

# Jesus, the Bible and You in 7 Steps - Jesus

*Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.*

Date: 08 February 2026

Preacher: Johan DeJong

[ 0 : 00 ] Thank you, Carolyn. Hello, everybody. It won't surprise you to hear that I'm not going to be able to cover the topic of Jesus! In one morning, in under half an hour.

Probably won't surprise most of you who are part of this church that in another one of those coincidences that we don't believe in, we get to talk about Jesus when we're baptising somebody. Let's just pray before we start, shall we? Lord God, thank you that you are good and that your goodness is seen most of all in the person of your Son, the Lord Jesus. Lord, his riches are inexhaustible. Thank you for the time we have this morning. Please show us something of the Lord Jesus that we need, that will feed our hearts, that will sustain our faith, that will draw us closer to him.

We pray that in Jesus' name. Amen. Any sci-fi fans in the room? No. No. No. I knew I was slightly limiting my audience by saying that.

[ 1 : 16 ] Here we are. Heard of War of the Worlds before? It's written by H.G. Wells. He's one of the two grandfathers of science fiction, along with Isaac Asimov.

We can talk about that for three hours after the service if you like. The thing you need to know about H.G. Wells is that he was an atheist. And he didn't have a lot of faith in humanity either. Come to that.

Here's what H.G. Wells says about Jesus. Jesus Christ is easily the most dominant figure in all history. Here's what the Chalcedonian Creed says about Jesus, one of the historical creeds of the Christian faith.

We confess our Lord Jesus Christ, truly God and truly man, of a reasonable soul and body, of one substance with the Father as to his divinity, consubstantial with us as to his humanity, in all things like us, but without sin, begotten before all ages of the Father, and in these latter days for us and our salvation, born of Mary, the Mother of God, existing in two natures without mixture, confusion, separation or division, not parted into two persons, but one and the same Son, the Lord Jesus Christ.

We've been walking through the plan of God together for seven weeks, working on the big picture, polishing our glasses, if you like, so that when we see something, we see it in good focus.

[ 2 : 53 ] Last time we thought about Israel, and Israel's story kind of finishes, does it, in Micah? Then there's 400 years of silence. God is silent, or so it seems, as he so often seems to be in our lives.

And then Jesus comes. And we know who Jesus is. I'm so thankful that all the way along we've been looking at Jesus. Jesus is the second member of the Trinity.

He's the means of creation. He's the reason for creation. He sustains creation. He's the serpent killer. He's the second Adam who resists temptation.

He's the child of promise to Abraham who will bless all the nations. He's the prophet, priest, and king par excellence. He is the word. He is the Passover lamb who fulfills the sacrificial system of the Old Testament.

He keeps the Ten Commandments. He's the Messiah, the suffering servant who will redeem his people. He's the Messiah. He's amazing. But you know, that's all stuff you could know about Jesus without ever knowing Jesus for yourself.

[ 4 : 04 ] Isn't it? Now we can get to know him a little bit better. And from this passage that we've just read, which we'll use as a jumping off point, really, I just want us to notice six things.

And I'm trying to be brief. So if the number six scares you, don't. First thing we need to know is Jesus is real. When we read this event, this account that's written down for us, the first thing that jumps out at you is that Jesus is a walking, talking, breathing human being, isn't he?

He meets people. He touches them. It isn't a fable. The details are too real, aren't they? Jesus isn't 2D. He's in a place at a time, confronted with a real situation.

He's local. He's local. And at the same time, he does these remarkable things that we can't do. Maybe you're thinking, yeah, but the Bible, you know, it's just mistranslated myth, really, isn't it? Well, set aside for a moment the fact that it is better attested by a factor of 10 than any other document from that period. And let's just spend a moment thinking about this man.

[ 5 : 14 ] He's called Tacitus. He's a first century Roman historian who thought that Christianity was a pernicious superstition, his words. And his writing confirms that Jesus lived and died, just as the Bible says.

