

We Believe in Jesus: Lecture Manuscript

Intro: "Who Do You Say That I Am"

Good evening. Tonight, we are continuing our We Believe series by looking at Christology—the study of who Jesus is and what He has done.

This isn't about collecting trivia. We are here to answer the most important question of your life:

Who is Jesus?

Not just, "Do you like Him?" or "Do you believe He existed?" But who do you say He is?

In Matthew 16, Jesus asks His disciples, "Who do people say that the Son of Man is?" They list the popular opinions: John the Baptist, Elijah, Jeremiah. People had opinions then, and they still do today. Great teacher. Prophet. Moral example. Revolutionary.

But then Jesus makes it personal: "But who do you say that I am?"

Peter confesses: "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God." Peter isn't saying Jesus is just helpful or inspirational. He is declaring Him the promised Messiah, the Son of God.

This matters because a false Jesus cannot save.

A Jesus of your own imagination cannot save you. A Jesus who is only a good teacher cannot save you. A Jesus who is just a created being, or who didn't rise from the grave, cannot save you. We need the real Jesus of Scripture.

To anchor this, we are using four simple memory hooks tonight. When someone asks what you believe about Jesus, you won't freeze. You will have these four truths ready:

- Jesus is the Eternal Son.
- Jesus is God and Man.
- Jesus is Crucified and Risen.
- Jesus is the Only Way.

Let's say those together:

- Jesus is the Eternal Son.
- Jesus is God and Man.
- Jesus is Crucified and Risen.
- Jesus is the Only Way.

That is our roadmap. For each hook, we will look at a key Scripture, explain it, address a common objection, and repeat the truth.

We want these hooks to be so clear that you can easily share them with a child, a friend, or a coworker.

Let's look at the first hook.

1. Jesus is the Eternal Son

Our first memory hook is this: Jesus is the Eternal Son.

Say that with me: Jesus is the Eternal Son.

Let me ask you a question: When did Jesus become the Son of God? Was it at His birth in Bethlehem? At His baptism? At His resurrection?

The Bible's answer is: He never became the Son. He eternally is the Son.

Look at Jesus's own words in **John 5:26**:

"For just as the Father has life in Himself, even so He gave to the Son also to have life in Himself."

The context here is critical. Jesus had just healed a man on the Sabbath and called God His own Father. The religious leaders wanted to kill Him because He was making Himself equal with God (John 5:18). He wasn't claiming God was His Father in some general way; He was claiming a unique, divine relation.

In verse 26, Jesus explains why. He says the Father has "life in Himself."

You and I do not have life in ourselves. We are dependent creatures. We need air, food, water, and sleep. We need God to sustain us every single second. Theologians call God's self-existence aseity. God doesn't borrow life from anyone.

Yet Jesus says the Father gave the Son to have this same life in Himself. Not borrowed life. Not creaturely life. Divine, self-existent life.

Now, does "gave" mean the Son didn't always have it? No. If that were true, the Son would be a creature.

This is where need to remind ourselves of a memory hook about God. That is God is "wholly other". God is utterly unique and categorically different than you and I. So when God speaks in human terms at time, it's anthropomorphically, or in analogies that we can understand him.

This is where we need the biblical truth of eternal generation.

This means the Father is eternally Father, and the Son is eternally Son. The Father is unbegotten; the Son is eternally begotten. This does not mean created, and it does not mean the Son is less than the Father. It means the Son eternally comes from the Father as Son, sharing the exact same divine essence, glory, and power.

With human fathers and sons, the father exists first. But God is eternal and outside of time. There was never a time when the Father was not Father, and the Son was not Son. As the early church confessed, He is begotten, not made.

This directly refutes adoptionism—the false idea that Jesus was just a man who became the Son of God at some point in history.

Galatians 4:4 says:

"But when the fullness of the time came, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman..."

Notice the order. God sent His Son. He didn't send a man who later became His Son.

In John 17:5, Jesus prays for the glory He shared with the Father "before the world was." In John 17:24, He says the Father loved Him "before the foundation of the world."

This changes how you think about your salvation. God didn't create the universe because He was lonely or needed someone to love. The Father eternally loved the Son. Through salvation, we are brought by grace into that eternal love. We are adopted as sons and daughters by grace because Jesus is the Son by nature. You are not saved by a promoted servant or a created being. You are saved by the Eternal Son of God.

