

What a Friend we Have in Jesus

February 1, 2026

John 1:9-4, Philippians 2:5-11

Vince Lombardi was one of football's greatest coaches. He coached the Green Bay Packers to five championships. After a disappointing game, Vince walked into the locker room and held up a football.

"Men", he said, "This is a football". He went on to make the point that there comes a time when the best strategy is to get back to the basics. There is a great object lesson in that illustration. He stood before champions; in this room were of some of the greatest football players in history. Even the best of the best have to stop and get back to the basics when they get off course.

That is what we are doing as we move forward in 2026. Three weeks ago, we began by looking at the doctrine of God. Now mind you, a few years ago I took six weeks to explore God's nature and all of his attributes. You can never cover it all in 20 - 25 minutes. To get a true understanding of the nature of God takes a lifetime of learning and personal experience.

So I hope you understand that in the next few weeks, God willing and in between the snow storms, we will not be able to cover everything. We are exploring the basics of our Basic Christian doctrines. We find them in a rudimentary form in the earliest Christian creeds. For example, when it comes to God, the Apostle's Creed formulated in the second century AD says,

I believe in God,
the Father almighty,
Creator of heaven and earth.

The Nicene Creed written and adopted in 325 AD adds the words, "The maker of all things." It's very simple.

When it gets to Jesus, the Apostles Creed goes into much more detail into his nature and calling... which suggests that for the early Christians, who Jesus was and what he did was extremely important to their faith. The apostles Creed says,

And in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died and was buried;
he descended into hell;
on the third day he rose again from the dead;
he ascended into heaven,
and is seated at the right hand of God the Father almighty;
from there he will come to judge the living and the dead.

So I want to warn you upfront... I am taking two weeks to cover the Doctrine of Christ. I can't do it in one week. So here is the football. It begins with Caesarea Philippi. Jesus asks his disciples, his closest friends, those who had lived with him for many months, "What is everyone saying about me? Who do they say I am?" They told him about the rumors, the suppositions, the talk on the street.

The truth is that if you asked that question to people on the street today, you'd get similar answers. They'd say "He's a great teacher." "He is a moral leader." He is the perfect example of how God wants us to live?" "He is a prophet like Elijah." There aren't many people who deny that Jesus lived or that he was a good person. What they don't believe is that he had a miraculous birth.

They don't believe he was anything more than a man. That's all he was to them. They stop there.

As a result, they don't believe that he was worthy of worship. They don't believe he rose from the dead. They don't believe he had the power to forgive sin. They don't believe he was a savior.

So here is the question: What do we believe? He asked the disciples that question. He asked them, "Who do you say am I?" That's when Peter steps up and declares, "Master, you are the Christ, the Messiah, the Son of God." Jesus notes that this was a divine revelation from God.

The name "Christ" is his official title and the role of our Lord. It occurs 514 times in the New Testament and reveals that He was anointed or consecrated to His redemptive work as Prophet, Priest, and King. He was the promised Messiah of the prophets, the Savior sent of God. But even these things are just the tip of the iceberg concerning the person and works of Christ. The Bible says that Jesus is... our Lord, our Comforter, our advisor, our Mediator, our Advocate, our Strength, our Inspiration, our Protector, our Provider, our Shepherd, our Master and our Peace.

And Scripture tells us that to Abraham He was the ram. To Israel He was the lamb. To Ruth He was a Redeemer. To Nehemiah He was a Master Builder. To David He was the Tender Shepherd. To Solomon He is the Wise and All-Knowing God. To Amos He was the Burden Bearer. To Malachi He was the Sun of Righteousness with healing in His wings. To Mark He was the Suffering Servant. To John He was the Light of the world. To Paul He was a Wonderful Savior.

Listen, I could go on and on and on. Who does the Bible say Jesus is? We don't have time to say it all! If you really want to know who Jesus is, then you need to get into the book that identifies who He is! The Bible. So let me begin at the beginning. You heard what was read earlier from the gospel of John. John begins that section by saying,

“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning. Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made.”

John tells us that the Living Word, the Christ, was pre-existent, eternal and one and the same with God. Let that sink in for a minute. God, in the person of Christ, descended from the heights of heaven to walk through life with us, limiting himself to the nature of mortal man, so that he could experience all that we know. James Denny, a 19th century Scottish theologian tells us...

“From beginning to end, the Christian faith is determined by the person and the work of Jesus Christ... Its convictions are about Him... Its hopes are hopes which He has inspired and which it is for Him to fulfill... Its ideals are born of His teaching and His life. Its strength is the strength of His spirit.”

