

1 **The Life of Christ**

"Christianity is the only major religion to have as its central event the humiliation of its God." – Bruce L. Shelley

2 **Background of Jesus' life**

- Roman political dominance over the Mediterranean region
- Greek cultural dominance

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- Jewish divisions
 - Pharisees
 - Emphasized strict obedience to the Law of Moses
 - Observed many traditions derived from the Law
 - Advocated separation from pagan Greek culture
 - Sadducees
 - Interpreted the Law very narrowly; did not observe the Pharisees' traditions or accept the teachings of the Prophets
 - Tolerant toward Roman rule and Greek culture
 - Held positions of power in the priesthood and government

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- Zealots
 - Advocated armed revolt against Romans
- Essenes
 - Lived in isolated religious communities in the wilderness
 - Not mentioned in the New Testament
- Jews waited together for the coming of the Messiah, God's Anointed One

5 **Jesus' life and work**

- Early life
 - God incarnate beginning approximately 4 BC
 - Raised in a Jewish home

6

- Ministry
 - Revealed as God's Son at His baptism
 - John baptized as a symbol of repentance and spiritual cleansing
 - John reluctantly baptized Jesus at Jesus' request
 - Traveled throughout Palestine after spiritual preparation in the wilderness
 - Performed miracles—signs of His anointing by God
 - Gathered and instructed followers
 - Preached

7

- Message
 - A new covenant between God and man, fulfilling the old covenant of the Law
 - The kingdom of God
 - The absolute lordship of God over all
 - A spiritual kingdom

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- Responses to Jesus' message
 - Pharisees saw their traditions and self-righteousness threatened
 - Sadducees saw their comfortable position in society threatened
 - Zealots hoped Jesus would become a revolutionary leader

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- Death
 - Pharisees and Sadducees conspired together to have Jesus killed
 - Roman authorities cooperated to avoid trouble with the Jews
 - Jesus submitted to crucifixion to establish the new covenant between God and man

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- Resurrection
 - Jesus rose the third day after His death
 - His triumphant lordship over all, including death, was thus proclaimed
- Ascension after forty days spent instructing His followers