

# J E S U S - THE MAN NOBODY KNOWS

SESSION THREE - WEDNESDAY, JULY 6, 2011  
BASED ON THE WRITINGS OF ATTORNEY BRUCE BARTON

## THE JESUS OF SO MUCH MORE

An automobile with 12 cylinders does not operate on 2 cylinders. Yet that's the situation with the Christian church "at large" today. It's operating on 2 cylinders when there is so much more power available if only believers would "tune up" the massive engine God has provided and "press the pedal to the metal."

From Barton's book:

*A sermon was once preached in St. John's Church in New York which dealt very severely with the frailties of poor human nature and put forth with unctuous assurance the promise of eternal punishment for a large proportion of the race. Among the worshipers was Aaron Burr, a gentleman of unfortunate reputation but keen mind. As he left the church a lady spoke to him. "What did you think of the sermon, Mr. Burr?" she asked. "I think," responded Burr, "that God is better than most people suppose."*

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I believe that was the message of Jesus. It was so incredibly positive and full of faith. The church has reduced the Christ of God to a petulant, severe, vain deity who must be cajoled and coerced to working among His earthly subjects. But I believe Jesus to be my greatest Companion, my delightful and faithful Friend, Who gives me purpose and joy in living. The Jesus I know is SO MUCH MORE....YES, SO MUCH MORE that today's church grudgingly wants to acknowledge.

Attorney Barton was right on, in my opinion, with his summary:

*For three years, Jesus walked up and down the shores of His lake and through the streets of towns and cities, trying to make people understand. Then came the end and, almost before His fine firm flesh was cold, the distortion began. He Who cared nothing for ceremonies and forms was made the idol of formalism. Men hid themselves in monasteries; they lashed themselves with whips; they tortured their skins with harsh garments and cried out they were followers of Him - of Him Who loved the crowd, Who gathered children about Him wherever He went, Who celebrated the calling of a new disciple with a feast in which all the neighborhood joined! "Hold your heads*

1 *high,” He had exclaimed. In His last supper He told His disciples, “My joy I leave*  
2 *with you. Be of good cheer!”*

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4

5 What has happened to THAT Jesus? He has disappeared, in my opinion, and He has  
6 been replaced apparently by a soft-eyed, weak feminine apparition who apparently has no  
7 power or authority. Except for full-gospel, Pentecostal churches congregations are  
8 shrinking like cheap shirts. There is more “sharing” than “declaring” in the pathetically  
9 weak pulpits. Faith has been replaced by fear. The Great Commission has been shrunk  
10 to fit into today’s diminishing economic situation and the Fed has replaced the Holy Ghost  
11 in determining the extent of our mission. It’s all so pathetic. Just so pathetic!

12  
13 In today’s church at large, so much has changed. By and large there is not enough faith  
14 to fill a flea’s navel. There is enough doubt to overfill the banks of the Mississippi.  
15 There is not enough vision to get across life’s roads. And yet all this is done in the Name  
16 of Him Who exclaimed, ‘I HAVE OVERCOME THE WORLD.’

17  
18 Where in the world did this Jesus come from that so many mistakenly worship today? I  
19 do not find Him in the Gospel anywhere. Instead, I read:

20  
21 2 Cor. 3:4-11 (NLT)

22 **We are confident of all this because of our great trust in God through Christ. [5] It**  
23 **is not that we think we can do anything of lasting value by ourselves. Our only power**  
24 **and success come from God. [6] He is the one who has enabled us to represent his**  
25 **new covenant. This is a covenant, not of written laws, but of the Spirit. The old way**  
26 **ends in death; in the new way, the Holy Spirit gives life.**

27 **[7] That old system of law etched in stone led to death, yet it began with such glory**  
28 **that the people of Israel could not bear to look at Moses' face. For his face shone with**  
29 **the glory of God, even though the brightness was already fading away. [8] Shouldn't**  
30 **we expect far greater glory when the Holy Spirit is giving life? [9] If the old covenant,**  
31 **which brings condemnation, was glorious, how much more glorious is the new**  
32 **covenant, which makes us right with God! [10] In fact, that first glory was not**  
33 **glorious at all compared with the overwhelming glory of the new covenant. [11] So if**  
34 **the old covenant, which has been set aside, was full of glory, then the new covenant,**  
35 **which remains forever, has far greater glory.**

36  
37 Look carefully at some of those words used by Paul when speaking of Christ:

