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The Greatest Words Ever Spoken

Everything Jesus Said about You, Your Life, and Everything Else

Foreword by Gary Smalley

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Steven K. Scott

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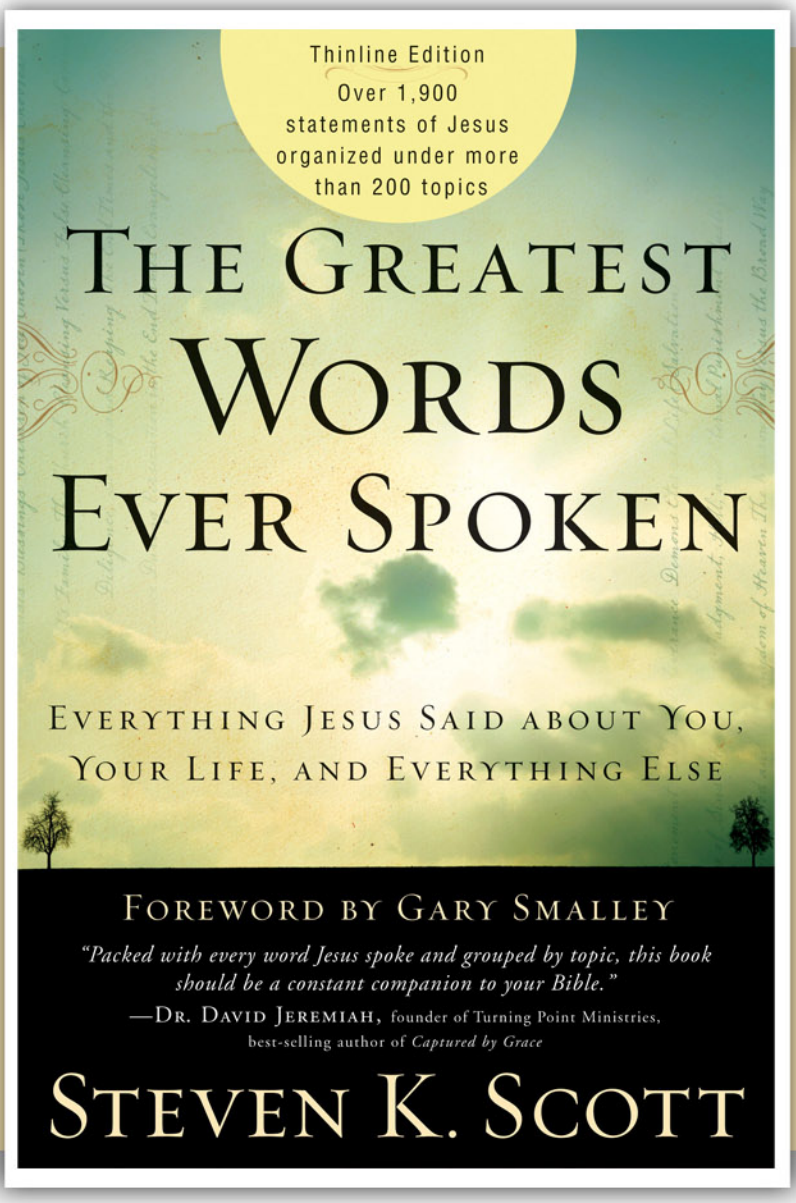

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The Greatest Words Ever Spoken

Everything Jesus Said About You, Your Life, and Everything Else

Steven K. Scott

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Dedicated

To my family:

To my sweet wife, Shannon, whose love and life are daily demonstrations of the love of Christ and shining examples of how the Lord wants me to be.

To my children, Hallie, Sean, Ryan, Devin, Zach, Mark, and Carol, and my grandchildren, Maddy, Julia, Gracie, and Ian. May the lamp of God's Word illuminate your way and guide you through each day of your lives. And may the words of the Lord Jesus Christ lead you into an intimate knowledge of and fellowship with God.

To the men and women who have made
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Foreword

An Important Word from Gary Smalley

Steve Scott has been one of my best friends for more than thirty years. He coauthored and published my first two books, which enabled me to launch my ministry in 1979. Eight years later Steve produced and distributed our *Hidden Keys to Loving Relationships* video series, which helped millions of couples throughout the world improve their marriages.