The New Testament opens with the story of Jesus' birth in Matthew 1:18 ff. We read it again in Luke 2:1-20. He was born like you and me, born a human child, born of a woman, and he came into this world as a tiny babe. Matthew and Luke both tie him into human history by recording his genealogy. Furthermore, we are told that He was born of a virgin, a miraculous birth, fulfilling the prophecies of old. All the ancient manuscripts contain

the record of the virgin birth. All the traditions of the early church recognize it. If the virgin birth is rejected, it is only on purely subjective grounds.

We don't know a lot about his childhood. We know he was dedicated in the temple and that at 12 years old he was already pretty astute in his understanding of the Jewish faith.

In Luke 2:40 it says, "And the child grew and became strong; he was filled with wisdom, and the grace of God was on him." It seems clear from the Scriptures that Jesus' growth and wisdom came from growing up in a godly home; and from the instruction given at the synagogue, and from His fellowship and communion with God. His youth was a lot like what many of us experienced. We had faithful parents. We grew up in Sunday School and church. We came to know and confess Jesus as Lord and savior and were baptized. That was the same path that Jesus took. The Scriptures say that he experienced life the same way we have.

Several years ago, I was in Vienna, Austria and my daughter took me to an art museum. What I noticed there and in other places since then, is that Jesus is often pictured in art with a halo, pointing to his divine nature. Yet, the Bible suggest that there was nothing in Jesus' appearance that made him stand out from others. As a matter of fact, in John 4, Jesus meets a Samaritan woman at a well. To her, he looked just like anyone else. She

didn't think he was anything special until he began to talk. It suggests that he looked like you and me.

In John 1:14 and again in Hebrews 2:14 we are told that it was through his incarnation Christ came into possession of a real human nature. John says he came not only to His own, you and me, but he came to us in the flesh and blood of mortal humanity. He experienced life as we do, with all of its ups and downs, trials and sufferings. He was truly Emmanuel, God with us. He became a man and soon became more than that, he became a friend. He sympathized with our struggles because he came to know what it was like to live in a fallen world. We have examples in Matthew 4:2 where Jesus was led into the wilderness to face temptation. The Bible points to times where he knew hunger and thirst. He got tired and needed rest. He got overwhelmed and needed to get away. He mourned the death of people he loved, like Lazarus. He felt isolation and loneliness, as evidenced on the cross, when he felt that everyone had abandoned him, even God and cried out, "My God, My God, why have you forsaken me?" It is confirmed in Hebrews 4:15. It says,

“For we do not have a high priest who is unable to empathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are—yet he did not sin.”

That's why we can identify with Jesus. He was just like us in so many ways. He was often called by his detractors, "A friend of sinners." That's us!

The apostle Paul says in his letter to the Romans,

“For all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God.”

When Jesus was being condemned by the Pharisees after dining with Zacchaeus, the famous tax collector, He says to them,

“For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost.”

You see, it is because we have a friend, whose name is Jesus, who understands what it is to be human, to be tempted and tried, that we have hope today. The only way that Jesus could provide the perfect sacrifice to satisfy God’s righteousness... was to give up his place in heaven and to take on human flesh... so that he could take our place and receive the punishment for our sin. He stepped in so that we could be freed and forgiven and the scriptures say that his righteousness was then imparted to us. In other words, he was a man who lived a sinless life and he stepped in and took on our sentence so that we were set free. That’s a true friend, one you can count on to be there when you need them.

Most of us know what it’s like to have *situational friends*. Friends who are close when life is fun, when you’re doing well, when you’re easy to be around. But when the diagnosis comes... when the marriage is strained... when the failure becomes public... those friendships often grow quiet.

The Gospels show us that Jesus is not a situational friend. On the night before the cross, Jesus says to His disciples, “*I no longer call you servants... I have called you friends.*” And then—almost immediately—those friends fall asleep while He’s in agony, deny knowing Him, and abandon Him when things get dangerous. And yet, Jesus doesn’t take back the word *friend*.

After the resurrection, Jesus goes looking for them. He cooks breakfast. He restores Peter. He walks with them on the road. He doesn't say, "You failed the friendship test." He says, "Peace be with you." That's the kind of friend Jesus is.

He doesn't define friendship by our consistency, but by His love.
He doesn't walk away when we disappoint Him.
He doesn't wait for us to get stronger before staying close.