Think of an air hockey table. When I was a kid, we would run to the back of Pizza Hut and beg our moms for quarters to turn the table on. But every now and then, you'd walk up and the table was already running. No coin needed. The air was already blowing; the puck was already floating.

When Jesus came into the world, He didn't "come alive" or become the Son for the first time. The life was already there. He is eternally alive with the Father.

I know this is difficult to wrap your mind around. That's good. That's mean you're searching out God correctly. The eternal son is a double doozy. In one hand you're talking about eternity (something we don't know anything about right now), and the other hand, a Son that was eternally generated from His father.

Memory hook number one: Jesus is the Eternal Son.

Let's say it together: Jesus is the Eternal Son.

And because He is the Eternal Son, we have to ask the next question: What does it mean when Scripture says this Son became flesh?

That brings us to our second hook.

2. Jesus is God and Man

Here is the condensed version of Section 2. It cuts the text down by about two-thirds (from 2,500 words to roughly 800) while retaining the critical biblical arguments, theological distinctions, historical guardrails, and pastoral comfort in a sharp, readable preaching style:

2. Jesus is God and Man

Our second memory hook is this: Jesus is God and Man.

Say that with me: Jesus is God and Man.

We must get this right. If we get this wrong, we lose both who Jesus is and how He saves.

Let's go to John chapter 1:

"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God... And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us." (John 1:1, 14)

These verses give us both sides of our memory hook.

First: Jesus is God.

John writes, "In the beginning was the Word." When the beginning began, the Word already existed. John says, "The Word was with God"—showing a distinction of persons—and "the Word was God"—showing equality of nature.

Then verse 3 makes it even clearer: "All things came into being through Him." John divides all of reality into two categories: things that were created, and the Word who created them. Jesus is not a creature. He is the Creator.

A common objection is: "Wait, isn't Jesus called the 'firstborn of all creation' in Colossians 1:15?"

Some argue this means He was the first thing God created. But in the Bible, "firstborn" doesn't refer to birth order; it refers to rank, supremacy, and honor. For example, in Exodus 4:24 - The nation of Israel is identified as God's "firstborn", you also see this in Jeremiah. Maybe even more specifically to Jesus, God calls King David, in Psalm 89:27, His "firstborn," even though David was actually the youngest son in his family.

Why is Jesus called the firstborn over creation? Colossians 1:16 tells us: "For by Him all things were created." He is supreme over creation because He made it. Then Paul, the author of Colossians, in just a few verses later in Colossians 2:9 solidifies his points by stating, "In Him all the fullness of Deity dwells in bodily form."

Paul can't be any clearer, all of the essence of that which is God dwells fully in the Person of Jesus Christ. Which leads us to conclude that Jesus is Truly God.

Second: Jesus is Man.

John 1:14 says, "The Word became flesh."

This is the Incarnation. When the eternal Son became flesh, He did not stop being God. He did not subtract His deity. The Incarnation is an act of addition, not subtraction. He remained what He was—truly God—and added what He was not—truly man. He had a real human body, mind, soul. He grew, got hungry, got tired, suffered, and died.

Now how do we talk properly about this? How can Jesus be both God and Man at the same time?

The theological term that the church developed throughout centuries of fighting heresy is titled: the hypostatic union.

This simply means Jesus is one person with two natures: truly God and truly man. Not a 50/50 blend. Not God merely pretending to be human.

This is what we believe, as orthodox Christians, believe the Bible faithfully teaches about the Person of Jesus.

Why does this matter for salvation?

Hebrews 2:14-17 explains the divine logic. Since we are flesh and blood, He had to partake of the same. God, in His divine nature, cannot die. So if the Son is going to die in our place, He must take on a human nature. He must be human to represent us and pay our debt. But He must also be God, because only God has the power to save us from sin, death, and judgment.

This helps us answer common questions like: "If Jesus is God, how could He be hungry, tired, or not know the hour of His return?"

The rule to remember is this: What is true of either nature can be spoken of the one person, but we must not confuse the two natures.

According to His human nature, Jesus grew in wisdom, felt tired, and got hungry.

According to His divine nature, Jesus claimed "I AM" before Abraham, sustained the universe, and received worship.