Since I have known him, Steve has undertaken scores of projects. The companies he has created with his business partners have blessed the lives of millions of people. He also has authored a number of international bestsellers on personal achievement. But two years ago he told me about something that he considered the most important project of his life. He said he was gathering all the statements of Jesus Christ and organizing them by topic.

At the time Steve had already organized all the Lord's statements from the gospels of John and Mark, but he hadn't yet started Luke and Matthew. I asked about his publisher, and his answer surprised me. "Gary, I don't even know if I'm going to publish it… I'm doing this one for *me.*"

Steve told me that based on his reading of John 8:31-32 and Matthew 7:21-25, he wanted the words of Christ to form the concrete foundation of his beliefs on every subject and issue of life and to do that he needed to put *everything* the Lord said on every subject into an easily accessible format. Once he had the foundation of Christ's words on any given subject, he could then build everything else pertaining to that subject *securely* upon the foundation of Christ's teachings.

I asked if I could look at what he had so far, and he pulled out his manuscript. I quickly found a topic that meant a lot to me, and as I read the Lord's words, I was overcome with emotion. I looked at Steve and said, "This is the

most powerful thing I have ever read." You see, even though I had read every one of the verses on that subject dozens of times throughout my life, I had *never* read them *together.* The authority, clarity, and power of all the Lord's teachings on that subject impacted me in a way that the piecemeal reading never had. My heart was melted by an intense love that I felt from the Lord.

As I read one particular topic, it was like each statement Jesus made penetrated deeper and deeper and deeper into my soul. I've never felt anything as powerful. This is what the disciples must have felt as He intimately answered their greatest questions.

Steve told me he had felt the same kind of impact. He said that bringing all of Christ's statements together on a given subject was like bringing all the individual pieces of a jigsaw puzzle together. Separately, every piece has color, meaning, and beauty…but you never see the full picture until the pieces are brought together. Steve then said something I'll never forget: "Gary, it's like having a personal appointment with the Lord, where you can ask Him about anything you want, and He then tells you *everything* He taught about that subject when He was on earth. You say, 'Lord, tell me about forgiveness,' and He then tells you *everything* He taught on forgiveness."

I told Steve he had to get this book published—and promised that I would promote it all over the world. He later told me that my encouragement was timed perfectly, because his efforts to categorize the Lord's statements had been the hardest thing he had ever done, and he had been on the verge of quitting.

I have now had the completed manuscript for several months, and it's everything I hoped it would be, and more. It's not only perfect for study; it's wonderful for your devotional time as well. You prayerfully ask questions that are on your heart, and Jesus gives the answers. And because most of the verses are quoted from the New International Version (and a few from the New King James Version and the New American Standard Bible), it's just as readable for children as it is for adults. This book is going to be my Christmas gift to each of my children, their spouses, and their children, because I'm convinced that each one of them should have their own copy.

And here's something I *wasn't* expecting. Steve divided all the topics into nine general categories that make up the nine chapters of the book. He has written short chapter introductions that are extremely enlightening and compelling to *non-Christians.* Steve said he did this so he could give the book to

his skeptical friends who have no interest in church or religion. His goal is to enable them to take a fresh look at the person of Christ, judging Him not on what anyone else has said or done but solely on what Christ said. So many people have misconceptions about Jesus that when they simply read what He said, those misconceptions are eliminated.

Jesus has made incredible promises to every man and woman, boy and girl who would learn His words and follow them. *The Greatest Words Ever Spoken* provides us with the perfect tool to do just that. With more than nineteen hundred statements of the Lord organized into more than two hundred topics, it's a treasure chest of answers, promises, inspiration, encouragement, love, faith, and power for living that *no* Christian home should be without. My prayer is that you and your family will use it as a tool to become even more intimate with the Lord Jesus Christ. I also pray that you will use it to place His incomparable words into the hands of the non-Christians whom God brings across your path.

Acknowledgments

Thank you, Ryan Scott, for giving your dad the perfect title for this book. Not only was it better than the one I had thought of; it is truly the only title that sufficiently describes the incomparable words of the Lord Jesus Christ.

I can't begin to express my gratitude to Michael Palgon, deputy publisher of the Doubleday Broadway Publishing Group, and my Doubleday editor, Roger Scholl, for their incredible support of my vision for this book. Without *your* vision this book would never have been distributed beyond my own family.

