

come in the flesh means that many in the world (including some of our own family and friends) will hear these sad words from the Lord.

**6. We must face Him in judgment.** While on the earth Jesus declared that when the Day of Judgment comes, He will sit as judge of the world. In his gospel John relates Jesus' declaration—"For the Father judges no one, but has committed all judgment to the Son" (John 5:22). In teaching His disciples about final judgment Jesus tells them at the end of things He will sit "on the throne of His glory" and all the nations will be gathered before Him so that he might separate them "as a shepherd divides his sheep from the goats" (Matthew 25:31,32). If Jesus never came we would have no accountability to Him.



His coming in the flesh means that we can not escape our responsibility to Him and our appointment to stand before in judgment.

By Kyle Pope

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# Faithful Sayings

## Olsen Park Church of Christ

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### Services

Sunday: 9:30 a.m.  
10:20 a.m.  
6:00 p.m.  
Wednesday: 7:00 p.m.

### Elders:

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### Deacons:

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## “Jesus Christ Has Come In The Flesh”

It is generally believed that the first epistle of John focused to some degree on the early stages of Gnostic belief. Gnosticism, in the first few centuries after Christ spread throughout the ancient world and challenged many early Christians. In their view Jesus could not have really come in the flesh because they felt that material things were inherently corrupt. To justify their own immoral behavior, Gnostics argued that since Jesus (in their view) spiritually came to earth, without really having contact with the material, they could do what they wished with their bodies and by attaining secret knowledge (*gnosis* in Greek) they could still be pure inwardly. In refutation of this type of thinking John, through the Holy Spirit, declared that Jesus was One whom —“...we have heard, which we have seen





with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled...” (I John 1:1, NKJV). Further, “every spirit that does not confess that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is not of God. And this is the spirit of the Antichrist, which you have heard was coming, and is now already in the world.” (I John 4:3).

While our modern world may no longer have proponents of Gnosticism as it existed in the ancient world, there are still many who have their own reasons for choosing to deny that “Jesus Christ has come in the flesh.” Even so, certain conclusions are inescapable.

*If Jesus has come in the flesh...*

**1. He is the way to eternal life.** Jesus offers mankind the way of salvation but He declares that it is a “narrow” and “difficult” way (Matthew 7:14). Not all roads lead to heaven. Not everything done in the name of religion is profitable to us. While we might hope and strive and try to attain a relationship with God through some other religion, our imagination or our conscience,

Jesus declares boldly—**“I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.”** (John 14:6).

**2. His word must be followed.** In offering man the way to salvation, Jesus sets down a very exclusive standard of faith and behavior. We will not be judged according to some human philosophy or theory, but by Jesus’ words. Jesus taught—**“He who rejects Me, and does not receive My words, has that which judges him—the word that I have spoken will judge him in the last day”** (John 12:48). Since Jesus came in the flesh the standard of truth is clearly set forth in His word.

**3. We can’t follow our own way.** Jesus taught—**“If anyone desires to**

**come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me.”** (Matthew 16:24). Jeremiah taught the same principle centuries before this—**“O LORD, I know the way of man is not in himself; It is not in man who walks to direct his own steps”** (Jeremiah 10:23). Since Jesus came in the flesh and offered mankind the way which must be followed, in matters of personal lifestyle or in questions of religious practice the question is not what we want but what God (in Jesus) wants for us.

**4. Sin can be avoided.** Just as the Gnostics rationalized away the sinfulness of immorality, many today try to suggest that it is impossible for people to resist temptation and avoid sin. They do so either from some theological doctrine which claims that we inherit a sinful nature or from a humanistic determinism which treats behavior as the result of genetics, instinct or chemistry. The Bible makes it clear that Jesus possessed the same human nature that we do. The Hebrew writer tells us that Jesus was made like us **“in all things”** and that He has partaken of our **“and blood”** which is the very reason He can act

as our **“Priest in things pertaining to God”** (2:14-17). Yet Jesus also was **“in all points tempted as we are yet without sin”** (Hebrews 4:15). While it is obvious that the flesh is often weak (see Matthew 26:41), to suggest that the flesh cannot avoid sin we must reject Jesus’ own coming in the flesh.

**5. Many of our friends are lost.** The fact that Jesus came and offered to mankind a new way of salvation sets before us an offer we can either accept or reject. To reject Jesus is to forfeit the only hope that any of us have of salvation. Those who make such a choice will one day hear the sad words - **“I never knew you, depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness”** (Matthew 7:23). The fact that Jesus actually did

