

## **The Bible is True and Jesus Christ is the Only God**

- My name is Pastor Mark, and on behalf of my family and our church family, just wanna wish you a very merry Christmas. And my gift to you is a short sermon. If you're new, you know that this is a very once in a year special gift. And so here's my Christmas sermon. The Bible is true and Jesus is God. And so I get to do my favorite thing, and that is to open the Bible and to tell you about Jesus. Well, his name indicates something of his ministry. Joshua is really the derivative of the name Jesus. It means God is my Savior. Christ means anointed or chosen by the Holy Spirit to save people from their sins. He lived about 2,000 years ago. He grew up in a small town. His parents were probably teenage peasants. He never traveled more than a few hundred miles from home. He never penned a book, he never held a political office. He never commanded an army. But he has changed the world. And here we are a few thousand years later in the wake of the person and the work of Jesus Christ, and we're celebrating his birth in this global celebration called Christmas. Mass is what Christians would say is a church service, and Christ of course is his name. So we're here to worship, to meet with, commemorate, and celebrate Jesus Christ. And so what I want to do, I wanna look at some things that the Bible says about the person and the work of Jesus. And I'm gonna do so from my Bible. This Bible was used of God to change my life and I'm praying today that he uses it to change your life. I was 17 years of age in high school. I met a cute pastor's daughter. She bought me this Bible. We are now married 30 years. The rule is if a woman buys you a Bible, buy her a ring. That's a good woman right there. So Grace and I met at 17 and she gave me this Bible and I started reading and studying it and it changed my life, it altered my destiny, and it introduced me to Jesus Christ. And so I'm really honored to open this Bible for you, and I've been praying all week that God would use it to reveal to you Jesus and to change your life as he did mine. Well, when it comes to the Bible, various words are used. Scripture is writing. Bible means book, and Holy Bible means the Holy Book. For those of you who may not be familiar with the Bible, it's actually a library of 66 books. It has 39 in the Old Testament, 27 in the New. The middle in the centerpiece of the Bible in history is Jesus Christ. The Old Testament prepares us for his coming and then he arrives, he lives, he dies, he rises. And then the church follows in his wake. And as I like to say, it's all about Jesus. These books of the Bible were written over the course of 1,500 years by people in three different cultures and continents, Asia, Africa, and also Europe. That being said, when the Bible was written, 25% of it was prophetic in nature. Prophetic means this. God rules the future. He knows and sees the future, so he can tell us what the future holds. God anticipates and prepares his people for the coming of Jesus. And again, 25% of the Bible when it was written was predicting in incredible detail the coming of Christ. That means that the Bible is unlike any other religious book. Scholars tell us that the Bible has between 61 at the lowest and 300 to 400 at the highest prophecies about the coming of Jesus Christ, which is exactly what we're celebrating during this Christmas season. In a moment, I will look at eight of these. That being said, this is revelation. There is God and there is us. And we don't know who God is. We don't know where God is. We don't know what God is like. And so there are two options, speculation where philosophers and/or religious leaders will sort of make their best guess or guesstimate about who God is, where God is, or what God is like. The other option is revelation. And that is that God speaks to us, that God introduces himself to us, that God reveals himself to us. And that's exactly what he does in the pages of scriptures and these prophetic promises.

