

# **"Seeing God in Jesus Christ."**

Colossians 1:15

15 **He is the image of the invisible God,  
The firstborn of all creation.**

We are on a wonderful journey on learning about Jesus the Christ; Jesus the only anointed by God to manifest Himself in verses 15-19

**This is one of the most important sections  
of all the New Testament.**

For example: In Colossians 1:15-19, there is more about JESUS CHRIST than you can find in Matthew, Mark or Luke. You can learn a great deal about Jesus Christ from the gospels.

But you can learn a great deal more about Jesus Christ from these four verses than you can from the gospels and from almost any other section of the Word of God. Colossians 1:15-19 is a concentrated passage on who and what JESUS CHRIST is.

Since everything that we are, or have or ever will have depends on who and what Christ is, it is imperative that we know and understand all that is taught in these few verses

Colossians 1:15-19

15 **He is the image of the invisible God,  
The firstborn of all creation.**

16 **For by Him all things were created, *both* in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—  
all things have been created through Him and for Him.**

17 **He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together.**

18 **He is also head of the body, the church; and He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, so that He Himself will come to have first place in everything.**

19 **For it was the *Father's* good pleasure for all the fullness to dwell in Him,**

It will take us into eternity to begin to grasp the Glory of JESUS CHRIST. We all know He is our Savior, and He is our Friend, but what is so wonderful is what JESUS CHRIST asked God the Father about us in the Lord's prayer:

John 17: 24

24 **“Father, I desire that they also, whom You have given Me, be with Me where I am, so that they may see My glory which You have given Me, for You loved Me before the foundation of the world.**

Think about this request, when you are alone, meditate on the fact that JESUS CHRIST prayed to God the Father that we **Be With Him** for all eternity. There are multitude of questions that people have about heaven and eternity, which we are not told, but let me assure you of this one thing, you will be with Him for all eternity! And if you grasp these five verses... enough said!

## Colossians 1:15

14

**He** (referring to Jesus Christ)

**He** (note how the Holy Spirit builds into the person of JESUS CHRIST)

In verse 13 He is described as **the Son of His love**

Then in verse 14 refers to the work of JESUS CHRIST – **redemption, the forgiveness of sins**

Now in verse 15 He is described as the image of the invisible God.

**He is** (The Present Active Indicative of this verb introduces the absolute status of Jesus.)

**He is** (Always has been and there will never be time when He is not.)

**He is the image.**

This introduces a two century old debate,

**Is JESUS CHRIST a ‘Spark’ Like God**

**or**

**Is JESUS CHRIST God?**

And the debate is resolved by the Greek word used here. There are two Greek words for *image* and it is extremely important as to which word is used here. One of these words is ***homoion*** and means ***representation*** and this is not the word we have here.

Instead we have the Greek word ***eikon*** which means ***exact image***. There is no question, JESUS CHRIST does not have the 'spark' of God.

# **Jesus Christ Is God**

**JESUS CHRIST does not represent God**

# **JESUS CHRIST IS GOD**

**JESUS CHRIST is the exact image of the invisible God.**

**Who is the invisible God?**

**The Invisible God is  
JESUS CHRIST in His deity,  
God the Father in His deity  
and  
Holy Spirit in His deity.**

But JESUS CHRIST is the revealed member of the Godhead.

God the Father is not seen nor felt,  
Holy Spirit is felt but not seen  
And

JESUS CHRIST is the seen member of the Godhead.

# **WHO is Jesus Christ?**

## **WHAT is Jesus Christ?**

We are just some 2000 years since the birth of JESUS CHRIST. People have been debating on these questions from the first century and many are still debating this today.

Is JESUS CHRIST deity?

Is JESUS CHRIST true humanity?

### **Does He represent God— or Is He, in fact, God?**

A study of Church history –especially early history various councils were held to debate these issues concerning JESUS CHRIST.

