

# Names of God Canonically Listed – NT

Though not all the below names in the next two sections are related to Jesus, a vast majority are. For the most part, theologians throughout history have recognized three but sometimes four<sup>1</sup> main titles for Jesus of Nazareth:

1. Jesus Christ.<sup>2</sup>
2. The Word of God.<sup>3</sup>
3. The Son of God.<sup>4</sup>
4. Wisdom.<sup>5</sup>

## Son of David Son of Abraham

Matt 1:1: A record of the genealogy of *Jesus Christ the son of David, the son of Abraham*.

1. Attached to the names David and Abraham are two great promises about sonship and messianic expectations that are respectively temporal and spatial in nature:
  - a. **Temporal:** God promises to David a son, who would be king forever (2 Sam 7:12-16; 1 Chr 17:11-14). The NT records this promise as being fulfilled in Jesus (Matt 1:1; Mark 1:11; Luke 1:32-33; Heb 1:5).
    - i. This promise of God to David was often repeated in the ears of the Israelites; e.g., 2 Sam 23:5; Ps 89:3; 132:11; Isa 55:3; Ezek 37:24-27. The larger OT acclamations about the *Son of David* are found in Ps 2; 89; Isa 9; 11; Jer 23, 30; 33; Ezek 34; 37; Hos 3.
    - ii. The phrase “Son of David” is found only in the synoptic gospels (17x; 10 of those are in Matthew). However, the NT also refers to Jesus as a Root and Offspring of David, Root of Jesse, the “descendant” or “seed” of David, and one who holds the “key of David” (Mark 12:35–37; Rom 1:1–4; 15:8, 9–12; Rev 3:7; 22:16).
  - b. **Spatial:** Abraham is promised that his seed would be a blessing for all people and his descendants as vast in number as the sands of the sea and the stars in the sky. Gal 3:16-17 declares that the promise to Abraham, found in Gen 12:1-3, is now fulfilled in Christ. This promise to Abraham, expanded in Gen 15, 18, 22 and echoed throughout the Bible, is *foundational to understanding God’s missional heart for the world*.
  - c. Here and there, now and then, Jesus rules forever as king over the kingdom of God; he established new creation life for it, defends and advances his kingdom, controls entrance into it, and accompanies those who labor in it.
2. The above promises to both David and Abraham find footing within Gen 3:15: “And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will crush your head, and you will strike his heel.” Gen 3:15 may be one of the reasons Luke traces Jesus’ lineage all the way back to “son of Adam, the Son of God” (Luke 3:37).

Christ has become a servant of the Jews on behalf of God’s truth,  
to confirm the promises made to the patriarchs.

Rom 15:8

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<sup>1</sup> Per R. Wilken’s book: *The Spirit of Early Christian Thought: Seeking the Face of God* (2003), 93-94.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Psalm 2:2 (The Anointed One) in “Significant OT Messianic Names.”

<sup>3</sup> Cf. John 1:1-5, 14 (The Word) in “Names of God Canonically Listed – NT.”

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Matthew 16:16 (The Christ, the Son of the Living God) in “Names of God Canonically Listed – NT.”

<sup>5</sup> Cf. Pro 8:12 (Wisdom) in “Other Primary Hebrew Names for God.”

## Lord of the Harvest

Matt 9:35–38: Jesus went through all the towns and villages, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the good news of the kingdom and healing every disease and sickness. When he saw the crowds, he had compassion on them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. Then he said to his disciples, “The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. Ask the *Lord of the Harvest*, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field.”

1. The above infinitive phrase “to send out” is from the Greek word ἐκβάλλω (*ekballō*), which BDAG gives the below range of meanings; it’s predominately found in the gospels (66 of 75x in NT).
  - a. To force to leave, drive out, expel. This is the NT’s main use of this word, being consistently used to describe Jesus driving out demons from people.
  - b. To cause to go or remove from a position (without force), send out/away, release, and bring out. BDAG gives five NT examples:
    - i. Workers being sent into the harvest field (Matt 9:38; Luke 10:2).
    - ii. Rahab sending the spies out in a different direction (James 2:25).
    - iii. Paul being released from prison in a manner undesirable by him (Act 16:37).
    - iv. Jesus being led by the Spirit into the wilderness (Mark 1:12).
    - v. Sheep being brought out by the Good Shepherd (John 10:4).
  - c. To cause someth. to be removed from someth., take out, remove evacuate.
  - d. To pay no attention to, disregard.
  - e. To bring someth. about, cause to happen, bring.
2. LORD, speak to hearts, especially mine, and *compel* us daily into your harvest field!

## Friend of Tax Collectors and Sinners

Matt 11:19: The Son of Man came eating and drinking, and they say, “Here is a glutton and a drunkard, a *friend of tax collectors and sinners.*” But wisdom is proved right by her actions.

1. Though “friend” is never used in the Bible as a name for God, the LORD’s friendship and love for his children is not only unquestionable but also unparalleled in kind. Friendship describes God’s relationship with both Abraham and Moses. God loves us as a friend, even when we are his enemies. Then as we mature, not only is he still our friend, but we become his friend, as well.
2. Cf. Ex 33:9-11; Mark 2:17; Luke 19:8-10; John 15:12–17; Rom 5:8; 8:5-8; 1 Tim 1:12–17; James 2:20–25
3. Aristotle spoke of friendship as a “single soul in two bodies.” True! But our friendship with God is different than with a person; the LORD, who hates our sins but loves our souls, is uniquely different from us: he’s the lover of our souls but also the LORD of our lives, who works all things for his glory and our good: i.e., our maturity in Christ (cf. John 11:1-44; Rom 8:28-39). As we grow in Christ, so does the depth of our friendship with God.
4. Both Luke and Acts are addressed to *Theophilus* (Θεόφιλος means “friend of God”; cf. Luke 1:3; Acts 1:1).

## One Who Sows the Good Seed

Matt 13:37–43: The *one who sows the good seed* is the Son of Man. The field is the world, and the good seed stands for the sons of the kingdom. The weeds are the sons of the evil one, and the enemy who sows them is the devil ... at the end of the age. The Son of Man will send out his angels, and they will weed out of his kingdom everything that causes sin and all who do evil ... Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father. He who has ears, let him hear.

## The Christ The Son of the Living God

Matt 16:15–18: “But what about you?” he asked. “Who do you say I am?” Simon Peter answered, “You are *the Christ, the Son of the living God*.” Jesus replied, “Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah, for this was not revealed to you by man, but by my Father in heaven. And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it.

1. The bedrock confession of the NT church was that Jesus was the Son of God.
  - a. Heb 4:14: Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has gone through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold firmly to the faith we profess. (lit: “let us hold firmly to the confession”; cf. ESV, NLT, NKJV, NRS, NAS, etc).
  - b. Jesus and Timothy are recorded as making the “good confession.” Though we are not exactly sure of the content of this confession, it no doubt had to do with the core thoughts of the gospel. Similarly, Hebrews exhorts its readers to do likewise. (The word “confession” (ὁμολογία, homologia) is used 6x in the NT: 2 Cor 9:13; 1 Tim 6:12-13; Heb 3:1; 4:14; 10:23)
  - c. LORD, may we make the “good confession” for all to hear; may we not grow weary in well doing.
3. Matthew’s most important title for Jesus is Son of God, a name that is declared by the Father at Jesus’ baptism (3:17) but immediately challenged twice by the devil (4:3, 6); worshipfully acknowledged by the disciples, who saw Jesus walking on water (14:33); revealed to Peter by the Father (16:16-17) and shortly thereafter spoken by “a voice from the cloud” at the Transfiguration (the former incident, bringing a “superior” perspective of who Jesus was into Peter’s mind, but something that still needed maturing [cf. v 22-23]; the Transfiguration, with its accompanying declaration of Jesus being “my Son” and the command “Listen to him!” (17:5), no doubt, deepened this perspective within Peter’s heart but also declared it to James and John); disbelieved by the high priest but acknowledged by Jesus (26:63-66); mockingly uttered by both “those who passed by” the crucifixion, the key religious leaders, and the two thieves (27:40, 43-44) but heartily affirmed that same day by the Roman Centurion in charge of the crucifixion and “those with him” (27:54).
  - d. To read the above confessions found in Matthew’s gospel, within their immediate context, see: Matt 3:16-17; 4:3-7; 14:28-33; 16:15-20; 17:4-8; 26:63-66; 27:39-44; 27:50-54. Noteworthy within Matthew is its strong affirmations of this name for Jesus (e.g., at Jesus’ baptism as well as when he walked on water and was transfigured) coupled with its stance that acknowledgment and confession of this name is the “rock” upon which the church will be built (Peter’s confession) – a position take by the nascent church’s “inner circle” (Peter, James, and John). Additionally, support for this name, by God and the church’s key leaders, is contrasted by denial of this name by the devil and the key Jewish leaders. Further, within this gospel “everyday people” are shown either accepting or rejecting this confession. Lastly, do the synoptic gospels, when read as a whole, mean for us to realize that even those who once violently opposed this confession will be shown mercy, if they too acknowledge this truth? Even if it is on their death bed? (Matt 17:44 and Mark 15:32 state that both thieves denied this name; however, Luke 23:39-43 has the “good confession” on the lips of one of the thieves, possibly as his last words. Could one thief have initially railed on Jesus only to come to his senses and be forgiven? And that while Jesus was in great pain? Truly this was the Son of God!)
  - e. Matthew’s declaration that Jesus is “Immanuel – which means, ‘God with us’” (1:23) – only accentuates the point that Jesus is “the personal embodiment of God’s saving presence with his people, ... [h]is sonship ... the source and abiding mystery of his whole existence.” (R. Kendall Soulen, *The Divine Name(s) and the Holy Trinity – Distinguishing the Voices*, p 224.
  - f. LORD, may we make the “good confession” for all to hear.
2. Amongst the four gospels, John heightens the relational concepts inherent within Father-Son terminology as well as the connection between divine kinship and divine presence between Father and Son.
  - a. John 14:9–10: Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, “Show us the Father”? Don’t you believe that I am in the Father, and that the Father is in me? The words I say to you are not just my own. Rather, it is the Father, living in me, who is doing his work.
  - b. John 5:43; 10:25: I have come in my Father’s name, and you do not accept me; but if someone else comes in his own name, you will accept him. Jesus answered, “I did tell you, but you do not believe. The miracles I do in my Father’s name speak for me.”
  - c. Jesus: the Father lived in him and he did things in the Father’s name. Christian: Christ lives in us and we do things in Jesus’ name and as his representative.