And so as we jump into these in a moment, you're going to hear that these are all BC. These are prophecies given before Christ. And this is just one interesting footnote that history literally swings on the hinge of the life of Jesus Christ. BC means before Christ. AD means anno Domini, or the year of our Lord. We literally measure time and all of human history by not just this good man but this God man, Jesus Christ. And so what we're going to do is see how God was preparing his people for the coming of his Son and our Savior. Anytime there is the coming of a big person or product or project, all of a sudden there is pronouncements that go forth to prepare the people for this long awaited coming. This is the time of year when you're getting ready for your holiday meal and maybe you flip on the television and they've got the big Christmas parade. Who always comes last at the Christmas parade? It's Santa, and everybody is preparing the way. So there's this succession of celebrations anticipating and building anticipation for the grand finale. Well, ultimately, human history is like that and prophecy is a series of promises, anticipations for the coming of Jesus to cause the people to be welcoming of him and awaiting for him. That being said, what I'm going to do now, I'm gonna look at eight prophetic promises in the Old Testament and how they point to the person and work of Jesus. Number one written 700 years BC before Jesus Christ was born. Isaiah the prophet says this in 7:14. "The Lord himself will give you a sign. The virgin will be with child, will give birth to a son, and will call him Emmanuel." There are multiple promises in this prophecy. Ultimately God will reveal himself through a virgin. So this is going to be a unique, supernatural, once-in-human-history birth. Not only will a child be born, but it'll be a male child, a son, and what's his name going to be? Emmanuel. What's Emmanuel mean? God with us. You need to know this, my dear friend. We don't go up to God. God comes down to us. All other religions are how we work our way up to God. Jesus Christ is how God comes down to be with us. That Jesus is the promised Son through the virgin birth and he is Emmanuel, God is with us and ours is a visited planet. Number two, we are told not only how he would be born, but where he would be born. 700 years before Christ Micah 5:2 promised, Bethlehem, though you are small." This was an obscure, small, rural town. No one really paid much attention to it until Jesus arrived at it. "Out of you will come from me one who will be ruler over Israel, the King of kings, whose origins are from old, from ancient times." The original language in which this was written says that he will be coming from eternity into history. That the Creator would enter creation, that he who is without and beyond time would enter into time at a moment in time. And so it tells us that he would be coming to this small town of Bethlehem. Now, if you're familiar with the Christmas story, Jesus' family was not from Bethlehem. They lived some miles away in another small, obscure, rural town, and the government decided that they would want to ensure that all taxes were being paid. The point is this. God can even work through a government and taxes. Amen. It's very hard, but he can do that. We call that a miracle. So what happens here is a miracle involving the government and taxes, and they decide that everyone needs to go to their hometown and register for the census so that they can ensure that all of the citizens are being taxed. Well, it just so happens the Jesus' adoptive father Joseph is from the family hometown of Bethlehem. And so the decree is sent forth at exactly the right time, that though Mary is very pregnant with child that the family would travel to Bethlehem and in the providence of God, they find themselves in the place at the time for the birth of Jesus to fulfill the promise and prophecy of the great prophet Micah. And in addition, it tells us not only how he would be coming and

where he would be coming, but when he would be coming. The third prophecy is 400 years before Christ. Malachi 3:1 says this. "I will send my messenger," this was Jesus' cousin John the Baptizer, "who will prepare the way before me. Then suddenly the Lord," that is the Lord Jesus Christ, "you are seeking," the one that all human history had been longing the coming of, will come to where? "His temple, says the Lord Almighty." Now you need to know this, my friend. The temple was destroyed in 70 AD. This gives us a historical deadline for the coming of Christ. To my Jewish friends, we love you, we appreciate you, and we're praying for you. But some of my Jewish friends are still awaiting the coming of Messiah. And the truth is he had to come by 70 AD, because the prophets proclaimed that he would come to what place? The temple. After the life, ministry, death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus in 70 AD, the temple was destroyed. For nearly 2,000 years, it has remained ruins and rubble. I have been there myself. There is no temple. He would be coming through the womb of the Virgin Mary. He would be coming to the town of Bethlehem, and then he would come before 70 AD, and he would enter into his temple fulfilling all of its ministries. In addition, number four, we read this. Isaiah 35:5 and six tells us 700 BC. "Then the eyes of the blind will be open, the ears of the deaf unstop. Then will the lame leap like a deer and the mute tongue shout for joy." One of the ways that we would know that we were a visited people and planet is that when the King of kings brought the kingdom of God, we would see supernatural miracles unleashed and unfolded. What was promised is that Jesus wouldn't be just a mere mortal, that he would do supernatural things. We call them miracles. In the days of Jesus he raised the dead, and friends, he will do it again at the end of time. In the days of Jesus, the lame ran, the sick were healed. The blind could see, the deaf could hear, and the mute would sing the praises of God, that ultimately when the King comes and the kingdom comes, everyone and everything is healed and the power of God is unleashed. You and I lived in a, we now live, my friend, in a cursed and fallen planet. It doesn't matter how many dollars we spend, how many wars we wage, how many prescriptions we fulfill, how many elections we hold. Until Jesus comes, everything and everyone is broken. But when the King comes, there is healing. When the King comes, there is deliverance. When the King comes, there is life. And this absolutely was fulfilled in the earthly ministry of Jesus Christ. Not only that, we then read how he would die. We read this 1,000 years before Jesus walked on the earth. Psalm 22:16 says, "Dogs," it's a pejorative term toward his enemies and critics, "have surrounded me. A band of evil men has encircled me. They have pierced my hands and my feet." The promise was given that the Messiah, the Savior, Emmanuel God with us, he would be crucified through the hands and the feet. What's curious about this, this not only predicts, prophesies, and promises the crucifixion of Jesus, it also tells us in advance what would become the invention of crucifixion. It wasn't for 200 years from this prophecy that crucifixion actually began to be undertaken by the ancient Persian Empire. It says that Jesus would be crucified before there was crucifixion. God here was telling us not only that his son would be crucified, but that previously crucifixion would come into existence, and Jesus Christ lived the life we have not lived, the life without any sin. You need to know that there is no founder of any major world religion who has declared himself to be God except for Jesus Christ. To silence Jesus, he was sentenced to death and ultimately crucified, and they crucified him by driving large nails through the most sensitive nerve centers on the human body. Where was it? The hands and the feet. This connects Christmas, his birth, with Good Friday, his death. Jesus not only died, he died