38  
39 Verse 4 CONFIDENT

40 Verse 5 POWER and SUCCESS

1 Verse 6 ENABLED and LIFE  
2 Verse 8 FAR GREATER GLORY  
3 Verse 9 MORE GLORIOUS

4  
5 I love the great old hymn, written by A. B. Simpson, the founder of the Christian and  
6 Missionary Alliance. Look at these words for these are thoughts we USED TO SING :

7  
8 *Rise with thy risen Lord / Ascend with Christ above*  
9 *And in the heavenlies walk with Him / Whom, seeing not, you love*  
10 *Look on your trials here / As He beholds them now*  
11 *Look on this world as it will seem / When glory crowns your brow*  
12  
13 *Walk as a heavenly race / Princes of royal blood*  
14 *Walk as the children of the light / the sons and heirs of God*  
15 *Fear not to take your place / With Jesus on the throne*  
16 *And bid the powers of hell and earth / His sovereign scepter own*  
17  
18 *Your full redemption rights with holy boldness claim*  
19 *And to its utmost fulness prove the power of Jesus' name*  
20 *Your life is hidden now / Your glory none can see*  
21 *But when He comes His bride will shine all glorious as He.*

### 22 THE FINAL DIVINE MANDATE OF THE CHRIST

23  
24  
25 It was a scene that defied all comprehension. Our risen Lord met - post resurrection -  
26 with His remaining eleven disciples. It was not a rah-rah pep talk meeting. The eleven  
27 had met for dinner, totally bent out of shape about the happenings of the preceding days in  
28 which Jesus had been crucified, and His dead body was laid in a borrowed and completely-  
29 sealed tomb. Now - even His body was missing. Two followers of Jesus from Emmaus  
30 - a town just northwest of Jerusalem - were claiming they had seen Jesus alive. But as  
31 Mark informs us in 16:13, nobody much believed them. The spirit of the disciples was  
32 rock-bottom. Everything was lost.

33  
34 But as they sat eating, Jesus suddenly appeared. He was not overjoyed at their response.  
35 Mark 16:14 [The Message]

36 **Still later, as the Eleven were eating supper, he appeared and took them to task**  
37 **most severely for their stubborn unbelief, refusing to believe those who had seen him**  
38 **raised up.**

39  
40 Now, reeling from their Lord's verbal chastising, Jesus hits them with the most

1 preposterous commission anyone has ever heard:

2  
3 Mark 16:15-16

4 **Then he said, "Go into the world. Go everywhere and announce the Message of**  
5 **God's good news to one and all. [16] Whoever believes and is baptized is saved;**  
6 **whoever refuses to believe is damned.**

7  
8 *Consider the sublime audacity of that command. To carry Roman civilization across*  
9 *the then known world had cost millions of lives and billions in treasure. To create any*  
10 *sort of reception for a new idea today involves a vast expense and well-organized*  
11 *machinery of propaganda. Jesus had no funds and no machinery. His organization*  
12 *was a tiny group of uneducated men, one of whom had abandoned the cause as*  
13 *hopeless, deserting to the enemy before the command was given. He had come*  
14 *proclaiming a Kingdom and was to end on a cross; e knew He would not be physically*  
15 *present much longer; yet He dared to talk of His Gospel conquering all creation. What*  
16 *was the source of His faith in that handful of followers? By what methods had He*  
17 *trained them? What had they learned from Him of persuading men?*

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19  
20 

<p>The world has rarely met new ideas with much enthusiasm. I entered the ministry in 1959 in Dayton, Ohio, home of the NCR, the National Cash Register company. It was huge, covering many blocks of the downtown area along the river. Today there is nothing there, just blocks of empty land. What happened to NCR? When the whole concept of computers came along, NCR leaders doubted that the concept would ever take off. They just kept making cash registers as they always had. Another firm, IBM - International Business Machines - saw the future in computers and took that road. That's a classic case of leadership that "believes" and leadership that doesn't.</p>
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21  
22 The same story could be told of Robert Fulton, creator of the first commercially-successful  
23 steam boat in the late 1700's. His own testimony is a point made against the natural  
24 skepticism of mankind:

25  
26 *"As I had occasion daily to pass to and from the shipyard where my boat was in progress,*  
27 *I often loitered near the groups of strangers and heard various inquiries as to the object of*  
28 *this new vehicle. The language was uniformly that of scorn, sneer or ridicule. The loud*  
29 *laugh often rose at my expense; the dry jest, the wise calculations of losses or*  
30 *expenditures; the dull repetition of 'Fulton's Folly.' Never did a single encouraging*  
31 *remark, a bright hope, a warm wish cross my path."*

32  
33 That has so often been the story of mankind's response to ingenious vision. That being

1 the case, imagine the stunned response of eleven poor outcasts, huddled in secret in  
2 Jerusalem, when they heard Jesus say, "Take my Gospel to the whole world - to every  
3 person!"

