: it is of equal importance that what comes to mind is shaped by the Bible alone.

- If you say, "I believe in God," is that the God of the Bible?
- If you say, "I believe in Jesus," is that the Jesus of the Bible?

If what comes to mind isn't defined by the Bible, you might get the right name, but the wrong person.

RIGHT NAME, WRONG PERSON

Illustration: the bag that went to Israel. Years ago Pastor Jason flew from Birmingham to New York City to drive a Mini Cooper back home. (The first place he ever drove a stick shift was Manhattan.) He checked a bag full of CDs and a change of clothes. At baggage claim his bag never came. The agent looked up his name and handed him a bag with a tag that said "Jason Mayfield." It was not his bag. His bag was on its way to Israel, and he was holding another Jason Mayfield's bag. They had the right name and the wrong person.

> **1 CORINTHIANS 8:5-6** ESV
>
> [5] For although there may be so-called gods in heaven or on earth—as indeed there are many "gods" and many "lords"—[6] 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.

There is a way to picture this:

- **Big G God:** the one true God of the Bible. "Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one" (Deuteronomy 6:4).
- **Little g gods:** the false gods, what the Bible calls the gods of the nations.
- **Big J Jesus:** the Jesus of the Bible.
- **Little j jesus:** the jesus of our imagination. The right name, but the wrong person. Who we think Jesus is, not who the Bible says He is.

Hold up the figurine. He is smiling, his hands are up, and he is called Jesus. He is Jesus, but he's not Jesus. There is no Bible verse that says Jesus is one inch tall.

> PSALM 115:4-8 ESV
>
> 4 Their idols are silver and gold, the work of human hands. 5 They have mouths, but do not speak; eyes, but do
> not see. 6 They have ears, but do not hear; noses, but do not smell. 7 They have hands, but do not feel; feet,
> but do not walk; and they do not make a sound in their throat. 8 Those who make them become like them; so
> do all who trust in them.

Verse 8 is the one that should concern us most: those who make idols become like them.

Big J Jesus can save. He can heal. He can deliver. He can baptize you in the Holy Spirit. He can pull your life up out of the pit. But little j jesus can't do anything for you. He is powerless to make any change in your life.

> 1 CORINTHIANS 3:10-11 ESV
>
> 10 According to the grace of God given to me, like a skilled master builder I laid a foundation, and someone
> else is building upon it. Let each one take care how he builds upon it. 11 For no one can lay a foundation other
> than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ.

If the God or the Jesus of our mind turns out to be the right name and the wrong person, we risk an ineffectual supernatural supply. There is no answer to prayer and no breakthrough at the end of the wrong Jesus.

So today, seven truths that define who Jesus is.

1. Jesus Is Fully God

> COLOSSIANS 1:15-19 ESV
>
> 15 He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. 16 For by him all things were created, in
> heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things
> were created through him and for him. 17 And he is before all things, and in him all things hold together. 18 And
> he is the head of the body, the church. He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in everything he
> might be preeminent. 19 For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell,

Paul says the same thing again in the next chapter: "For in him the whole fullness of deity dwells bodily" (Colossians 2:9).

Jesus is God in the flesh. He was God before His time on earth, He was God in the flesh during His time on earth, and He is God in the flesh right now and forevermore.

Everything Jesus did on earth, He did as fully God. Yet He voluntarily restrained the privileges of His divinity while He was here. He "emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant" (Philippians 2:7). This is called the **self-limitation of Christ.**

THE TRINITY

Here we tiptoe into the Trinity: **God eternally exists as three persons, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, and each person is fully God, and there is one God.**

This is an essential doctrine, and yet it is beyond our full comprehension. One theologian put it this way: preachers need to stop trying to explain the Trinity and start accepting it. That may be a little bold, but there is truth in it. We have to get comfortable with some mystery.

Why raise it here? Because there is a rise, especially among Pentecostals, of a teaching called Oneness, or modalism, which says the Father, Son and Spirit are not three persons but one person appearing in three modes. Pastor Jason's position: he does not necessarily believe modalism keeps a person out of the family of God, but he believes it is a great error that confuses how the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit work in our lives. And the Holy Spirit is not an "it." He is the third person of the Trinity, He is God, and He shall be honored.

A full message on the Trinity comes at the end of this series.

2. Jesus Is Fully Human

In the same way that Jesus was and is fully God, He was and is fully man. The theological term for this is the **hypostatic union.** He is not half God and half man. He is fully God and fully man.

Read the Gospels and it is obvious that Jesus was a real human. He ate, He drank, He worked, He slept. He was a real man who did real things. When He went to the cross, it was a real price He paid and a real death He experienced.

