



*Who He is - What He has done - What He can do - What He will do*

Nowadays, the market is full of different religions and denominations each claiming authenticity, reliability and viability. Christians, on the other hand, firmly believe that there is only one true religion, Christianity, and one true God; the great "I AM" as described to Moses in the Old Testament, (Exodus 3:14) His Only begotten Son Jesus Christ "*I am He*" (John 18:4), Who is one with Him and the Holy Spirit.

St. Peter urges us to "*be ready to give a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you*" (1 Peter 3:15). How do we know that we are following the true God and what is our source of teaching and reference? In order to be able to defend our case and our source, we will have to address two important questions:

1. Why should I follow Jesus Christ?
2. Is the Holy Bible truly the Word of God?

A Christian is, by name and definition, a follower of Jesus Christ. Christians believe that He is **the WAY, the TRUTH and the LIFE**; and that if anyone wants to have everlasting life with God must follow



Jesus Christ; or else they will perish "*that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life*" (John 3: 15).

## **I. Why should I follow Jesus Christ?**

To define our Lord, we need to examine four different, yet major aspects:

1. Who He is.
2. What He has done.
3. What He can do.
4. What He will do.

### *1. Who He is*

- He is The Son of God

He is the Son of God in a different sense than we are the children of God. While we are sons by adoption, He is a SON by nature; Light of Light, True God of True God (The Nicene Creed). In this sense, Christianity is the only religion that offers the missing link between God and man; Christ being the mediator, "God who became Man in order to make man son of God" according to St. Athanasius. "*For there is one God and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus, who gave Himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time*" (1



Timothy 2:5,6). So, one can boldly say that Jesus Christ is different from any other religious leaders. All of them are human beings just like us. Our Lord is not a human being; but God the Incarnate who became Man for our sake; *"For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life"* (John 3:16).

Another important aspect of this incarnation is the uniqueness of the Son of God and His oneness with the Father since He is the only one who has the same nature as the Father; for *"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God"* (John 1:1). The term "Word" here means "Logos" which reveals that Christ was always with God with no beginning and no end. The Holy Spirit revealed this truth to St. Peter in the declaration he had made that *"You are the Christ, the Son of the living God"* (Matthew 16:16). The Lord's response to that was: *"Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah, for flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but My Father who is in heaven"* (Matthew 16:17). To know and to believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God comes not from human cognizance but is a divine revelation



affirmed by our Lord's Words; "My Father who is in heaven has revealed this to you". Therefore, if we Christians pose to ask ourselves why we are following Jesus Christ, our reply will be that we know Who He truly is.

- He is the Head of the Church

Christ became the bridegroom of the church. He is the head and we are the body. Separation of the head from the body results in death. Thus would the consequences be if we separate ourselves from Christ. Therefore, following Jesus Christ will keep us alive. According to St. Paul, "*And He is the head of the body, the church*" (Colossians 1:18). He is the husband of the church; "*Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her*" (Ephesians 5:23). The body with its various organs normally gets instructions from the head where all the sensory and cognition centers reside. Christ is the Head of the Church from Whom she gets instructions. No other religious leader can claim headship over his followers. John the Baptist knew that very well and made it clear to his followers at the beginning of his ministry by affirming that he was not the bridegroom "*You yourselves bear me witness, that I said, 'I am not the Christ,'*"



*but, 'I have been sent before Him.' He who has the bride is the bridegroom; but the friend of the bridegroom, who stands and hears him, rejoices greatly because of the bridegroom's voice. Therefore this joy of mine is fulfilled. He must increase, but I must decrease" (John 3:28-30).*

