

Lesson 4 Commentary

Who Is Jesus Christ?

Review/ What did we learn from the last study about the result of sin?

The consequence of sin (rebellion against God) is separation from God.

1. **John 20:30-31** Why did John write about Jesus?

John recorded some of the many miracles Jesus performed as evidence that he is the Christ, the Son of God. John's ultimate purpose was that his readers would receive spiritual life by believing in Jesus.

“Christ” is from “Christos,” the Greek word for “Messiah,” which means “Anointed One” in Hebrew, and is the title given in the Old Testament (Daniel 9:24-26) to the One whom God planned to send to save his people from their sins. The prophet Isaiah foretold that the Messiah would die for the sins of his people but rise again (Isaiah 53:8-12) and ultimately rule over an eternal kingdom on earth (Isaiah 9:6-7). One of Jesus’ first disciples announced to his brother, Peter, that he had found “the Messiah (that is, the Christ)” (John 1:41). When Jesus was brought to trial by the Jews, the high priest asked him, “Are you the Christ, the Son of the Blessed One?” and Jesus answered “I am” (Mark 14:61-62). When Peter spoke to his fellow Jews in Jerusalem on Pentecost after Jesus’ death and resurrection, he said, “Therefore let all Israel be assured of this: God (by raising Jesus from the dead) has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ” (Acts 2:32,36).

2. **14:1-11** List and summarize the things Jesus said about who he is.

Throughout the passage Jesus refers to God as “Father” and “my Father,” making clear his claim to be the Son of God. By his statements that knowing and seeing him is to know and see the Father and that he is in the Father and the Father is in him, Jesus was also claiming that the Son of God is equal with God.

Even though the main point of the passage is the claim of Jesus to be the Son of God, he also claimed to be the way to God. He is not one way among many but the *only* way to the Father. “No one comes to the Father except through me.”

3. **6:33-40** List and summarize the other claims Jesus made about himself.

The predominant theme of Jesus’ words in this passage is his claim to be the “bread of life,” which “comes down from heaven and gives life to the world.” He claimed to be the source of life, the One who is able to give life.

Only God has life that is inherent to his nature and not derived from other life. Jesus said that he has life “in himself” (John 5:26, 1:4) and can give it to others (5:21,39-40). Both statements reaffirm his claim to be God by attributing to himself what is only true of God. Jesus gives not only life that is physical and temporal (sustained by bread like that which God provided to the people with Moses in the wilderness) but also life that is spiritual and eternal. We were created with a spirit as part of our being (1 Thessalonians 5:23, Hebrews 4:12), and we are only truly alive when we are alive both in body and in spirit. It is only when we are alive spiritually through faith in Jesus Christ that we will no longer hunger and thirst for peace with God and purpose in life.

4. **5:16-18** Why did the Jews try to kill Jesus in this situation?

The Jews were trying to carry out the requirement of the law that a person should be stoned who claimed equality with God (John 10:30-33, Leviticus 24:16). The evidence that led to their verdict of blasphemy was that Jesus called God his “own” Father.

Many accuse Christians of reading far more into this one word than Jesus ever intended. If all we had was Jesus’ statement, there might be grounds for a different interpretation. But the Bible also records the reaction of those who shared language, culture and religious background with Jesus. Their conclusion was that Jesus claimed a unique relationship of equality with God, and Jesus never tried to dissuade them. Jesus was always careful to distinguish his relationship with God from that which any person can have with God the Father through faith in his Son. Jesus never referred to God as “our” Father, except when he taught his disciples how they should address God in prayer. In order to emphasize the uniqueness of his relationship with God, Jesus described him at one point as “my Father and your Father” (John 20:17). The apostle Paul wrote that Jesus is God’s “own” Son (Romans 8:32), whereas believers are his children by adoption (Romans 8:23).

5. **5:24** What response to his claims did Jesus say he expects from us?

Jesus expects us to believe his claims to be the Son of God and the source of life.

6. What will be the result of responding as Jesus requires?

Those who believe in Jesus as the Son of God have life. They are no longer condemned to spiritual death but have been given eternal life (vs 21, 24, 25).

Elsewhere, Jesus explained, “...I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full” (John 10:10). This verse is often misquoted and misunderstood. Jesus is usually quoted as saying, “I have come that they might have abundant life.” When put this way, the implication is that Jesus came to give us more of something we already have, but his statement is far more profound than that. Jesus came to give us something we lack entirely until we receive it from him. He came to give us spiritual life. Without Jesus Christ in us our spirits are dead. Through faith in him we can have real life (1 John 4:9) in a relationship with God. “This is eternal life: that they may know you, the only true God” (John 17:3). Spiritual death is separation from God; life is reconciliation to him. Eternal life is more than living forever; it’s enjoying a close, loving relationship with God both in this life and the life to come. It is for this that God made us.