

Believe Him & Receive Him

Greg Albrecht

“Yet to all who did receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God—children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband’s will, but born of God” (John 1:12-13).

A grandmother was reading the story of Christmas to her granddaughter. The grandmother liked the *King James Version*, with all its old English words and phrases... and when she came to the part “*Mary was great with child,*” her little preschool-age granddaughter didn’t get it. The grandmother stopped and talked about how pregnant mothers grow in size because they are carrying a baby, and that Mary was ready to give birth. The little girl said, “*Oh goody, I hope it’s a girl.*”

She was disappointed when her grandmother explained that the little baby was a boy. Some people are disappointed that Jesus wasn’t an American... or English or Chinese or Indian.

Beyond his gender and his race, Jesus wasn’t, in so many ways, what many people hoped and expected him to be.

Jesus was God in the flesh. Jesus was God coming to become one of us. Jesus was, even though he became flesh and blood and therefore like us in his physicality and mortality, totally unlike us in his divinity.

Jesus was the God-man (the Greek, *theanthropos*, God incarnate). Jesus is very man and very God—in his humanity he

was corruptible and mortal (yet without sin). Given his mortality, Jesus could and did die, not of disease or aging, but at the hands of hatred and evil.

Jesus was the God-man, very man and very God—in his divinity, absolutely perfect and inherently pure. He was and is the divine Word of God.



LIKE... AND UNLIKE US

While Jesus was one of us during this Christmas season we reflect and give thanks that he was not at all like us in so many ways.

He was totally unlike his human creation in his values and his priorities—totally unlike humans in terms of how he spent his time and energy, and what and who we respect and admire.

We give thanks and celebrate the fact that Jesus came to be like us so that we could become like him.

Jesus is our friend—and what a friend we have in him. Jesus is our

Lord and Savior. Jesus is our King. Jesus is our Redeemer, our Healer... he is our ALL in ALL.

Christ is like us, one of us, in the fact that he came out of eternity into time and space, born of a woman with a physical body. Time, of course, is the opposite end of eternity—eternity is defined as *beyond time* by we who are defined by our time and space limitations.

Jesus came to be one of us in order (1) to reveal the fulness of the love of God, so that we understand God, who is Father, Son and Holy Spirit, and (2) to offer all who believe and receive him the grace of God that we could become like him—and thereby live his risen life in all who believe and receive him.

“The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth” (John 1:14).

“WHO WAS, IS & IS TO COME”

In his book, *The Applause of Heaven*, Max Lucado says:

“Only a puny god could be bought with tithes. Only an egotistical god would be impressed with our pain. Only a temperamental god could be satisfied with our sacrifices. Only a heartless god would sell salvation to the highest bidders. And only a great God does for his children what they cannot do for themselves.”



Who was and who is this Jesus whose birthday we celebrate?

Jesus is not only God in the flesh, but God is Jesus in the flesh.

Jesus, the Light of the world, is the prism through which the light of God is reflected into every aspect of our lives.

Jesus came to more fully reveal Father God—and we see in and through him, as he invites us out of our darkness into his glorious light, that he is absolutely and irrevocably and eternally concerned with our suffering, our failures, our losses, our frustrations, our humiliations, our injuries both emotional and physical—*Jesus is God with us, God one of us, God for us.*

We see God in Jesus, we come to know God in and through Jesus... so that we realize his forgiveness, his mercy, his grace and his love.

When we focus on and absorb the fullness of the birth, life, death and resurrection of Jesus we discover that he is a spiritual earthquake, a necessary one subverting and overturning human values and desires.

When we focus on and absorb the fullness of the birth, life, death and resurrection of Jesus we see all he was and is, so that we cannot conceive of God independently without considering Jesus.

When we focus on and absorb the fullness of the birth, life, death and resurrection of Jesus in gratitude and thanksgiving, *we believe and receive him.*

For many years the music of Don Moen has graced our home during the month of December. For Karen and myself, Don Moen touches chords of joy, thanksgiving and worship in a way that most Christmas music does not.

The thoughts and phrases, lyrics if you like, of “Believe Him and Receive Him”—my humble efforts of lyrical verse—are partly inspired by Don Moen’s song, “You Can Trust Him” and from Pastor S.M. Lockridge’s classic sermon, “That’s My King! Do You Know Him?”

But most of all, literary sources from the New Testament, primarily the Gospel of John, guided my thinking, and are in many cases direct quotes. □

Greg Albrecht is President of Plain Truth Ministries.

Believe Him & Receive Him

Believe Him and Receive Him!

He is unique and exceptional
He is the One and Only
He is filled with grace and truth
He is our relentless, eternal lover

Believe Him and Receive Him!

He is the way and the truth and the life
He is the creator of all that is,
 visible and invisible, seen and unseen
He was in the beginning,
through him all things were made
He was and is the Light shining in our darkness
He became one of us,
 living with and among us

Believe Him and Receive Him!

He came to reveal the fullness of the Father
He came to reveal the love, grace and mercy of
Father, Son and Holy Spirit
Moses gave the law,
 grace and truth came through Jesus
From the fullness of his grace,
 we are given one blessing after another

Believe Him and Receive Him!

He is the king of the kingdom, yet
He is a different kind of king
He is meek and lowly in spirit
He is humble and approachable
He is filled with limitless love
There is no end of his mercy and grace
He defines and illustrates
 the unbelievable love of God
He is Jesus, the Son of God
He is our Lord and our Savior
He is Alpha and Omega
He was, and is and is to come
In him is life, and his life is immortal
You can't be given new life without him

Believe Him and Receive Him!

He received hatred and animosity
 from religious professionals
He accepted betrayal and rejection
 by and from his own

He forgave all
He destroyed all evil
 by drinking it all into himself
He died and was buried
Christless religion thought it had gotten rid of him
But death could not hold him
Jesus exploded from his tomb
Our risen Lord lives that death may die
He died eternal life to bring
He rose in victory and triumph
 over death and the grave

Believe Him and Receive Him!

O death where is your victory?
O grave, where is your sting?
He has triumphed over the gates of hell
He leads captives to freedom
He rescues the impoverished and the enslaved
He comforts the afflicted
He afflicts the comforted

Believe Him and Receive Him!

He is Jesus
King of kings and Lord of Lords
He is Jesus
The Prince of Peace
He is Jesus
The True Vine and the Living Water
He is Jesus
The Bread of Life and the Light of the World
He is Jesus
The Living Water
He is Jesus
The Resurrection and the Life

Believe Him and Receive Him!



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