But as early as the writing of the New Testament, people were denying that Jesus had a real body. They taught that Jesus went to the cross as a spirit, a kind of projection from heaven, so the price He paid was not real. This error came to be called Docetism. John dealt with these teachers directly:

> **1 JOHN 4:2** ESV
>
> 2 By this you know the Spirit of God: every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God,

What Jesus did on the cross was a real payment for our sin, not a symbolic gesture.

Paul writes, "there is one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus" (1 Timothy 2:5). Because He is fully God and fully man, Jesus perfectly represents us to the Father, as the payment for humanity's sin:

> **ROMANS 8:3-4** ESV
>
> 3 For God has done what the law, weakened by the flesh, could not do. By sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, he condemned sin in the flesh, 4 in order that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.

And He perfectly represents the Father to us:

> **HEBREWS 1:3** ESV
>
> 3 He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature, and he upholds the universe by the word of his power. After making purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high,

If you want to know what God is like, look to Jesus. Look to the finished work of the One who came, paid the price and saved you.

> **1 JOHN 4:10** ESV
>
> 10 In this is love, not that we have loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.

3. Jesus Lived a Sinless Life

> **HEBREWS 4:15** ESV
>
> 15 For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin.

You would think everyone in church knows this. You would think Jesus being perfect would be at the forefront of what people think about Christianity, whether they are saved or not. It is not.

In the American Bible Society's *State of the Bible: USA 2025* survey of American adults (not church members, all Americans), 38% believed Jesus was sinless, 18% were unsure, and 44% believed He was a sinner. This was not a question of faith, but of what people think is true about Jesus.

It is crucial to proclaim this: **if He is not sinless, you are not saved.** Jesus is God, and "God is not man, that he should lie" (Numbers 23:19). He is utterly holy, utterly pure, utterly perfect, the spotless Lamb, "like that of a lamb without blemish or spot" (1 Peter 1:19).

America, you need to know that Jesus is perfect. Your church needs to know that Jesus is perfect.

And He was still tempted as we are. That means we have a high priest who sympathizes with us. Jesus does not sit in an ivory tower. He came down into the middle of His creation.

4. Jesus Died on a Roman Cross

> **PHILIPPIANS 2:8** ESV
>
> 8 And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.

> **1 PETER 2:24** ESV
>
> 24 He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. By his wounds you have been healed.

His death on the cross was the payment required for our sin to be completely forgiven.

5. Jesus Rose from the Dead Three Days Later

> **ROMANS 6:5-6** ESV
>
> 5 For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his. 6 We know that our old self was crucified with him in order that the body of sin might be brought to nothing, so that we would no longer be enslaved to sin.

His resurrection makes us "partakers of the divine nature" (2 Peter 1:4).

The cross gets it for you. The resurrection gets it to you. The cross paid for it: what Jesus did on the cross secured the payment, and the bill is paid in full. The resurrection delivers it. Because Jesus lives, you get to be free. Because Jesus lives, you get to experience deliverance. Because Jesus lives, you get to be healed. Because Jesus lives, you get to go to heaven.

BONUS: WHERE CHRISTIANITY GETS ITS AUTHORITY

Pastor Jason was recently asked what gives Christianity its authority. The person offered two options: the Pope, as the Catholic Church believes, or the Bible, as Protestants believe. His answer: neither. **The resurrection gives the church its authority.** What makes Christianity true, and the only way to God, is that we serve a risen, living Savior right now.

6. Jesus Will Come Again

Christ "will appear a second time, not to deal with sin but to save those who are eagerly waiting for him" (Hebrews 9:28). We are "waiting for our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ" (Titus 2:13).

> **1 THESSALONIANS 4:16-17** ESV
>
> 16 For the Lord himself will descend from heaven with a cry of command, with the voice of an archangel, and with the sound of the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. 17 Then we who are alive, who are left, will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we will always be with the Lord.

Jesus is coming back, and He is coming back for you and me. We look forward to His soon-coming return. "But concerning that day and hour no one knows" (Matthew 24:36). So stop buying the books that claim to know when

the end of the world is coming. We don't know the day, but He is coming.

7. Jesus Will Judge All People

> REVELATION 20:11-15 ESV
>
> 11 Then I saw a great white throne and him who was seated on it. From his presence earth and sky fled away,
> and no place was found for them. 12 And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne, and
> books were opened. Then another book was opened, which is the book of life. And the dead were judged by
> what was written in the books, according to what they had done. 13 And the sea gave up the dead who were in
> it, Death and Hades gave up the dead who were in them, and they were judged, each one of them, according
> to what they had done. 14 Then Death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death,
> the lake of fire. 15 And if anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake
> of fire.