I am so very grateful to Ron Lee, my brilliant editor at WaterBrook. Ron, you have made this book so much better than my original manuscript. You amaze me!

Carol Bartley and the copyeditors did such a wonderful job of catching all the things I missed. They came up with wonderful ways to make this book so much better for you, the reader.

I am grateful to Michael Smalley and the Logos Project for your vision for developing church curriculum to help bring *The Greatest Words Ever Spoken* to the pulpits and Sunday schools of churches throughout the world.

Introduction

The Greatest Words Ever Spoken

I know men; and I tell you that Jesus Christ is not a man....
Between Him and whoever else in the world,
there is no possible term of comparison.
—Napoleon Bonaparte

"The greatest words ever spoken." How could such a claim be made about any collection of statements? With all the life-changing words spoken by so many great men and women throughout history, how could the words of one person rise above all the others?

To qualify as the greatest words ever spoken, they would have to reveal incredible truths that would otherwise go undiscovered. They would have to bring extraordinary, perhaps even near-miraculous benefit to the hearts, minds, and lives of those who read them. Certainly, to qualify as the greatest words ever spoken, they would have to produce life-altering changes not just for a few people but for millions. They would have to impart hope to those in despair, joy to those whose hearts are broken, and peace that subdues even the most paralyzing fears.

To earn the ranking of the greatest words ever spoken, the words would have to exert enough power to transform a hateful heart into a loving one, a mind driven by greed into one overflowing with generosity, a life ruled by arrogance into one that is driven by the desire to serve others. And if they were truly the greatest words ever spoken, they would have the power to give sight

to the blind, deliverance to the captive, forgiveness to the wrongdoer, and life to the dead. If anyone's words could accomplish these things, they would certainly rise above all other words in history. They would deserve to be called the greatest words ever spoken.

These words exist; they have been spoken and recorded. And, yes, they *have* accomplished remarkable, miraculous results. The greatest words ever spoken are the words of Jesus of Nazareth, who claimed to be the Son of the living God.

The If-Then Statement That Can Change Your Life

If Jesus is who He claimed to be, then everything He said must be fully, absolutely true. If He is the Son of God, He would never speak in error. Think of the implications. First, if Jesus' words are absolute truth, they are the standard by which all other purported truths must be measured. Second, everything Jesus said about you, your life, and your circumstances is true. His words describe your life and reveal your immediate and long-term future. To succeed in life, to understand yourself, and to gain wisdom about your present and your future, you need to learn everything Jesus said about you. In that way you will discover what He wants for you and from you.

And then there are the promises Jesus made. If you choose to follow Him, then all of his 108 promises are promises you can count on—promises that will produce peace in a troubled heart, joy in the midst of tragedy, success in place of failure, and most important, a glorified life that lasts for eternity.

And this leads to the most important question you will ever face. *Is* Jesus of Nazareth the person He claimed to be, or was He a mere man?

Napoleon Bonaparte, the emperor of France and one of the greatest military geniuses who ever lived, concluded that Jesus was no mere man. Once when Napoleon was discussing various emperors and their empires with his most trusted advisors, the name of Jesus came up. To the surprise of his generals, Napoleon exclaimed:

> I know men; and I tell you that Jesus Christ is not a man. Superficial minds see a resemblance between Christ and the founders of empires, and the gods of other religions. That resemblance does not exist.… Everything

> in Christ astonishes me. His spirit overawes me, and His will confounds me. Between Him and whoever else in the world, there is no possible term of comparison. He is truly a being by Himself. His ideas and sentiments, the truth which He announces, His manner of convincing, are not explained either by human organization or by the nature of things… The nearer I approach, the more carefully I examine, everything is above me—everything remains grand, of a grandeur which overpowers.… One can absolutely find nowhere, but in Him alone, the imitation or the example of His life… I search in vain in history to find the similar to Jesus Christ… Neither history, nor humanity, nor the ages, nor nature, offer me anything with which I am able to compare it or explain it. Here everything is extraordinary.[i]

Jesus of Nazareth

What did Napoleon know that some of us do not? He was a student of history and a student of men, and he had diligently studied the life and words of Christ. In light of this, he believed that no one in history could compare to Jesus of Nazareth. Think about it: how could one man from an obscure village in the Middle East have changed so many millions of lives as well as the course of history? If ever a man should have been overlooked by history, it was Jesus.