The early church summarized this beautifully at the Council of Chalcedon. They declared Jesus is one person in two natures:

Without confusion (the two natures are not mixed into a hybrid).

Without change (He never stopped being God).

Without division or separation (He is one acting person, forever united).

In ordinary language:

When Jesus is sleeping in the boat, the person sleeping is the eternal Son, sleeping according to His human nature.

When He stands and calms the storm, the same person commands the wind with divine authority according to His divine nature.

When He is nailed to the cross, the person suffering is God the Son in our humanity.

This is not just abstract theology, it is deep pastoral comfort.

Hebrews 4 tells us we have a High Priest who can sympathize with our weaknesses. When you are tempted, Jesus knows temptation. When you suffer, He knows suffering. When you are tired, He knows exhaustion. When you grieve, He knows tears. He has walked in our shoes, yet without sin.

The Redeemer we need is exactly the Redeemer the Bible gives us. If He is not truly God, He cannot save us. If He is not truly man, He cannot represent us.

Let's say our first two hooks together:

Jesus is the Eternal Son.

Jesus is God and Man.

Because He is God and man, He can do what no one else could do: He can die for sinners and rise in victory. That brings us to our third hook.

3. Jesus is Crucified and Risen

Our third memory hook is this: Jesus is the Risen Savior.

Say that with me: Jesus is the Risen Savior.

In 1 Corinthians 15:3, Paul writes:

"For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received."

This is the absolute center of our faith:

"That Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried, and that He was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures."

The Resurrection.

Paul does not stop at the grave. In 1 Corinthians 15:17, he writes: "If Christ has not been raised, your faith is worthless, and you are still in your sins." Christianity stands or falls on a historical, bodily resurrection.

To see the historical reality of this event, think of a three-legged stool of evidence:

Leg 1: The Empty Tomb

- **Verse:** Look at **John 20:1–2**: "Now on the first day of the week Mary Magdalene came early to the tomb, while it was still dark, and saw the stone already taken away from the tomb. So she ran and went to Simon Peter... and said, 'They have taken away the Lord out of the tomb, and we do not know where they have laid Him.'"
- **Point:** Notice Mary's immediate reaction. She does not look at the open grave and shout, "Resurrection!" Instead, she cries, "They have taken the body!"
- **Explanation:** This shows us the disciples were not sitting around expecting a miracle. They had to be convinced by hard evidence. More than that, the empty tomb is an undeniable historical reality. If the body of Jesus were still in that tomb, the Roman and Jewish authorities in Jerusalem could have produced it and crushed the Christian movement on day one. But they couldn't. The tomb was empty.

Leg 2: The Resurrection Appearances

- **Verse:** Look at **1 Corinthians 15:5–6**: "...and that He appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve. After that He appeared to more than five hundred brethren at one time, most of whom remain until now, but some have fallen asleep;"
- **Point:** Paul points to a massive, public cloud of living eyewitnesses. He is writing this only twenty-some years after the event, essentially telling his readers: "This wasn't a private dream or a secret vision. If you don't believe me, go talk to them yourself—most of them are still alive."

- **Explanation:** The resurrection of Jesus was not a subjective feeling inside the disciples' hearts. It was a concrete, public, historical event witnessed by hundreds of people at the same time. And these witnesses weren't seeing a ghost or a hallucination. As Luke 24:39 supports, Jesus stood among them and said, "See My hands and My feet, that it is I Myself; touch Me and see, for a spirit does not have flesh and bones as you see that I have." He showed them His scars, He walked with them, and He ate physical food. The sheer scale of these public appearances—paired with their physical reality—proves that Jesus is alive in a glorified body, guaranteeing our future resurrection.

Leg 3: The Witness of the Women

- **Verse:** Look at Matthew 28:8–9: "And they left the tomb quickly with fear and great joy and ran to report it to His disciples. And behold, Jesus met them and greeted them. And they came up and took hold of His feet and worshiped Him."
- **Point:** The very first people to see the risen Lord, hold His feet, and receive the commission to tell others were women.
- **Explanation:** In the first-century Roman and Jewish world, women were not legally allowed to testify in court. Their testimony carried zero weight. If you were inventing a story in the ancient world to convince skeptics, you would never make women your primary witnesses. You would put Peter or John at the front of the line. The only reason all four Gospels record women as the first witnesses is because that is exactly what happened. It is an awkward historical detail that proves the absolute authenticity of the text.