In fact, the cross itself is the ultimate act of friendship—"*Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one's life for one's friends.*" Jesus didn't just say that. He lived it.

So when we talk about the friendship of Jesus, we're talking about a friend who:

- Knows us completely and stays anyway
- Sees our worst moments and doesn't unfriend us
- Moves toward us when everyone else backs away

Jesus is the friend who stays when the room empties. The friend who loves us not because we're loyal—but because *He is*.

Oh, what a friend we have in Jesus. All our sins and griefs to bear. What a privilege it is to carry everything to God in prayer. It is because Jesus is who he is, that we can go to him and find our perfect peace. He is our rock. He is our anchor in the storm. He is the friend who is always there.

Jesus is a friend... but he is so much more than that. He is also our Savior. We will talk about that next week. I hope you will be here. Amen.

II. THE DEITY OF JESUS CHRIST.

1. DIVINE NAMES ARE GIVEN TO HIM.

- a) He is Called God. **Read John 1:1** "The Word was God." **Read Hebrews 1:8** "But to the Son he says, Your throne, O God, is forever."
- b) He is Called the Son of God. The references containing this title are numerous. Among others see Matt.16:16, 17; 8:29; 14:33; Mark 1:1; 14:61; Luke 1:35; 4:41. While it may be true that in the synoptic Gospels Jesus may not be said to have claimed this title for Himself, yet He unhesitatingly accepted it when used of Him and addressed to Him by others.

If when He called Himself "the Son of God" He did not mean more than that He was *a son of God*, why then did the high priest accuse Him of blasphemy when He claimed this title (Matt.26: 61-63)?

The sonship of Christ is human and historical, it is true; but it is more: it is transcendent, unique, solitary. The use of the word "only begotten" also indicates the uniqueness of this sonship. He is the Son from eternity. He is Son by nature. He is Son of the same essence with the Father.

c) He is Called The Lord.

Read Acts 4:33; 16:31; Luke 2:11; Acts 9:17; Matt.22:43-45. In our Lord's day, the title "Lord" as used of Christ was applicable only to the Deity, to God. So when the New Testament writers speak of Jesus as Lord, there can be no question as to what they mean.

2) HE POSSESSES THE QUALITIES AND PROPERTIES OF DEITY.

a) Pre-Existence. **Read John 1:1, John 8:58**

b) b) Self-Existence and Life-Giving Power: **Read John 5:21, 26. See also John 14:6, Hebrews 7:16, John 17:3-5, John 10:17, 18.** These scriptures teach that all life -- physical, moral, spiritual, eternal -- has its source in Christ.

c) Immutability: **Read - Hebrews 13:8, Hebrews 1:12.** All nature, which like a garment He throws around Him is subject to change and decay; Jesus Christ is the same always, He never changes.

d) All the Fulness of the Godhead Dwelt in Him: **Read Colossians 2:9** -- He was the very essence and nature of the Godhead. He was not merely God-like. He was God.

3. DIVINE OFFICES ARE ASCRIBED TO HIM.

- a) He is the Creator: **Read John 1:3** -- "All things were made by Him."
- b) He is the Upholder of All Things: Christ's power causes all things to hold together.
- c) c) He Has the Right to Forgive Sins. **Read Mark 2:5-10.**
Read Luke 7:48 The Pharisees recognized that Christ was assuming a divine prerogative. No mere man had any right to forgive sins. God alone could do that. Hence the Pharisees' charge of blasphemy. Christ does not merely *declare* sins forgiven. He *actually* forgives them.
- d) The Raising of the Bodies of Men is Ascribed to Him: **Read John 6:39, 40, 54; John 11:25.** Five times it is here declared by Jesus that it is His prerogative to raise the dead. Others raised the dead, but under a delegated power but Christ, by His own power
- e) He is to be the Judge of All Men; **Read John 5:22**

5. DIVINE ATTRIBUTES ARE POSSESSED BY HIM.

- a) Omnipotence. **Read Matt 28:18** "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth." **In Rev. 1:8; John 17:2; Eph. 1:20-22.** Here is power over three realms: First, all power on earth: over disease (Luke 4:38-41); death (John 11); nature, water into wine

(John 2); tempest (Matt.8). Second, all power in hell: over demons (Luke 4:35, 36, 41); evil angels (Eph.6). Third, all power in heaven: (Eph.1:20-22). Finally, power over all things: (Heb.2:8; 1:3; Matt.28:18).

b) Omniscience. **Read John 16:30.** Our Lord always leaves the impression that He knew all things in detail, both past and future, and that this knowledge comes from His original perception of the events. He does not learn them by acquisition. He simply knows them by immediate perception.

c) Omnipresence. **Read Matt.18:20.**

B. THE WORK OF JESUS CHRIST.

I. THE IMPORTANCE of the DEATH OF Christ

1. IT HAS A SUPREME PLACE IN THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION.

Christianity is a religion of atonement distinctively. It is its redemption feature that distinguishes Christianity from any and all other religions. If you remove this distinctive Christian doctrine from its creed, then Christianity is brought down to the level of many other religious systems.