Consider the facts:

Jesus was born to a peasant couple in a village in the middle of nowhere. He lived in a country occupied by foreign conquerors. His only means of transportation was His legs.

He was a carpenter until He turned thirty, and only then did He begin to teach and speak in public. For three short years He proclaimed His message, mostly in small villages.

After being falsely accused and then convicted in a rigged trial, He was sentenced to death by an official who believed Him to be innocent. He died the death of a criminal and was executed on a cross between two convicted criminals. Only His mother and a few of His close followers were present at His execution. The rest of His disciples had fled, hiding from the mob and the Roman officials.

It was only after Jesus rose from the dead and appeared to His followers

that His disciples were transformed from distraught cowards into confident, fearless believers and preachers of Jesus' message. But they had no means to spread His story and teachings to a mass audience. There were no radios, televisions, or printing presses. In fact, paper as we know it had not yet been invented. Every papyrus scroll had to be painstakingly written by hand. The only way to make a copy was to read the original and laboriously copy it word by word.

In first-century Palestine, the thought that Jesus' life might make a significant impact on anyone beyond the Judean countryside was laughable. Any history of this itinerant rabbi who appeared in public for only three years should have been lost—either burned or buried—in the rubble when Jerusalem was destroyed by the Roman legions less than forty years after Jesus walked the earth. Against such a background, you can begin to understand the miracle of His life and words. Jesus' short earthly life—far from being lost to the generations who have followed—became the focal point of history.

How could one man's life impact humanity to a greater extent than any other person or any series of events in history? As you read *The Greatest Words Ever Spoken,* you will get to know this man who changed everything…forever. Jesus did it all, not with money, armies, science, or politics, but with the witness of His life and the power of His words. His life and the miracles He performed attracted the attention of the crowds, but it was what He *said* that melted their hearts and transformed their lives. The apostle John said, "The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth" (John 1:14).

The Tragedy of the Information Age

Today we have more information about everything than any past generation had, yet most people know less of what Jesus said. Countless people are so unaware of first-century history that they are swayed by baseless myths perpetuated by works of fiction such as *The Da Vinci Code.* Many Christians have built their beliefs and values on the words of Bible teachers, authors, and television and radio preachers rather than on the words of Christ. As wonderful as the words of preachers and writers may be, they can't begin to compare in wonder and power to the pure, undiluted words of Jesus Christ. After all,

He alone claimed to be the embodiment of all truth when He said, "I am the way and the truth and the life" (John 14:6). He made incredible promises to those who would build their lives on His words.

It's important to realize that Jesus did not make these promises to people who followed the words of any other teacher, prophet, or leader. The words of Jesus stand alone in truth, power, and authority. For example, He promised, "If you *abide* in My word, then you are truly disciples of Mine; and you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" (John 8:31-32, NASB). And that was just the beginning. Here are a few of the many promises Jesus made to those who choose to abide in His Word:

- You will receive eternal life.
- Your desires will be fulfilled in answer to your prayers.
- God the Father, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit will be your constant companions, both with you and within you.
- You will receive a level of peace and joy, direct from God, that is otherwise unattainable.
- You will impact the lives of others in ways that can't be achieved strictly by human effort.
- You will be loved by God in a unique way.
- You will avoid God's ultimate judgment.
- You will see miracles in your life that others can't understand or explain.
- You will learn eternal truths that will set you free from all that holds you captive.

Jesus Was *Not* a Religious Leader!

Jesus Christ did not come to earth to start a new religion. In fact, He leveled His harshest criticisms at the religious leaders of His day. He accused them of not knowing God and said they had used religion to bind people to a life of misery, frustration, and failure. He claimed they were blind and had blinded the "spiritual eyes" of their followers (see Matthew 15:13-14; 23:13-24).

When He described Himself, Jesus claimed that He had come from God and that His mission was to reveal who God was and what God wanted. Most important, Jesus claimed that He could lead anyone into an intimate relationship with the only true God and that in doing so He would lead them into

eternal life. In His final prayer before His crucifixion, Jesus stated, "Now this is eternal life: that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent" (John 17:3).

Think about getting to know the God who created the universe. What would it be like to know Him on a first-name basis—or, even better, to know Him so intimately that you could call Him your best friend, even your dad? Imagine what it would be like if you could consistently experience His presence and a level of peace and joy that no adversity could vanquish. That's exactly what will happen as you begin to focus on the words of Christ.

