

UNION BAPTIST CHURCH
BIBLE STUDY – CHRISTIANITY 101

TUESDAY, May 27, 2025

Stan Campbell, *Bible to Go: Genesis to Revelation in One Hour*, (New York: Faith Words, 2006)

Jesus: His Humanity

Throughout the Old Testament...especially during bad times...the people were told to expect a Messiah (Genesis 49:10, Numbers 24:17,29). For centuries, God's people had been watching and waiting for a Savior (Philippians 3:20). Now, with the oppression they are feeling from Rome, no doubt some of them recall the many promises that God would send someone to help.

In the flow of Bible history, everything points to the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus (Luke 9:22). Many previous events and prophecies have foreshadowed this, and everything afterwards will point back to the significance of Jesus, the Messiah, the Christ ("Anointed One" – Matthew 16:13).

Jesus' Birth

The first we see of Jesus in the Bible; he does not look much like the Savior of the world. God chooses to send him to earth as a baby, to live and grow just as any other human being. A young girl named Mary is chosen to give birth to Jesus (Isaiah 7:14). The angel Gabriel appears to explain to her what is going on. She is quite confused because she is a virgin. But Gabriel assures her that "*nothing is impossible with God*" (Luke 1:37). An angel also must appear to Joseph, because when Mary turns up pregnant, he is about to "divorce" her quietly. (Although Mary and Joseph were only engaged at the time, engagements then were much more binding than are those today). Both Mary and Joseph do as instructed and await the birth of Jesus without having any sexual contact in the meantime (Matthew 1:24-25).

The Bible does not support many of our Christmas tradition. We do know the Mary and Joseph left Nazareth to go to Bethlehem because of a Roman-ordered census (Matthew 2:1,12-14). (No doubt they were glad to get out of town during the final stage of her pregnancy to avoid local gossip.) And we know that when Jesus was born, Mary and Joseph laid him in a manger (Luke 2:7). But we do not know that he was in a stable; it might have been a cave. (All we do know is that the inn was full.) We know shepherds visited him, as well as magi from the East (Matthew 2:1-2; Luke 2:8). But when the wise men got there, Jesus was in a house, so they were not likely around the manger with the

UNION BAPTIST CHURCH
BIBLE STUDY – CHRISTIANITY 101
TUESDAY, May 27, 2025

Stan Campbell, *Bible to Go: Genesis to Revelation in One Hour*, (New York: Faith Words, 2006)

shepherds. We are not told how many wise men came, only that they presented the child with three gifts (Matthew 2:11).

Yet it seems clear that God was altering certain segments of the world that something earthshaking was taking place. An army of angels fills the sky to direct the shepherds to the manger (Luke 2:15-16). A star points the way for the magi (Matthew 2:2). And when Jesus' parents present him at the temple, two people separately approach them with prophecies about what the child will do (Luke 2:25-38).

The Bible says little about Jesus' childhood, but the few clues we have indicate he was an extraordinary person. Even at the age of twelve, he was able to hold the attention of the religious leaders in the temple, causing all who hear him to be amazed (Luke 2:41-52).

Jesus' Baptism and Temptation

The prophet Malachi told the world to watch for the prophet Elijah to appear "*before the great and dreadful day of the LORD comes*" (Malachi 4:5). Isaiah had predicted a voice in the desert calling, "*Prepare the way for the LORD*" (Isaiah 40:3). Jesus would later identify this "*Elijah*" as John the Baptist (Matthew 11:11-15), who prepared the way for Jesus by preaching in the desert, calling people to repentance, and alerting them that "the kingdom of heaven is near" (Matthew 3:1-2).

We next see Jesus at age thirty, coming to John to be baptized. John is reluctant at first but does so as Jesus asks. As Jesus comes up out of the water, the Spirit of God descends like a dove. "And a voice from heaven said, "*This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased*" (Matthew 3:13-17).

Jesus is then led by the Spirit into the wilderness, where he fast for forty days and is tempted (Matthew 4:1-11). Three times Satan tries to persuade Jesus to do something wrong or self-centered, and each time Jesus respond with an appropriate quote from the Old Testament (Duet. 6:16; 6:13; and 8:3) that rebuffs (refuses) Satan.

By The Grace of God, Next Week's Focus:

- **Jesus' Relationship**

- **Jesus' Emotions**

- **Jesus' Teaching**