- d. Lord Jesus, as you were sent out in the Father's name, may we too go forth in your name making the "good confession, by word and deed."
3. Within Roman culture, the term Son of God was a regular and primary title taken by their emperors from Augustus forward; e.g., Tiberius Caesar was son of the "divine" Augustus. This phrase was on their Roman coins, including the one given to Jesus (Mark 12:15-17).
  4. Within Judaism, the phrase *Son of God* could refer either to Israel or the Messiah (Ex 4:22; Jer 31:9; Hos 11:1; Ps 2:7; 89:26-27; 2 Sam 7:14). The NT brings forth these two very common OT definitions for God's Son (viz., Jesus is both representative of true Israel and the Messiah), identifies them with Jesus, and adds to them a third, vital meaning. These three meanings are:
    - a. Jesus, as representative of Israel, not only does what Israel has never done (viz., fulfill the law; cf. Rom 8:3) but also takes upon himself the curse of the law that was to be Israel's (Deut 28-29; 2 Cor 5:21; Gal 3:10-13). As such, his life and death become the goal and end of the Mosaic Covenant (Rom 10:4).
    - b. Jesus is the promised Christ (i.e., Messiah; cf., Rom 9:5; Matt 16:16), who ushers in a new era (Heb 8:1-13). That the Messiah would be a Son to the Father was not uncommon OT language (cf., Ps 2:7; 2 Sam 7:14 listed in the entry of 1 Chr 17:11-14).
    - c. Jesus is God (Rom 9:5; 14:9-12; 1 Cor 8:6; Phil 2:10-11; Tit 2:13; Heb 1:1-10) in the flesh (cf. John 1:1-14; Phil 2:6; Col 1:15, 19). As God's son, he is "God's ultimate self-expression as a human being" (NT Wright), the perfect representation of God's image, and "the face of God."
      - i. Lord, created in your image we've fallen from it. May we again become your image bearers. Thank you for the good news about Jesus (viz., the gospel), who is the image of God. Restore us to you. We hear your charge spoken to those at Colossae as words to us: "Put to death whatever belongs to our earthly nature ... since you have taken off your old self with its practices and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge in the image of its Creator." Help us, LORD! (Gen 1:26-27; 2 Cor 4:4; Col 3:5, 9-10).
  5. Jesus' divinity is not an uncommon NT thought; e.g., Matt 1:23; Luke 8:39; John 1:1ff; Heb 1:1-3; Rev 22:12-13. Three times, a voice from heaven speaks to Jesus and those around him, twice declaring him to be God's Son – baptism, transfiguration, and after the triumphal entry into Jerusalem (Matt 3:16-17; 17:4-5; John 12:27-29).
  6. Other related names:
    - a. He said, "Look! I see four men walking around in the fire, unbound and unharmed, and the fourth looks like a son of the gods." Dan 3:25
    - b. But Jesus remained silent and gave no answer. Again the high priest asked him, "Are you the Christ, the Son of the Blessed One?" Mark 14:61
    - c. 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, and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever; his kingdom will never end." "How will this be," Mary asked the angel, "since I am a virgin?" The angel answered, "The Holy Spirit will come upon 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. Luke 1:32-35
    - d. Jesus has been found worthy of greater honor than Moses, just as the builder of a house has greater honor than the house itself. For every house is built by someone, but God is the builder of everything. Moses was faithful as a servant in all God's house, testifying to what would be said in the future. But Christ is faithful as a son over God's house. And we are his house, if we hold on to our courage and the hope of which we boast. Heb 3:3-6
    - e. We know also that the Son of God has come and has given us understanding, so that we may know him who is true. And we are in him who is true — even in his Son Jesus Christ. 1 John 5:20
    - f. He is the true God and eternal life. Grace, mercy and peace from God the Father and from Jesus Christ, the Father's Son, will be with us in truth and love. 2 John 1:3
  7. The phrase "Son of God" is mentioned 40 times in the NT: Matt 4:3, 6; 8:29; 14:33; 26:63; 27:40, 43, 54; Mark 1:1; 3:11; 15:39; Luke 1:35; 3:38; 4:3, 9, 41; 22:70; John 1:34, 49; 5:25; 11:27; 19:7; 20:31; Acts 9:20; Rom 1:4; 2 Cor 1:19; Gal 2:20; Eph 4:13; Heb 4:14; 6:6; 7:3; 10:29; 1 John 3:8; 4:15; 5:5, 10, 12-13, 20; Rev 2:18.
  8. Luke 9:20; 23:35 mention "the Christ of God":
    - a. "But what about you?" he asked. "Who do you say I am?" Peter answered, "The Christ of God."
    - b. The people stood watching, and the rulers even sneered at him. They said, "He saved others; let him save himself if he is the Christ of God, the Chosen One."
  9. This name and concept is huge in the Bible. See also:
    - a. Cf. Psalm 2:2 (The Anointed One) in "Significant OT Messianic Names."
    - b. Cf. John 1:41 (Messiah, the Christ) in "Names of God Canonically Listed – NT."
  10. Cf. John 4:25-26 (The Messiah) in "The I Am Statements of John's Gospel."

“God of grace and God of glory, on your people pour your power. Crown your ancient church’s story, bring her bud to glorious flower. Grant us wisdom, grant us courage, for the facing of this hour ... Cure your children’s warring madness, bend our pride to your control. Shame our wanton selfish gladness, rich in things and poor in soul. Grant us wisdom, grant us courage, lest we miss your kingdom’s goal ... Set our feet on lofty places, gird our lives that we may be, armored with all Christ-like graces, in the fight to set men free ... Save us from weak resignations, to the evils we deplore. Let the search for your salvation, be our glory evermore. Grant us wisdom, grant us courage, serving you whom we adore.”(From the hymn “God of Grace and God of Glory” by H.E. Fosbick)

## The Carpenter

Mark 6:1-3: Jesus left there and went to his hometown, accompanied by his disciples. When the Sabbath came, he began to teach in the synagogue, and many who heard him were amazed. “Where did this man get these things?” they asked. “What’s this wisdom that has been given him, that he even does miracles!”<sup>5</sup> “Isn’t this *the carpenter*? Isn’t this Mary’s son and the brother of James, Joseph, Judas and Simon? Aren’t his sisters here with us?” And they took offense at him. Jesus said to them, “Only in his hometown, among his relatives and in his own house is a prophet without honor.” He could not do any miracles there, except lay his hands on a few sick people and heal them. And he was amazed at their lack of faith.

1. This same story in Matt 13:55 has Jesus being called “the carpenter’s son.” The Greek word here for “carpenter” can also apply to other trades, more generally pointing to someone who is a craftsman. Paul labored as a tent maker that he might not hinder the gospel and asks that the followers of Jesus also not be lazy (1 Cor 9:1-27; 2 Th 3:6-13).
2. The point of the story is not Jesus’ particular trade but the questions within the people’s hearts: “Doesn’t he work with his hands like the rest of us? Isn’t he just like us? He is a person without formal training, why listen to him?”
3. Luke records similar questions, albeit being spoken both by those in his hometown of Nazareth, during Jesus’ inaugural address, and those in Capernaum (Luke 4:16-31).
4. During the Feast of Tabernacles, while in Jerusalem, similar questions were thought about Jesus, as recorded in John 7:5, 7, 12, 15-18: Even his own brothers did not believe in him.<sup>7</sup> The world cannot hate you [my brothers], but it hates me because I testify that its works are evil.<sup>12</sup> Among the crowds there was widespread whispering about him. Some said, “He is a good man.” Others replied, “No, he deceives the people.”<sup>15</sup> The Jews there were amazed and asked, “How did this man get such learning without having been taught?” Jesus answered, “My teaching is not my own. It comes from the one who sent me. Anyone who chooses to do the will of God will find out whether my teaching comes from God or whether I speak on my own. Whoever speaks on their own does so to gain personal glory, but he who seeks the glory of the one who sent him is a man of truth; there is nothing false about him.
  - a. Not only does John 7:1-9 depict a sarcastic state of Jesus’ brothers towards him and possibly even a desire by our Lord for space from this pressure, but the imperfect tense of *pisteuō*, found in verse five, represents a pitiful state: “persistent refusal of the brothers of Jesus” (RWP).
  - b. With respect to verse seven:
    - i. John 3:19–20: This is the verdict: Light has come into the world, but people loved darkness instead of light because their deeds were evil. Everyone who does evil hates the light, and will not come into the light for fear that their deeds will be exposed.
    - ii. 15:18, 23: “If the world hates you, keep in mind that it hated me first. Whoever hates me hates my Father as well.
    - iii. 18:37: “You are a king, then!” said Pilate. Jesus answered, “You say that I am a king. In fact, the reason I was born and came into the world is to testify to the truth. Everyone on the side of truth listens to me.”
5. The qualifications of Jesus’ disciples were also questioned: When they saw the courage of Peter and John and realized that they were unschooled, ordinary men, they were astonished and they took note that these men had been with Jesus. But since they could see the man who had been healed standing there with them, there was nothing they could say. (Acts 4:13–14)
6. Cf. Ps 95:6 (The LORD Our Maker) in “Hebrew Names with LORD.”

## Good Teacher

Mark 10:17-18, 21: As Jesus started on his way, a man ran up to him and fell on his knees before him. “*Good teacher,*” he asked, “what must I do to inherit eternal life?” “Why do you call me good?” Jesus answered. “No one is good—except God alone ... Follow me.”

1. Our *Teacher* lives and was called by that name when here on earth: Matt 26:18, 25, 49; Mark 1:22; 9:5; 11:21; John 13:13-14; 11:28; 14:15-18 (ὁ διδάσκαλος; *ho didaskalos*).
  - a. After Jesus’ departure the Holy Spirit, the Counselor and Spirit of Truth, took over this role (John 14:25-26; 16:7-15). RWP on John 16:14: “One need only refer to Peter’s sermon at pentecost [*sic*] after the coming of the Holy Spirit, to Peter’s Epistles, to Paul’s Epistles, to Hebrews, to John’s Epistles, to see how under the tutelage of the Holy Spirit the disciples grew into the fulness [*sic*] of the knowledge of God in the face of Christ.”
  - b. Rabbi has a similar meaning as teacher.
2. “The Hebrew word for parents ... comes from the same root as ... teacher. The parent is, and remains, the first and most important teacher that the child will ever have.” – Rabbi Kassel Abelson.
3. The theme of religion is “do.” Jesus, however, lived and taught the message of grace and said, “Follow me.” That is, enter into a grace relationship with me. In this latter scenario, we experience God’s unmerited favor; viz., encounter God’s goodness by faith and from no merit of our own. As we grow in Christ, being first loved by God, he allows his love to flow to us and also through us to others – our old man dying and our new man arising; in this setting, we love others as we are taught this love by God by being first loved by him.
4. The parallel account to Mark 10:17-30 (Matt 19:16-30) provides an emphasis on the religious manta: “what must I do in order to get” (Matt 19:16, 27: 21:2; 13). It’s also the only gospel narrative to include the Parable of the Workers in the Vineyard – a parable provided by the Good Teacher to explain how “many who are first will be last and many who are last will be first (19:30; 20:16).” Those who appear to be first but will actually be last on that Last Day are those who are like the “rich young ruler; they appear to be keeping all the commandment, are the desired pick of the labor pool, and are “hired first.” They understand and live by the rule “do this and get that.” However, though they are hard workers, they don’t understand and operate their lives from the foundation of grace: they have “expectations” about their reward for religious work (9), often “grumble” about bearing the heat of the day and are “envious” of others, who receive things that they haven’t earned (11, 15); they know what is fair and unfair (13); they do not give to the poor and underserving or realize the unmerited favor of walking near to Jesus, the Good Teacher and God in the flesh. And, therefore, they operate their lives with God from a platform of “if I do this, you will give me that” (2, 13). However, the last – fisherman, tax collectors, sinners, and those hired at the eleventh hour, because they aren’t the pick of the litter – though they may equally live a life of sacrifice, they understand and live by grace; they’re the “last, who will be first” on that last Day. Instead of negotiating their wages upfront, they trust their Master to treat them right and understand the privilege and unmerited favor of walking with the Good Teacher! They live from a platform of grace, with God and to others.
  - a. Those “who did not pursue a righteousness, have obtained it, a righteousness that is by faith; but Israel, who pursued a law of righteousness, has not attained it ... they pursued it not by faith but as if it were by works.” (Rom 9:30-32)
  - b. Lord Jesus, evermore be my Good Teacher. LORD, change me – what is impossible with man is possible with God! (19:26)
5. Cf. John 3:2 (*Rabbi*) in “Names of God Canonically Listed – NT.”

