

LIKE NO OTHER: THE LIFE OF CHRIST



His name is Jesus. He is like no other.

He never wrote a book. Yet more books have been written about Him than about any other individual in all of history.

He never wrote a song. But more songs have been composed and sung about Him than about anyone else in the world.

He never traveled more than 300 miles from His home. Yet you can find only a few places in the entire world where people have not heard His name.

Jesus.

To simply worship or acknowledge Jesus as a great person, great prophet, or great leader is to insult Him. He is far more than all of these. He is God who become a man; He is God in the flesh. In Him, the perfect wedding of Deity and humanity coexist, yet are not mixed.

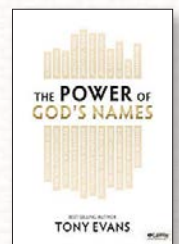
Jesus became like us in order to bring us back into a relationship with God. He entered our world in order to give us a way out of it. He died so that we may live. He gives us life for now and life for eternity.

This study is for all of us. Jesus Christ is more than theology on a shelf, a picture of a man with a halo, or miracles from long ago. He is your friend like no other.



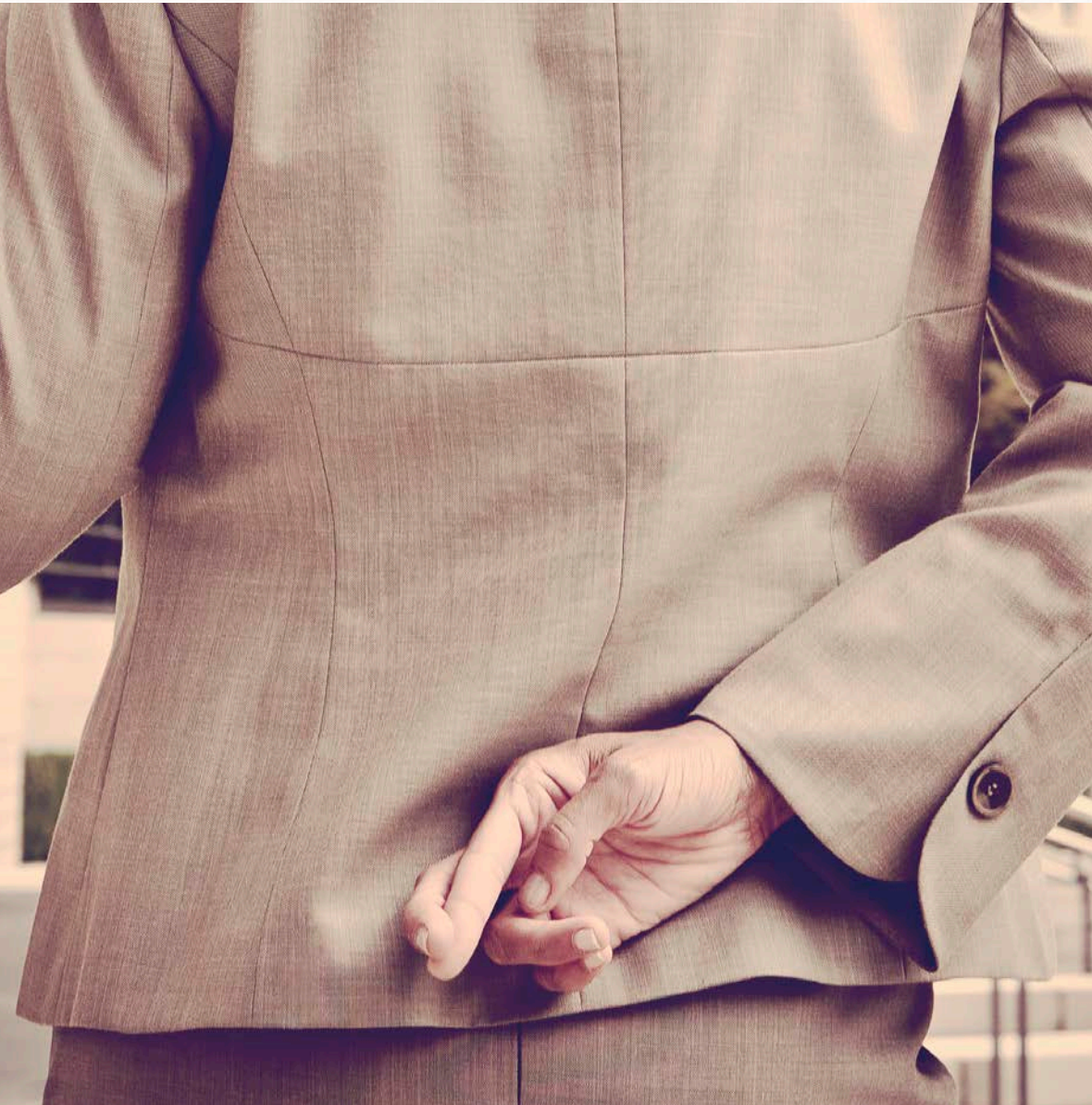
Tony Evans

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SESSION 1

PROMISED LIKE NO OTHER



*How do you decide whether
someone is believable?*

QUESTION #1

#BSFLpromised

THE POINT

Jesus is the promised Messiah.



THE BIBLE MEETS LIFE

Two brothers ran into the house and saw a bowl full of eggs their mom was about to boil. The older brother said, "I'll give you a dollar if you let me break three of these on your head." "Promise?" the younger one asked. "Of course," the older one answered.

Soon, the first egg dripped down the younger brother's face. Then the second. He didn't care; he had his heart set on the promise of the dollar. But as the boy stood there waiting for the third egg, his older brother darted off laughing. "I'm not breaking the third one," the older brother called back, "because that would cost me a dollar!"

