

"One of a Kind"

The Lord Jesus is truly unique. No one in all history compares with His love, His purity, or His honesty. Hello, I'm Phil Sanders. And this is a Bible study, "In SEARCH of the Lord's Way." And today we're going to see how Jesus is one of a kind. Stay tuned.

Welcome to In SEARCH of the Lord's Way! We're here to search the Scripture for God's teaching, so that we may please Him. We know the Scriptures come from God, and there is no other volume in all the earth like the Bible. 2 Timothy 3 verses 16 to 17 says, that "All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work." Because it's God's Word, the Bible can work in our lives like no other book. It can teach us the truth, keep us straight, and train us to do what is right. God blessed us greatly through the Bible. Thanks for studying with us today. We want to be part of your life each week.

In all of history, Jesus stands unique; He is one of a kind. We can find no one so pure, so kind, so humble, so loving, or so honest. He sets the standard for morality, for sacrificial giving, for compassion, and for righteousness. He is our only hope, our only joy, our only peace, and our only source of eternal life. The apostle Paul said of Jesus in 1 Corinthians 1 verses 30 to 31, that He "became to us wisdom from God, righteousness and sanctification and redemption, so that, as it is written, 'Let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord.'" My friend, what is Jesus to you? How do you regard Him? Have you set Him apart as Lord in your life? Is He one of a kind in your life? When you boast, do you boast in the Lord?

Now if you want to study more about the uniqueness of Jesus, we offer this study free. If you'd like a printed copy or a CD of our study and you live in the United States, mail your request to In Search of the Lord's Way, P.O. Box 371, Edmond, OK 73083 or send an e-mail to searchtv@searchtv.org. Or, you can call our toll-free telephone number. That number is 1-800-321-8633. Now if you live outside the United States, we have materials free online, and you can find them at www.searchtv.org.

The Edmond church will now worship in song, we'll read from Acts 4 verses 8 to 12, and see how Jesus is truly one of a kind

Our scripture reading today is from Acts chapter 4 verses 8 through 12. Now Peter and John had healed a man who was lame in the temple. And they were called to account by the chief priests and others. And here is the words of Peter. "And then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them, 'Rulers and elders of the people, if we are on trial today for a benefit done to a sick man, as to how this man has been made well, let it be known to all of you and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ the Nazarene, whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead—by this name this man stands here before you in good health. He is the **STONE WHICH WAS REJECTED** by you, **THE BUILDERS**, but **WHICH BECAME THE CHIEF CORNER** stone. 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.'" That's the words of the apostle Peter found in the holy Bible. Let's pray together. Father, we're grateful for the fact that Jesus came to this earth. And we know that we must give our faith and our trust to Him. Father help us everyday to be pleasing in your sight, and to love our Lord. It's in His name we pray, Amen!

Dr. James Francis wrote this brief essay about Jesus Christ in 1926, "Here is a man who was born in an obscure village, the child of a peasant woman. He grew up in another village. He worked in a little carpenter shop until He was thirty. Then for three years, He was an itinerant preacher. He never owned a home. He never wrote a book. He never held an office. He never had a family. He never went

to college. He never put His foot inside a big city. He never traveled two hundred miles from the place He was born. He never did one of the things that usually accompany greatness. He had no credentials but Himself...While still a young man, the tide of popular opinion turned against Him. His friends ran away. One of them denied Him. He was turned over to His enemies. He went through the mockery of a trial. He was nailed upon a cross between two thieves. While He was dying His executioners gambled for the only piece of property that He had on earth – His coat. When He was dead, He was laid in a borrowed grave through the pity of a friend. Nineteen long centuries have come and gone, and today He is the centerpiece of the human race and leader of the column of progress. And I am far within the mark when I say that all the armies that ever marched, and all the navies that were ever built; and all the parliaments that ever sat and all the kings that ever reigned, put together, have not affected the life of man upon this earth as powerfully as that one solitary life.”

Jesus was and is indeed one of a kind! We can thank God that He came to this earth and gave Himself that we might have forgiveness, that we might have eternal life, and hope. Because of Jesus, we have reconciliation with the Father. Because we pray in His name, the Father hears and answers. Because of Jesus, we can become children of God and fellow heirs with Christ in heaven. Oh, how is Jesus able to do all this?

Well first, Jesus is unique because He has always existed. John 1 verses 1 to 3 says, “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. And all things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made.” Some see Jesus as nothing more than a myth; others see Him only as a traveling preacher. The Bible, however, teaches that Jesus was in the beginning and created you and me. In Revelation 22 verse 13 Jesus said, “I am the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end.” The Lord Jesus told the Jews in John 8 and verse 58, “Truly, truly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I am.” Now in saying this, Jesus was revealing His divine nature, that He’s always existed.

