

## How Do We Really Know Jesus?

The *International Sunday School Lesson* for Sunday July 27, 2008  
Matthew 16:13-23

*“And Jesus answered him, ‘Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father in heaven’”* (Matthew 16:17—NRSV).

*“And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven”* (Matthew 16:17—KJV).

God gives us a variety of ways to learn about His existence and character. By looking at the things God has made, we can learn about God’s eternal power and divine nature. As we think about the visible world in which we live, we can develop ideas about the invisible God (see Romans 1:19-20). Since we are “one of the things” God has made, we can develop a limited understanding about the creativity and reasonableness of God. We can agree with the psalmist who exclaimed, “I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made. Wonderful are your works; that I know very well” (Psalms 139:14).

As we look at nature, our powers of reason will take us only so far in learning more about God. Knowing our limitations, God has spoken to us in the Bible to reveal the truth about himself and the type of world in which we live. For example, only from the Bible do we learn that God created us in His image and gave us responsibility over His creation (see Genesis 1:26-31).

Moreover, God went beyond speaking truthfully to us through the priests and prophets in the Bible (see Hebrews 1:1-5). Almost 2000 years ago, when Jesus came to Earth, God’s Word became flesh, lived among us, and taught the truth about God. Jesus, “God the only Son” made God known (see John 1:14-18). Indeed, Jesus declared, “Whoever has seen me has seen the Father” (John 1:9). Later, the Apostles taught what they had witnessed about Jesus and also what the Father in heaven had revealed to them. — Copyright 2008 L.G. Parkhurst, Jr.

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