

## **The Uniqueness of the Bible #6 The Unique Claims of Christianity**

**Intro:** For several weeks I've been speaking to you about the unique features of the Bible as the revelation of God—its unity, its impact on the world, its fulfilled prophecies, its external confirmation through archaeology in both the OT and the NT. However, to speak of the uniqueness of the Bible is to also recognize its unique message.

**The Bible as a whole is the basis for a religion that is different from all other religions of the world. In fact it is in a league by itself. How Christianity is different from every other religion.**

**Its founder claimed to be God Himself!**

*Consider the evidence!*

**Jesus claimed to be equal with the Father.**

*"I and the Father are one." The Jews took up stones again to stone Him. Jesus answered them, "I showed you many good works from the Father; for which of them are you stoning Me?" The Jews answered Him, "For a good work we do not stone You, but for blasphemy; and because You, being a man, make Yourself out to be God." (John 10:30-33)*

*But He answered them, "My Father is working until now, and I Myself am working." For this cause therefore the Jews were seeking all the more to kill Him, because He not only was breaking the Sabbath, but also was calling God His own Father, making Himself equal with God. (John 5:17-18)*

**Jesus identified with the divine name of the God of Israel.**

**God had identified Himself as the externally existent one!**

*And God said to Moses, "I AM WHO I AM"; and He said, "Thus you shall say to the sons of Israel, 'I AM has sent me to you.'" (Exodus 3:14)*

**Jesus identified with the divine name and suggested existence during the time of Abraham.**

*Jesus said to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, before Abraham was born, I am." (John 8:58)*

**Jesus was crucified because He admitted in His trial that He was the Son of God!**

*Again the high priest was questioning Him, and saying to Him, "Are You the Christ, the Son of the Blessed One?" And Jesus said, "I am; and you shall see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of Power, and coming with the clouds of heaven." And tearing his clothes, the high priest \*said, "What further need do we have of witnesses? "You have heard the blasphemy; how does it seem to you?" And they all condemned Him to be deserving of death. (Mark 14:61-64)*

*Consider the implications!*

**Jesus certainly does not fit the mold of the founders of other religions.**

**Thomas Shultz writes, “Not one recognized religious leader, not Moses, Paul, Buddha, Mohammed, Confucius, etc. has ever claimed to be God; that is with the exception of Jesus Christ. Christ is the only religious leader who has ever claimed to be deity and the only individual ever who has convinced a great portion of the world that He is God”.**

***The claim of Jesus to be God makes Christianity unique among the religions of the world.***

**It teaching purports to reveal the only way to heaven!**

***Jesus professed to be the only way of salvation***

*Jesus \*said to him, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father, but through Me. (John 14:6)*

*“I said therefore to you, that you shall die in your sins; for unless you believe that I am He, you shall die in your sins.” (John 8:24)*

***Jesus’ apostles proclaimed Him as the only Savior***

*“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.” (Acts 4:12)*

*For there is one God, and one mediator also between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave Himself as a ransom for all, the testimony borne at the proper time. (1 Timothy 2:5-6)*

**Again, the religion of Christ is unique. What other religious founder has made such bold claims as these!?**

**The validity of the message is proven by the ultimate miracle—His resurrection from the dead!**

***While on earth the founder of Christianity promised to prove His claims true by coming forth from the grave.***

*And He took the twelve aside and said to them, “Behold, we are going up to Jerusalem, and all things which are written through the prophets about the Son of Man will be accomplished. “For He will be delivered to the Gentiles, and will be mocked and mistreated and spit upon, and after they have scourged Him, they will kill Him; and the third day He will rise again.” (Luke 18:31-33)*

**The apostles of Jesus give abundant evidence that He made this claim good by coming forth from the grave as He had predicted.**

***The NT documents 9 post-resurrection appearances of Jesus.***

***Paul summarizes the evidence for the resurrection in 1 Cor. 15 indicating that the many of the witnesses were still living to confirm the truth of his testimony about Jesus.***

*For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received, 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, 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; then He appeared to James, then to all the apostles; and last of all, as it were to one untimely born, He appeared to me also. (1 Corinthians 15:3-8)*

***The uniqueness of the religion of Christ is clearly seen then in view of Jesus' resurrection. All other religions do not depend upon miracles such as the resurrection to promote their faith. Confucius, Buddha, Mohammed are all still in their places of burial; yet it does not matter to their followers. Jesus is the only founder of a religion whose disciples claim He is still alive! And if this claim is not true, then Christianity would crumble upon this foundation of sand. But if it is true, then Christianity is in a class all by itself.***

**Conclusion: If Jesus wasn't God, he at least deserves an Oscar for pulling off the greatest acting job in the history of humanity! But if His claims are true, then He and the faith He revealed are unique among the religions of the world. The faith of Christ does not advocate simply that people accept the religion in which they were born. Instead it demands universal proclamation and acceptance. In this, it is like no other!**