Fast forward to today, or pretty close to today. 2017, there was an archaeologist professor called Eric Meyer who's having an interview with the National Geographic. And he says this, I don't know any mainstream scholar who doubts the historicity of Jesus.

Then what about his impact on history? Jesus was born a peasant, never had title, never had wealth, never went further than 200 miles from his hometown.

And yet he launches the single biggest global movement for good ever. And his teaching underpins everything that we value in our country. Human dignity, compassion, justice.

If you're alive in the 21st century in the UK, you have to deal with Jesus. Have you done that? Have you thought for yourself, who is this?

[ 6 : 21 ] This Jesus. Jesus is real, but secondly, Jesus reveals God's heart. What Jesus does in the story that we read today shows us what God's heart is like.

And the Bible tells us that. It says in Colossians 1.15, The sun is the image of the invisible God. Hebrews 1.3, The sun is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being. One person's put it like this, Jesus is God spelling himself out to us in language we can understand. So what is Jesus' heart like?

Well, Matthew 11, he tells us. He says, I am gentle and humble of heart. He is careful. He is caring. He is approachable. If you know your Bible, you know there is a parade of others, right from the beginning, who harden their hearts. They harden their hearts against God's goodness and against people's needs.

[ 7 : 30 ] Jesus' heart is soft. He doesn't harden it. And he is the wholehearted one. He is the only one who has ever lived with an undivided heart, completely undivided.

We don't love God with all our heart and strength and soul and might and mind, as the Bible says we ought to. Jesus does.

His heart is not divided. It is totally committed in word, in deed, in feeling, to the things God loves. Holiness, justice, and wonderfully also, compassion and transforming grace.

And therefore, his whole heart is also for the people God loves. He loves us. I don't know if you recognise the man in the picture.

He's an American actor. Thank you, Deb. Film star called Keanu Reeves. He's probably slightly last century now. You can see him in films like The Matrix or, better yet, Bill and Ted's Excellent Adventure.

[ 8 : 41 ] Recommend that one. The other thing is, he can also be found on the New York subway, quite often. He's riding along like an ordinary person. And there's video footage of him just getting up, as hopefully you or I would, to give up his seat to somebody who needs it more than he does.

Jesus is a bit like this. It's like we meet the man on the big screen where all you see is, you know, the chiseled jaw and the cool outfits.

And you meet him on the street and you find that they're everything you'd hoped they would be. That's Jesus. Maybe you're thinking, you know what, I kind of believe in a God, but I don't really know what he's like.

Look at Jesus. We saw at the beginning that God is great and good and gracious. If you want to know what that means for you, look at Jesus. Jesus reveals God's heart.

Thirdly, Jesus moves towards you. Let's look at our passage, verses 13 and 14 especially. Jesus goes to a town called Nain. As he approaches, a dead person is being carried out.

[ 9 : 57 ] An only child. Verse 13, he sees the mother. When the Lord saw her, his heart went out to her. And he said, don't cry. And then he went up and touched the bier they were carrying him on and the bearers stood still.

Can you see? God's heart goes out to people. He moves towards them. Not the other way around. Not just people who were born into some religion.

Not when they behave well enough. Not when they're spiritually alive enough. No, the boy's dead. Jesus moves towards him.

He moves towards you. His heart goes out to that mother and child. Why? Because of what his heart is like. It is soft. It's compassionate.

It's gentle. It's completely committed to God's plan to resurrect and reunite and restore people to himself. And that explains so much when you realise it, doesn't it?

[ 11 : 00 ] It explains the incarnation. The fact that Jesus left the glory and harmony of heaven to come and walk through the muck with me as a human being. Jesus moves towards me.

It explains the cross where Jesus moves towards all of us who suffer by suffering himself on our behalf. Where he moves towards the very men who are torturing him to death when he says, Father, forgive them because they don't know what they're doing.

