

# CHRISTIANITY



*Understanding What Christians Believe*

---

Mike Taylor

<https://www.taylornotes.info/abt>

---



## PART 5: UNDERSTANDING WHO JESUS IS

### A. THE PRE-INCARNATE CHRIST

---

Pre-Incarnate: The time before Christ took on a human physical form. Christ always existed and there was never a time when he did not exist.

### B. THE INCARNATE CHRIST

---

Incarnate: The act of God the Son whereby he took to himself a human nature.

### C. THE EARLY LIFE OF JESUS (BIRTH TO AGE 12)

---

1. Jesus was born in Bethlehem; a town located about five miles south of Jerusalem. Bethlehem was also the ancestral home of King David (1 Sam. 17:12).
  - Jesus was most likely born toward the end of Herod the Great's reign as king of the Jews (37—4 B.C.).
  - Matthew tells us that Herod killed Bethlehem's babies two years old and under, so the earliest Jesus could have been born, therefore, is 6 B.C.
  - Through a variety of other time indicators, we can be relatively confident that the one called Messiah was born in either late 5 or early 4 B.C.
2. Mary, Joseph, and Jesus returned to Nazareth afterward (Luke 2:39). It was here that Jesus grew up.
3. Jesus most likely spoke three languages (Aramaic, Hebrew, Greek).

### D. THE HIDDEN YEARS OF JESUS (12 TO LATE 20s)

---

1. Place: Nazareth (Galilee).

2. Significant events: unknown (Luke, 2:40-52; Mark 6:3; John 6:42; 7:15); he probably cared for his family since Joseph may have died in Jesus' younger days.
3. He had four brothers and at least two sisters (Mark 6:3)
4. Jesus ministered in Galilee, Samaria, and Judea (Late 20's to early 30s).
5. Begins with: Jesus' baptism (Matthew 3:13-17; Mark 1:9-11)
6. Jesus' temptation by Satan (Luke 4:1-13).
7. His first miracle of turning water into wine in Cana, Galilee (John 2:1-11).

## **E. JESUS' MINISTRY YEARS (AGE LATE 20s)**

---

### **1. The Culture of Galilee in Jesus' time**

- Generally open to Jesus' teachings (except for Nazareth).
- Most of Jesus' 33 miracles were done in Galilee.
- Pleasant rural area with mixed Jewish and Gentile cultures.

### **2. The Culture of Samaria in Jesus' Time**

- Mixed breeds comprised of Jewish and Assyrian ancestry.
- Combined Torah and pagan religions (syncretism).
- Samaritans were hated by the Jews.
- Jews traveled east of Jordan to avoid Samaritans.
- Except for the Samaritan woman at the well, and those in the city of Sychar, most Samaritans were skeptical of Jesus because he was a Jew (John 4)

### **3. The Culture of Judea in Jesus' time**

- Jerusalem was both the religious and the political seat of Israel.
- Location of the (2nd) Temple.
- Center of Jewish religion and culture.
- Presented the greatest opposition to Jesus.

### **4. The Characters in Jesus' Life**

- Twelve Disciples/Apostles: The twelve ordinary men whom God used in an extraordinary manner.
- Pharisees: A Jewish sect that accepted the written and oral law.
- Sadducees: A Jewish sect that accepted only the written law.
- Scribes: Interpreters of the Law.
- Herodians: Supporters of Herod the Great.
- Essenes: A Jewish sect characterized by asceticism.
- Zealots: A warlike group that strongly opposed Roman rule.