The words of Jesus have changed the course of history by changing millions of lives, one life at a time. His words were first believed by those who witnessed His miracles. He turned water into wine and caused the blind to receive their sight, the lame to walk, and the dead to rise. Fortunately for us, He promised even greater blessings to those in later generations who would believe in Him without seeing Him in person. For two thousand years Jesus has kept that promise. He extends the same promise to you. As you begin to store up His words in your mind and heart, you will discover their life-changing power in ways you never thought possible.

The Life Issues That Jesus Addressed

In this book you will find every word of Jesus that is recorded in the New Testament, organized in more than two hundred topics. This will enable you to read everything Jesus said without the interruption of commentary, transitional scenes, and details about the activities of the people who surrounded Him. As you read this book, you can immerse yourself in Jesus' *words.* You can reflect on every statement He made about things that are important to you. You'll see everything the Lord said on such subjects as prayer, faith, eternal life, fear, your life priorities, His incredible promises, and the claims He made about Himself.

Because Jesus' words are organized by topic, you can easily grasp the breadth of what He said on each one. In a matter of minutes, you can read everything He said about a topic, which will help you gain a deeper understanding of His teachings. People who have read Jesus' words as they are organized in this book say they gained a depth of wisdom and experienced a life-changing power far greater than they could have imagined.

The two hundred-plus topics have been grouped into nine chapters, each addressing a general category. At the beginning of every chapter, I added a few thoughts about the topics addressed in that chapter. The chapters are:

1. The Greatest Words Ever Spoken About Jesus
2. The Greatest Words Ever Spoken About God the Father
3. The Greatest Words Ever Spoken About the Holy Spirit
4. The Greatest Words Ever Spoken About Eternity
5. The Greatest Words Ever Spoken to Jesus' Followers
6. The Greatest Words Ever Spoken About Humanity
7. The Greatest Words Ever Spoken About God Reaching Out to Us
8. The Greatest Words Ever Spoken About How to Know God
9. The Greatest Words Ever Spoken About Personal Relationships

The Only Foundation That Is Truly Secure

Jesus made a number of incredible promises to men and women who learn, embrace, and follow His words. He said we should base all our values, beliefs, and behaviors on the foundation of His words. Unfortunately, most of us base our lives on a mixture of things we've learned from every source we've been exposed to. As a result, the foundation of our beliefs is a combination of truth and falsehood, including contradictory information and false assumptions. My hope is that as you study the words of Christ, any weaknesses in your current foundation will be revealed, and you will replace them with the undiluted, indestructible concrete of Jesus' words. May He bless you in your pursuit of intimacy with God and the eternal truths revealed by His incomparable words.

How to Get the Most Out of This Book

This is not a book you will read cover to cover in a few sittings. You won't find even one of the chapters to be a quick read. Instead, this book is a resource you can use for the rest of your life. The two hundred-plus topics offer great variety. If you're seeking an answer to a specific question, a quick reading of Jesus' words on that topic will meet that need. If you're wrestling with an important decision, the wisdom and inspiration you seek can be found by reading His words on the appropriate topics. At the same time, a focused

study of a topic can provide a rock-solid foundation for your faith. It will deepen your love for God and will provide an anchor in the greatest trials of life.

This book can easily be adapted to the need of the moment. Depending on the topic and how you approach it, the spiritual meal can range from a quick-energy bar to an entire buffet. Because the wisdom offered on each topic comes solely from the undiluted statements of Christ, their breadth, depth, and power are enlightening, faith building, and life changing.

Here are two suggestions that will help you get the most out of reading this book.

Use It as a Quick Reference

Whenever you are studying a biblical subject, considering a spiritual question, or seeking guidance for a decision, the first question you should ask is "What did Jesus say?" His words will provide the foundation for all your values, beliefs, and doctrines.

To locate a topic, check the book's table of contents, which lists the nine general categories (one per chapter) and the specific topics within each of the nine categories. You can also go to the back of the book and search the two hundred-plus topics in alphabetical order. Once located, each topic includes every direct statement Christ made on that topic and most of the implied references. Because context is so important, the verses surrounding the key points are usually provided.

