

are brought into right relationship to God, they sing, paint, and give him glory in the arts. That's why more hymns and songs have been written about Jesus than any other person in history.

**10. Faith** - Jesus lived a life of complete faith in the Father and imparted that faith to his followers. If Abraham is the father of faith in the ancient world, then Jesus is the engine of faith in the modern one. Faith in him has led his followers through the centuries to care for the poor; minister to the sick; start hospitals and schools; share the Good News around the world; apply Christian principles to government, economics, and social issues; and to influence every other engine of progress. Christians are the true progressives because they see life's challenges and opportunities through the lens of faith in Jesus Christ. "All things are possible to those that believe." Their faith makes them the best leaders, soldiers, caregivers, and husbands and wives. Wars against evil have been won through valiant faith; individual lives have been rescued through tender faith. It's hard to imagine a world without faith in God and the Lord Jesus Christ. Over two billion people now share that faith worldwide.

**11. Love** - For two thousand years, followers of the loving Christ have carried his compassion and care to peoples everywhere. Nations have been won through his love. The majority of hospitals and other ministries of compassion around the globe were launched in his name. Where there's natural disasters, wars, or famine, people filled with God's love have run to alleviate human suffering via the Red Cross, World Vision, and thousands of other agencies.

**12. Hope** - Christ gives individuals a firm hope in a future he has secured through his death, resurrection, and ascension. There's life after death. There'll be a resurrection of all people. Jesus is coming again to bring his redeemed people into his heavenly presence. Because of these truths, the follower of Christ lives in hope in the future Jesus Christ will provide. Hope isn't a wish—it's as real as the nail-scarred hands and the empty tomb. Hope gets us through the day, helps us handle tragedies, and points us

upward. Jesus Christ is the only hope of the world.

### **Jesus the Son of God**

Jesus wasn't just a good man who founded a great religion. He was the Son of God, sent on a mission to transform the world through changing lives. Imagine for a moment what your life would be like if this wonderful life hadn't appeared.

You'd be powerless in your sins, separated from God forever. If you're a woman, you'd have no rights or future. Your family would be broken and dysfunctional. You'd have no worship or fellowship. You would be living under a tyrant, without education, and in miserable poverty. You would be fearful of creation, and your art would express those fears. You'd lack faith, hope, and love in this life—and the next.

Unfortunately, that description fits many people today who haven't heard of Jesus and of his love, or who have heard but have rejected his love. Let's be faithful to take his Good News to them.

Jesus is worthy of our highest praise not only for what he did, but also for who he is, and what he's still doing. May we awaken to Christ for all he is, and join him in bringing God's Kingdom forth.

## **Twelve Ways Jesus Christ Changed the World**



By Ron Boehme

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To the majority of people, Jesus is an honored historical figure who founded Christianity—but that is about as far as it goes. Many have no idea that his most wonderful life had an unsurpassed effect on the history of man. In fact, without the birth, death, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus Christ, life on planet earth would be far different from what it is today. How different? Let's think about the impact of the life of Jesus Christ.

**1. Individuals** - The essence of Jesus' mission was to save individuals who choose to put their trust in him. He didn't point the way to a set of ideals or moral principles as many other teachers did. He promised when we were "born again by his Spirit" he would come to live inside of us, empowering us to live meaningful and godly lives. At the age of fifteen I put my trust in Christ to forgive my sins and come into my life. He did. From the very beginning I experienced his presence, power, guidance, and empowering, which changed everything. I was no longer the "wretched man that I am!" (Romans 7:24), but was set "free from the law of sin and death" (Romans 8:2). There was a new dynamite—a dynamic power—to live a productive life. Over the past two thousand years, it is the Spirit of Jesus Christ in, now billions of people, that has altered history through changing individuals.