## Lord of the Sabbath

Luke 6:1–5: One Sabbath Jesus was going through the grain fields, and his disciples began to pick some heads of grain, rub them in their hands and eat the kernels. Some of the Pharisees asked, “Why are you doing what is unlawful on the Sabbath?” Jesus answered them, “Have you never read what David did when he and his companions were hungry? He entered the house of God, and taking the consecrated bread, he ate what is lawful only for priests to eat. And he also gave some to his companions.” Then Jesus said to them, “The Son of Man is *Lord of the Sabbath.*”

1. Mark 2:27 inserts into this story the following: “The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath. So the *Son of Man* is Lord of the Sabbath.” Matt 12:6–7 inserts: “I tell you that one greater than the temple is here. If you had known what these words mean, “I desire mercy, not sacrifice,” you would not have condemned the innocent. For the *Son of Man* is ...”
2. Jesus never violated or did away with the Sabbath. He did, however, fiercely attack the many man made traditions that had attached itself to that day as well as assert his authority and unique position as God’s earthly interpreter of the law.
3. Cf. the section entitled “Sabbath,” which is found in the Appendix.”

## The Chosen One

Luke 23:35: The people stood watching, and the rulers even sneered at him. They said, “He saved others; let him save himself if he is the Christ of God, the *Chosen One*.”

1. This could be a reference to either:
  - a. Isa 42:1: “Here is my servant, whom I uphold, my chosen one in whom I delight; I will put my Spirit on him and he will bring justice to the nations.
  - b. Luke 9:35: A voice came from the cloud, saying, “This is my Son, whom I have chosen; listen to him.” See Matt 3:17; 17:5; 2Pe 1:17, where the phrase “chosen one” is substituted by “whom I love.”
2. This word “choose” (ἐκλέγομαι, *eklegomai*) is used 20x in the NT (Mark 13:20; Luke 6:13; 9:35; 10:42; 14:7; John 6:70; 13:18; 15:16, 19; Acts 1:2, 24; 6:5; 13:17; 15:7, 22, 25; 1 Cor 1:27–28; Eph 1:4; Jas 2:5) with the typical meaning of choose, select; it’s often used with a meaning of significance in the selection and in the preceding verses also with reference to choosing the apostles, Israel and “the foolish things of the world to shame the wise ... the weak things of the world to shame the strong.”
3. John 15:14–19: You are my friends if you do what I command. I no longer call you servants, because a servant does not know his master’s business. Instead, I have called you friends, for everything that I learned from my Father I have made known to you. You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you to go and bear fruit — fruit that will last. Then the Father will give you whatever you ask in my name. This is my command: Love each other. “If the world hates you, keep in mind that it hated me first. If you belonged to the world, it would love you as its own. As it is, you do not belong to the world, but I have chosen you out of the world. That is why the world hates you.

## The Word

John 1:1-5, 14: In the beginning was the *Word*, and the *Word* was with God, and the *Word* was God.<sup>2</sup> This *Word* was with God in the beginning.<sup>3</sup> Through this *Word* all things were made; without this *Word* nothing was made that has been made. What came into being<sup>4</sup> by this *Word* was life and this life was the light for all people.<sup>5</sup> The light shines in the darkness, but the darkness has not understood it [or “overcome/extinguished it”].<sup>14</sup> The *Word* became flesh and made its dwelling among us. We have seen [the *Word*’s] glory, the glory of the *One and Only*, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.

1. The above translation of John 1:1-5, 14 is my own.
2. The phrase “this *Word*” (cf. CEB, NET) in 1:2 represents the demonstrative pronoun of verse two (*DP*; this, this one, he; *houtos*) as a reference to what precedes it in verse one; i.e., a reference to the logos. This is also the translation of Westcott and LK. However, a translation of “he” in 1:2 (cf. NIV, ESV), for *houtos*, represents verse two’s demonstrative pronoun lining up with the masculine/neuter pronoun (he, she, it; *outos*) of verses three and four; i.e., *outos* in verses three and four are recognized as a masculine form instead of a neuter one and the *DP* of verse two is a reference to what proceeds in vv. 3, 4, 14, As such it would anticipate what follows from the *DP* of verse two. The above translation of John 1:1-5 is a literal translation, as the paragraph is initially read or spoken; i.e., verse two is interpreted only because of verses one and not based on verses three and four. If this was John’s intent, his use of *houtos* in verse two may also be a possible literary technique that keeps John’s audience in suspense about who is this “*Word*.” Something that is answered at the prologue’s conclusion of 1:14ff. If this “dawning experience” is John’s



intent, this technique may be meant to support what happens throughout John's gospel, as various key figures – from Nicodemus to the blind man – have the truth that Jesus was the Son of God (the very Word of God to them) dawn in their hearts; it also supports the purpose of why John's gospel was written: that “you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the son of God.” The latter translation seems to assume this point from John 1:1 forward.

3. “God's Word is himself, his most vital, his innermost self: his only-begotten Son, of the same nature as himself, sent into the world to bring it home, back to him. And so God speaks to us from heaven and commends to us his Word, dwelling on earth for a while: ‘This is my beloved Son: listen to him’ (Mt 17:5).” (Hans Urs von Balthasar, *Prayer*, 15)
4. Noteworthy scriptures pertaining to the Word coming or becoming flesh: 1 Ti 3:16; Heb 1:1-3; 1 John 1:1-2; Rev 19:11–16.
5. God creates by Word. Here preachers don't entertain or convey information but preach the gospel with transformative power, for such words are “not the words of men” but “the word of God, which is at work in you who believe” (1 Th 2:13); cf. Rom 10:17; 2 Cor 4:6; 1 Pe 1:23. See also Matt 13:1-23.
  - a. As such, the “living and enduring word of God” creates not only this world (Heb 11:3) but also new creation life in our hearts. Peter likens it to his “imperishable seed.” Barth would say that the preacher is nothing but a “mailman” and the preached word is the Word of God. This preached, transformative Word was also huge for M. Luther.
  - b. Tweet: God creates by Word. Here preachers don't entertain or convey information but speak for the One who is truth and has transformative power (12-15-17).
6. Psalms of mention on this topic are Ps 1, 15, 19, 24, and 119. Note also:
  - a. Ps 138:2: I will bow down toward your holy temple and will praise your name for your love and your faithfulness, for you have exalted above all things your name and your word.
  - b. Ps 56:3–4: When I am afraid, I will trust in you. In God, whose word I praise, in God I trust; I will not be afraid. What can mortal man do to me?
    - i. Tweeted Feb '16: When I'm afraid ... I'll not be afraid (Ps 56:3-4). What? Yes, one steadily believed confession, found in the dots, can make all the difference!
7. John 6:66–69: From this time many of his disciples turned back and no longer followed him. “You do not want to leave too, do you?” Jesus asked the Twelve. Simon Peter answered him, “Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. We believe and know that you are the Holy One of God.”

## **One and Only One and Only Son**

John 1:18: No one has ever seen God, but God the *One and Only*, who is at the Father's side, has made him known. 3:16-18: 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. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him. Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe stands condemned already because he has not believed in the name of God's *one and only Son*.

1. The phrase One and Only is translated from one Greek word (*monogenēs*, μονογενής), which means: the only one of its kind within a specific relationship, the only one of its kind or class; it can also refer to an only or special child. It's found nine times in the NT. Both John's gospel and the epistle of John use this word to refer to Jesus; Luke's gospel and Hebrews to refer to a child. Cf. Luke 7:12; 8:42; 9:38; John 1:14, 18; 3:16, 18; Heb 11:17; 1 John 4:9.
2. Without using the word *monogenēs* Heb 1:1-7:28 declares the uniqueness and superiority of Jesus over angels, Moses, and Aaronic priests; Mark 1:24; Col 1:15; 2 Cor 4:4 similarly portray this same meaning of Jesus.
3. RWP on 1:18: “*The only begotten Son (ho monogenēs huios)*. This is the reading of the Textus Receptus and is intelligible after *hōs monogenous para patros* in verse 14. But the best old Greek manuscripts (Aleph B C L) read *monogenēs theos* (God only begotten) which is undoubtedly the true text. Probably some scribe changed it to *ho monogenēs huios* to obviate the blunt statement of the deity of Christ and to make it like 3:16. But there is an inner harmony in the reading of the old uncials. The Logos is plainly called *theos* in verse 1. The Incarnation is stated in



verse 14, where he is also termed *monogenēs*. He was that before the Incarnation. So he is “God only begotten,” “the Eternal Generation of the Son” of Origen’s phrase. *Which is in the bosom of the Father* (*ho ðn eis ton kolpon tou patros*). The eternal relation of the Son with the Father like *pros ton theon* in verse 1. In 3:13 there is some evidence for *ho ðn en tōi ouranōi* used by Christ of himself while still on earth. The mystic sense here is that the Son is qualified to reveal the Father as Logos (both the Father in Idea and Expression) by reason of the continual fellowship with the Father.”

4. The Christian way of thinking about God is to start with Jesus Christ, his only son, and what Jesus reveals to us about the LORD.
  - a. “We must confess Father and Son before we can apprehend God as one and true” (Hilarius *On the Trinity* 4.4; cf. 9.61; 5.35).
5. Cf. Matt 16:16 (*Son of God*) in Names of God Canonically Listed – NT.

## Lamb of God

John 1:29-30: John saw Jesus coming towards him and said, “Look, the *Lamb of God*, who takes away the sin of the world. This is the one I meant when I said, “A man who comes after me has surpassed me because he was before me.”