As you begin to read Jesus' statements, underline the key points. For example, in chapter 5 under the heading "The Promises of Christ," you will find more than one hundred promises that Jesus made to His followers. Here is one of the crucial promises Jesus made:

> Most assuredly, I say to you, <u>he who hears My word and believes in Him who sent Me</u> **has everlasting life, and shall not come into judgment,** but has passed from death into life. Most assuredly, I say to you, the hour is coming, and now is, when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God; and those who hear will live. (John 5:24-25, NKJV)

In this promise, I underlined the condition to be met so the promise can be fulfilled. The condition is you must hear (follow) Christ's words and truly

believe in the God who sent Him. The promised benefits, set in boldface type, are you'll receive eternal life and you won't be subject to God's judgment.

When you underline or highlight the key points of every statement of Jesus as you study them, something wonderful happens. Each statement becomes like a piece of a jigsaw puzzle. As you read all of Christ's statements on a given topic and underline or highlight the key points, you'll see the pieces of the puzzle come together to create a clear picture of what He is teaching. Any other Bible verses you read on that subject will serve as additional pieces for the picture.

Use It for Topical Studies for You and Your Family

One of the greatest values of this book is that it will enable you to quickly and effectively study any subject that Christ spoke about. Individuals, couples, and families can select topics to study during morning or evening devotions, in-depth individual Bible studies, or group Bible studies. I suggest going through the table of contents and placing a check by the topics that interest you the most. One of my friends asked his wife and his children to put their initials beside each topic they wanted to study. This helped them prioritize the subjects they wanted to study first. They decided not only to study the topics individually but to use that list for selecting topics for family devotions.

As you study the words of Christ, you will receive the benefits He promised in John 16:13 and John 14:26. The Holy Spirit will guide you into all truth, He will tell you things to come, and He will glorify Christ. Jesus also promises that the Holy Spirit will teach you all things and bring to your remembrance all the things that Christ has spoken to you.

You will notice that most of the Scripture sections begin with verses from the gospel of John, followed by verses from Matthew, Mark, Luke, and sometimes Acts, 1 or 2 Corinthians, or Revelation, in that order. I begin the topical sections with verses from John because his gospel is more direct and more intimate. John referred to himself as "the disciple…Jesus loved" (John 21:20). John's account of Jesus' life conveys an unmistakable warmth and a sense of immediacy. Reading his gospel is like receiving an invitation from an old friend. I hope you will accept his invitation as you read Jesus' words addressing various subjects in this book.

Jesus' greatest promises were made to those who will hear His words and do them. His words will provide abundant light and perfect wisdom for any

decision you face and all the power you will need to overcome any adversity. But the promises He makes and the power He offers will never be known by those who refuse to hear His words. In my forty-three years of discovering and relying on His words, I have experienced miraculous outcomes in every area of my life. What His words have done for me, I know they will also do for you. May you learn their meaning and experience their power as never before.

1

The Greatest Words Ever Spoken About Jesus

What Christ Tells Us About Himself

No theologian or historian would dispute the fact that Jesus was the single most influential figure ever to walk the earth. His actions, words, and miracles changed the course of history. He inspired entire societies to incorporate compassion and mercy into their cultures. He redefined the standards of morality. He not only changed the course of nations; He brought an unexplainable measure of purpose, peace, and joy into the lives of hundreds of millions of individuals.

Only God Could Beat These Impossible Odds

In His brief life, Jesus fulfilled hundreds of Old Testament prophecies describing the birth, life, and death of the Jewish Messiah. Mathematics professors Peter W. Stoner and Dr. Robert C. Newman calculated the statistical probability of one person fulfilling just forty-eight of these detailed prophecies. The odds turned out to be 1 in 10^{157}. That's a 1 in 10,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000 chance.[ii]

To put it in perspective, let's say you built a wooden box so big that the solar system would fit inside it. Then you filled that box with silver BBs and placed just one copper BB in the box. The chances of anyone reaching into

the box and picking out the copper BB on the first try would be trillions of times *more likely* than the odds of one person fulfilling all the prophecies that Jesus fulfilled. No occurrence in history or physical science has been verified with a higher degree of statistical certainty than the fact that Jesus is exactly who He claimed to be—the Messiah, the Son of the living God.

Since His death and resurrection, more words have been written about Jesus Christ than about any person or event in history. But more important than the words written about Him are the words that Jesus spoke about Himself. Who was Jesus, and where did He come from? What was His mission, and what is He accomplishing now, and what will He do in the future? What are His plans for your life, your future, and the future of the world? What is His relationship with God, and what kind of relationship does Jesus want to have with His followers?