And it explains the coming of the Holy Spirit by whom Jesus moves closer to his people than anyone else can. Dwelling within them. Groaning on their behalf in prayer to God.

God's powering change. See, Jesus is God. And God, by his very nature, does everything he does perfectly and completely. And so when Jesus moves towards someone, he does that perfectly and completely.

When he loves you, he loves you completely. It doesn't depend on you, on your behaviour, or your progress. It depends on who he is. So maybe you're here today and you're thinking, I'm not sure I can.

[ 12 : 11 ] I'm not sure I can come. I don't, I'm not sure God would want me. Jesus can. And he will move towards you.

Ask him to do that. Allow him to do that. Jesus moves towards you. Jesus calls you.

Back to verse 14. He said, young man, I say to you, get up. See, this is how Jesus works.

He calls people. He calls fishermen. He calls tax collectors. He calls politicians. He calls shopkeepers. He calls you. He calls me. He calls dead people. And he calls them from dark to light. I think most of you probably have heard of C.S. Lewis. He was an atheist too, into his 30s. Do you know what set him on the path to eventually admitting that God was God?

[ 13 : 12 ] Those are his words. Do you know what set him on that path? A phone call from J.R.R. Tolkien, who was a Christian. You see, people don't believe because they finally get it or because they need some crutch or because all their questions are answered.

We believe because a person's voice speaks to us, calls us, Jesus. And here's how Lewis described how it felt to hear that voice through the experience of his character, Lucy, in the Chronicles of Narnia.

says this, Lucy, speaking for himself, woke out of the deepest sleep you can imagine, like that dead boy, with the feeling that the voice she liked best in all the world had been calling her name.

That's Jesus. Wouldn't you like to hear that voice? And if you did, what would he say?

Well, let's go back to that passage in Matthew 11 where Jesus was revealing his heart, God's heart. Here's the full section. This is what Jesus says to everybody in this fallen world. Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest.

[ 14 : 37 ] Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. those are Jesus' words as he calls you today.

Sadly, the Bible also tells us that just like in Jesus' day, the majority of people will refuse to hear that and will reject Jesus and will not recognise him for who he is.

But the whole reason that this account is kept in the Bible for us is to remind us that Jesus is still calling people today. He's calling you from dark to light.

Will you hear him? Jesus calls you. Finally. Almost finally. Jesus gives you life.

This miracle that we've been reading about, which happens in an unimportant village and to ordinary people, is at heart a picture of who Jesus is and what he does.

[ 15 : 43 ] We grieve with that widow. We understand that, don't we? We grieve with her in a world that is broken. That's what James was talking about with the fall. But deeper still, we are that boy.

We are spiritually dead in our sins. Dead as he was. We need saving. We need raising. Because as the Bible says, the wages of sin is death.

Romans 6.23. But that verse carries on. The wages of sin is death. But the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus, our Lord.

You see, when Jesus calls us and as we answer, he recreates eternal, spiritual life in us by his voice and his words, just as he created life at the beginning.

and then when he speaks, then the dead man sits up. The dead man sat up and began to talk.

[16:51] How does that work? How is it that Jesus gives life? How is that even fair if the wages of sin is death? What is it that can bridge the gap between man and God?

how can we cross the chasm that we have created between him and us through our rebellion? How can we even come when he calls? It's through the cross.

Because Jesus is human. Dying, he can represent us on the cross. and rising, he can break a path for humanity to enter heaven and be with God forever.

Because he is God, he can live a perfect life and he is able to carry our sin and carry it for us to the cross because he has none of his own. Jesus dies in our place and if we have faith in Jesus and what he did on the cross, God looks at us and he sees his beloved son.

Because of the cross, the impossible happens. The dead man sat up and began to talk. But that's a nonsense sentence otherwise, isn't it? Because the whole thing about dead people is they don't sit up unless they're given new life.

[18:11] By his death and his resurrection, Jesus gives life. Death defeated. Life in Christ. Christ. I just want to share a story that I came across recently.