## **Early Church Councils**

- 1 Jerusalem
- 2 First Council of Nicaea 325 AD
- 3 First Council of Constantinople 381 AD
- 4 First Council of Ephesus 431 AD
- 5 First Council of Chalcedon 451 AD
- 6 Second Council of Constantinople 553 AD

7 Third Council of Constantinople 680 AD

8 Second Council of Nicaea 787 AD

However, not all of these councils have been universally recognized as ecumenical. As indicated above, the **CHURCH OF THE EAST** accepts only the first two, and Oriental Orthodoxy only three. NONTRINITARIANS, such as ONENESS PENTECOSTALS, UNITARIANS, THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS, QUAKERS, CHRISTADELPHIANS and JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES, reject the teachings of all seven.

1 **Jerusalem:** That the gospel, **BELIEVE ON THE LORD JESUS CHRIST AND THOU SHALL BE SAVED** was to be proclaimed to both Jew and Gentile.

2 **First Council of Nicaea** 325 AD  
Dealt with the person of JESUS CHRIST being equal with God the Father.

1 Christ is of the being of the Father.

2 To the phrase “begotten” is added “not made” to deny the Arian contention that the Logos was “made”.

3 The Son is one substance with the Father.

- 4 To the words “became flesh” was added “and was made man”.
- 5 Other issues discussed: date of Easter; problems of clerical discipline, heresy, and schisms.

**This doctrine will never be resolved  
to the satisfaction of everyone.**

**Therefore, the church today is characterized by divisions.**

This is one reason JESUS CHRIST as head of the Church, set it up by **LOCAL CHURCHES**, not by denominations. But even then major doctrines like the essence of Jesus Christ divides the Church universally.

Even today, we have “**Evangelicals**” and “**Fundamentalists**” who disagree even within these broad designations.

3 **First Council of Constantinople** 381 AD  
primarily decreed the deity of the Holy Spirit.

4 **First Council of Ephesus** 431 AD  
This Council was called to combat **Nestorianism**, which split Jesus Christ, the God-man into two distinct persons, one human and one divine. Also at issue was the “**Theotokos**” –God bearing of Mary.

5 **First Council of Chalcedon** 451 AD

Still debating the nature of JESUS CHRIST; when pressed few people today are capable of giving a definitive definition to the two natures in Christ.

At this Council, it was confirmed:

- 1 That Lord Christ is one. His two natures preserved in one—**hypostasis**.
- 2 Two natures in one, **complete deity and true humanity**”, unconfusedly, unchangeable, indivisibly, and inseparably.”
- 3 The distinct natures are fully God and man, thus securing salvation by a saving God, and a man identified with man (representing mankind)

6 **Second Council of Constantinople** 553 AD

Which was called due to the great division in the Church over the being of JESUS CHRIST primarily **“Monophysitism”** from two Greek words *monos*—only and *fusis*—nature which contends there is only one nature in the Incarnation, not two. This they felt was the only way to protect the teaching of the unity of Christ’s person. To ascribe two natures to Christ was a denial that man could gain ultimate oneness with God which was the goal of Salvation.



The result of this emphasis is to play down the manhood of Christ and relegate it to the realm of an unimportance” (from *Dictionary of the Christian Church*, general editor; J.D. Douglas)

Now back to the 2<sup>nd</sup> **Council of Constantinople** in 553 AD.

They challenged the “**hypostatic union**” of JESUS CHRIST making Him one nature, de-emphasizing His Humanity. This one was so pro-Roman Catholic Church that it pronounced Mary as –**Mother of God** and now “**ever Virgin**”.

7 **Third Council of Constantinople** 680 AD

This council came by necessity from the rise of Islam from the middle of the 7<sup>th</sup> century.

But they could not come to any full agreement on the substance of Jesus Christ and it ended with yet greater division.

8 **Second Council of Nicea** 787 AD

This one focused on “**iconoclasm**” and while it said that worship of these was forbidden it did not stop the making or having of them. Again, ended in more division in the Church.

There were no more significant Church Councils, nor was there any universal agreement on virtually any one doctrine.