And most important, how are His words relevant to each of us and our families right now? These are just a few of the questions Jesus answers in the twenty topics in this chapter.

One of my favorite sections in this chapter is "The Claims Jesus Made About Himself." Here we see more than 170 amazing claims Jesus made about Himself. If you or I made even a couple of these claims about ourselves, we would be committed to a mental institution. And yet, those who heard Him firsthand marveled at His teachings.

Why? First, Jesus spoke with a level of confidence and authority that we can't even imagine. Second, He backed up His seemingly preposterous claims with actions that proved the claims to be absolutely true. For example, He not only claimed that He could raise people from the dead, but He revived a corpse that had been rotting in a tomb. And He did it in front of eyewitnesses (John 11:38-44). Jesus also claimed He was going to be executed, buried for three days, and then rise from the dead. This claim was so preposterous His disciples didn't believe it—until He appeared in their midst after His resurrection.

Jesus made other incredible claims. He said He was the Light of the World and the embodiment of eternal truth. He claimed to be the only path by which men and women could enter into an eternal relationship with God. He claimed to be in perfect unity with God the Father and the only One who had ever seen God. He claimed to be the only begotten Son of the Eternal

God. He claimed that He was present at the beginning of time and that at the end of time He will be the One to judge every person who has ever lived. He even claimed that all authority in heaven and on earth had been given to Him. He claimed that He could grant eternal life to anyone who would follow Him.

And these are only 10 of His more than 170 claims.

The power of these claims has convinced many of the world's most brilliant atheists to become devout believers in God and followers of Christ. One such man was the former chairman of the literature departments of Oxford and Cambridge; another was one of America's most celebrated historians; and a third was a leading nuclear physicist, a man who earned eight doctorates.

In addition to chairing departments at two of the world's most prestigious universities, atheist-turned-Christian C. S. Lewis became one of the world's, and Christianity's, greatest novelists. Historian Lew Wallace, another atheist-turned-Christian, destroyed his anti-Christian manuscript titled *The Myth of Christianity* and replaced it with the most celebrated historical novel of all time, *Ben Hur: A Tale of the Christ.* And Dr. Charles Payne, a nuclear physicist with eight doctorates and also an atheist-turned-Christian, gave up his efforts to scientifically disprove Christianity and instead began proclaiming the scientific evidence for the existence of God and the divinity of Christ.

As you read this chapter, you'll find the statements Jesus made about His second coming and the signs of the times surrounding His return. As you read His statements on these topics, you'll gain a better perspective of what's happening in the Middle East and, more important, a basis for tremendous hope and confidence that we are the first generation in which His prophecies of His second coming are being fulfilled. As you read the statements under "Jesus' Relationship with God the Father," you will gain a deeper understanding of the relationship and fellowship that has always existed between these Persons of the Trinity.

Finally, near the end of this chapter, you will read Jesus' words spoken in parables, metaphors, and allegories. These stories reveal the depth of God's love and forgiveness and a number of eternal mysteries. If you have ever questioned your worth as a person or how much God loves you, Christ's statements and illustrations will resolve those questions. May His words speak with revelation and power to the depths of your soul.

The Claims Jesus Made About Himself

This is the single most important subject Jesus spoke about, because the authority for everything He did and everything else He said is built on this foundation. Jesus made more than 170 claims that no one else in history could have authoritatively made. In some cases a single statement reveals multiple claims. Apply any of these to someone else in history, and neither their lives nor their accomplishments would support even one of these claims. Yet, every one of the claims fits comfortably with Jesus. Here again, He made His claims using direct statements, implied statements, and metaphors. His claims were also made by His acceptance of what others said about Him. Who else could claim to be both a king and a servant, the Son of God and the Son of Man, the Beginning and the End, the Light of the World, the Living Water who gives eternal life, and the total fulfillment of the law and all righteousness? Who else could offer to provide *eternal life* and not be looked upon as a lunatic or an outright fraud? In this section you will see both the ultimate in humility and the ultimate in majesty. You will experience a level of gratitude as you realize that this glorious Person knows you better than any other. And in spite of His majesty, He intimately loves you more than you have ever been loved by anyone.[iii]

John 3:10-13 "You are Israel's teacher," said Jesus, "and do you not understand these things? [11]I tell you the truth, we speak of what we know, and we testify to what we have seen, but still you people do not accept our testimony. [12]I have spoken to you of earthly things and you do not believe; how then will you believe if I speak of heavenly things? [13]No one has ever gone into heaven except the one who came from heaven—the Son of Man."