Christianity is not merely a system of ethics; it is the history of redemption through Jesus Christ, the personal Redeemer.

2. ITS VITAL RELATION TO JESUS CHRIST. The atonement is so closely related to Jesus Christ, so allied to His work, as set forth in the Scriptures, that it is absolutely inseparable from it.

Christ was not primarily a religious teacher, a philanthropist, an ethical example; He was all these, yes, and much more -- He was first and foremost the world's Saviour and Redeemer.

3. ITS RELATION TO THE INCARNATION.

It is not putting the matter too strongly when we say that the incarnation was for the purpose of the atonement. At least this seems to be the testimony of the Scriptures. Jesus Christ partook of flesh and blood in order that He might die (Heb.2:14). "He was manifested to take away our sins" (1 John 3:5). Christ came into this world to give His life a ransom for many (Matt.20:28).

The very purpose of the entire coming of Christ into the world, in all its varying aspects, was that, by assuming a nature like ours, He might offer up His life as a sacrifice for the sins of men. The faith of the atonement presupposes the faith of the incarnation. The incarnation is a pledge and anticipation of the work of atonement. The incarnation is most certainly the declaration of a purpose on the part of God to save the world.

4. ITS PROMINENCE IN THE SCRIPTURES.

It was the claim of Jesus, in His conversation with the two disciples on the way to Emmaus, that Moses, and all the prophets, indeed, all the Scriptures, dealt with the subject of His death (Luke 24:27, 44). That the death of Christ was the one great subject into which the Old Testament prophets searched deeply is clear from 1 Pet.1:11, 12. Let's read it.

The atonement is the scarlet cord running through every page in the entire Bible. Cut the Bible anywhere, and it bleeds; it is red with redemption truth. It is said that one out of every forty-four verses in the New Testament deals with this theme, and that the death of Christ is mentioned in all one hundred and seventy-five times.

5. THE FUNDAMENTAL THEME OF THE GOSPEL.

Paul says: "I delivered unto you first of all (i.e., first in order; the first plank in the Gospel platform; the truth of primary importance) . . . that Christ died for our sins" (1 Cor.15:1-3). There can be no Gospel story, message or preaching without the story of the death of Christ as the Redeemer of men.

II. THE SCRIPTURAL DEFINITION OF THE DEATH OF CHRIST. The Scriptures set forth the death of Jesus Christ in a four-fold way:

1. AS A RANSOM. Read Matt.20:28; 1 Pet. 1:18; 1 Tim.2:6; Gal.3:13.

The meaning of a ransom is clearly set forth in Lev.25:47-49: To deliver a thing or person by paying a price. So sin is like a slave market in which sinners are "sold under sin" (Rom.7:14). Christ, by His death, buys sinners out of the market, thereby indicating complete deliverance from the service of sin. He looses the bonds, sets the prisoners free, by paying a price -- that price being His own precious blood. Christ redeemed us from the curse of a broken law by Himself being made a curse for us. His death was the ransom price paid for our deliverance.

2. A PROPITIATION. Read Rom.3:25; 1 John 2:2; Heb.2:17

Christ is the propitiation for our sins; It is through His blood. Propitiation means a covering. The mercy-seat covering the ark of the covenant was called propitiation (Exod.25:22; Heb.9:5.) It is that by which God covers, overlooks, and pardons the penitent and believing sinner because of Christ's death. Propitiation furnishes a ground on the basis of which God could set forth His righteousness, and yet pardon sinful men. The death of Jesus Christ is the basis on which a righteous God can pardon a guilty and sinful race without compromising His righteousness.

3. AS A RECONCILIATION. Read Rom.5:10; 2 Cor.5:18, 19; Eph.2:16; Col.1:20. We are reconciled to God by the death of

His Son, by His Cross, and by the blood of His Cross -- that is the message of these scriptures.

