

4

GOD'S LIVING WORD SAVES



When have you been thrilled to meet someone?

QUESTION #1

#BSFLspoken

THE POINT

Jesus is the ultimate Word from God who brings salvation.



THE BIBLE MEETS LIFE

Ever had a brush with someone famous?

- ▶ A backstage pass to meet the band.
- ▶ A quick handshake at a political rally.
- ▶ A celebrity spotting at the airport.

You'll know if one of your friends has such an encounter—because they'll tell you! That's not a big deal at first. But it can be pretty annoying when someone starts dropping names like spare change.

Things are different when we encounter Jesus, though. That's because Jesus Christ is no mere celebrity. He is the King of kings and Lord of lords. While dropping a star's name is a boastful act, talking about our encounters with Jesus is a gracious act—because everyone has the same opportunity to know Him and follow Him.

In this session, we'll look at two passages that show us why we should tell others the good news about Jesus.

WHAT DOES THE BIBLE SAY?

Psalm 119:41

⁴¹ May your unfailing love come to me, LORD, your salvation, according to your promise.

The term “unfailing love” used in this verse is the covenant love of God. It’s His loyal love—a love that is unconditional, unchanging, and unending. The psalmist knew he couldn’t force this love to come to his way; he could only pray for such a blessing.

The psalmist’s next phrase revealed why he needed God’s love in the first place: salvation. While the word “salvation” has a specific meaning in the New Testament, the Old Testament writers used it more broadly to speak of rescue from trouble or deliverance from distress. Here, the psalmist responded to his difficult circumstances by praying that God, out of His loyal love, would rescue and deliver him from his burdensome situation. The psalmist wasn’t necessarily looking for a miracle or a supernatural experience. He simply asked God to help according to the faithful promises He’d already given. What God promises, whatever He says, will happen.

Now that we have the benefit of the New Testament, we can see that God’s promises about salvation throughout the Scriptures are ultimately about Jesus Christ. Specifically, the Word of God promises that sinners can be saved from eternal punishment through faith in Christ. As John wrote: “For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life” (John 3:16). This is what the Word of God is all about.

It’s important that we understand this truth: all of the Bible points to this message of salvation in Jesus (see Luke 24:27). In fact, the Bible is all about the Lord Jesus Christ—heaven’s wonder, hell’s worry, and humanity’s way out from sin and death into the presence of God.

What comes to mind when you hear the word “salvation”?

QUESTION #2

Luke 1:30-33

³⁰ But the angel said to her, “Do not be afraid, Mary; you have found favor with God. ³¹ You will conceive and give birth to a son, and you are to call him Jesus. ³² He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his father David, ³³ and he will reign over Jacob’s descendants forever; his kingdom will never end.”

Hundreds of years after the psalmist wrote Psalm 119, God changed the life of a young woman. This virgin would give birth to a son, the Savior of the world. In Luke 1, the angel Gabriel announced to Mary God’s plan and her role in it.

The angel’s statement made it clear that Mary’s son would be divine—the Son of the living God. But it’s also significant that Gabriel made this statement about a child Mary would bear.

In short, Jesus became one of us. He was divine, yet He was born and lived and died as a human being.

Hebrews 4:15 assures us: “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.” Jesus was tempted in every respect, just as we are; therefore, He can sympathize with our weakness. He knows how we feel when we bear the weight of life’s tests, trials, and temptations—yet He never sinned.

Jesus experienced every aspect of our human nature except our sin nature. If Jesus had committed any sin, He would not be qualified to be our Savior. You cannot be a sinner and Savior at the same time. Jesus is the only true Savior because He lived the perfect life we should have lived before God. As Paul wrote: “God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God” (2 Cor. 5:21).

Why is it important that Jesus is fully human?

QUESTION #3

BEING HUMAN

Struggling through adversity is part of what it means to be human. Using the list below, draw a rectangle around specific challenges you have overcome throughout your lifetime. Draw a circle around challenges you are currently working to overcome.

Medical issues

Tight finances

Addiction

Relational stress

Depression

Loneliness

Parenting stress

Sibling rivalry

Unemployment

Abuse

Emotional stress

Anger management

Boredom

Debt

Other: _____

How does Jesus' humanity help you approach and overcome these challenges?