Revelation is a complex book, and many people claim more about it than the text says. But here is what we do know from this passage.

Every person will be judged according to what they have done. Every person who has lived, is living or will live will stand before what the church has called the great white throne judgment. Every lie, every time you cheated the tax man, every time you took what was not yours, every time you looked at what you shouldn't have. That is bad news for all of us.

But then another book is opened: the Book of Life. Call it Jesus' little black book. Heaven belongs to "only those who are written in the Lamb's book of life" (Revelation 21:27).

- If your name is written in the Book of Life, you are judged according to the fully sufficient payment of Jesus' finished work. You go to heaven, you reap an eternal reward, and you spend the rest of time in glory.
- If you have not put your faith in Jesus Christ, you will be judged according to your own doing. No one has done enough to pay for their own sin, and those whose names are not written in the book of life will be thrown into the lake of fire.

Conclusion

This is why we do what we do. This is why a church makes changes, and why a pastor gets bold on Sundays and Wednesdays.

When this message was preached, there were about 320,000 people within 20 miles of the church. How many of them do not have their names written in the Lamb's Book of Life? (Use the number for your own community.)

There's a heaven to gain and a hell to shun. We build everything on Jesus because all people need Jesus Christ. As Pastor Jason put it: "I just want to make it real difficult for people in South Alabama to go to hell."

Pray that when people meet us, pass the building, see the church sign, see an ad online or get an invitation card, the Holy Spirit will anoint it so that they become responsive to the gospel, and that their names will be written in the Lamb's Book of Life.

Close where you began: Jesus is Lord. Who is Jesus? He is fully God, fully human, sinless, crucified, risen, coming again, and the judge of all people. Build everything on Him.

03

Scripture List

Every passage read, cited or alluded to in the message, in the order it comes up.

Read

Read aloud in the message.

ROMANS 10:9	9 because, if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.
1 CORINTHIANS 8:5-6	5 For although there may be so-called gods in heaven or on earth—as indeed there are many "gods" and many "lords"—6 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.
PSALM 115:4-8	4 Their idols are silver and gold, the work of human hands. 5 They have mouths, but do not speak; eyes, but do not see. 6 They have ears, but do not hear; noses, but do not smell. 7 They have hands, but do not feel; feet, but do not walk; and they do not make a sound in their throat. 8 Those who make them become like them; so do all who trust in them.
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ROMANS 8:3-4	3 For God has done what the law, weakened by the flesh, could not do. By sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, he condemned sin in the flesh, 4 in order that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.
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Cited

Named or quoted along the way.

EPHESIANS 2:20	20 built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone,
DEUTERONOMY 6:4	4 "Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one.
1 TIMOTHY 2:5	5 For there is one God, and there is one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus,
HEBREWS 9:28	28 so Christ, having been offered once to bear the sins of many, will appear a second time, not to deal with sin but to save those who are eagerly waiting for him.
TITUS 2:13	13 waiting for our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ,

Alluded to

Drawn on without naming the reference.

NUMBERS 23:19	19 God is not man, that he should lie, or a son of man, that he should change his mind. Has he said, and will he not do it? Or has he spoken, and will he not fulfill it?
1 PETER 1:19	19 but with the precious blood of Christ, like that of a lamb without blemish or spot.

2 PETER 1:4	4 by which he has granted to us his precious and very great promises, so that through them you may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped from the corruption that is in the world because of sinful desire.
MATTHEW 24:36	36 “But concerning that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but the Father only.
REVELATION 21:27	27 But nothing unclean will ever enter it, nor anyone who does what is detestable or false, but only those who are written in the Lamb’s book of life.

Pastor Jason Mayfield

SENIOR PASTOR, CITYLIGHT CHURCH

Pastor Jason Mayfield is the Senior Pastor of Citylight Church in Saraland, Alabama, where he and his wife, Ashleigh, lead a church devoted to Building Lives on Jesus. His preaching is rooted in the Bible, full of hope, and grounded in one conviction: an incredible life is built on the finished work of Jesus Christ.

For more than 20 years, Pastor Jason has given his life to the local church. He has been credentialed with the Assemblies of God for 21 years and ordained for 14, and he has led revitalization in churches that went on to rank among the Top 100 Fastest-Growing Churches in America. He carries a deep conviction that the church can be both excellent and supernatural, and a passion for revival.

He is an author and the creator of Tear Up Your Bible and POWER 27, a daily rhythm of Bible reading, prayer and worship. His resources have helped more than 100,000 people go deeper in the Scriptures. Above every title, his greatest joy is seeing people meet Jesus, be filled with the Spirit, and grow into everything God has called them to be.

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