4. AS A SUBSTITUTION. **Read Isa.53:6; 1 Pet.2:24, 3:18; 2 Cor.5:21.** The story of the passover lamb (Exod.12), with 1 Cor.5:7, illustrates the meaning of substitution as here used: one life given in the stead of another. "The Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all." God made Christ, who knew no sin, to be sin for us. This is substitution. Christ died in our place, bore our sins, paid the penalty due our sins; and all this, not by force, but willingly.

III. THE NECESSITY OF CHRIST'S DEATH.

The necessity of the atonement lay in a twofold fact: The holiness of God, and the sinfulness of man. The doctrine of the atonement is related to the conditions existing between God and man, a condition which has been affected by sin.

1. THE HOLINESS OF GOD.

We should carefully note the emphasis laid upon the doctrine of God's holiness in the Old Testament. The Levitical law, the laws of clean and unclean, the tabernacle and the temple with its outer court, its holy and most holy place, speak in unmistakable terms of the holiness of God. We are thus taught that if sinful man is to approach unto God, it must be through the blood of atonement.

The holiness of God demands that before the sinner can approach unto and have communion with Him, some means of propitiation must be provided. This is set forth in the shed blood.

2. THE SIN OF MAN.

Sin as the Bible depicts it, is something which brings wrath, condemnation, and eternal ruin. We must see sin as God sees it. The only way in which things can be made right is by means of the atonement.

IV. THE EXTENT OF CHRIST'S DEATH.

Was the death of Jesus Christ for all mankind, or was the atonement to those who are spiritually united to Christ by faith? Let us put it this way: "The atonement is *sufficient* for all; it is *efficient* for those who believe in Christ." The atonement itself, so far as it lays the basis for the redemptive dealing of God with all men, is *unlimited*; the *application* of the atonement is limited to those who actually believe in Christ.

V. THE EFFECTS OF CHRIST'S DEATH.

1. IN RELATION TO THE PHYSICAL OR MATERIAL UNIVERSE.

Just as the material universe was in some mysterious manner affected by the fall of man so also is it affected by the death of Jesus Christ, which is intended to neutralize the effect of sin upon

the creation. There is a cosmical effect in the atonement. Just how this takes place we may not be able definitely to explain.

Read Col.1:20

2. IN RELATION TO THE WORLD OF MEN.

a) The Enmity Existing Between God and Man is Removed:

b) A Propitiation for the World's Sin Has Been Provided:

c) Satan's Power Over the Race Has Been Neutralized:

Read John 12:31, 32 -- The lifting up of Christ on the Cross meant the casting down of Satan. Satan no longer holds undisputed sway over the sons of men. The power of darkness has been broken. Man need no longer be the slave of sin and Satan.

3. THE EFFECT OF CHRIST'S DEATH ON SATAN. The devil must submit to the victory of Christ. The dominion of Satan, so far as the believer in Christ is concerned, is now at an end. Christ's death was the pronouncement of Satan's doom; it was the loss of his power over men. The power of the devil, while not yet absolutely destroyed, has been neutralized (Heb.2:14).

THE RESURRECTION OF JESUS CHRIST.

I. ITS IMPORTANT PLACE IN THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION.

1. IT HOLDS A UNIQUE PLACE IN CHRISTIANITY.

Christianity is the only religion that bases its claim to acceptance upon the resurrection of its founder. In that wonderful chapter on the resurrection (1 Cor.15) Paul makes Christianity answer with its life for the literal truth of the resurrection of Jesus Christ. That the body of the founder of the Christian religion did not lie in the grave after the third day is fundamental to the existence of the religion of Christ: "And if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain" (v.14). "If Christ be not raised . . . ye are yet in your sins" (v.17). "Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished" (v.18). Remove the resurrection from Paul's Gospel, and his message is gone. The resurrection of Jesus Christ is not an appendage to Paul's Gospel; it is a constitutive part of it.

The importance of this doctrine is very evident from the prominent part it played in the preaching of the Apostles. It was belief in such preaching that led to the establishment of the Christian church. Belief in the resurrection of Christ was the faith of the early church (Acts 4:33).

The testimony to this great fact of Christian faith was borne in the midst of the fiercest opposition. Nor was it controverted, although the grave was well known and could have been pointed out. It was in this fact that Christianity acquired a firm basis for its

historical development. There was not only an "Easter Message," there was also an "Easter Faith."