As we have seen there are many who deny the simple gospel as presented in Scripture:

## **‘Believe On The LORD JESUS CHRIST and Thou Shall Be Saved’**

And so it is with the deity of JESUS CHRIST, but for the eye that will see the deity of JESUS CHRIST is taught in the Word of God.

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### **I Scriptures That Teach The Deity Of Jesus Christ**

1. The most powerful and definitive passages on the deity of JESUS CHRIST is John 1:1-18

**1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.**

**2 He was in the beginning with God.**

**3 All things came into being through Him, and apart from Him nothing came into being that has come into being.**

**4 In Him was life, and the life was the Light of men.**

**5 The Light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it.**

**6 There came a man sent from God, whose name was John.**

- 7 **He came as a witness, to testify about the Light, so that all might believe through him.**
- 8 **He was not the Light, but *he came* to testify about the Light.**
- 9 **There was the true Light which, coming into the world, enlightens every man.**
- 10 **He was in the world, and the world was made through Him, and the world did not know Him.**
- 11 **He came to His own, and those who were His own did not receive Him.**
- 12 **But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, *even* to those who believe in His name,**
- 13 **who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God.**
- 14 **And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we saw His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth.**
- 15 **John testified about Him and cried out, saying, “This was He of whom I said, ‘He who comes after me has a higher rank than I, for He existed before me.’ ”**
- 16 **For of His fullness we have all received, and grace upon grace.**
- 17 **For the Law was given through Moses; grace and truth were realized through Jesus Christ.**

<sup>18</sup> **No one has seen God at any time; the only begotten God who is in the bosom of the Father, He (JESUS CHRIST) has explained *Him*.** (God the Father)  
This is what our passage in Colossians 1:15 is teaching.

2. The eternal existence of JESUS CHRIST is seen in passages such as: John 8:58

<sup>58</sup> **Jesus said to them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, before Abraham was born, I am.”**  
“I AM” means self existing, did not come from anyone higher or before Him.

Now, when you read a passage such as John 8:58 either JESUS CHRIST is liar, or a mad man or He is who He claims to be.

He cannot be a wonderful prophet (*Mohammads and many others view of Jesus*) but if He is a liar or a mad man; He certainly cannot be a wonderful prophet.

3. In the Old Testament prophecy of His birth is also declaration of His Deity. Micah 5:2

<sup>2</sup> **“But as for you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, *Too* little to be among the clans of Judah, From you One will go forth for Me to be ruler in Israel. His goings forth are from long ago, From the days of eternity.”**

4. A passage that declares that Jesus is also God:

Romans 9:5

<sup>5</sup> **whose are the fathers, and from whom is the Christ according to the flesh, who is over all, God blessed forever. Amen.** (Referring to Jesus the Christ.)

5. Another passage that right out declares that Jesus is God:

Titus 2:13

<sup>13</sup> **looking for the blessed hope and the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Christ Jesus,**

6. A passage that equates both JESUS CHRIST and God the Father: Hebrews 1:8-10

<sup>8</sup> **But of the Son (JESUS CHRIST) *He* (God the Father) *says*, “YOUR THRONE, O GOD,(yes, God the Father calls His son, God, for indeed JESUS CHRIST is deity; He is the God man, Undeminished Deity, True Humanity in one person) IS FOREVER AND EVER, AND THE RIGHTEOUS SCEPTER IS THE SCEPTER OF HIS KINGDOM.**

<sup>9</sup> **“YOU HAVE LOVED RIGHTEOUSNESS AND HATED LAWLESSNESS; THEREFORE GOD, (JESUS CHRIST) YOUR GOD, (God the Father) HAS ANOINTED YOU (humanity) WITH THE OIL OF GLADNESS ABOVE YOUR COMPANIONS.”**

<sup>10</sup> **And, “YOU, LORD, IN THE BEGINNING LAID THE FOUNDATION OF THE EARTH, (We know from many passages that JESUS CHRIST created the world, the universes, and all creatures—angelic, human or animal.) AND THE HEAVENS ARE THE WORKS OF YOUR HANDS;**