4. Jesus is the Only Way

Our fourth and final memory hook is this: Jesus is the Only Way.

Say that with me: Jesus is the Only Way.

Let's look at **John 14:6**. Jesus says: "I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me."

This is one of the clearest statements Jesus ever made. But notice the context. He isn't speaking in a calm lecture hall. He is speaking to terrified disciples on the night of His betrayal. They are confused, anxious, and afraid.

When Thomas asks in John 14:5, "Lord, we do not know where You are going, how do we know the way?" Jesus doesn't give him a map, a formula, or a religious technique. Jesus gives Thomas Himself.

He says, "I am the way. I am the truth. I am the life."

This is not a cold slogan. It is profound comfort. The way to the Father isn't a code we have to crack. The way is a Person who came from the Father, died for us, rose for us, and brings us home.

In our culture, this sounds incredibly narrow. People ask: "Isn't it arrogant to say Jesus is the only way? What about other sincere religious people?"

Let's be clear: when Christians claim Jesus is the only way, we aren't saying we are smarter or better than anyone else. The exclusivity of Christ doesn't flow from our pride; it flows from His unique identity and work.

If Jesus were just a moral teacher, saying He is the only way would be absurd. But our core problem is not ignorance; if it were, we would only need a teacher. Our core problem is not lack of inspiration; if it were, we would only need a good example. Our problem is sin before a holy God. Sincerity does not remove guilt.

We need a mediator who can reconcile us to the Father. Only Jesus is qualified because of the truths we have already established tonight:

Because He is the Eternal Son, He alone reveals the Father.

Because He is God and Man, He alone can stand between God and man.

Because He is the Risen Savior, He alone has conquered sin and death.

Therefore, He is the Only Way.

As Acts 4:12 declares: "There is salvation in no one else; for there is no other name under heaven... by which we must be saved."

1 Timothy 2:5 echoes this: "For there is one God, and one mediator also between God and men, the man Christ Jesus."

People argue that a single way is unfair. But look at the cross. The wonder of the gospel is not that there is only one way to God—the wonder is that there is a way at all.

God did not owe us a rescue. Yet in infinite love, He sent His Son to die our death and rise in victory. The exclusivity of Christ is the exclusivity of the only Savior who can actually save.

We trust in Christ alone. Not Christ plus our goodness, our morality, or our church attendance. Just Christ.

Let's say all four of our memory hooks together one last time:

Jesus is the Eternal Son.

Jesus is God and Man.

Jesus is the Risen Savior.

Jesus is the Only Way.

This is the Jesus of Scripture. Worship Him, trust Him, and confess Him clearly to the world.

Conclusion

Let's come back to where we started.

Jesus asked His disciples, "Who do you say that I am?" Tonight, that same question comes directly to you.

Who do you say Jesus is?

Now, you have your answer. Let's say our four hooks one more time:

- Jesus is the Eternal Son.
- Jesus is God and Man.
- Jesus is the Risen Savior.
- Jesus is the Only Way.

So, what do we do with this?

First, worship Him. Jesus is not a helper you add to your busy schedule. He is the eternal Creator, the Sustainer, and the Lord of glory. Worship Him.

Second, trust Him. His work is sufficient. Do not try to add to it with your goodness, your morality, or your religious effort. Christ is enough. Trust Him.

Third, confess Him clearly. The world has many false versions of Jesus. But the church must boldly confess the true Jesus of Scripture.

Do not worry if you can't remember all of the technical terms we used tonight, like aseity, hypostatic union, or penal substitution. If you simply remember these four hooks, you have a protective frame for your faith:

- The Eternal Son protects you from a Jesus who is merely a creature.
- God and Man protects you from a Jesus who is too small to save or too distant to represent you.
- The Risen Savior protects you from a Jesus who merely teaches but doesn't redeem.
- The Only Way protects you from trusting in your own works.

Hold onto these hooks, and keep filling them with Scripture. The next time someone asks you who Jesus is, you will be ready to look them in the eye and say:

We believe Jesus is the Eternal Son of God, truly God and truly man, who died for our sins, rose from the grave, and is the only way to the Father.

Amen.