1. John the Baptist’s declaration about Jesus must have immediately conjured vivid images for his hearers, as the Jew of John’s day understood that the bloody sacrifice of an innocent animal provided a graphic picture of what it meant to violate the Mosaic Law. Those who offered such sacrifices knew that the animal was a symbolic representation of themselves being judged and that the process was an outward demonstration of their inward desire to consecrate their lives afresh to God; they also knew that forgiveness of sins was through the shedding of blood.
2. Twenty-nine of the thirty-four NT occurrences of “lamb” are in Revelation.
3. “Get rid of the old yeast that you may be a new batch without yeast—as you really are. For Christ, our *Passover Lamb* has been sacrificed” (1 Cor 5:7; Ex 12:1-13:16).
4. Cf. Isa 43:25; 53:3-7; John 10:17-18; Eph 5:1-2; 1 Pe 1:17-21; 1 John 2:1-2; 1 John 4:8-12; Rev 5:9-10, 12-13; 7:9-17; 12:10-11; 13:8; 15:2-4; 17:12-14; 21:22-27.
5. Related Names:
  - a. See Isaiah 53:3; Ps 69:8; 109:31 (A Man of Sorrows, A Stranger, An Alien, The Needy One) in Significant OT Messianic Names.

## Messiah The Christ

John 1:41: The first thing Andrew did [after spending a day with Jesus] was to find his brother Simon and tell him, “We have found the *Messiah*” (that is, the Christ).

1. Israel’s scriptures anticipated a coming deliverer, “anointed” by God to initiate God’s rule of righteousness and peace. The predominant name for this anointed deliverer is Messiah, in the OT, and Christ, in the NT:
  - a. The English word Christ comes from the Greek word for “anointed one” (χριστός, *christos*).
  - b. The English word Messiah comes from the Hebrew word for “anointed one” (מָשִׁיחַ, *māshîaḥ*, *masheach*; a Hellenized transliteration of this Hebrew word is found 2x in the NT [John 1:41; 4:25] and in both cases explained as a reference to Christ).
2. Christ is not Jesus’ last name, as if his parents were Joseph and Mary Christ. The NT uses the word Christ with meaning: Israel’s promised Messiah had come! God’s anointed leader that will bring deliverance was here! With this concept in mind the book of Hebrews can state that Moses and other Jewish patriarchs “regarded disgrace for the sake of Christ as of greater value than the treasures of Egypt” (Heb 11:26).
3. Of the NT’s 533 uses of this term, Paul uses it 383 times! But Jesus avoided the term, more than likely, to prevent being forced into playing a political role:
  - a. In Jesus’ day, the term messiah, within 2<sup>nd</sup> Temple Judaism, was understood to refer to a physical deliverer who would “save” Israel from the oppression of Rome.
  - b. Peter also is rebuked by Jesus for trying to reshape Jesus into a messiah he wanted or thought he should be rather than the one Peter needed (Matt 16:21-23).

- c. For Paul, the term meant that the *Lord Jesus Christ* (Rom 9:5), the long awaited *Messiah*, had brought the Mosaic Covenant to its rightful climax and resultant end and had established the New Covenant (10:4; 8:3-4; 2 Cor 3:6).
4. The gospel of Matthew uses the term 16 times; pre-eminently as a title implying that in Jesus the OT promises of restoration and salvation are coming to pass (cf. 2:4; 26:63). Within Matthew, both Peter and the high priest identify the term closely with Jesus being the *Son of God* (16:16; 27:40, 43).
5. Dietrich Bonhoeffer, as every major theologian must, wrestled long and hard over the question, “Who is Christ for Us?” His answer informed his thoughts and formed his life. Unless it does both, our lives are clanging cymbals. In short, for Bonhoeffer, “Christ is the center,” “a rediscovered center,” and “the center of existence, history, and nature.”
  - a. Even if we’re not theologians, God asks each of us this same question (Matt 16:15): Who is Christ? A proper answer is affirmed by the Father (3:17) but challenged by all that is ungodly (4:3); some mock its validity (27:40) others are infuriated by the audacity of its truth claim (26:65); it’s the key to being a disciple and a Church leader but only something graciously received as a gift (16:16-18). Its answer needs to be proclaimed by every Christian, heard by every unreached person, and properly nuanced for every generation (Rom 10:9-15). It’s not just a proclamation by word but also by deed.
  - b. Some “believers” will answer so as to fit their own needs or perspective; however, those who are pastors, teachers, establishers ... in the body of Christ must keep this answer sure and steadfast; much depends on this, as Christ is the cornerstone of our individual faith and corporate Community (Matt 16:21-23).
  - c. Bonhoeffer declares: Christ is “the man for others” and his church “is only church when it is there for others ... The church of Christ is not a church against others, not even without others, but also not as others.”
6. Cf. Matt 2:1-6; 16:15-16; Luke 2:10–11, 26, 29–32; 9:20; Acts 4:26; Phil 3:8-11.
7. This name and concept is huge in the Bible. See also:
  - a. Cf. Psalm 2:2 (The Anointed One) in “Significant OT Messianic Names.”
  - b. Cf. Matt 16:16 (The Christ, the Son of the Living God) in “Names of God Canonically Listed – NT.”
  - c. Cf. John 4:25-26 (The Messiah) in “The I Am Statements of John’s Gospel.”
8. Col 2:1–3: I want you to know how much I am struggling for you and for those at Laodicea, and for all who have not met me personally. My purpose is that they may be encouraged in heart and united in love, so that they may have the full riches of complete understanding, in order that they may know the mystery of God, namely, Christ, in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.

## Rabbi

John 3:2: [Nicodemus] came to Jesus at night and said, “*Rabbi*, we know you are a teacher who has come from God. For no one could perform the miraculous signs you are doing if God were not with him.

1. Rabbi is “a comparatively new title in Christ’s time” (RWP, on John 3:2), an Aramaic one, literally meaning my great one, my Master, my teacher (AB 5:500-602). John, who often explains Aramaic words (cf. 1:38, 41, 42; 4:25; 9:7, etc.), expounds this word in 1:38 to mean “teacher.”
  - a. John 1:38: Turning around, Jesus saw them [two disciples of John, one being Andrew, Simon Peter’s brother] following and asked, “What do you want?” They said, “Rabbi” (which means Teacher), “where are you staying?”
2. In Jesus’ day, the name was reserved for someone who had studied for many years under another rabbi, who would then teach to others what he had learned from his rabbi. Jesus ignored this chain of events, but taught with great authority and started a new stream of teaching with those who followed him.
  - a. This word is not word found in the LXX; synagogues were not functioning during the time it was written.
3. Cf. Mark 10:17 (*Good Teacher*) in “Names of God Canonically Listed – NT.”

## Son of Man

John 3:14-15: Just as Moses lifted up the snake in the desert, so the *Son of Man* must be lifted up, that everyone who believes in him may have eternal life.

1. The title, *Son of Man*, was Jesus' most used self-designation (81x in the gospels) and never used by anyone else but him in the gospels (but see Acts 7:56; Rev 1:13).
2. In pre-Christian Judaism, the title "son of man" wasn't by itself a reference to the *Messiah*. However, this term's connection to Dan 7:13 and Jesus' personal linkage to Daniel's messianic reference to the son of man (cf. Mark 13:26, 14:62 and its Matthew parallels) makes the connection between Son of Man and Messiah a very strong one.
  - a. In Matthew, this term is directly paralleled with the statement that Jesus was "the Christ, the Son of the Blessed One." (Cf. Matt 16:13-16)
  - b. Revelation 1:13 parallels this name, in its second of five "I am" statements, with "I am the First and the Last. I am the Living One."
3. George Ladd, *A Theology of the New Testament*, 157 states: "By designating himself the Son of Man, Jesus claimed to be the Messiah; but by the way in which he used the term, he indicated that his messiahship was of a very different order from that which was popularly expected. The title "Son of Man" permitted him to lay claim to messianic dignity but to interpret that messianic office in his own way. It was a claim, therefore, that would not be readily recognized by the people who possessed an erroneous concept of the Messiah, but that nevertheless was designed to alert those who were spiritually responsive to the actual presence of the Messiah, although in an unforeseen messianic role."
4. Not without intent, CEB translates this phrase – Son of Man – as "Human One," a translation that also has merit. If this is a helpful translation, Jesus' life allows us to see what being truly human – being the *imago Dei* – should look like in a fully redeemed state.
5. Daniel, Stephen, and John saw the "son of man," for who he was, and they worshipped him. The high Priest and Stephen's persecutors heard the "good confession" by Jesus and Stephen, and they "tore their robes" and lashed out in anger. LORD, may I too make the "good confession." Cf. GraceLivedOut blog of 2-5-15 ("How Can This Be?"), which is about making the "good confession" and the Ninth Commandment.
6. Ps 80:14–18; Dan 7:9-14; Mark 13:26-27; 14:60-62; Acts 7:56; Rev 1:13-18

## Prophet

John 6:14: After the people saw the miraculous sign that Jesus did [feeding 5,000 people], they began to say, "Surely this is the *Prophet* who is to come into the world.

1. God had provided for the people in the desert, both water and food through Moses; Moses predicted a greater prophet after him (Deut 18:15-18); they expected the forthcoming Prophet to do even more than what Moses had done.
2. Deut 18:15-18; Luke 24:13–19; John 1:21-25, 45; 5:45-47; Acts 3:14–15, 18–26; 7:35-38; Heb 1:1-4

## My Father, The Gardner

John 15:1–3: I am the true vine, and my Father is the *gardener*. He cuts off every branch in me that bears no fruit, while every branch that does bear fruit he prunes\* so that it will be even more fruitful. You are already clean\* because of the word I have spoken to you.

1. The above asterisked noun (καθαρός, *katharos*) and verb (καθαίρω, *kathairō*) are cognates: God's word can prune us, as can hardships (Heb 12:1-13).
2. LORD, continue to speak your word into my heart; prune me and give me ears to hear. May God-breathed Words of life teach me ... and even discipline me, so I can walk in righteousness. I realize that Jesus learned obedience through the things he suffered and that in my case hardships can be your way of turning up the megaphone. Who amongst us isn't from time-to-time hard of hearing; however, I'd so much rather not have to go through unnecessary things that help me hear you better. Have mercy on me. This day, I come to your Word, as a child, and ask that you would speak, prune ... and change me. May I hear afresh and anew your Word spoken to me: "Peter, come follow me! You did not choose me but I chose you to go and bear fruit." (1 Sam 3:1-10; Pro 3:1-18; John 15:16; 21:15-19; 2 Tim 3:16-17; Heb 5:8; 12:1-13)
  - a. God whispers to us in our pleasures, but shouts in our pain. Pain is his megaphone to rouse a deaf world. C.S. Lewis (Tweeted April 2016)

## Heart-Knower

Acts 15:8: God, who knows the heart, showed that he accepted them by giving the Holy Spirit to them, just as he did to us.