4  
5 Why? Was the world clamoring for a new religion? Hardly. The Greeks and Romans  
6 had inundated society with multitudes of gods. The Hindus (whose religion went back  
7 thousands of years BC) had millions of them. AND NOW JESUS COMMANDED HIS  
8 POOR ELEVEN FOLLOWERS TO TAKE ON THE WHOLE WORLD WITH HIS  
9 TRUTHS! HOW AUDACIOUS! HOW UTTERLY AND HOPELESSLY  
10 IMPOSSIBLE! Yet today Christianity is the largest faith known to mankind and is  
11 growing (primarily overseas) in an exponential fashion!

### 12 13 WHAT DID CHRISTIANITY HAVE TO OFFER?

14  
15 The Creator God was hidden to the masses. Even to the Jews, He was believed hidden  
16 away "behind the veil" of the Great Temple, available only to the Great High Priest - and  
17 that only once a year. The God Who had created mankind in the very beginning in order  
18 to have fellowship and communion with him was now spirited away behind centuries of  
19 superstition, fear and the unknown. What did Jesus have to offer?

20  
21 Oh, many aspects of faith. For example: *He invited frail bewildered humanity to*  
22 *stand upright and look at God face to face! He called on men to throw away fear,*  
23 *disregard the limitations of their mortality and claim the Lord of Creation as Father. It*  
24 *is the basis of all revolt against injustice and repression, all democracy. For if God is*  
25 *the Father of all men, then all are His children and hence the commonest is equally as*  
26 *precious as the king. No wonder the authorities trembled. They were not fools; they*  
27 *recognized the implications of the teaching. Either Jesus' life or their power must go.*  
28 *No wonder succeeding generations of authorities have embroidered His ideas and*  
29 *corrupted them, so that the simplest faith in the world has become a complex thing of*  
30 *form and ritual, of enforced observances and 'thou shalt nots.'* *It was too dangerous a*  
31 *Power to be allowed to wander the world unleashed and uncontrolled.*

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### 33 34 THE SUPERNATURAL POWER BEHIND THE COMMANDMENT

35  
36 The disciples must have been jolted. Take the Gospel of Jesus to the world? Us? The  
37 eleven of us? And Jesus Himself has said He's leaving? How in the world are we  
38 supposed to even take this command seriously?

39  
40 But then Jesus gave them the response they so desperately needed - and which we still  
41 need today - just as much!

1 Acts 1:8

2 **But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye**  
3 **shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and**  
4 **unto the uttermost part of the earth.**

5  
6 In obedience to Jesus' directive, following our Lord's ascension, the eleven disciples made  
7 their way down the steep descent of the Mount of Olives, entered the Kidron Valley and  
8 made their way south a half mile or so to the Pool of Siloam where they scrambled up the  
9 steep stone steps (there to this day) to the summit of Mount Zion, to the home of Mark's  
10 mother where they had participated in the Last Supper with Jesus just a few weeks earlier.  
11 There they were joined by other early followers of Jesus so that their numbered swelled  
12 from 11 to 120. Luke tells us what happened ten days later in his narrative in Acts:

13  
14 Acts 2:1-4

15 **And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in**  
16 **one place. [2] And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty**  
17 **wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. [3] And there appeared unto**  
18 **them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. [4] And they were all**  
19 **filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave**  
20 **them utterance.**

21  
22 Now note this carefully: On that day, the Day of Pentecost (the annual feast of the  
23 harvest), the followers of Jesus jumped from 120 to at least 3,000! In one day! And  
24 within a few more days, the number had increased another 5,000!

25  
26 What had happened? Those early believers were suddenly empowered by the Holy Spirit  
27 (just as Jesus had promised in Acts 1:8) that enabled them to DO THE IMPOSSIBLE.  
28 Everything about them was sharpened for service - the words they spoke, the ability to  
29 think, the assurance to extend themselves into impossible situations (as recorded again and  
30 again in Acts).