- He is the only source of eternal salvation

*"I am the Way, the Truth and the Life, no one comes to the Father except through me" (John 14: 6). The ways and walks in life are much more than we think. However, none of them leads to eternity; and if they do not procure our future destiny after we get out of the body on earth then they are definitely deadly. "There is a way that seems right to a man, but its end is the way of death" (Proverbs 14:12). There is only ONE TRUE WAY that leads to life: Jesus Christ Who grants eternal salvation; for "for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved" (Acts 4:12) and "He became the author of eternal salvation to all who obey Him" (Hebrews 5:9). In Hebrews 1:1-3 St. Paul sums up who Christ is. He is:*

- The heir,
- Co-creator and agent Creator,
- The brightness of Divine glory,



- The express image of God's being,
- The sustainer and preserver of the universe,
- The purifier of sin
- The Co-ruler

## 2. *What He has done*

- He laid down His life

Our Lord Jesus Christ loved us limitlessly, willfully, unconditionally and sacrificially. Thus it was easy for Him to lay down his life for us when we needed salvation. No other religious leader can, nor will ever do so. On the contrary, all other religions, we know of, have their leaders control and increase the number of their followers through legalism or violence. Christ's aim was not to increase the number of His followers for the sake of increasing the number (although He procured salvation for the whole world); but wanted us to get to know the essence of His mission, which was giving His life for the sake of those whom He loved. Such message was not comprehensible to everyone; and so, many got offended and decided to quit when he told the multitude about giving His body and blood. Finding his teachings hard to grasp, many of His disciples walked away from him. Our Lord's reaction was neither compromising nor



relenting.. He turned around and asked the rest of the disciples if they too wanted to leave as well. *"Do you also want to go away?"* (John 6:67). To this Simon Peter gave his magnificent assertion, *"Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life"* (John 6:68).

While other religious leaders send their followers ahead to die for their sake; our Lord went ahead and died for our sake to save us; *"Therefore, my Father loves Me because I lay down My life that I may take it again"* (John 10:17). Although it was Pontius Pilate who had sentenced him to death; yet, Pontius Pilate had no authority over Jesus Christ. *"No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down and I have power to take it again. This command I have received from My Father"* (John 10:18). In the Divine Liturgy we pray, "for in the night in which You have given Yourself up by Your own will, and authority alone." Jesus Christ died willingly because He has loved us with the true unlimited love. *"Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one's life for his friends"* (John 15:13).

- He offered His Body to Sanctify Us

Our Lord Jesus Christ did not only lay his life down for us; but gave us His body and blood to



eat and flourish by them. Till today and tomorrow and until He comes, His body is always on the altar; "given to us for salvation remission of sin, and eternal life to those who partake of him" (Divine Liturgy - Confession). No other religious leader's body could do anything because they all turned into dust long before they could even know or realize. The Lord Jesus Christ's body is alive, given to us as a sacrifice for our sins. *"By that will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all"* (Hebrews 10:10). Our Lord Jesus Christ's sacrificial offering gave us sanctification and propitiation "whom God set forth as a propitiation by His blood, through faith, to demonstrate His righteousness, because in His forbearance God had passed over the sins that were previously committed" (Romans 3:25). *"The chastisement for our peace was upon Him, and by His stripes we are healed"* (Isaiah 53:5).

- He Gave us Victory Over Grief and Death

Our Lord Jesus Christ's Resurrection distinguishes Him from anybody else on earth. No other leader whether murdered or died a normal death, rose again. Even the people like Lazarus and the Son of the widow at Nain that our Lord had raised from the dead, died again.



Our Lord rose from the dead for a purpose and a reason, which is to trample over death. "By His death He trampled over death" and that is where our victory lies. Death can no more rule over us because all of us, believers in Him, will rise again in the second coming. As we pray in the Creed, "We look for the resurrection of the dead and the life of the coming age." *"Knowing that Christ, having been raised from the dead, dies no more. Death no longer has dominion over Him. For the death that He died, He died to sin once for all; but the life that He lives, He lives to God"* (Romans 6:9,10) and *"But now Christ is risen from the dead, and has become the first fruits of those who have fallen asleep. For since by man came death, by Man also came the resurrection of the dead"* (1 Corinthians 15:20,21).