1. Per RWP it's a late word from *kardia* (heart) and *gnōstēs* (known, *ginōskō*): God the *heart-searcher* or *heart-knower* (καρδιογνώστης).
2. Per BDAG it's only found in Christian writings.
  - a. Two times in the NT (Acts 1:24; 15:8) but prolifically so in post-apostolic Christianity (LK).
  - b. It does, however, express a well-known biblical thought: God knows our hearts (1 Sam. 16:7; 1 Kgs. 8:39; Lk. 16:15; Rom. 8:27; 1 Th. 2:4; Rev. 2:23).
3. In Acts 1:24–25, it is found in the vocative case and in a prayer: Then they prayed, “Lord, you know everyone’s heart. Show us which of these two you have chosen to take over this apostolic ministry, which Judas left to go where he belongs.”

## Gives Life to the Dead Calls Things that Are Not as Though They Were

Rom 4:17: [Abraham] is our father in the sight of God, in whom he believed—the God who *gives life to the dead* and *calls things that are not as though they were*.

1. The Greek verb defined by BDAG as “to cause to live,” “to keep alive” (ζωοποιέω, *zōopoieō*) is found 11x in the NT and contextually in the following verses: John 5:21; 6:40, 51, 63; Rom 4:17; 8:11; 1 Cor 15:22, 36, 45; 2 Cor 3:6; Gal 3:21; 1 Pe 3:18.
2. Jesus is the Author of Life (Acts 3:15) and the Word of Life (1 John 1:1-2).
  - a. Here’s a snippet of Peter’s sermon about the Author of Life and our needed response: Acts 3:14–15, 18–26.
  - b. Numbers and John’s Gospel frame it this way: Num 21:4-8; John 3:14-18
3. The psalmist prays eight times in Ps 119 for God to revive him; each time the request is based on either God’s love, Word, or righteousness. For example, “Revive my life according to your love.”
  - a. Ps 119:25, 37, 40, 88, 107, 149, 154, 156, 159.
  - b. In the LXX the common phrase is ζῆσον με [*zēson me*] from the AAImp 2s form of *zaō* = ζάω.
  - c. In the MT: חַיֵּנִי (*hayyēnî*, a piel imperative form of the verb *chayah*, חָיָה); this Hebrew phrase/prayer is found nowhere else in the Bible.
4. In Rom 4:17, most scholars believe that Paul is drawing from well-established and received concepts that are firmly rooted in both current Jewish thoughts (e.g., Philo of Alexandria; 20 BC – 50 AD) and the theology of *creation ex nihilo* (“creation from nothing”) that support his belief in the resurrection of Jesus. That is, this truth echoed in Rom 4:17, which is the very foundation of the Christian faith and Jesus’ resurrection, was also the cornerstone of Abraham’s faith and the ever-present Jewish remnant.
  - a. The NIV’s translation of Rom 4:17—“call things that are not as though they were”—is not clear or strong enough; a better translation of this phrase is “calls into being things that were not” (NIV11). The concept is that out of nothing God makes something (*creation ex nihilo*).
5. Eph 2:5; Col 2:13: “made alive with” Christ (συζωοποιέω, *syzōopoieō*).
  - a. LK @ Eph 2:5: “to make alive together w. The word is a synonym for the vb. ἐγείρω but it can also have the meaning “to keep alive” or “to preserve life” (Barth). The words in compound w. σύν indicate the relationship between Christ and the believer, and the participation with Christ (Lincoln).”
  - b. Eph 2:1–10: As for you, you were dead in your transgressions and sins, in which you used to live when you followed the ways of this world and of the ruler of the kingdom of the air, the spirit who is now at work in those who are disobedient. All of us also lived among them at one time, gratifying the cravings of our flesh and following its desires and thoughts. Like the rest, we were by nature deserving of wrath. But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions—it is by grace you have been saved.<sup>5</sup> And God raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus, in order that in the coming ages he might show the incomparable riches of his grace, expressed in his kindness to us in Christ Jesus. For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—not by works, so that no one can boast. For we are God’s handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.

- c. Col 2:9–15: For in Christ all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form, and in Christ you have been brought to fullness. He is the head over every power and authority. In him you were also circumcised with a circumcision not performed by human hands. Your whole self, ruled by the flesh, was put off when you were circumcised by Christ, having been buried with him in baptism, in which you were also raised with him through your faith in the working of God, who raised him from the dead. <sup>13</sup>When you were dead in your sins and in the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made you alive with Christ. He forgave us all our sins, having canceled the charge of our legal indebtedness, which stood against us and condemned us; he has taken it away, nailing it to the cross. And having disarmed the powers and authorities, he made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them by the cross.
- 6. From death God brings life! From nothing he makes something! This concept is central to Paul’s doctrine of new creation, elaborated most notably in 2 Cor 5:17 and Gal 6:15:
  - a. 2 Cor 5:17–19: Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come! All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting men’s sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation.
  - b. Gal 6:14–15: May I never boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world. Neither circumcision nor uncircumcision means anything; what counts is a new creation.
- 7. Cf. John 11:25-26; Rom 4:23-24; Acts 26:22-23; 2 Cor 1:9; Col 3:4; Gal 3:21; Rev 2:8; Isa 40:28 in (*Creator*) in “Other Primary Hebrew Names of God” and “The God of Jacob” found in the Appendix.

## God Who Justifies the Wicked

Rom 4:5, 25: However, to the man who does not work but trusts *God who justifies the wicked*, his faith is credited as righteousness ... [Jesus] was delivered over to death for our sins and was raised to life for our justification.

- 1. Rom 4:5, 25; 5:6-8; Eph 4:29-5:2

## Firstborn Among Many Brothers

Rom 8:28–29: And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose. For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the likeness of his Son, that he might be the *firstborn among many brothers*.

- 1. Rom 8:29 mentions “likeness/image.” Jesus was the “image (εἰκὼν, eikōn) of the invisible God” (Col 1:15; cf. 2 Cor 4:4).
  - a. ANE kings often set up “images” or statues in distant parts of their kingdom to represent themselves (Dan 3:1-15).
  - b. Though God forbids people to create images (idols) to represent him (Deut 5:8-10; Ex 32:4), Adam and Eve were created in his image and God called and formed both Israel and the Church to do that very thing – represent him (Gen 1:26-27; 9:6; Ex 19:3-6; Ps 100:3; 1 Pe 2:9-10).
  - c. One day, the redeemed will fully “be conformed to the eikōn of his Son” (Rom 8:29; cf. 1 Cor 15:49; Col 3:10). Until then, the believers are being transformed into his “image” (2 Cor 3:18) and are called to live such lives that point people to God (Matt 5:13-16; Col 4:5-6; 1 Pe 3:15).
  - d. The doorway into contagious, evangelistic opportunities swings upon the hinges of loving God and loving my neighbor – a way of living that’s filled with life, love, joy ... and peace. LORD, you have apprehended me that I might be your image bearer:
    - i. May praise arise to your name, LORD, for your good work in and through me; ever more so, LORD, continue the good work of grace that you have begun in me: your grace and your mercy that lovingly and patiently and consistently forgives but also dethrones my idols and molds me

into the image of Jesus and makes me passionate about loving both you and the people around me.  
(A portion of Wednesday's prayer launched from the Second Commandment)

2. LK on Rom 8:29: "In Judaism the firstborn was the most beloved, the most cherished, the most honored, the one with the most ability (SB, 3:256–58). The term reflects on the priority and the supremacy of Christ (Murray; s. Col. 1:15)."
3. Related names:
  - a. But Christ has indeed been raised from the dead, the **firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep** 1 Cor 15:20.
  - b. He [*Jesus* Christ] is the image of the invisible God, the **firstborn over all creation** ... the beginning and the **firstborn from among the dead**. Col 1:15-20
  - c. Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, the **firstborn from the dead**, and the ruler of the kings of the earth. To him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by his blood, and has made us to be a kingdom of priests to serve his God and Father (τῷ θεῷ καὶ πατρὶ αὐτοῦ)<sup>6</sup> — to him be glory and power for ever and ever! Amen. Rev 1:5-6
  - d. Cf. Mark 3:31–35; 2 Cor 4:1-7; Col 1:15-20; 3:5-11; Heb 2:10–15 and Ps 95:6 (The LORD our Maker) in "Hebrew Names with LORD."

## Lord Jesus

Rom 10:6–10: But the righteousness that is by faith says: "Do not say in your heart, 'Who will ascend into heaven?'" (that is, to bring Christ down) "or 'Who will descend into the deep?'" (that is, to bring Christ up from the dead). But what does it say? "The word is near you; it is in your mouth and in your heart," that is, the word of faith we are proclaiming: That if you confess with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved.

1. The Greek word for Lord is *Kyrios* (κύριος); it's used 717 times in the NT, primarily within Paul's letters (274x) and Luke-Acts (263x). In the LXX, *kyrios* was primarily used as a reference to three Hebrew names of God: *Yahweh*, *Adonai*, and *Elohim*. In Greek culture, it was also used to refer to a father, husband, master, owner, emperor, or king.
2. Though Paul often means otherwise, when people within the gospels used this word to refer to Jesus, it was typically used as a title of respect, as towards a teacher or rabbi; it is easy for us, on this side of the cross, however, to always read into these texts a reference to Jesus as LORD and Savior, a meaning which is not extinct from some of the NT texts but not as common as some make it out to be. That this is not the dominant meaning of this word in the gospels is another argument for their authenticity.
  - a. Paul uses the phrase "in the Lord" (ἐν κυρίῳ, *en kyriō*) 47 times (Rom 14:14; 16:2, 8, 11–13, 22; 1 Cor 1:31; 4:17; 7:22, 39; 9:1–2; 11:11; 15:58; 16:19; 2 Cor 2:12; 10:17; Gal 5:10; Eph 2:21; 4:1, 17; 5:8; 6:1, 10, 21; Phil 1:14; 2:19, 24, 29; 3:1; 4:1–2, 4, 10; Col 3:18, 20; 4:7, 17; 1 Th 3:8; 4:1; 5:12; 2 Th 3:4, 12; Phlm 1:16, 20). Outside of Paul's writings, the phrase ἐν κυρίῳ is only found one other time in the NT (Rev 14:13). No doubt, Paul's phrase "in the Lord" bears some parallelism to the phrase "in Christ," which is even more commonly used by Paul.
  - b. *Kyrios* is associated with both the name of Jesus and LORD/God in settings outside of the gospels; cf. Rom 10:6–10; 14:9–11; 1 Cor 8:1-6; Phil. 2:6-10; Col 1:15-20; Heb 1:1-10; Jude 1:4 and "The Incomparability of YHWH, the Shema, and the Trinity" found in the Appendix.
  - c. As per this section's heading scripture, confessing Jesus' lordship over one's life is foundational, for Christianity and salvation: "If you confess with your mouth, 'Jesus is Lord,' and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved." (Rom 10:9)
3. "Jesus Christ, as he is attested for us in all the Scriptures, is the one Word of God which we have to hear and which we have to trust and obey in life and in death." (31) "In Christ we are not dealing with a new concept of God or a new moral teaching. We are dealing with God's personal address, through which God summons human beings to responsibility. (Bonhoeffer's *Who Is Christ for Us?* p. 46)

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<sup>6</sup> RWP on 1:6: "Unto his God and Father (*tōi theōi kai patri autou*). Dative case and *autou* (Christ) applies to both *theōi* and *patri*. Jesus spoke of the Father as his God (Matt. 27:46; John 20:17) and Paul uses like language (Eph. 1:17), as does Peter (1 Peter 1:3)."