exactly as God promised and prophesied he would. In addition, the next prophecy is that he would be betrayed. 500 years before Christ, the Old Testament prophet Zechariah in chapter 11 verse verses 12 and 13 says, "They paid me 30 pieces of silver, so I took the 30 pieces of silver and threw them into the house of the Lord, the potter's house." Now this being said, it's saying that Jesus would be betrayed and that the bounty on his head would be how much? 30, not 29 and not 31. Not bronze, silver. Not gold, silver. Jesus was betrayed by a pretend friend named Judas Iscariot. He was covert and not overt. He spent three years in the presence of Jesus plotting against Jesus. He was one of these evil men that the Bible speaks of. And when he betrayed Jesus he was paid by the religious and political leaders 30 pieces of silver, fulfilling the prophecy exactly. And then when it says it was thrown into the potter's house, that was a portion of the temple that existed until it was destroyed in 70 AD. And Judas did exactly that. He threw the money. He gave the money to the temple. The point is this. Judas was a very evil but a very religious man. Sometimes people will do the most horrific evil in the name of their religion, and he betrayed his God and Savior for 30 pieces of silver. And then it tells us what Jesus would say when he died on the cross in our place for our sins. It says this in Psalm 22:1. "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" Friends, you need to know that when Jesus Christ died on the cross in our place for our sins as our substitute and Savior, he quoted this verse exactly and precisely. He applied it to himself. And as he was dying, he cried out, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" Now, when Jesus died, he was forsaken so you and I could be forgiven. Christians like to explain this as something called the Great Exchange, that Jesus is God who took our place and put us in his place. He died that we might live. He had condemnation so we could receive salvation, that he would be separated from the Father so we could be reconciled from the Father, that he would endure wrath so we could receive grace. You need to know that Jesus lived the life that we have not lived, the life without sin, that Jesus has died the death we should die, the death for sin. To sin against God results in death and separating ourselves from the living God who is the source of life. And on the cross, Jesus said that he was fulfilling this by quoting this. Now I have very good news for you. Jesus did not stay dead. Jesus is alive right now. Jesus is ruling and reigning right now. Jesus is King of kings and Lord of lords right now. Amen. And we're gonna sing again in a minute. And when you sing, your praises are going to go into his presence and join an angelic choir in honoring and celebrating, enjoying and rejoicing in the finished work of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ. But here is my final promise and prophecy. 1,000 years before Jesus walked the earth, Psalm 16:10 says this. "You will not abandon me to the grave." The one who would die would not stay dead. "For you will not let your Holy One see decay." We all sin, we all die. There's one who dies and does not remain dead because he has no sin. His name is Jesus Christ. And it says that the Holy One, the one Holy One, the one Holy One who is without any sin that he would die and be buried. He would be put in a grave, but he would not remain there. I have such good news to tell you. This brings us from Christmas to Good Friday to Easter, and all of it is about Jesus. Christmas is about his birth. Good Friday is about his death. Easter is about his resurrection. And the good news is this, that everything that God promised about Jesus came true in the life, the death, the burial, and the resurrection of Jesus. Here we are, dear friend, a few thousand years removed from the life, death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus. Kings in kingdoms have come and gone, but the church of Jesus Christ remains. Movements and causes have come