7. Several declarations of JESUS CHRIST are given in one passage: 1 John 5:20

<sup>20</sup> **And we know that the Son of God (JESUS CHRIST) has come, (incarnation) and has given us understanding so that we may know Him (God the Father) who is true; and we are in Him (we are in Christ by faith in JESUS CHRIST) who is true, (God the Father is true, JESUS CHRIST is true and the Holy Spirit is the Spirit of Truth) in His (God the Father) **Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God and eternal life.** (JESUS CHRIST)**

8. There are two passages that mention JESUS CHRIST as the third member of the Godhead:

Matthew 28:19

<sup>19</sup> **“Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit,**

2 Corinthians 13:14

<sup>14</sup> **The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with you all.**

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## **II The Pre-incarnate work of JESUS CHRIST.**

What did JESUS CHRIST do before He came in the flesh as a member of the Godhead The pre-incarnate work of JESUS CHRIST necessitates His pre-existence—Deity

- a. **Christ Created The Universe.** The heavens and earth were created by His speaking, in less than a second and all at one time.
- b. **Man was created on the 6<sup>th</sup> day of restoration,** long after the heavens and earth were created.
- c. **Angels were created** sometime between the creation of the earth and the creation of mankind.

**EVERY ACT OF ORIGINAL CREATION IS THE WORK OF THE LORD JESUS CHRIST.** Many passages teach of His creating all things such as... John 1:3; Colossians 1:16 and Hebrews 1:10.

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### **III The doctrine of Divine Decrees Teaches that JESUS CHRIST as God had a Definite Part in the Divine Decrees.**

Psalm 2:7-9

7 **“I will surely tell of the decree of the LORD: He said to Me, ‘You are My Son, Today I have begotten You.**

8 **‘Ask of Me, and I will surely give the nations as Your inheritance, And the *very* ends of the earth as Your possession.**

9 **‘You shall break them with a rod of iron, You shall shatter them like earthenware.’ ”**

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## **IV The Christophanies also Indicate the Deity of JESUS CHRIST**

The only member of the Godhead who has ever been manifest, in the Old Testament or in the incarnation is JESUS CHRIST. A Christophany that directly indicates that JESUS CHRIST is God is as ‘**Angel of Jehovah**’. In several of these appearances JESUS CHRIST is referred to an ‘**Angel of Jehovah**’ and at the same time as **Jehovah**, indicating that He is also God.

The Angel of Jehovah is identified as Jehovah  
Genesis 16:7-13

- 7 **Now the angel of the LORD (THIS IS THE ONLY REVEALED MEMBER OF THE GODHEAD—JESUS CHRIST) found her by a spring of water in the wilderness, by the spring on the way to Shur.**
- 8 **He said, “Hagar, Sarai’s maid, where have you come from and where are you going?” And she said, “I am fleeing from the presence of my mistress Sarai.”**
- 9 **Then the angel of the LORD said to her, “Return to your mistress, and submit yourself to her authority.”**
- 10 **Moreover, the angel of the LORD said to her, “I will greatly multiply your descendants so that they will be too many to count.”**



11 **The angel of the LORD said to her further, “Behold, you are with child, And you will bear a son; (As God, He knows all things) And you shall call his name Ishmael, Because the LORD has given heed to your affliction.**

12 **“He will be a wild donkey of a man, His hand *will be* against everyone, And everyone’s hand *will be* against him; And he will live to the east of all his brothers.”**

13 **Then she called the name of the LORD (YHWH) who spoke to her, “You are a God (El original Hebrew *you...God* or [*you are God*]) who sees”; for she said, “Have I even remained alive here after seeing Him?” (She knows this one she is talking with is God and she knows that anyone who sees God, dies, so she is a little bewildered)**

Another strong passage that identifies **The Angel of the Lord** as God or as Deity. Genesis 22:11-18

11 **But the angel of the LORD called to him from heaven and said, “Abraham, Abraham!” And he said, “Here I am.”**

12 **He said, “Do not stretch out your hand against the lad, and do nothing to him; for now I know that you fear God, since you have not withheld your son, your only son, from Me.” (Indicating that He is God)**