4. Jesus is both Savior and Lord: the Savior in whom we believe is nothing less than our Lord whom we should obey; but, we can only obey Jesus as Lord, if we wholly trust (believe) in Him. “Only the one who believes obeys, and only the one who obeys believes” (Bonhoeffer). A salvation prayer can never be an insurance policy against unholy living that gets us into heaven despite ... But true righteousness, i.e., new creation life, is rather a springboard to holy living. As such, a holy life reflects what one really believes and what one believes empowers how one lives.
5. Matt 7:21–24: “Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only he who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. Many will say to me on that day, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and in your name drive out demons and perform many miracles?’ Then I will tell them plainly, ‘I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers!’ “Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock.
6. Related Names:
  - a. Rom 1:4; 5:21; 7:25: **Jesus Christ Our Lord**
  - b. Acts 7:59; 16:31; 20:21: **Lord Jesus**
  - c. Acts 11:17; 1 Cor 1:3: **Lord Jesus Christ**
  - d. 2 Pet 1:11; 3:18: **Lord and Savior Jesus Christ**
  - e. Acts 10:36: **Lord of All**
  - f. 1 Cor 2:8: **Lord of Glory**
  - g. Rev 17:14; cf. 19:16: They will make war against the Lamb, but the Lamb will overcome them because he is **Lord of lords** and **King of kings** — and with him will be his called, chosen and faithful followers.”
  - h. Cf. Luke 6:5’s entry: **Lord of the Sabbath**
  - i. Cf. Matthew 9:38’s entry: **Lord of the Harvest**
  - j. For ease of cut and paste, when desiring to read the above verses in electronic format: Rom 1:4; 5:21; 7:25; Acts 7:59; 16:31; 20:21; Acts 11:17; 1 Cor 1:3; 2 Pet 1:11; 3:18; Acts 10:36; 1 Cor 2:8; Rev 17:14; 19:16; Luke 6:5; Matt 9:38.

## Only Wise God

Rom 16:25-27: Now to him who is able to establish you by my gospel and the proclamation of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery hidden for long ages past, but now revealed and made known through the prophetic writings by the command of the *eternal God*, so that all nations might believe and obey him (εἰς ὑπακοὴν πίστεως)—to the **Only Wise God** be glory for ever through Jesus Christ! Amen.

- Cf. Pro 8:12 (Wisdom) in “Other Primary Hebrew Names for God.”

## Last Adam

1 Cor 15:45-49: So it is written: “The first man Adam became a living being”; the *last Adam*, a life-giving spirit (πνεῦμα ζωοποιού). The spiritual did not come first, but the natural, and after that the spiritual. The first man was of the dust of the earth, the second man from heaven. As with the earthly man, so are those who are of the earth; and as it is, the man from heaven, so also are those who are of heaven. And just as we have borne the likeness of the earthly man, so shall we bear the likeness of the man from heaven.

1. Rom 8:11: And if the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead is living in you, he who raised Christ from the dead will also give life (ζωοποιέω) to your mortal bodies through his Spirit, who lives in you.
2. Related Names:



- a. Cf. Rom 4:17 (Gives Life to the Dead) in “Names of God Canonically Listed – NT” and Rom 5:14-18.
- b. Cf. Matt 1:1 (Son of David, Son of Abraham) in “Names of God Canonically Listed – NT.”

## The Seed

Gal 3:16–19: The promises were spoken to Abraham and to his seed. The Scripture does not say “and to seeds,” meaning many people, but “and to your seed,” meaning one person, who is Christ ... if the inheritance depends on the law, then it no longer depends on a promise; but God in his grace gave it to Abraham through a promise. What, then, was the purpose of the law? It was added because of transgressions until the Seed to whom the promise referred had come.

1. Gal 3:29 directly relates to the above scripture: “If you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise.” The other scriptures that follow below, if they relate at all to Gal 3:16-19, only do so loosely by use of the same word, “seed,” which is often seen in scripture as germinal and related to God’s spoken promises.
2. Luke 8:11: “This is the meaning of the parable: The seed is the word of God.
3. John 12:24: I tell you the truth, unless a kernel of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains only a single seed. But if it dies, it produces many seeds.
4. 1 Cor 3:6-7, 9: I planted the seed, Apollos watered it, but God made it grow. So neither he who plants nor he who waters is anything, but only God, who makes things grow ... we are God’s fellow workers; you are God’s field; God’s building.
5. 1 John 3:9: No one who is born of God will continue to sin, because God’s seed remains in him; he cannot go on sinning, because he has been born of God.
6. 1 Pet 1:23: For you have been born again, not of perishable seed, but of imperishable [seed], through the living and enduring word of God.

## Abba, Father

Gal 4:6: Because you are sons, God sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, the Spirit who calls out, “*Abba, Father.*” So you are no longer a slave, but a son; and since you are a son, God has made you also an heir. (cf. Rom 8:15)

1. *Abba* is a transliteration of an Aramaic word that means father and implies a sense of intimacy between father and child. Jesus frequently used this name in his own prayer life; in fact, with only one exception, every recorded prayer of Jesus has him referring to God as *Father*.
2. God is referred to as a father sporadically in the OT and prolifically in the NT; it is mentioned about 120 times in John’s gospel, alone, which is almost double the amount used within all three Synoptic gospels combined.
3. Related names:
  - a. Isa 9:6: Everlasting Father
  - b. John 6:57: Just as the Living Father sent me and I [Jesus] live because of the Father, so the one who feeds on me will live because of me.
  - c. John 15:1-2: my Father the gardener.
  - d. John 17:11: Holy Father
  - e. John 17:25: Righteous Father
  - f. 2 Cor 1:3–4: Praise be to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves have received from God.
  - g. Eph 1:17: Glorious Father
  - h. Heb 12:9: Father of our spirits

- i. James 1:17: Father of the heavenly lights
4. If we think about God without thinking about Father–Son–Spirit dynamics, then "only the bare and empty name of God flits about in our brains, to the exclusion of the true God" (Calvin, Institutes 1.13.2). However, if we see God through the lens of him being Father before eternity, then we can easily rest, trust, and delight in his providence, his wisdom, his direction ...
5. The name Father nuances how we must perceive God as King, Savior, Creator ... and light and consuming fire. For example, with respect to God being also known as a King, we can say the following: the LORD, my *Abba*, has created me and redeemed me from darkness. He wants to be in relationship with me, share his goodness with me and through me. As a loving father, his light and fire disciplines me and purges my life from evil intent. As such, I joyfully and peacefully accept his kingship and rulership over my life.
6. Cf. Deut 32:6 (*Father*) in "Other Primary Hebrew Names of God."

## Head of the Body

Eph 4:15–16: Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will in all things grow up into him who is the *Head*, that is, Christ. From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work (cf. Col 1:15-20).

1. Paul, in his letters, establishes the central truth of Christ’s supremacy, over all things, from which flow especially two streams of thoughts: eschatology (study about the Last Day) and ecclesiology (study about the church); by doing so, he uses Christ’s position as head of the body to address various errors in several churches, as noted below.
2. Ephesus: Paul confesses: “[God] made known to us the mystery of his will according to his good pleasure, which he purposed in Christ, to be put into effect when the times will have reached their fulfillment—to bring all things in heaven and on earth together under one head, even Christ.” “God placed all things under his feet and appointed him to be head over everything for the church, which is his body” “Christ is the head of the church, his body” (1:9-10, 22; 5:23). By doing so, among other things, he:
  - a. Addresses Jew-Gentile relationships in Ephesus: Christ has broken down the dividing wall between races, everyone, regardless of cultural status, are members of the same body of Christ (2:1-22).
  - b. Teaches about marriage: Just like Christ serves and leads the body of Christ, even laying down his life for it, so should the husband for his family.
3. Colossae and Laodicea: Paul uses Christ’s position as “head of the body, the church” and “head over every power and authority” to address heresy that resulted in improper Christian thought patterns and lifestyle: they were being “taken captive by “human tradition” and “the basic principles of the world,” even religious ones. His instructions, among other things, still free us today from judgment about eating and drinking rules and Sabbath Day observations (Col 2:9-10; 16-23).
  - a. “None of us lives to himself alone. ... we live to the Lord ... You, then, why do you judge your brother? ... Do not by your eating destroy your brother for whom Christ died.” (Rom 14:7-15)
4. Corinth: In a lengthy section about the body of Christ (11:1-12:31), Paul establishes Christ as the head of the church and addresses:
  - a. Propriety in worship (11:2-16).
  - b. The Lord’s Supper and those, who demonstrated by their divisions and partaking of communion without waiting for everyone to eat with them, that they did “not recognize the body of the Lord” (11:17-34).
  - c. With respect to various gifts of grace, their priority of use and that each member of the body of Christ is equally important and must cohesively work together (12:1-14:40).
  - d. Most Christians, today, believe that Paul’s particular teaching about Christ’s headship and women wearing a head covering in the church was a cultural thing that was applicable to Paul’s day but not ours (1 Cor 11).

5. How does the truth of Christ's headship effect current cultural patterns within today's church (see above point one)? Two thoughts from Bonhoeffer, help me think through this question, each thought compelling me towards a different direction – one towards culture and the other away from it:
  - a. "Christ is "the man for others" and his church "is only church when it is there for others." (Bonhoeffer's *Who Is Christ for Us?* p. 5) "The church of Christ is not a church against others, not even without others, but also not as others." (Ibid. p. 15)
    - i. Sometimes our Christian traditions and language are so foreign to the non-Christian that they isolate and disconnect Christ from our culture. Can we please talk in normal language and not use theological words that just aren't understood by others? Christ's "basin and towel" encourages us to this end.
  - b. "Between ascension and *parousia* [i.e., the 2<sup>nd</sup> coming of Jesus] the congregation is [Jesus'] form. What does it mean Word and Sacrament are congregation? Word, as Word of God is congregation. That means that it has temporal and spatial existence. It is not only the weak word of human teaching but instead the powerful Word of the Creator. It creates for itself the form of the congregation, insofar as it speaks. Congregation is Word of God insofar as the Word of God is God's revelation. Only because the congregation itself is the Word of God, can it understand the Word of God alone. The Word is in the congregation insofar as the congregation is a receiver of the Word. This form of his embodiment is the body of Christ himself and is as such at the same time the form of the congregation. (*Who Is Christ for Us?* p. 52-53; underline added)
  - c. Does my church reflect the culture's passion for glitz, marketing, individualism, treating people as objects to get a goal done ... more than Christ? Have these things happened to the point of the corporate gathering not being a house of prayer and community life not representative of the body of Christ with Jesus as its head. Christ's cleansing of the Temple encourages otherwise.