31  
32 REAL CHRISTIANITY HAS NEVER ADVANCED BY USING NORMAL MAN-  
33 MADE IDEAS AND CREATIVITY. IT HAS ONLY SHOWN ITS TRUE POWER  
34 AND ADAPTABILITY WHEN CHRIST'S FOLLOWERS HAVE HAD THE FAITH TO  
35 BELIEVE THAT WITH GOD ALL THINGS ARE POSSIBLE.

36  
37 Study the lives of the outstanding movers and shakers for God through the centuries.  
38 They were daring, unconventional, risk-takers and visionaries. Where did they get those  
39 characteristics? From our Founder, the Lord Jesus Himself.

1 Today, much of Christianity is governed by “consensus.” It is cold, watered down,  
2 conventional and not very successful. Overseas, it’s different. The work is not led by  
3 committees, but by men and women of God who dare to do the impossible. Throughout  
4 holy Scripture, God used men and women who were not afraid to trust Him. And, oh,  
5 how God used and blessed them for His glory!

6  
7 PEOPLE MARVELED AT THE JESUS OF SCRIPTURE. DO THEY STILL MARVEL?

8  
9 Matthew 22:22

10 **When they had heard these words, they marvelled, and left him, and went their**  
11 **way.**

12  
13 Matthew 21:20

14 **And when the disciples saw it, they marvelled, saying, How soon is the fig tree**  
15 **withered away!**

16  
17 Small wonder that multitudes followed Jesus everywhere. He was marvelous. Is the  
18 Jesus we proclaim today still marvelous? Or is He still the masterpiece portrayed by oil  
19 painting on canvas? Or merely a water color on cheap paper? DOES THE AVERAGE  
20 FOLLOWER OF CHRIST REALLY KNOW HIM - OR MERELY KNOW ABOUT HIM?  
21 Remember Paul’s cry, Philip. 3:10: **That I may know him, and the power of his**  
22 **resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his**  
23 **death...**

24  
25 Leonard Sweet has written: “Christians have made the gospel about so many things -  
26 things other than Christ. Religious concepts, ideas, doctrines, strategies, methods,  
27 techniques and formulas have all eclipsed the beauty, the glory and the reality of the Lord  
28 Jesus Himself. We know a lot ABOUT our Lord, but we don’t really know HIM very  
29 well. We know a lot about trying to be like Jesus, but very little about living by His  
30 indwelling life. Every revival and restoration in the church has been a rediscovery of  
31 some aspect of Christ in the process of answering the ultimate that Jesus put to His  
32 disciples: “Who do you say that I am?”

### 33 34 **JESUS, THE MANY-FACETED MAN**

35  
36 A diamond sparkles because of the way it is cut and polished. The gem will have many  
37 facets or sides cut upon it so that it reflects various sources of light in stunning imagery.  
38 So it is with Christ. If there is anything Jesus is not - it’s ONE-DIMENSIONAL. He  
39 was the Healer, the Encourager, the Proclaimer, the Philosopher, the Savior - everything  
40 needed to benefit every man and woman who ever lived.

1 Yet today's gospel, which is supposed to reflect HIM, is so often mind-numbing one-  
2 dimensional, boring and even at times trite.

3  
4 Ask yourself this question: How is it that Jesus could command such public acclaim and  
5 why today, by way of contrast, churches are so tiny and poorly-attended?  
6

7 I have had well-intentioned people tell me through the years that the really great churches  
are the small ones with only a few well-grounded and "deep" believers in them. I don't  
buy that for even a moment. Why not? Because I know the Scriptures. They tell me of  
a totally different Christ Who commanded multitudes of people.

8  
9 1. Before you can reach people you have to GET THEIR ATTENTION. You have to get  
10 them to listen. Why are the masses so turned off to much of Christian television, for  
11 example? Well, just listen! It's Johnny one-note:  
12

13 \* Plant your seed. (A pitch for offerings) And while there is some truth to what  
14 they are saying, proper motivation for giving is set aside and it becomes a matter of what  
15 you can get from God because you gave; when, in truth, we give because we love Him.  
16

17 \* "Put your hands together and let's make some noise here tonight." There is a place  
18 for that, to be sure; but the same Bible commands, BE STILL AND KNOW THAT I AM  
19 GOD. (A Christian TV program given to deep meditation would not last for a month!)  
20

21 \* It's "bishop-this" or "prophetess-this, rarely, "brother in Christ" or "sister in  
22 Christ.". In other words, the teachings get shriveled down to "me-me-me-me-me."  
23