Life often serves up broken promises. People disappoint us. Leaders mislead us. And over time, trust cracks like an egg spilling its contents over us. So, how do we know Jesus is who He claimed to be? Why should we believe Him? We know this and we believe Him because He was promised through indisputable prophecy that ultimately came to pass. Let's begin our study of the life of Jesus by going back to a promise that is like no other.

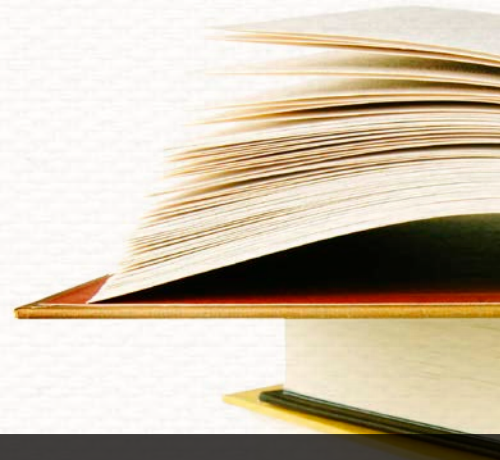
WHAT DOES THE BIBLE SAY?

Isaiah 53:2-12 (HCSB)

2 He grew up before Him like a young plant and like a root out of dry ground. He didn't have an impressive form or majesty that we should look at Him, no appearance that we should desire Him. **3** He was despised and rejected by men, a man of suffering who knew what sickness was. He was like someone people turned away from; He was despised, and we didn't value Him. **4** Yet He Himself bore our sicknesses, and He carried our pains; but we in turn regarded Him stricken, struck down by God, and afflicted. **5** But He was pierced because of our transgressions, crushed because of our iniquities; punishment for our peace was on Him, and we are healed by His wounds. **6** We all went astray like sheep; we all have turned to our own way; and the LORD has punished Him for the iniquity of us all. **7** He was oppressed and afflicted, yet He did not open His mouth. Like a lamb led to the slaughter and like a sheep silent before her shearers, He did not open His mouth. **8** He was taken away because of oppression and judgment; and who considered His fate? For He was cut off from the land of the living; He was struck because of my people's rebellion. **9** They made His grave with the wicked and with a rich man at His death, although He had done no violence and had not spoken deceitfully. **10** Yet the LORD was pleased to crush Him severely. When You make Him a restitution offering, He will see His seed, He will prolong His days, and by His hand, the LORD's pleasure will be accomplished. **11** He will see it out of His anguish, and He will be satisfied with His knowledge. My righteous Servant will justify many, and He will carry their iniquities. **12** Therefore I will give Him the many as a portion, and He will receive the mighty as spoil, because He submitted Himself to death, and was counted among the rebels; yet He bore the sin of many and interceded for the rebels.