13 **Then Abraham raised his eyes and looked, and behold, behind *him* a ram caught in the thicket by his horns; and Abraham went and took the ram and offered him up for a burnt offering in the place of his son.**

14 **Abraham called the name of that place The LORD Will Provide, as it is said to this day, “In the mount of the LORD it will be provided.”**

15 **Then the angel of the LORD called to Abraham a second time from heaven,**

16 **and said, “By Myself I have sworn, declares the LORD, because you have done this thing and have not withheld your son, your only son,**

17 **indeed I will greatly bless you, and I will greatly multiply your seed as the stars of the heavens and as the sand which is on the seashore; and your seed shall possess the gate of their enemies.**

18 **“In your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed, because you have obeyed My voice.”**  
(That is, he has obeyed the voice of God.)

Another passage where **The Angel of the Lord** declares that He is God. Gen. 31:11-13

11 **“Then the angel of God said to me in the dream, ‘Jacob,’ and I said, ‘Here I am.’**

12 **“He said, ‘Lift up now your eyes and see *that* all the male goats which are mating are striped, speckled, and mottled; for I have seen all that Laban has been doing to you.**

13 **'I am the God of Bethel, where you anointed a pillar, where you made a vow to Me; (as the Supreme God) now arise, leave this land, and return to the land of your birth.'** ”

Another interesting passage equating The Angel of Jehovah as being God. Acts 7:31-35

31 **“When Moses saw it, he marveled at the sight; and as he approached to look *more* closely, there came the voice of the Lord:**

32 **'I AM THE GOD OF YOUR FATHERS, (In Exodus 2:2, this is The Angel of Jehovah and here He is God!) THE GOD OF ABRAHAM AND ISAAC AND JACOB.'** Moses shook with fear and would not venture to look.

33 **“BUT THE LORD SAID TO HIM, ‘TAKE OFF THE SANDALS FROM YOUR FEET, FOR THE PLACE ON WHICH YOU ARE STANDING IS HOLY GROUND.**

34 **'I HAVE CERTAINLY SEEN THE OPPRESSION OF MY PEOPLE (THE HEBREWS ARE THE PEOPLE OF GOD) IN EGYPT AND HAVE HEARD THEIR GROANS, AND I HAVE COME DOWN TO RESCUE THEM; COME NOW, AND I WILL SEND YOU TO EGYPT.'**

35 **“This Moses whom they disowned, saying, ‘WHO MADE YOU A RULER AND A JUDGE?’ is the one whom God sent *to be* both a ruler and a deliverer with the help of the angel who appeared to him in the thorn bush. (The Angel of Jehovah is GOD.)**

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## **V Even Old Testament Passages Refer to this Messiah (Jesus Christ) as God.**

Isaiah 9:6

<sup>6</sup> **For a child will be born** (referring to the birth of the Messiah, Jesus the Christ) **to us,** (the Jews) **a son will be given to us;** (by the grace of God)  
**And the government will rest on His shoulders;**  
**And His name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,** (He is known as Mighty God—deity)  
**Eternal Father,** (Eternality is an attribute of God) **Prince of Peace.**

<sup>7</sup> **There will be no end to the increase of *His* government or of peace, On the throne of David and over his kingdom, To establish it and to uphold it with justice and righteousness From then on and forevermore. The zeal of the LORD of hosts (God) will accomplish this.**

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## **VI Divine Essence... Referring to Essence of The Being of Deity**

**These characteristics of God are attributed to JESUS CHRIST.**

### **Eternal Life**

Isaiah 9:6; Micah 5:2; John 1:1; John 5:8 Colossians 1:16-17

### **Perfect Righteousness and Justice or Holiness:**

Luke 1:35; John 6:59; Hebrews 7:26

### **Divine Love**

John 13:1 and 34; 1 John 3:16;

## **Immutability**

Hebrews 13:8

## **Omniscient**

Matthew 9:4 John 2:25; 1 Corinthians 4:5; Colossians 2:3  
Revelation 2:23

## **Omnipotent**

Matthew 24:30 and 28:13; 1 Corinthians 15:28; Philippians 3:21;  
Hebrews 1:3 and Revelation 1:8

## **Omnipresence**

Matthew 28:20; Ephesians 1:23; Colossians 1:27

**Next Week We will see exactly why  
it is so important that JESUS CHRIST is also God.**

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*You have to make up your mind:*

**Is Christ sufficient for all your needs?**

Or do you have to have other things or something else?

