

# **“Given to Us in Christ Jesus Before Time Began”**

(Compiled by Paul R. Blake)

Introduction: 2Tim. 1:8-10

A. From whence did Jesus Christ come? When did He begin to be?

1. Jesus did not begin to exist when He was born in Bethlehem, nor when He was conceived of the Holy Spirit within Mary.
2. Scripture teaches that Jesus Christ, unlike us, existed long before His conception and birth.
3. This is not just an intellectual point or trivia to challenge our imagination or provoke our curiosity. Rather, the pre-existence of Jesus Christ has a direct bearing on a number of issues that relate to exactly who Jesus is and what He has done and continues to do for humankind.
4. What did God plan to give to us through Jesus Christ before the world began? - John 5:19-20

## **I. THE ETERNAL AND PRE-EXISTENT CHRIST**

A. John 1:15

1. “Preferred before me” addresses order; Jesus is greater than John
2. “He was before me” addresses time; Jesus existed before John, even though John was six months older. Thus, Jesus existed before John

B. Jesus has been since before “the beginning” - John 1:1

1. “The Word” denotes Jesus - John 1:14
2. “The beginning” denotes creation (Gen. 1:1) Therefore, at the creation Jesus already was.

## **II. IMPLICATIONS OF CHRIST’S PRE-EXISTENCE**

A. Jesus is Deity - John 1:1 - “The Word (Jesus) was God,” not was a god.

1. The verb tense of “was” is “Past Perfect Progressive. Past perfect progressive tense describes a past, ongoing action that was completed before some other past action.”  
([leo.stcloudstate.edu/grammar/tenses.html](http://leo.stcloudstate.edu/grammar/tenses.html); St. Cloud State University)
2. That Jesus already “was” in the beginning, tells us that He is eternal (an attribute of Deity)
3. This is not just an academic matter; if Jesus is not eternal Deity, then He is not the “Son of God”
4. John 8:58 - “I AM” (“not I was” or “I have been”); this is the emphatic present - “I Myself AM”
  - a. “I Am that I Am” (אֶהְיֶה אֲשֶׁר יְהִיָּה, ehyeh asher ehyeh is the first person singular imperfect form - Ex. 3:14
  - b. It connotes existence without beginning or end. “I always was, I currently am, and I always will be.”
  - c. Existence apart from time.
  - d. While we are eternal beings, that is, our soul will live forever, we have a beginning point. God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit

have no beginning point. They have always existed, currently exist, and always will exist.

- e. Even the beings of power and angels of heaven have a beginning or creation point
- f. The Watchtower Bible and Tract Society's New World Bible (Jehovah's Witnesses) corrupt the translation of this passage to "I have been"
- g. Jesus' pre-existence is evidence of His Deity

B. Jesus is Co-Creator with the Father

1. "By Him all things were created" - Col. 1:16; John 1:3; Heb. 1:2
  - a. Watchtower inserts "other" (other things, not all things) into Col. 1:16 twice, twice in v. 17, and once in v. 20
2. Since Jesus is Creator:
  - a. He must pre-exist this universe, a realm in which time governs being.
  - b. Therefore, as He pre-existed in a realm where time does not govern being, and from there created a realm where time does rule being, He necessarily is from everlasting to everlasting God

C. Jesus is the Condescending (stooping, self-abasing) God

1. Condescending? "Generally, this word is used negatively. Perhaps we think of someone who is rich mistreating someone who is poor. Maybe we think of someone highly educated thinking the rest of the world to be less enlightened. This word means, "To descend to the level of one considered inferior; lower oneself" (Dictionary.com). People who act in a condescending manner toward others are viewed in a negative way because we recognize we are all on the same level. We are all human beings regardless of our economic or educational levels."

(<http://www.renewedinspirit.org/2010/06/condescension-of-god.html>)

2. But, Jesus was not a man before His advent into this world. He was God who became a man. "The Son of God became a son of man, so that sons of men could become the sons of God." (W. Frank Walton)
3. God the Father condescends to humankind - Psalm 113:5-9
  - a. He created us and provides for our needs impartially
  - b. He sustains us providentially and hears and answers our prayers
  - c. He wants a relationship with us and wants us to live in His home
  - d. He sacrificed His Son in order to impute the state of righteousness to obedient believers
4. Jesus condescended fully in His Being. He went from being God the Son in heaven to become Jesus the son of man on earth.
  - a. Not that He humiliated others or looked down on them, but, He humbled Himself, lowered Himself to be like us
5. Phil. 2:6-8 - "Have this mind in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: who, existing in the form of God, counted not the being on an equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, taking the form of a servant, being made in the

likeness of men; and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, becoming obedient even unto death, yea, the death of the cross." (ASV)

6. He had equality with God (eternal existence), but He became poor so that He could die in our place. As the eternal, pre-existent God, He could not die. He had to become a man to do this.

- a. 2Cor. 8:9; John 17:5

D. Jesus is the pattern of our own obedience - John 6:38

1. We are a statistically oriented people. We measure ourselves numerically against each other.
  - a. The only acceptable means of measuring ourselves is against the example of our Lord Jesus Christ - 2Cor. 10:12
2. Had He not existed prior to His conception, He could not have "come down from Heaven" nor could He have been "sent" by the Father.
3. Had He not been perfectly obedient, He couldn't have been our atonement offering - Heb. 5:8-9

E. Jesus is our Mediator

1. We pray to the Father in the name of Jesus - John 16:23
2. We do not pray to Jesus. In v. 23, Jesus specifically said "in that day you will ask Me nothing," meaning in the days of the new covenant you will not ask Me for things; you will ask the Father through Me
3. To effectively mediate between God and man, Jesus has to be both God and man - 1Tim. 2:5
4. An understanding of this is necessary for proper faith and acceptable prayer in His name - John 16:26-27

Conclusion:

- A. Jesus did not come into being at His holy conception or His birth in a Bethlehem stable. He has always been, and always will be.
- B. Psalm 47; Gal. 1:3-5