### 3. *What He Can Do*

The Lord Jesus Christ, being One and Co Creator with the Father, has authority over:

- a. *Nature*: With a word from His blessed mouth, our Lord could calm the storm. With all its advancement, science can only predict storms, warn against and about them but can never stop or even divert their direction in the interest of humanity. All hurricanes, tornadoes typhoons,



cyclones and any other natural disaster can attest to that. They form a power that no one has authority over except the creator.

b. *Diseases*: Our Lord Jesus Christ has the power and authority to do what science and medicine have failed to accomplish in spite of their advancement in research and pharmacology. He raised the dead, created eyes for the blind, and cured the incurable.

c. *Death*: "by His death, He trampled upon death" (Resurrection Hymn). All those whom He raised from the dead died again; except himself. He did not die again.

d. *Evil Spirits*: While science and medicine have no dominion over spirits; our Lord Jesus Christ commanded the demons out of many and ordered them where to go to which they complied fearfully. "*What have we to do with You, Jesus, You Son of God? Have You come here to torment us before the time?*" (Matthew 8:29). As a matter of fact demons believe in the existence of Christ and tremble just at the mention of His name.

Someone in the capacity of our Lord can and will certainly give us rest from labor and strength to overcome obstacles and release from spiritual burden. "*Come to Me, all you who labor and are*



*heavy laden, and I will give you rest*" (Matthew 11:28), St. Didymus the Blind sums up what God can do succinctly saying, "He delivers us from sin and death making us spiritual, partakers of the Divine glory, children of God the Father, and His heirs. He changes us into the likeness of His Son; making us his brothers, partakers of the inheritance; so that we may be glorified with Him and reign with Him. He gives us heaven instead of earth; and in heaven He grants us Paradise making us glorified more than the angels and quenching the flames of hell fire in the waters of Divine Baptism."

#### *4. What He Will Do*

According to St. Paul's first letter to the Thessalonians, chapter four, the Lord Himself will:

- a. Descend from heaven with a shout (v. 16).
- b. The dead in Christ will rise (v. 16).
- c. Those who are alive shall be caught up (v. 17).

The Lord will come again and take us to be with Him always liberated from all burden and trouble, sickness and diseases unto salvation. No other leader dared promise his followers that big promise. Christianity is not the only religion that believes Christ will come again and will also be the Judge of all judges. While in the gospels He is presented as the slaughtered lamb, in the Book of Revelation he is



presented as the Lion "*Do not weep. Behold, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has prevailed to open the scroll and to loose its seven seals*" (Revelation 5:5) ready to sit on the throne to rule and reign.

## **II. Is the Holy Bible truly the Word of God?**

The authenticity of the Holy Bible resides in a number of things:

- **Circumstances**

The Holy Bible has been written over sixteen hundred years ago by more than forty authors from all walks of life including statesmen, physicians, poets, kings, philosophers, fishermen, and statesmen. It was written in three continents, Asia, Africa and Europe in different places including deserts, islands and jails. It was also written under different circumstances of war and peace, different moods of peace and turmoil; in three different languages: Hebrew, Aramaic and Greek. It also addresses hundreds of topics.

**Continuity** In all of that, one cannot miss the continuity that exists in the Holy Bible that makes it feel as if one person wrote it. In essence, the author is the Holy Spirit. The story



of Redemption is spoken about in such an extraordinary harmony and continuity. If we run a quick comparison between the first three chapters of Genesis and the last three chapters from Revelation we will discover the following:

- *Reference to a new heaven and a new earth*

The first chapter of Genesis is the creation of heaven and earth The last chapter of Revelation tells us about a new heaven and a new earth.

- *Reference to union*

The second chapter in Genesis is the wedding of Adam and Eve The second chapter from the end in Revelation is the wedding of Christ and the church.