His seed (v. 10)—The Hebrew word refers either to what was sown to produce crops or to a person's offspring or descendants. In Isaiah 53:10, the phrase "His seed" likely indicated the Messiah's spiritual descendants—people who would enter His family of faith through commitment to Him.

Portion (v. 12)—The Hebrew word refers either to a share of the spoils of victory in war or to a parcel of land allotted to or possessed by people. The Messiah would be victorious, and He would be rewarded for His faithfulness to God's redemptive purpose.



What surprises you about this description of Christ?

QUESTION #2***Isaiah 53:2-3***

A pastor walked with a soap manufacturer down the streets of New York. Noticing all the advertisements, stores, and clothing promoting a life of ungodliness, the soap manufacturer remarked to the pastor: “The gospel you preach hasn’t done much good. There’s a lot of filth in this world.”

The two men walked a few more blocks before they encountered a homeless man covered in grime. “The soap you sell hasn’t done much good,” the pastor reflected. “There’s a lot of filth in this world.”

The soap manufacturer chuckled and said: “Ah, but you’re wrong. Soap is only useful when it is applied.”

“Exactly,” said the pastor. “And so it is with the gospel.”

A lot of people misunderstand what Jesus came to give us—and how He came to give it. When they look at the life of Jesus, they see things they’d rather not see: pain, rejection, endurance, obscurity, and humility. You see, Jesus didn’t come as a pop star or as a reality-TV king. Isaiah 53:2-3 shows us He had no stately form or majesty. He wasn’t handsome. Instead, He was despised. He knew grief and hung out with sorrow. The promise God gave was that our Savior would be rejected by His own people.

We see in the Gospels how this promise came true:

- ▶ “He came to His own, and His own people did not receive Him” (John 1:11).
- ▶ “Then they all cried out together, ‘Take this man away!’” (Luke 23:18).

Have you ever felt rejection? It cuts deep. It knocks the wind out of you. It’s a pain that lingers, causing you to doubt your own worth. So when it happens, you might try to ignore it. People often try to eat, shop, or entertain their way out of it.

But Jesus didn’t run from rejection. He knew God always has a purpose for the pain. And because of that truth, He willingly embraced it. The gospel message is that Jesus endured rejection so that we can have abundant life. But His sacrifice must be applied in order for that life to take effect.

"I PROMISE!"

What makes a promise believable for you? Rank the following factors according to their level of importance when it comes to evaluating the promises of other people. (Give a 1 to the most-important factor and a 5 to the least-important.)

- ___ The content of the promise itself.
- ___ The trustworthiness of the person giving the promise.
- ___ Your desire for the promise to be true.
- ___ Your past experiences with people and promises.
- ___ The consequences of the promise falling through.

Which of these factors contribute to your evaluation of the promises in God's Word?

"Our Lord came down from life to suffer death.
The Bread came down to hunger.
The Way came down on the way to weariness.
The Fount came down to thirst!"

—ST. AUGUSTINE OF HIPPO

Isaiah 53:4-9

The Bible has been substantiated both historically and archeologically as more accurate than any other book handed down through time. Research and analysis by historians, linguists, sociologists, and archeologists have demonstrated the soundness of the Scriptures through forensic science, the discovery and study of ancient literature, and much more.

The Bible is set apart from all other books in one other way: its prophetic accuracy. A classic example is the foretelling of Jesus' birth in Bethlehem. In Micah 5:2, the prophet Micah told of our Savior's birth more than 700 years before it happened. Matthew recorded the fulfillment of this prophecy in Matthew 2:1-6. What makes this prophecy stand out is the obscurity of Bethlehem. Had Micah mentioned a major metropolis in Israel, people could say he had merely guessed well. Yet Micah recorded the mind of God by pinpointing this remote region as the site of Christ's birth.