**2. Women** - No one altered the role of women more than Christ. Before Jesus, women labored in harsh, subservient roles, and were nothing more than slaves to men and family. The Greek philosopher Cicero likened women to "slaves, dogs, horses, and donkeys"—possessions to be used and cast away. Jesus' confirmed in every way, women are of equal worth as men in God's sight. ALL of women's rights we enjoy, especially in the past two hundred years, were produced by the Christian faith. Even in Muslim societies today, women are second-class citizens, not like in the Christian West where women have all the same rights as men. If you're a woman living in a Western nation, you can thank Jesus Christ for the freedoms you enjoy.

**3. Family Life** - Jesus' teaching gave strength to the world's most important institution—family. Wives weren't slaves, husbands weren't to be

tyrants, and children were significant. Christian truths of submission, equal worth, partnership, equality, and self-sacrificing love gave harmony and protection to family relationships that over hundreds of years became the foundation of Western civilization and culture.

**4. The Church** - Though the Church hasn't always properly applied the teachings of Christ, it's also true no group has made a more positive impact on the history of the world. The Church transformed the Roman Empire, rescued "learning" from the destruction of the Middle Ages, raised Europe out of barbarism, pioneered the New World, and sent Christian civilization to the ends of the earth. History would be much different without the acts of God's people. Even today, without the compassion, evangelism, humanitarianism, and social justice works of the Church in scores of nations, the lives of millions would be without hope.

**5. Civil Government** - Prior to the Christian faith being applied to civil government, people lived in perpetual fear of massacres and tyrants. Your town could be here one day and be burned to the ground the next. You could be alive one day and dead the next. Power and fear ruled human societies for much of human history. But after the coming of Christ, the biblical role of civil government began to emerge through the Magna Carta, British common law, republican governments, democratic principles, and human rights. These things weren't just the evolutionary march of history—they were incremental applications of Christ's teachings to human governments. Do you appreciate armies and police that protect us? Do you value the right to vote and elect your representatives? Do you appreciate the relative tranquility of a just social order? All of these things, which are not enjoyed in many non-Christian nations in the world, are the fruit of faith in Jesus Christ.

**6. Education** - Did you know we would have lost much of the great literature of the ancients if it weren't for the Christians who preserved that knowledge through finding, preserving, and copying ancient writings during the Middle Ages? Are you aware that the first universities

in Paris and London were started by believers who had a thirst for knowledge and wisdom? Did you know that the printing of the Gutenberg Bible was considered by TIME magazine the most important event of the past five hundred years because it made truth and knowledge easily available to the masses? Have you heard that the first 120 universities in America, beginning with Harvard, were started by followers of Christ for the advancement of the Christian faith? Most of the major milestones in human education flow from one fountain: faith in Jesus Christ.

**7. Business** - For most of history, and still in parts of the world, there were only a few wealthy tyrants and masses of poor people. For ages there was no middle class or freedom for individual initiative. During the Christianizing of Europe, believers applied biblical ideas of labor and industry, leading to free enterprise capitalism, leading the world out of mass poverty. As Adam Smith wisely pointed out in his book Wealth of Nations, the large and growing middle classes, the endless business opportunities, the Protestant work ethic, extensive philanthropy, and the standard of living we share today is the fruit of the teachings of Christ applied to economics.

**8. Science** - It was Christian civilization that proposed that "design points to a Designer" and that man was placed on the earth to discover God's secrets in nature and use those discoveries to benefit people. From Galileo to Faraday, from Pascal to Einstein, many of the leading scientists of both the past and present have been people of faith who used their trust in God to reveal the mysteries of his creation. I recently visited the Kennedy Space Center and gazed in awe at the technology and scientific genius that put men on the moon. None of this would have been possible without believing in a God whose creation can be understood. That Creator is Jesus Christ.

**9. The Arts** - Totem pole faces and primitive art forms always look wild, menacing, and evil. But after Jesus brought completeness to thousands and thousands of people, artists began reflecting that wholeness in ever expanding art forms. It's a long way from totem poles to the Sistine Chapel, but Christ produced the difference. When people