- *Reference to human destiny*

The third chapter of Genesis is about the fall of Adam and Eve and Satan's victory The third chapter of Revelation is about the victory of Christ; our redemption and unity with God.

- *Reference to the Tree of Life*



In Genesis, God prohibited Adam from coming close to the tree of life. In Revelation, the Tree of Life has been given to people to eat of.

- Endurance

No book was criticized as much as the Holy Bible. However, it survived all political, social, and intellectual persecutions. The fact that it is still criticized proves its validity, authenticity and awesomeness. It is still attacked, yet still alive and well. It was written 3500 years ago on paper and manuscripts before the invention of the printing press. The Holy Bible survived not only time but also political, social, and intellectual persecutions. It is still the bestseller book in the whole world; and the most quoted, read, referenced and circulated.

- Divinity

Another evidence that the Holy Bible is divine exists the number of prophecies, (over three hundred), pertaining to the Messiah; all of which have been fulfilled literally. Psalm 22, written almost 1000 years before Christ has been fulfilled word by word.

- Historical Evidence



In his book "The Antiquities of the Jews", the secular non-Christian historian Josephus, testified for the Holy Bible.

- Scientific Evidence

Any scientific theory does not stand verified that long before it becomes replaced by another theory. Unlike the Holy Bible, it stated scientific and natural facts that stood verified for three thousand five hundred years.

- a. Geology: One hundred years before Aristotle came up with the speculation that the earth could be spherical, the Holy Bible attested to that fact. "*It is he Who sits above the circle of the earth*" (Isaiah 40:22).

- b. Hydrology: the several phases of the hydrological cycle (evaporation, circulation, condensation, electrical charge precipitation and the recirculation of water) are all attested for in Jeremiah "*When He utters His voice, there is a multitude of waters in the heavens: "And He causes the vapors to ascend from the ends of the earth. He makes lightning for the rain, He brings the wind out of His treasures"* (Jeremiah 10:13) and Ecclesiastes "*All the rivers run into the sea, yet the sea is not full; to the place from*



*which the rivers come, there they return again" (Ecclesiastes 1:7).*

c. Anthropology: The Holy Book of Job talks about the cavemen who were isolated from the rest of the world during the time of Babylon; and how they deteriorated physically, mentally and spiritually; proving that they were not apes but were those driven away by the more successful tribes. *"They were driven out from among men, they shouted at them as at a thief. They had to live in the clefts of the valleys, in caves of the earth and the rocks" (Job 30:5,6).*

d. Astronomy: during the time when people taught the earth rested on two animal horns; the book of Job proved the suspension of the earth *"He stretches out the north over empty space; He hangs the earth on nothing" (Job 26:7).*

e. Psychology: Long before Medicine had discovered the relationship between the human psychological and physiological conditions, the Holy Bible mentioned psychosomatic disturbances. The book of Proverbs proves that internal peace and joy are essential for physical and mental health. *"A merry heart does good, like medicine,*



*but a broken spirit dries the bones"*  
(Proverbs 17:22).

- f. Biology: the concept of Genetic code manifest in the productive integrity of each type of plant and animal is first mentioned in Genesis 1: "*And the earth brought forth grass, the herb that yields seed according to its kind, and the tree that yields fruit, whose seed is in itself according to its kind. And God saw that it was good*" (Genesis 1:12).<http://www.suscopts.org/messages/lectures/scriptureslecture1.pdf>

## Conclusion

We will follow Jesus Christ not because we were born Christians; but because we know He is the great "I Am", the Son of God, Head of the church, source of eternal life, who laid down His life for us, gave us His body and blood for our sanctification, who can command nature and it will obey Him, diseases and they will disappear in His presence; death and it will turn into life; Evil Spirits and they will tremble at the mention of His name; who will come back to take us with Him that we may live forever in happiness and glory with Him. All glory and honor to The great "I AM" because of Who **He** is, what **He** has done, what **He** can do, and what **He** will do for us.



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