## Savior

Eph 5:23: Christ is the head of the church, his body, of which he is the *Savior*.

1. Cf. Luke 1:46-48; 2:11; John 4:42; Acts 5:31; 13:23; Eph 5:23; Phil 3:17-21; 1 Tim 1:1-2; 2:3-5; 4:10; 2 Tim 1:8-10; Titus 1:3-4; 2:9-10, 13; 3:4, 6; 2 Pet 1:1, 11; 2:20; 3:2, 18; 1 John 4:14; Jude 1:25; Ps 18:46 (God of My Salvation) in "Other Primary Hebrew Names of God."

Grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

To him be glory both now and forever! Amen.

2 Pet 3:18

## Jesus

Phil 2:4-11: Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others. Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus: Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death—even death on a cross! Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, that at the name of *Jesus* every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that *Jesus Christ* is *Lord*, to the glory of God the Father.

1. Jesus was a common first century Palestinian name, hence our Savior is called by various names that would identify him amongst the many others called by that name:
  - a. Jesus Christ Matthew 1:1
  - b. Jesus Christ: Son of David, Son of Abraham Matthew 1:1
  - c. Jesus, the Crucified One Matthew 28:5
  - d. Jesus, the Nazarene Mark 10:47

- |                          |            |
|--------------------------|------------|
| e. Lord Jesus            | Mark 16:19 |
| f. Jesus, Son of Joseph  | John 6:42  |
| g. Jesus of Nazareth     | Acts 10:38 |
| h. Lord Jesus Christ     | Rom 5:1    |
| i. Christ Jesus          | Phil 2:5   |
| j. Jesus, the Son of God | Heb 4:14   |
2. By the second century, the name Jesus had become so closely associated with Jesus Christ that the name Jesus was very rarely used to name children, regardless of the family's religion.
  3. Acts 5:40–42: [Gamaliel's speech persuaded [the Sanhedrin]. They called the apostles in and had them flogged. Then they ordered them not to speak in the name of Jesus, and let them go. The apostles left the Sanhedrin, rejoicing because they had been counted worthy of suffering disgrace for the Name. Day after day, in the temple courts and from house to house, they never stopped teaching and proclaiming the good news that Jesus is the Christ.
  4. In his high priestly prayer of John 17, is Jesus making a divine claim to be the one who reveals, manifests and makes God known? That an encounter with him makes known God's name and results in "God's love being poured out in our hearts"? (cf. Rom 5:1-5; 10:9-10) I believe so! Here's a portion of that prayer: "And this is eternal life, that they know you the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent. I have manifested your name to the people whom you gave me out of the world. ... Holy Father, keep them in your name, which you have given me, that they may be one, even as we are one. ... I made known to them your name, and I will continue to make it known, that the love with which you have loved me may be in them, and I in them." (ESV; John 17:3, 6, 11–12, 26)
  5. Confessing Jesus' lordship over one's life is foundational, for Christianity and salvation: "If you confess with your mouth, 'Jesus is Lord,' and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved." (Rom 10:9)
  6. Cf. Rom 10:6-10 (Lord Jesus) in "Names of God Canonically Listed – NT."
  7. See also above entry, listed within the section entitled "Other Hebrew Names," that discusses Savior (ישוע, σωτήρ) as a central name for God and the Hebrew equivalent for the Greek word translated as Jesus.

## Image of the Invisible God

Col 1:15–20: [The Lord Jesus Christ] is the *image of the invisible God*, the firstborn over all creation. For by him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things were created by him and for him. He is before all things, and in him all things hold together. And he is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning and the firstborn from among the dead, so that in everything he might have the supremacy. For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him, and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross.

1. Note the vast string of attributes and titles for Jesus in the above pericope. Cf. John 1:1-18, Phil. 2:5-11, and Heb. 1:1-4, which are also compact, high Christology pericopes.
2. In one short verse, v. 15, Paul expresses Jesus's deity by his relation to the Father (*eikōn*, image) and to the universe (*prōtotokos*, first-born).
3. "Jesus Christ, as he is attested for us in all the Scriptures, is the one Word of God which we have to hear and which we have to trust and obey in life and in death." (31) "In Christ we are not dealing with a new concept of God or a new moral teaching. We are dealing with God's personal address, through which God summons human beings to responsibility." (*Who Is Christ for Us?* p. 46)
4. For Bonhoeffer "discipleship of Christ became now the only visible sign of his presence. The act of believing became an act of living, as the question about who Christ is came to be connected with the question about where he is concretely to be found here and now." (Ibid. 14)
5. Col 3:10: [Y]ou have put on a new self which will progress towards true knowledge the more it is renewed in the image of its Creator (NJB). Cf. Rom. 8:29; 2 Cor 4:4-6; 3:18; Eph 4:22-24; Col. 3:10; Heb 1:3.

6. Lord, today, somehow and in some way, when people encounter me, may they encounter you! Give me this day your fresh bread of life that I may have both the motives and the ability to think, speak, and act in your name. May I be your image bearer!

## **Christ is All and Is in All PJD**

Col 3:11: Here [in the realm of new creation in Christ] there is no Greek or Jew, circumcised or uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave or free, but *Christ is all, and is in all*.

1. RWP: “*And in all (kai en pāsīn)*. ... Christ has obliterated the words barbarian, master, slave, all of them and has substituted the word *adelphos* (brother).”
2. WBC 3:11: “ἀλλὰ [τὰ] πάντα καὶ ἐν πᾶσιν Χριστός. The concluding triumphant words, ‘but Christ is all and in all,’ contrast the centrality of Christ with the divisions that separate people in the world. Similar expressions are found at 1 Corinthians 15:28 (‘that God may be all in all’) and Ephesians 1:23 (‘the fullness of him who fills all in all’) where, in the former at least and possibly also the latter, the relationship of God himself to the cosmos is in view. Here, however, the phrase is applied to Christ. The καὶ (‘and’) suggests that both halves of the phrase are important (note Eph 4:6). The first half states in an emphatic way that Christ is ‘absolutely everything’ (see Moule, 121, 122), or ‘all that matters,’ while the words he is ‘in all’ (ἐν πᾶσιν), which in the light of the preceding statement of verse 11a should probably be regarded as masculine (rather than neuter), mean that he permeates and indwells all members of the new man, regardless of race, class or background ... Christ lives in those who believe (cf. Col 1:27; Gal 2:20; 4:19).”
  - a. Eph 4:4–6: There is one body and one Spirit—just as you were called to the one hope that belongs to your call—one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.
  - b. Eph 3:16–21: I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, may have power, together with all the saints, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, and to know this love that surpasses knowledge — that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God. Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen.
3. “The church itself is not made up of natural ‘friends.’ It is made up of natural enemies. What binds us together is not common education, common race, common income levels, common politics, common nationality, common accents, common jobs, or anything else of that sort. Christians come together, not because they form a natural collocation, but because they have all been saved by Jesus Christ and owe him a common allegiance. ... They commit themselves to doing what he says—and he commands them to love one another. In this light, they are a band of natural enemies who love one another for Jesus’ sake.” D.A. Carson

## **Blessed and Only Sovereign**

1 Tim 6:15–16: God will bring about [the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ] in his own time — God, *the blessed and only Ruler*, the King of kings and Lord of lords, who alone is immortal and who lives in unapproachable light, whom no one has seen or can see. To him be honor and might forever. Amen.

1. The word translated above as Sovereign/Ruler (δυνάστης, *dynastēs*) is a *hapax legomenon* (i.e., found 1x in NT), but God’s sovereignty is a common Biblical theme.

## God, Who Does Not Lie

Titus 1:1–4: Paul, a servant of God and an apostle of Jesus Christ for the faith of God’s elect and the knowledge of the truth that leads to godliness—a faith and knowledge resting on the hope of eternal life, which *God, who does not lie*, (ὁ ἀψευδῆς θεός) promised before the beginning of time, and at his appointed season he brought his word to light through the preaching entrusted to me by the command of God our Savior, To Titus, my true son in our common faith: Grace and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Savior.

- The word ἀψευδῆς (*apseudēs*) is a *hapax legomenon* (i.e., found 1x in NT), but God’s truthfulness and unchanging nature are commonly mentioned in the Bible; e.g., Num 23:16–20; Rom 3:3–4; 2 Tim 2:11–13; Heb 6:16–18.

## A Merciful and Faithful High Priest The Apostle and High Priest

Heb 2:14-3:2: Since the children have flesh and blood, he too shared in their humanity so that by his death he might destroy him who holds the power of death—that is, the devil—and free those who all their lives were held in slavery by their fear of death. For surely it is not angels he helps, but Abraham’s descendants. For this reason he had to be made like his brothers in every way, in order that he might become *a merciful and faithful high priest* in service to God, and that he might make atonement for the sins of the people. Because he himself suffered when he was tempted, he is able to help those who are being tempted. Therefore, holy brothers, who share in the heavenly calling, fix your thoughts on Jesus, the *apostle and high priest* whom we confess. He was faithful to the one who appointed him, just as Moses was faithful in all God’s house.

1. Jesus performs every needed function in cleansing and preparing me for my access to God, even my final entry to him by way of death!
2. Thank you, Lord Jesus, for your wonderful ministry on my behalf. Why ruin a new day by bringing into it the failures and resultant condemnation of yesterday? God’s mercies are new and available each and every day, ready to be appropriated through a repentant heart (Lam 3:21-24; Mark 1:14-15; Heb 4:14-16).
3. Related names:
  - a. Tell him this is what the LORD Almighty says: “Here is the man whose name is the Branch, and he will branch out from his place and build the temple of the LORD. It is he who will build the temple of the LORD, and he will be clothed with majesty and will sit and rule on his throne. And he will be a **priest** on his throne. And there will be harmony between the two” (Zech 6:12–13). That is, harmony between the throne and the temple, the king and the priest.
  - b. Heb 4:14-16; 5:4–10; 8:1-2; 9:11-14 and Mal 3:1-3 (Messenger of the Covenant) in “Names of God Canonically Listed – OT.”