"An honest man with an open Bible and a pad and pencil is sure to find out what is wrong with him very quickly!"

—A. W. TOZER

The eternal Son of God became human to be our representative before God. “For there is one God and one mediator between God and mankind, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself as a ransom for all people. This has now been witnessed to at the proper time” (1 Tim. 2:5-6). Because of Jesus’ unique status, salvation is found in no one else (see Acts 4:12). Jesus Himself declared: “I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me” (John 14:6).

God promised salvation, and He brought it to us when He came to earth as a human baby born to a virgin.

Luke 1:34-35

³⁴“How will this be,” Mary asked the angel, “since I am a virgin?” ³⁵The angel answered, “The Holy Spirit will come on you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God.”

When the angel Gabriel announced to Mary that she would have a child, she was understandably confused. She was a virgin, after all. “How will this be . . . since I am a virgin?” Mary didn’t doubt the truth of what God had promised, but she couldn’t fathom how such a thing could happen. The angel explained the core truth of the mystery in verse 35: God would accomplish His will through His power.

The birth of Mary’s child clearly would not be a normal birth.



She would conceive the child by “The Holy Spirit” and “the power of the Most High.” The child therefore would “be called the Son of God” because He would be the Incarnation of the living God.

In short, Jesus is God in the flesh.

This unmistakable claim to deity permits no middle ground. Jesus is either a liar who intentionally deceived people or a lunatic who sincerely but mistakenly believed He was God—or else *He is exactly who He claimed to be: Lord of all*. This is the One we proclaim: Jesus, who is fully man and fully God.

- ▶ The one who went to sleep in the back of the boat on the Sea of Galilee was the One who quieted the raging storm (see Mark 4:35-41).
- ▶ The one who went to the wedding feast as an invited guest was the One who turned water into wine (see John 2:1-11).
- ▶ The one who wept at the tomb of Lazarus, His friend, was the One who raised him from the dead (see John 11:1-44).

Jesus is infinitely more than just a sweet, little baby in a manger whom we celebrate at Christmas. That fully human child was also fully God, and He grew to be a man who brought the ultimate salvation promised in the Old Testament. This salvation isn’t a work of human achievement; it’s a work of divine accomplishment—and a gift to us from God. “For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God” (Eph. 2:8).

Look back to the prayer offered in Psalm 119:41—“May your unfailing love come to me, LORD, your salvation, according to your promise.” Isn’t it great to see that God’s faithful love has come to us in the birth of a child? What a blessing to know that Jesus has given us God’s promised salvation.

Why is it important that Jesus is fully divine?

QUESTION #4

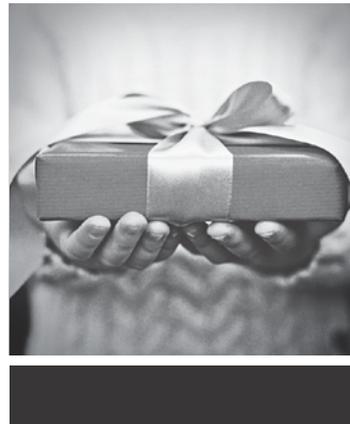
How have you come to understand who Jesus is?

QUESTION #5

LIVE IT OUT

How will you allow Jesus to impact your life this week? Consider the following suggestions:

- ▶ **Accept the gift.** Jesus came to earth to give you life. Believe that truth and trust your life in His hands. To know more about how to become a Christian, read the inside front cover of this book and talk to your Bible study leader.
- ▶ **Live the gift.** A life in Christ is a changed life. Pray daily that Jesus would make you more and more like Him. Identify one step you can take to more fully obey His Word.
- ▶ **Share the gift.** Many people are aware of the basic story of Jesus' birth. Tell them the significance of that event—God came to earth as a man to save us—and lead them to embrace the gift of salvation by faith in Christ.



You don't need any kind of special access or backstage pass to meet someone famous. You can have a one-on-one connection with Jesus Christ, the Savior of the world. Take advantage of that opportunity.

My thoughts

Share with others how you will live out this study: **#BSFLspoken**