II. THE NATURE OF THE RESURRECTION OF JESUS CHRIST.

1. JESUS CHRIST ACTUALLY DIED.

Jesus Christ appeared to the disciples after the third day, not as a weak, suffering, half-dead man, but as a conquering, triumphant victor over death and the grave. He never could have made the impression upon the disciples that He did, if He had presented the picture of a sick, half-dead man.

2. THE FACT THAT CHRIST'S BODY WAS ACTUALLY RAISED FROM THE DEAD.

The resurrection of Christ is not a spiritual resurrection, nor were his appearances to the disciples spiritual manifestations. He appeared to His disciples in a bodily form. The body that was laid in Joseph's tomb came forth on that first Easter morn twenty centuries ago.

a) We are Confronted by the Fact of an Empty Tomb.

Read Matt.28:6; Mark 16:6; Luke 24:3, 12; John 20:1, 2.

The fact that the tomb was empty is testified to by competent witnesses -- both friends and enemies: by the women, the disciples, the angels, and the Roman guards.

b) Those Who Saw Him After the Resurrection Recognized Him as Having the Same Body as He Had Before, Even to the Wound Prints.

Read John 20:27; Luke 24:37-39. It is true that there were occasions on which He was not recognizable by the disciples, but such occasions were the result of the eyes of the disciples being blinded in order that they might not know him. There was divine intervention on these occasions.

c) There Can Be No Doubt of the Fact that the Apostle Paul Believed in the Bodily Resurrection of Christ.

The Corinthians, to whom the apostle wrote that wonderful treatise on the resurrection (1 Cor.15), were not spending their time denying a *spiritual* resurrection; nor was the apostle spending his time trying to produce convincing arguments for a *spiritual* resurrection. (See also Rom.8:11.)

d) It is Clear also from Christ's Own Testimony Before and After the Resurrection.

Read Matt.17:23; Luke 24:39; Rev.1:18. These words refer to the resurrection of His body.

e) The Apostolic Testimony Corroborates this Fact. **Read Acts 2:24-32; 1 Pet.1:3, 21; 3:21.** Peter was at the tomb; he

stepped inside and saw the linen cloths lying. His testimony ought to be beyond question as to the fact at issue.

g) The Record of the Appearances of Christ Prove a Literal, Physical Resurrection. **Read Matt.28:9, 10; John 20:14-18, cf. Mark 16:9; Luke 24:13-32; John 21,** All these appearances bear witness to the fact that it was not an incorporeal spirit or phantom, but a real, bodily Christ that they saw. He could be seen, touched, handled; He was recognizable; He ate and drank in their presence.

III. THE RESULTS OF THE RESURRECTION OF JESUS CHRIST.

1. AS TO JESUS CHRIST HIMSELF. Read Rom.1:4 Christ was not *made* the Son of God by the resurrection, but *declared* such. Had Christ remained in the grave as other men had done, there would then have been no reasonable ground to impose faith in Him. The empty tomb testifies to the deity of Christ.

2. AS TO THE BELIEVER IN JESUS CHRIST.

a) Assures Him of His Acceptance with God. **Read Rom.4:25** -- "Who was delivered for our offenses, and was raised again for our justification." So long as Christ lay in the grave there was no assurance that His redemptive work had been acceptable to God. The fact that God raised Jesus from the dead was evidence that

the Father was satisfied with the sacrifice Christ had made for the sins of men.

b) Assures of Him an Interceding High Priest in the Heavens.

Read Rom.8:34 -- Salvation was not completed at the Cross; there is still need of daily forgiveness, and so of the continual presenting of the shed blood before the mercy-seat. We need a Moses, not only to deliver us from bondage, but also to plead for us and intercede for us because of our sins committed in the wilderness journey. Herein is our assurance of forgiveness of sins committed after conversion -- that our great High Priest is always heard and that He prays constantly for us that our faith fail not

c) The Assurance of His Own Resurrection and Immortality.

Read 1 Thess.4:14, 2 Cor.4:14, John 14:19 -

3. AS TO THE WORLD.

a) The Certainty of a Resurrection. **Read 1 Cor.15:22** -- "As in Adam all die; even so in Christ shall all be made alive." Paul is here discussing a *bodily*, and not a *spiritual*, resurrection. As in Adam all men die physically, so in Christ all men are raised physically. The resurrection of Jesus Christ guarantees the resurrection of all men.

b) The Certainty of a Judgment Day.

Read Acts 17:31 The resurrection of Christ is God's unfailing testimony to the fact of a coming day of judgment for the world. The one is as sure as the other.