

## =LIFE OF CHRIST=

### Lesson 2

#### The Eternal Christ

**INTRODUCTION:** Since our current lessons are on the life of Christ, the temptation is to spend the entire time discussing that portion of His life which lasted only thirty-three years and leave out the millions of years of the life of Christ before He came and after He went back. Hence, it seems unwise not to have at least two lessons on the Christ before Bethlehem. To begin the lesson, stress very strongly that the life of Christ did not begin at Bethlehem and end with the ascension. Explain that those years were simply a few years that He spent away from Home! Compare it to a weekend trip or a vacation, but by all means lead the pupils to think of more than just thirty-three years when they think of the life of Christ. Lead them to think of His earthly ministry as simply His entering into human conditions. Explain that He lived somewhere else and just came to live here for a while. There are many verses that have to do with the fact that Jesus came here from somewhere else. Luke 19:10, "For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost." Mark 10:45, "For even the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many." Matthew 5:17, "Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil." Mark 1:38, "...for therefore came I forth." Matthew 15:24, "...I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel." Mark 2:17, "...I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance." John 16:28, "I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world: again, I leave the world, and go to the Father." (This is a great verse explaining what He did.) Teacher, talk to the child about summer vacation. The child was not born when school was out. The child just entered another life. Then he will go back to school in the fall. This is the way it was with Jesus. This may not be as easy to teach as a Bible story about Daniel in the lions' den, but it is vital that our boys and girls know this truth. John 8:14, "...for I know whence I came, and whither I go; but ye cannot tell whence I come, and whither I go." John 8:16, "...I am not alone, but I and the Father that sent me." John 8:23, "...I am from above: ye are of this world; I am not of this world." John 6:62, "What and if ye shall see the Son of man ascend up where he was before?"

- I. **HE WAS UNVEILED WHEN HE CAME TO EARTH.** In I Timothy 3:16 notice the words, "God was manifest in the flesh." The word "manifest" is the same word that is mentioned in Revelation; in fact, it is the same word as the word "revelation." The Greek word is the word "apocalypse" which means "to uncover or unveil." Actually, Christ was unveiled when He came to earth. (Teacher, as the class comes in Sunday, have a statue or a picture covered or veiled. Place cloth over the object so the class can tell when they come in that something is under it. Sometime during the lesson—preferably at this point—lift up the veil and show them what is there. Now ask them if that thing had been there all along, or if it just then appeared there. Of course, the answer is that it was there all the time; it was simply veiled.) This is exactly the way Christ was. He had been in Heaven, but He had not yet been unveiled to men. The fact that He was preexistent is found in Hebrews 13:8, "Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever."
- II. **JESUS WAS THE "EXPECTED ONE."** In all the history of the world, Jesus emerges as the only expected Person. No one was looking for persons such as Julius Caesar, George Washington, Napoleon, or Abraham Lincoln to appear at the time and place at which they did appear. No other person has had his course foretold or his work laid out for him centuries before he was born. The coming of the Messiah had been predicted for centuries; in fact, the promise of His coming was given to Adam and Eve soon after their fall into sin. As time went on, various details concerning His person and work were revealed to the prophets. At the time that Jesus was born, there was a great expectation throughout the Jewish world that the Messiah was soon to appear. Even the manner of His birth and the town in which it would occur had been clearly indicated. Notice John 16:28a, "I came forth from the Father." (Teacher, a good way to explain this to the class would be to compare it to a famous person's coming to town. Everyone assumes he is alive before he gets to town. His coming is predicted. Pictures of him are displayed. Advertisements are on the radio stations, etc. The newspaper announces his coming. This is exactly what happened when Christ came to earth. He was already alive, but a publicity campaign was carried forth announcing His coming. No one would say that the famous person was born when he came to Hammond to appear, and no one in writing his life would tell only about the one appearance he made in Hammond.)

- III. THE PROPHETS PREDICTED HIS COMING AND TOLD US THAT HE WAS ALREADY ALIVE. Micah 5:2, "But thou, Beth-lehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting." In Isaiah 9:6 He is called "Wonderful," "Counsellor," "mighty God," "everlasting Father," and "Prince of Peace."
- IV. THE NEW TESTAMENT WRITERS KNEW THAT HE LIVED BEFORE HE CAME TO EARTH. John the Baptist said, "He that cometh after me is preferred before me: for he was before me," John 1:15. Paul said in I Timothy 1:15, "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners...." The word "came" implies that He was some place else before He came here. He said in Colossians 1:16, 17, "For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: And he is before all things, and by him all things consist." The word "consist" there is a very interesting word which means "stick together." (Teacher, bring some glue to class and put some things together, or you could bring any kind of substance that would cause some things to stick to each other.) It is Christ Who holds the universe and the world together; in fact, all things are stuck together by Him. This means that ever since there has been a world there had to be a Christ, and as long as there is a world, there must be a Christ, because everything is held together by Him.
- V. JESUS MENTIONED THIS SAME TRUTH. Notice these verses: John 17:24, "...for thou [Father] lovedst me before the foundation of the world." John 8:58, "...Before Abraham was, I am." Revelation 22:13, "I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last." (Teacher, explain that "Alpha" is the first letter of the Greek alphabet; "Omega" is the last. This means that Jesus says, "I am the A to Z. I am the first and the last.")

CONCLUSION: This is a very vital lesson! This is the basic difference between the liberal and the fundamentalist. Every person should know this doctrine inside and out.