Second, Jesus is unique in that He fulfilled prophecies made hundreds of years before His birth. You cannot find prophecies of other religious leaders like those that are made about Christ. The apostles appealed repeatedly to God’s prophecies found in the Old Testament to show Jesus is the promised prophet and the Messiah. J. Barton Payne listed 191 Old Testament prophecies about Jesus. Alfred Edersheim, a Jewish Christian scholar, cited 456 Old Testament passages referring to the Messiah. Yes, the Jews knew that a Messiah would come, and Jesus fulfilled those well-known prophecies precisely as no one else could.

The prophets knew that Jesus would be a son of David, that He would be born in Bethlehem of Judea, that He would be betrayed by a friend for thirty pieces of silver, that He would be crucified, that His bones would not be broken, that soldiers would gamble over His clothes, and that darkness would cover the land. The prophets knew that He would ride triumphantly into Jerusalem on a donkey, that He would teach in parables, and that He would rise from the dead on the third day. Isaiah the prophet knew that He would make His grave with the wicked and with a rich man in his death.

You see, the Lord Jesus could say in Luke 24 verse 44, that “these are My words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, that all things which are written about Me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled.” Jesus said the prophets wrote about Him in John 5 and verse 39. Peter could claim in Acts 3 and verse 18, that “the things which God announced beforehand by the mouth of all the prophets, that His Christ would suffer, He has thus fulfilled.” Yes, Jesus fulfilled the many prophecies given about Him over hundreds of years. Can anyone else make such a claim? No, Jesus is indeed one of a kind.

Third, Jesus is unique in that He was born of a virgin. Isaiah made the prophecy about Him in Isaiah 7 and verse 14. The apostle Matthew records its fulfillment in Matthew 1 verses 20 to 25. And Matthew tells how an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream, saying, "Joseph, son of David, do not fear to take Mary as your wife, for that which is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins." Now all this took place to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet: "Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall call his name Immanuel" (which means, God with us). Now when Joseph woke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him: and he took his wife, but he knew her not until she had given birth to a son. And he called his name Jesus." The virgin birth is unique; and only God could make that happen.

Fourth, Jesus is unique in that He never committed a single sin. Peter said in 1 Peter 2 and verse 22, that "He committed no sin, neither was deceit found in his mouth." Jesus could say as He does in John 8 and verse 46, He could ask, "Which one of you convicts me of sin?" My friend, could you say that? You see, Jesus could not have sacrificed Himself for our sins, if He Himself had committed sins. 1 John 3 and verse 5 says, "You know that he appeared in order to take away sins, and in him there is no sin."

Because He was sinless, He was the perfect high priest and the perfect sacrifice. Hebrews 4 verse 15 and 16 says, "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. Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need." Hebrews 7 verses 26 to 27 explains, "For it was indeed fitting that we should have such a high priest, holy, innocent, unstained, separated from sinners, and exalted above the heavens. He has no need, like those high priests, to offer sacrifices daily, first for his own sins and then for those of the people, since he did this once for all time when he offered up himself."

Fifth, Jesus is unique, because He bodily arose from the dead. Now Jesus predicted His own resurrection. The Lord Jesus confidently predicted in Matthew 16 and verse 21 "that He must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and on the third day be raised." Now the eyewitnesses to His death and resurrection say it happened precisely that way. Through the years, others have predicted that they would rise from the dead, but no one has, no one else has risen, only Jesus Christ. One can visit the tombs of the world's great religious leaders, and you know what those tombs possess the bones of those leaders. Jesus' tomb, however, is empty.

Jesus did not get resurrected in an emergency room after an accident, oh no. He wasn't given a shock after His heart stopped. No, what they did is they took this dead body to the tomb. You'll remember that Pilate would not release His body until he was sure that Jesus was dead. And that's why the soldier pierced His side with the spear. John 19 verse 34 says that when he was pierced with that spear, "immediately blood and water came out," giving proof that He had died. There can no doubt, He truly was dead. Well they bound His body "in linen wrappings with the spices, as is the burial custom of the Jews" (John 19 verse 40). And He spent three days in the tomb, but He arose just as He promised.

Now, both His disciples and His enemies knew the place where He was buried. His enemies tried to prevent His disciples from stealing the body and claiming a resurrection. Matthew 27 verses 62 to 66 says, that "the chief priests and the Pharisees gathered together with Pilate, and they said, 'Sir, we remember that when He was still alive that deceiver said, 'After three days I am to rise again.' Therefore, give orders for the grave to be made secure until the third day, otherwise His disciples may

come and steal Him away and say to the people, 'He has risen from the dead,' and the last deception will be worse than the first.' Pilate said to them, 'You have a guard; you go, make it as secure as you know how.' And they went and they made the grave secure, and along with the guard they set a seal on the stone."