Micah's prophecy is just one of several hundred that have already been fulfilled in Scripture. God knows the beginning from the end, and prophecy involves the recording of His thoughts before an event historically happens.

Isaiah 53 also contains a number of prophecies, including Jesus' piercing, His scourging, and even His silence in the face of oppression. The passage also mentions that our own iniquities would be placed on Jesus as our sinless Savior: "He Himself bore our sicknesses, and He carried our pains" (v. 4). Jesus came not only to bear our sins, but also our burdens.

In your pain, know this one truth: you are not alone. Jesus sees. He knows. He cares. He's been there. And because He has suffered, He offers a comfort not merely rooted in intellectual assent, but in compassionate understanding.

Which prophecies about Jesus in these verses do you find compelling?

QUESTION #3

How can you testify to Christ bearing your sickness and carrying your pain?

QUESTION #4

Isaiah 53:10-12

Have you ever reached that place where your best contacts, connections, relationships, and everywhere else you had previously put your hope just wasn't enough? We sometimes call that "hitting rock bottom." It's at that moment we realize how much we need Jesus. What other people offer in those moments comes up lacking, yet it's in those times we experience Jesus' presence all the more.

After all, Isaiah prophesied that Jesus would come so that He could help us. The crushing and the anguish He went through justified us before God. As He bore our sin, we also read that he "interceded for the rebels" (v. 12). What's more, now that our sin has been atoned for, His intercession has not ceased. In fact, because of His sacrifice, Jesus now intercedes from a position of strength (see Romans 8:34).

Through His death, Jesus secured our pardon. Through His resurrection, He secured our daily hope. **He is the promised Messiah who not only came for us but also remains as our lifeline and assurance.**

You can take comfort in the authenticity of Scripture; it's been confirmed by history, archeology, and the sheer number of fulfilled prophecies. Therefore, turning to Jesus as your help is the wisest thing you could ever do. He is uniquely positioned to provide guidance, comfort, strength, and power. Jesus' life and ministry were like no other. And the prophecies that point to Him are like no other. Jesus is that "friend who stays closer than a brother" (Prov. 18:24). He is "a helper who is always found in times of trouble" (Ps. 46:1). He is your Mediator and your Master. He is your risen King.

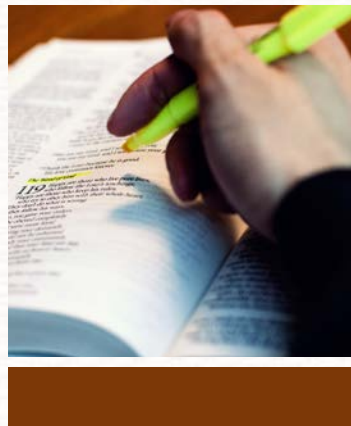
When have you felt like only Jesus was enough?

QUESTION #5

LIVE IT OUT

How can the fulfillment of these promises and prophecies help strengthen your faith? Consider taking one of these steps this week:

- ▶ **Discover God's promises.** As you read the Bible, highlight any verses that contain a promise from God.
- ▶ **Trust His plan.** Make it a point to actively proclaim your trust in God each day. When you pray, acknowledge His plan for your life and declare your intention to trust Him.
- ▶ **Search His prophecies.** Use a Bible dictionary or concordance to look up Old Testament prophecies about Jesus. Consider how each prophecy underscores the truth of who Jesus is.



God keeps His promises. He is dependable and faithful. He sent Jesus as the Messiah—just as He said He would. God will prove Himself trustworthy to you if you will seek Him.

It's All About Jesus



At the start of 2012, I managed to stumble across a number of read-through-the-Bible plans that caught my attention. One of those plans was to read the entire Bible in 90 days. I thought: Whoa! The idea seemed daunting, but also intriguing, so I decided to tackle the plan.

To continue reading "It's All About Jesus" from *ThreadsMedia.com*, visit www.BibleStudiesforLife.com/articles.



My group's prayer requests

A series of 15 horizontal dotted lines for writing.

My thoughts