24 But that's not what Jesus taught. That was never His demeanor, message or personality.  
25 First of all, He always exalted the Father God. He never drifted even for a moment of  
26 time His reason for coming to this earth - as Paul reminded us: 1 Tim. 1:15 **This is a  
27 faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to  
28 save sinners; of whom I am chief.**  
29

30 Jesus was a genius at commanding the attention of His hearers. Did Jesus make enemies?  
31 Of course, He did. He was not like some pathetic politician today who always tried to  
32 "say the right thing" in order to pacify everyone. He was fearless in the face of His  
33 detractors. He was never cowed by the sneers or verbal jabs that often came from them.  
34 With the exception of cleansing the Temple of money-grabbing thieves, He was never  
35 surly. And yet people were constantly amazed by Him. Why?  
36

37 Was it His constant compassion? Scriptures inform us that Jesus was moved by



1 compassion when He saw the plight of those who were suffering. Was it His mastery over  
2 nature and disease? Was it His superlative teachings such as came from Him on the  
3 Mount of Beatitudes?  
4

5 How could Jesus call grown men who were already involved in their careers with a simple  
6 “Follow Me” - and immediately they dropped everything to follow Him?  
7

8 *His honest directness had a startling, far-reaching effect. One of those who had been*  
9 *attracted by the excitement was a tax collector named Matthew. Being a man of*  
10 *business he could not stay through the argument, but slipped away early and was hard at*  
11 *work when Jesus passed by a few minutes before noon (in Capernaum). “Matthew, I*  
12 *want you,” said Jesus. That was all. No argument; no offer of inducements; now*  
13 *promise of rewards. Merely, “I want you.” And the prosperous tax collector closed his*  
14 *office, prepared a feast for the brilliant young teacher and forthwith announced himself*  
15 *a disciple.*

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17

18 Oh, the power of our Lord Jesus! This is the One people need to see today! The  
19 magnetism of our Lord needs to be stressed in the pulpits. We almost convinced folks that  
20 being a follower of our Lord is some terrible burden. Jesus Himself said, “My burden is  
21 light!”  
22

23 We need to show the world the Christ Who entered the home in Capernaum, a home  
24 surrounded by death-mourners over a young girl who had passed away. Their hideous  
25 wails and the dull pounding of the cymbals told those who had any hearing at all that death  
26 had visited this home. A vivacious young girl was dead! But Jesus strode through them  
27 all like a hot knife through butter. “Let me through!” He demanded. “This girl is not  
28 dead. She’s only asleep.” How the mourners laughed. “She’s dead, Jesus! We have  
29 seen her! We know death when we see it.” They had no reality that they were speaking  
30 to Him Who is Life.  
31

32 Jesus brushed by them and entered the home. His mission did not take long. There was  
33 no theatrical waving His hands or throwing of His cloak. As the crowd looked on with  
34 wide and disbelieving eyes, Jesus took the little girl by the hand. That’s all. That’s all!  
35 And what happened? The “dead” little girl sat up, her eyes wide open - and very, very  
36 much alive!  
37

38 Death itself did not stagger our Lord. So how can we be staggered by the various things  
39 that come our way? ***Jesus is the LORD OF SO MUCH MORE....***more of everything we  
40 need for life and fulfillment and true eternal joy. This is the Jesus we must faithfully  
41 declare.

1 I have noticed that many church web sites - including our national Assemblies of God site -  
2 lists what are called "Our Core Values." We don't do that at First Assembly of God -  
3 either in our printed material or on our web site. Why?  
4

5 Because I don't think people care one way or the other what our special interests are.  
6 BUT I DO BELIEVE THEY WOULD LIKE TO HEAR ABOUT CHRIST!  
7

8 List our core values? No. Let's instead talk about Jesus, sing about Jesus, witness about  
9 Jesus. Years ago, a great song writer, Haldor Lillenas, wrote this classic lyric:  
10

11 *Others may sing of treasures on earth / sing of its glitter and gold /*  
12 *But I have a song of far greater worth / exhaustless, it never grows old!!*  
13

14 *He is the lovely theme of my song / He is my light from afar /*  
15 *Glory and praise shall to Him belong / He is my bright morning star /*  
16

17 *Strength for my weakness He doth impart / He is the joy of my longing heart*  
18 *Fair rose of Sharon is Jesus to me / He is the theme of my song*  
19

20 More on the marvelous life of Christ, the Man Nobody Knows, next Wednesday night.  
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