and gone. But the church of Jesus Christ marches on. You and I are now part of the biggest movement of any sort or kind in the history of the world. We gather with brothers and sisters around the globe during this season, celebrating, worshiping in the billions the person and the work of Jesus Christ. If Jesus did not come, then we would not be here. If Jesus did not rise, then we would not gather. But we are here in the wake of the life, the death, the burial, the resurrection, and the great victory of Jesus Christ. Amen. Let me share three things with you. Number one. No other religion has anything like biblical prophecy. It is alone in a category that no other religious book or tradition has anything quite like the Word of God and the prophecy regarding Jesus. Number two, despite all of our technology and progress, we have made no progress in predicting the future. Amen. Every election, they're like, so-and-so's gonna win. No, they won't. Every year they're going to win the Super Bowl. No, they won't. We don't even know what the weather is going to be tomorrow. The app is not telling the truth. We never know exactly what the future holds. Yet God knows the future. God rules the future. God reveals the future, and I have good news for you. If you belong to Jesus Christ, he reveals to you a great and glorious and grand future. Not only will you die, you will rise. You will walk away from your grave. You will see Jesus Christ face to face. You will enter into the kingdom of God. He will wipe every tear from your eye and you'll be singing his praises as his people together forever. So we're here to celebrate Jesus. We're here to honor Jesus. We're here to love Jesus. We're excited about Jesus. And I would just say this in closing, for those of you that still have some skepticism or suspicion, my question, dear friend, is this. What would you give as an alternate explanation for all of these great prophecies and promises? The burden of proof is on you. If God didn't write the Bible, then who did? And if Jesus doesn't fulfill the Bible, then who does? I'll end with a quote, and here's what I'd like to share with you. This is from the Professor of Science at Westmont College, A gentleman named Peter Stoner. He wrote a book called "Science" and he looked just at the mathematical probability of not 61 at minimum prophecies being fulfilled, but just eight. Here's what he says. "Suppose that we take 10 to the 17th power silver dollars, lay them on the face of Texas. They will cover all of the state two feet deep. Now, mark one of these silver dollars and stir the whole mass thoroughly all over the state. Next, blindfold a man and tell him he can travel as far as he wishes, but he must pick up one silver dollar and say that it is the right one. What chance would he have of getting the right one? Just the same chance that the prophets would've had of writing these eight prophecies and having them all come true in any one man from their day to the present time, providing they wrote using their own wisdom." Friends, I have good news for you. This is the book that God wrote. This is the only perfect thing on Earth. It's all about Jesus. It tells us the truth of who we are. It tells us the truth of who God is. It tells us that we are sinners, but Jesus Christ is our Savior. It tells us that God has come for us in the birth of Jesus and he's coming again in the Second Coming of Jesus. I am telling you the greatest gift you can receive is Jesus Christ as your God and Savior. And I am telling you the Bible is true and Jesus Christ is the only God. Amen. All right, let's worship him. I'm gonna pray for you. Father, thank you so much for the Word of God. Thank you that we have revelation. Thank you that we know that we know that we know who Jesus is. We know that he is our Savior. We know that he is the fulfillment of prophecy. We know that he is the burden lifter. We know that he is the hurt healer. We know that he is the heaven opener. And Jesus, on your birthday, we say thank you. We love you. We trust you. We appreciate you. We

are so looking forward to seeing you again. And Lord Jesus, just like you fulfilled every promise at you're first coming, we're gonna worship until we see you again and you heal our hurts and you enter us into your eternity. Jesus, we love you. Happy birthday, Jesus. Merry Christmas to you.