But the guards and the seals, the governors seal, couldn't prevent Jesus from rising from the dead. God planned and ordained His resurrection. You remember, David prophesied a thousand years before the time of Christ in Psalm 16 verse 10, "For you will not abandon my soul to Sheol, or let your holy one see corruption." And you remember, the apostle Peter cited this passage and declared in Acts 2 and verse 24, that "God raised Him up again, putting an end to the agony of death, since it was impossible for Him to be held in its power." Again, Peter said of David in Acts 2 verses 31 and 32, that "he foresaw and spoke about the resurrection of the Christ, that he was not abandoned to Hades, nor did his flesh see corruption. This Jesus God raised up, and (then Peter says) and of that we are all, (that is all the apostles), are witnesses."

Yes, Jesus had witnesses. He appeared on twelve occasions to His disciples. Paul said in 1 Corinthians 15 and verse 6, that "He appeared to more than five hundred brethren at one time, most of whom remain until now, but some have fallen asleep." His disciples were skeptical at first, and some had hardened their hearts in unbelief. But Acts chapter 1 and verse 3 says that Jesus "presented Himself alive after His suffering, by many convincing proofs, appearing to them over a period of forty days." They saw Him, heard, Him, touched Him, and ate with Him. And in being resurrected like this, Jesus is one of a kind. Now these disciples who could hardly believe at first, were bold and courageous after the forty days. They told the story of His resurrection again and again, in spite of all the opposition and persecution. They wouldn't sit silent and leave the truth untold.

Some skeptics claim Jesus wasn't the only god that died and was resurrected. They say Jesus actually borrowed this idea from some pagan gods. Well the problem with this claim, as the historian and Biblical scholar Mike Licona has pointed out in his book "The Case for the Real Jesus", is that the reports of pagan gods dying and rising from the dead can only be found after the first century. While there are reports of dying and rising gods among the pagan religions, there are no reports of someone dying for the sins of mankind and rising up bodily like Jesus did. What we do find is pagan religions talking about the changing seasons of winter to spring being like a resurrection. No, the gospel story is indeed unique; and there simply is no one like Jesus Christ.

Why does this matter? Because the Lord Jesus Christ is the one and only Son of God, who can save your soul. Is He your Savior and your Lord? Let's pray together. Father help us to give our hearts and lives and souls to Jesus. To serve Him all the days that we live. And help us to love You. In Jesus name, Amen!

Everything in history before Jesus points forward to Him, and our calendars point back to Him. You see, He is Lord of all people of all places of all tongues and of all time. He is indeed one of a kind. We must place our faith and trust in Jesus. The apostle Paul wrote in 1 Corinthians 15 verses 1 to 4, "Now I would remind you, brothers, of the gospel I preached to you, which you received, in which you stand, and by which you are being saved, if you hold fast to the word I preached to you—unless you believed in vain. For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, that he was buried, and that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures."

The word "gospel" means good news, and everything Jesus did is good news for you and me. He died for our sins; He arose so that we might have life. Like the Christians of old, we need to receive the

gospel, believe it, and hold fast to it. The gospel has the power to save you, and if you receive and obey it, it can. Put your faith in Jesus, and in His Word. Repent of your sins and begin following the Christ. Confess your faith in the Lord Jesus as the Christ, the Son of the living God. And be baptized for the forgiveness of your sins. Now when you're baptized into Christ, according to Romans 6 verses 3 to ,7 you'll be united with Christ in His death, burial, and resurrection. And then you'll be raised with Him to walk in newness of life, free from sin, and with the hope of eternal life. No one can give you that life but Jesus. Follow Him, serve Him. And do it today!

We hope that today's study about Jesus Christ has stirred you to turn your heart to Him and obey Him. Now, if you live in the United States and you want a free printed copy or a CD of this message, mail your request to In Search of the Lord's Way, P.O. Box 371, Edmond, OK 73083 or send an e-mail to searchtv@searchtv.org. Or you can call the Search office toll-free at 1-800-321-8633. Now if you live outside the United States, you can download our material or watch the program online at www.searchtv.org. We also offer free Bible Correspondence courses and we have study sheets that you can download before each program. And you can fill them out as you are watching the program. Now if you write to us or call us, don't worry, we won't ask you for money or put you on a list.

Please get involved with a church of Christ. They love you and they want you to be a part of their family. Now if you are looking for a healthy, Biblical church home, we'll be happy to help you find one. Well as always, we'll be back next week, Lord willing. So keep searching God's Word with us and tell one of your friends about friends about this program. Invite them to watch it. As always, God bless you and we love you from all of us at In Search of the Lord's Way.