### Excurses: Original Sin

1. “No one, not even he who has been renewed ... has sufficient strength to overcome the snares of the devil, and to vanquish the concupiscence [i.e., lust] of the flesh, unless he obtains help from God each day to persevere in a good life.” (*The Indiculus*, a papal pronouncement on the doctrine of grace and original sin, cir. 435-42)
2. “This hereditary sin is so deep a corruption of nature that reason cannot understand it. It must be believed because of the revelation in the Scriptures (Ps 51:5; Rom 5:12ff; Exod 33:20; Gen 3:6ff.)” (M. Luther)
3. “More often than not we seem to know nothing against ourselves.” (Roland Bainton)

4. “Recognition of original sin is a necessity, nor can we know the magnitude of the grace of Christ unless we acknowledge our faults ... we cannot know his blessings unless we recognize our evil.” (Melancthon)
5. “Man is not ‘able by nature to want God to be God’; indeed, he wants himself to be God and he does not want God to be God.” (*The Heidelberg Disputations*, 1518, thesis 17.6)
6. We initially and constantly “need a savior – even (or especially) we who think we are good Christians.” (F. F. Bruner)
7. Per Karl Barth, the highest attestation to Original Sin is the crucifixion of Jesus by elect officials, soldiers, religious leaders, disciples, and the populous.
8. “No reason of man can justify God in a world like this. He must justify himself, and he did so in the cross of his Son.” (P.T. Forsyth)
9. “God allows what he hates in order to accomplish what he loves.” (Joni Eareckson Tada)

## The Source of Eternal Salvation

Heb 5:8–10: Although he was a son, he learned obedience from what he suffered and, once made perfect, he became *the source of eternal salvation* for all who obey him and was designated by God to be high priest in the order of Melchizedek.

## God of All Grace

1 Peter 5:10-11: And the *God of all grace*, who called you to his eternal glory in Christ, after you have suffered a little while, will himself restore you and make you strong, firm and steadfast. To him be the power for ever and ever. Amen.

## An Advocate

1 John 2:1: My dear children, I write this to you so that you will not sin. But if anybody does sin, we have *an Advocate* with the Father in our defense—Jesus Christ, the Righteous One.

1. Jesus’ life on earth was intercession and he still “lives to intercede,” for us. The Spirit also intercedes through us, with groans beyond words. (Isa 53:11-12; 59:1–4, 14–20; Heb 7:24-25; Rom 8:22-27, 34)
2. Both Moses and Paul were given to intercession, as were countless others. (Ex 32:9-12; 31-32; Num 16:21-24; Rom 9:1-3; Col 4:12-14; 1 Th 5:16-18)
3. God desires our intercession to be by word and deed, heart and hand. (Isa 1:10–20; 58:1-12)
4. Job 10:17; 16:19: You [Job’s friends] bring new witnesses (ἄνθρωποι) against me and increase your anger toward me; your forces come against me wave upon wave ... Even now my witness is in heaven; *my advocate* (ἄνθρωπος, μάρτυς) is on high.
5. The word translated as advocate in 1 John 2:1 is from *parakletos* (παράκλητος) the same Greek word used in the LXX as a reference to the LORD, the one who comforts us; cf. Isa 51:12 (Comforter) in “Other Primary Hebrew Names for God.”

## The Destroyer of the Devil’s Work

1 John 3:7–10: Dear children, do not let anyone lead you astray. He who does what is right is righteous, just as he is righteous. He who does what is sinful is of the devil, because the devil has been sinning from the beginning. The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the devil’s work. No one who is born of God will continue to sin, because God’s seed remains in him; he cannot go on sinning, because he has been born of God. This is how we know who the children of God are and who the children of the devil are: Anyone who does not do what is right is not a child of God; nor is anyone who does not love his brother.

1. Ps 124 declares, “If the LORD had not been on our side when men attacked us ... they would have swallowed us alive ... Praise be to the LORD, who has not let us be torn by ... the fowler’s snare ... our help is in the name of the LORD.” See also Lam 3:19–26.



2. Cf. Isa 54:16-17; 1 Sam 17:45 (LORD of Hosts) in “Hebrew Names with LORD”

Rescue me from my enemies, O LORD, for I hide myself in you.  
(Ps 143:9)

## The Faithful Witness

Rev 1:4–6: John, To the seven churches in the province of Asia: Grace and peace to you from him who is, and who was, and who is to come, and from the seven spirits before his throne, and from Jesus Christ, who is *the faithful witness*, the firstborn from the dead, and the ruler of the kings of the earth. To him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by his blood, and has made us to be a kingdom and priests to serve his God and Father—to him be glory and power for ever and ever! Amen.

1. Jesus, indeed, is the true witness (John 14:9) – the one who sees him sees the Father. He was and will ever remain the exemplar of what it means to be the personified witness of God’s holiness, power, grace ... and love. Is my life even close to being that reflection to others?
2. Related names:
  - a. Rev 3:14 “To the angel of the church in Laodicea write: These are the words of the Amen, the **faithful and true witness**, the ruler of God’s creation.
  - b. Rev 19:11–16: I saw heaven standing open and there before me was a white horse, whose rider is called **Faithful and True**. With justice he judges and makes war.

Then [Ananias] said:  
“The God of our fathers has chosen you  
to know his will and to see the Righteous One and to hear words from his mouth.  
You will be *his witness* to all men of what you have seen and heard.  
And now what are you waiting for?  
Get up, be baptized and wash your sins away, calling on his name.”  
Acts 22:14–16

## The Amen

Rev 3:14: To the angel of the church in Laodicea write: These are the words of the *Amen*, the faithful and true witness, the ruler of God’s creation.

1. The word “Amen” in Rev 3:14 may be a reference to Isa 65:16, where God’s name is mentioned in connection with the use of both blessings and oaths:
  - a. יִתְבָּרֵךְ בֵּאלֹהֵי אָמֵן (yitbārēk bē’lōhê ’āmēn; 65:16a): “he shall bless by the God of Amen” or also translated as the “God of truth” or the “God of faithfulness.”
  - b. יִשָּׁבַע בֵּאלֹהֵי אָמֵן (yīššāba‘ bē’lōhê ’āmēn; 65:16b): literally, “he shall swear by the God of Amen.”
  - c. This name in Isaiah is found only here in the OT (as a reference to God) and only once in the NT (as a reference to Christ).
2. The Hebrew word for “truth” or “amen” (אֱמֶת ’emet, being a close derivative of אָמֵן) was typically used within Judaism to refer to the LORD as the beginning, middle, and end of all: the three Hebrew letters of “amen” take these three positions in the Hebrew alphabet: א (Alef) is the first letter of the Hebrew alphabet, מ (Mem) the middle, and ת (Taw) the last.
3. In the MT, the LXX’s word for “amen” (ἀμήν), which is a transliteration of the Hebrew word, is also often translated by γένοιτο – “let or may it be so”; this later verb being frequently used as a strong affirming pronouncement. This Hebrew word for “amen” has at its core meaning the idea of “firmness,” “certainty,” and “faith.”
4. With these above meanings in mind, when the Amen speaks and or is present in the life of the believer something firmer than what is seen or felt is there, hence Hebrew 11:1’s “Faith is the substance of things ...”
5. Cf. 2 Cor 1:17–22; Heb 6:13-17; Rev 19:11; Isa 65:16 (God of Truth) in “Hebrew Names with God.”

## Lion of the Tribe of Judah

Rev 5:2-6: And I [John] saw a mighty angel proclaiming in a loud voice, “Who is worthy to break the seals and open the scroll?” But no one in heaven or on earth or under the earth could open the scroll or even look inside it. I wept and wept because no one was found who was worthy to open the scroll or look inside. Then one of the elders said to me, “Do not weep! See, the *Lion of the Tribe of Judah*, the Root of David, has triumphed. He is able to open the scroll and its seven seals.” Then I saw a Lamb, looking as if it had been slain, standing in the center of the throne, encircled by the four living creatures and the elders. He had seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God sent out into all the earth.

1. This Messianic concept first dawned in Gen 49:8-10: “Judah, your brothers will praise you; your hand will be on the neck of your enemies; your father’s sons will bow down to you. You are a lion’s cub, O Judah; you return from the prey, my son. Like a lion he crouches and lies down, like a lioness—who dares to rouse him? The scepter will not depart from Judah, nor the ruler’s staff from between his feet, until he comes to whom it belongs and the obedience of the nations is his.”
2. Though Satan is depicted in 1 Pe 5:8 as one that roams about like a roaring lion, Calvary’s triumphant shout of “it is finished” is the godly, victorious roar from the true lion (John 19:30).
  - a. The transliterated Greek words for Matt 27:50’s “loud voice” (*phone megale* = φωνῆ μεγαλή) are significantly familiar to *mega-phone*.
    - i. Matt 27:50-54: And when Jesus had cried out again in a loud voice [John 19:30 adds the words, “It is finished”], he gave up his spirit. At that moment the curtain of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom. The earth shook and the rocks split. The tombs broke open and the bodies of many holy people who had died were raised to life. They came out of the tombs, and after Jesus’ resurrection they went into the holy city and appeared to many people. When the centurion and those with him who were guarding Jesus saw the earthquake and all that had happened, they were terrified, and exclaimed, “Surely he was the Son of God!”
    - b. Jesus’ victory over Satan was prophesied in the Garden (Gen 3:15) and realized at Calvary (John 19:30); but this victory is also a “now-and-not-yet” reality for every believer (Rom 16:20; 1 Pe 5:6-11) – death and the devil have been defeated, the veil between God and us has been torn from top to bottom by God with the mercy seat being now made open to all who respond to his call, and in Christ “the dividing wall of hostility” between “Jew and Gentile, male and female” has been abolished (Eph 2:11-18)! But the day when this truth becomes a full reality in heaven, earth, and humanity awaits the Second Coming (Rom 8:18-28; 1 Cor 15:20-28).
3. What is meant by “now-and-not-yet”?
  - a. Ever since Jesus, the long waited “end” or “Day of the Lord” has in part significantly come forward into the present and has given the present time the distinct character of “now-and-not-yet.” This phrase is a theological term used to express that God’s reign, on the one hand, is “now.” On the other hand, it has “not yet” come and will not fully come until the second coming of Christ. Oscar Cullman metaphorically summed up this phrase in the terms of World War II: this “now-and-not-yet state is similar to the state between D-day – a day when the USA invaded France, and though the war was not yet over, the scales of power during WWII had shifted – and V-day – when the war ended. Since Pentecost, the Christian has lived at the dawning of a new age that was initialized by Jesus’ first coming (D-day) and will be consummated by his second coming (V-day). I quote Cullman: “The hope of the final victory is so much the more vivid because of the unshakeable firm conviction that the battle that decides the victory has already taken place.”<sup>7</sup> The analogy of D-day and V-day, or “now-and-not-yet,” can also be seen in sports. When a soccer team goes up in score by 3-0, the game’s fate is typically already decided, through it is not yet over in time.
  - b. Joel 3:16: The LORD will roar from Zion and thunder from Jerusalem; the earth and the heavens will tremble. But the LORD will be a refuge for his people, a stronghold for the people of Israel (cf. Amos 1:2; Jer 25:30).
4. Cf. Rev 22:16-17 (The Bright Morning Star) in “The I Am Statements of John’s Revelation.”

<sup>7</sup> Oscar Cullmann, *Christ and Time: The Primitive Christian Conception of Time and History*, trans. Floyd V. Filson (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1950), 87.