**This book is about the Sufficiency of JESUS CHRIST:  
to God the Father;  
and to you?**

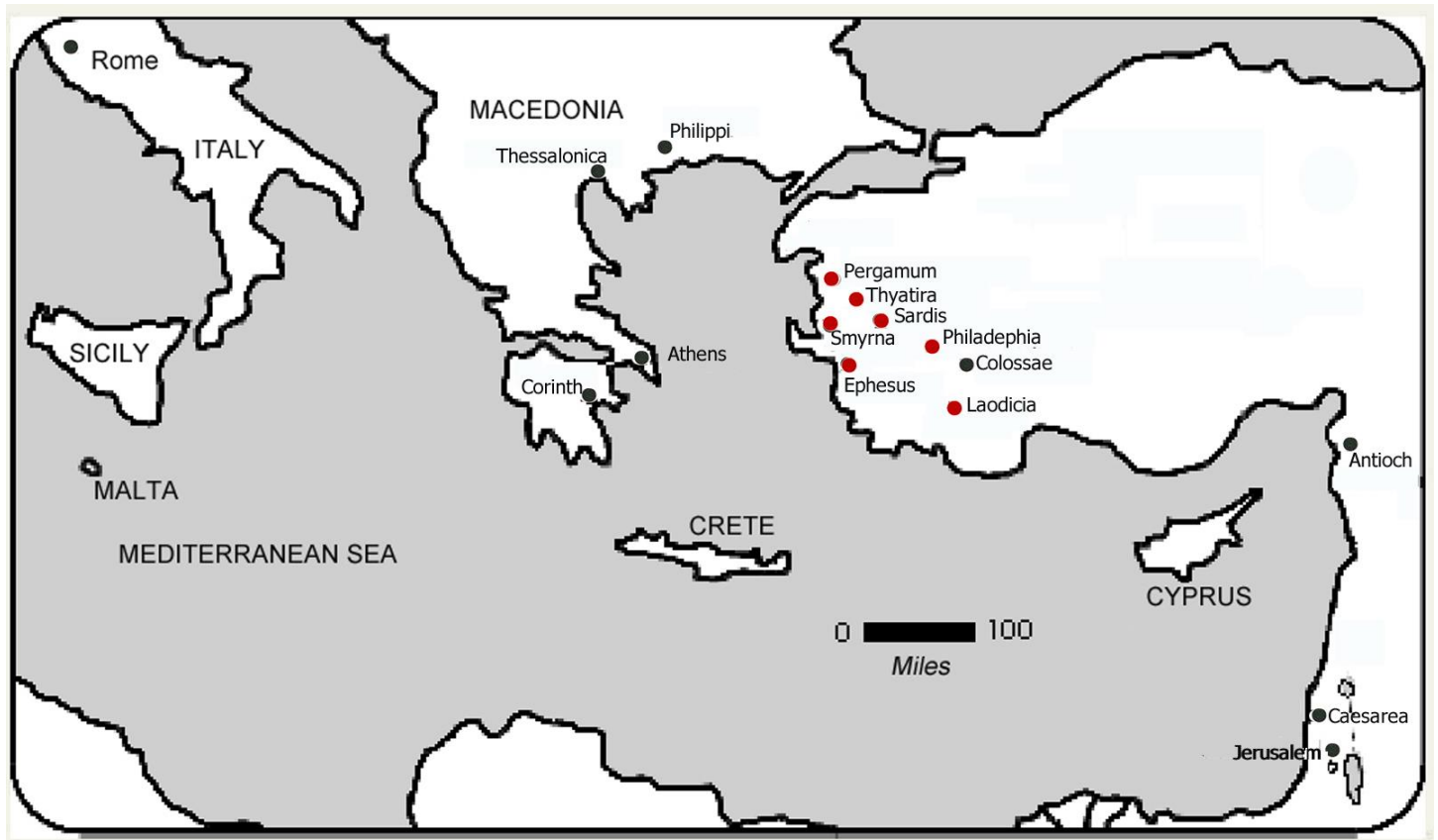
**Is the Word of God sufficient for you?**