It's a story of a very wealthy man who had lost his wife but he had one son whom he loved very much. And he also, with his son, had a passion for collecting works of fine art.

So he would tour around the world and they would buy only the finest paintings, Picasso, Van Gogh, Monet. And together they're happy. In this shared passion.

And then war breaks out. And the son enlists. And he's posted overseas. And the man's at home praying, praying, waiting for news, hoping it will be alright.

And then one day the dreaded knock on the door comes. And his son has been killed. Rescuing others from danger. And the man's distraught.

[19:22] As that widower was. And he grieves for weeks. Till on Christmas day there's a knock on the door. And he opens the door and there's a soldier standing there. And the soldier says, I knew your son.

He was one of my best friends during the war. And I know he loved art. And I love art too. So I want you to have this. And he handed him a package.

And then he left. And the old man went inside and he opened the package and inside was a painting of his son. Spitting image of his father. Not a masterpiece.

But precious. So the old man puts it pride of place in his collection. And a few years later he himself passes away.

What's going to happen to the art collection? Well, it's at the auctioneers. You can imagine all of the collectors rubbing their hands. And the first lot to be auctioned is a small painting of a boy in military uniform.

[20:30] The son. Who will bid me a hundred pounds? Fifty pounds. Ten pounds.

Who will bid me ten pounds? One bit of ten pounds. Going. Going. Gone. And all the collectors. Sigh of relief. Finally we can get on to the good stuff. Pass this rubbish. And then the auctioneer announces that the auction is over. And there's a clamour.

What about all Van Goghs and the Monet's and the Picassos? What about all of those? And the auctioneer simply says the will was very clear. He who takes the son gets it all.

You already see where we're going with this. Don't you? Here is what the Bible says. He who has the son has life. He who does not have the son of God does not have life.

[21:41] Jesus gives life. And finally Jesus holds you. Let's look at verse 16. All the people standing around the crowd here we are are filled with awe and praise God.

A great prophet has appeared among us they said God has come to help his people. See the people standing around knew that this wasn't some sort of isolated incident. You know dead boy raised job done thanks very much see you later.

That's not what's happening here. They knew this meant something more. Jesus' work doesn't stop with giving life to one dead boy.

Jesus' work means something for everybody in the whole world and it carries on after he has given us new life. Here's what Hebrews 7 says Consequently he is able to save to the uttermost those who draw near to God through him since he always lives to make intercession for them.

Jesus' saving work the blood he spilled does not just have power for this moment right now when you have faith. it has the power to make you safe for always from now until eternity because he is able to save to the uttermost.

[ 23 : 01 ] He is still at work he is still at work giving life to new people and more to the people that he has already made alive.

It's the difference between the doctor who gives you an appointment and some medicines to make you better and the nurse who stays with you until you are better or you pass away.

And of course Jesus is both. And that is how Paul is able to say these words for I am convinced that neither death nor life neither angels nor demons neither the present nor the future nor any powers neither height nor depth nor anything else in all creation will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Jesus holds you. Maybe you are a believer here this morning and you have Jesus and you think life doesn't feel different you are just in pain it doesn't seem to be working and you are thinking why isn't Jesus doing for me what he did for that mother for that boy speaking about life and hope feels as cruel as saying don't cry to the mother of a dead boy doesn't it?

It is only cruel if Jesus doesn't have a plan and he doesn't have the power to do something about it to save us but he has both and we are living between the don't cry and the miracle.

[ 24 : 47 ] Keep faith in Jesus who holds you. friend perhaps you are here this morning and you don't believe then I must tell you that you are on the wrong side of the chasm and Jesus calls you this history changing God shaped man he is calling you and his heart is for you he can give you life ask him for the faith to trust that don't delay let's pray Jesus we thank you for all that you are unimaginably great and with a heart that draws near to us and gently cares for us thank you that you hold us that you died for us that you call us to trust you please help us to do that and we pray that especially for Lou in Jesus name

Amen