**Sufficient to bring you to JESUS CHRIST?**

**Sufficient to bring you to God the Father?**

Is the World of God sufficient for **SAD** (*Stress, Anxiety, Depression*) in your life or do you need outside help?

So we learn so much from the true understanding of the Gospel.



*Only one life,' twill soon be past,  
Only what's done for Christ will last.*

## VERSE 1

James singing O Lord, my God, when I in awesome wonder, consider all the worlds Thy hands have made. I see the stars, I hear the rolling thunder, Thy power throughout the universe displayed.

CHORUS (congregation)

**Then sings my soul, my Saviour God, to Thee  
How great Thou art, How great Thou art  
Then sings my soul, my Saviour God, to Thee  
How great Thou art, How great Thou art**

VERSE 2 (congregation)

**And when I think of God, His Son not sparing  
Sent Him to die, I scarce can take it in  
That on the Cross, my burden gladly bearing  
He bled and died to take away my sin**

CHORUS (congregation)

**Then sings my soul, my Saviour God, to Thee  
How great Thou art, How great Thou art  
Then sings my soul, my Saviour God, to Thee  
How great Thou art, How great Thou art**

*When burdens Press and seem beyond endurance*

*Bowed down with grief, to Him I lift my face*

*And then in Love, He brings me sweet assurance*

*My Child! For thee, sufficient is My Grace.*

# Evangelism by Persecution

**From the Berean site!!! Persecution always "invigorates" to the gospel!!! --pkm  
Today's Update**

## WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT IRAN'S CHURCH

[Excerpts]

The Iranian revolution of 1979 established a hard-line Islamic regime. Over the next two decades, Christians faced increasing opposition and persecution: All missionaries were kicked out, evangelism was outlawed, Bibles in Persian were banned and soon became scarce, and several pastors were killed. The church came under tremendous pressure.

Many feared the small Iranian church would soon wither away and die. But the exact opposite has happened. Despite continued hostility from the late 1970s until now, Iranians have become the Muslim people most open to the gospel in the Middle East.

How did this happen? Two factors have contributed to this openness. First, violence in the name of Islam has caused widespread disillusionment with the regime and led many Iranians to question their beliefs. Second, many Iranian Christians have continued to boldly and faithfully tell others about Christ, in the face of persecution.

The testimonies of Iranian men and women who've come to Christ are powerful.

Kamran was a violent man who used to sell drugs and weapons. One day, a friend gave him a New Testament. After reading for five consecutive days, Kamran gave his life to Jesus. When his family and friends saw his transformed life over the ensuing months, many of them also came to faith. A church now meets in Kamran's house.



Reza was a mullah (a Muslim scholar) who hoped to become an ayatollah (a Shiite leader). One day, while studying at an Islamic seminary in Iran, he found a New Testament that had been boldly left in the library. Out of curiosity, he picked it up and was deeply shaken. Over time, he fell in love with Jesus. Today Reza is a trained church planter serving in the Iran region.

Fatemah's earliest memories were of being raped by her brothers. At age 11, she was sold in marriage to a young drug addict who abused her and then divorced her when she was 17. Upon returning home she was raped again, until she decided to leave. On the streets she heard the gospel preached, and she trusted Jesus. In time, she married a Christian man. As they were receiving training in evangelism and church planting, Fatemah felt called to go back home and witness to her family. Her entire family repented and gave their lives to the Lord. The first church Fatemah and her husband planted was in her childhood home.

(Howard, "What You Need to Know about Iran's Church," CrossWalk Online, 8/1/16)

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