John 3:16-17 "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. [17]For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him."

John 4:7-10, 13-14 When a Samaritan woman came to draw water, Jesus said to her, "Will you give me a drink?" [8](His disciples had gone into the town to buy food.) [9]The Samaritan woman said to him, "You are a Jew and I am a Samaritan woman. How can you ask me for a drink?" (For Jews do not associate with Samaritans.) [10]Jesus answered her, "If you knew the gift of God and who it is that asks you for a drink, you would have asked him and he would have given you living water." [13]Jesus answered, "Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again, [14]but whoever drinks the water I give him will never thirst. Indeed, the water I give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life."

John 4:25-26 The woman said, "I know that Messiah" (called Christ) "is coming. When he comes, he will explain everything to us." [26]Then Jesus declared, "I who speak to you am he."

John 5:20 "For the Father loves the Son and shows him all he does. Yes, to

your amazement he will show him even greater things than these."

John 5:21-23 "For just as the Father raises the dead and gives them life, even so the Son gives life to whom he is pleased to give it. [22]Moreover, the Father judges no one, but has entrusted all judgment to the Son, [23]that all may honor the Son just as they honor the Father. He who does not honor the Son does not honor the Father, who sent him."

John 5:26-27 "For as the Father has life in himself, so he has granted the Son to have life in himself. [27]And he has given him authority to judge because he is the Son of Man."

John 6:27 "Do not work for food that spoils, but for food that endures to eternal life, which the Son of Man will give you. On him God the Father has placed his seal of approval."

John 6:33 "For the bread of God is he who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world."

John 6:35 Then Jesus declared, "I am the bread of life. He who comes to me will never go hungry, and he who believes in me will never be thirsty."

John 6:37-40 "All that the Father gives me will come to me, and whoever comes to me I will never drive away. [38]For I have come down from heaven not to do my will but to do the will of him who sent me. [39]And this is the will of him who sent me, that I shall lose none of all that he has given me, but raise them up at the last day. [40]For my Father's will is that everyone who looks to the Son and believes in him shall have eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day."

John 6:43-44 "Stop grumbling among yourselves," Jesus answered. [44]"No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him, and I will raise him up at the last day."

John 6:46-47 "No one has seen the Father except the one who is from God; only he has seen the Father. [47]I tell you the truth, he who believes has everlasting life."

John 6:48-51 "I am the bread of life. [49]Your forefathers ate the manna in the desert, yet they died. [50]But here is the bread that comes down from heaven, which a man may eat and not die. [51]I am the living bread that came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever. This bread is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world."

John 6:53-56 Jesus said to them, "I tell you the truth, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you. [54]Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day. [55]For my flesh is real food and my blood is real drink. [56]Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood remains in me, and I in him."

John 6:57-58 "Just as the living Father sent me and I live because of the Father, so the one who feeds on me will live because of me. [58]This is the bread that came down from heaven. Your forefathers ate manna and died, but he who feeds on this bread will live forever."

John 6:63 "The Spirit gives life; the flesh counts for nothing. The words I have spoken to you are spirit and they are life."

John 7:16 Jesus answered, "My teaching is not my own. It comes from him who sent me."

John 7:28 Then Jesus, still teaching in the temple courts, cried out, "Yes, you know me, and you know where I am from. I am not here on my own, but he who sent me is true.…"

John 7:38-39 "Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, streams of living water will flow from within him." [39]By this he meant the Spirit, whom those who believed in him were later to receive. Up to that time the Spirit had not been given, since Jesus had not yet been glorified.

John 8:12 When Jesus spoke again to the people, he said, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life."

John 8:23-24 But he continued, "You are from below; I am from above. You are of this world; I am not of this world. [24]I told you that you would die in your sins; if you do not believe that I am the one I claim to be, you will indeed die in your sins."

John 8:38 "I am telling you what I have seen in the Father's presence.…"

John 8:42 Jesus said to them, "If God were your Father, you would love me, for I came from God and now am here. I have not come on my own; but he sent me."

John 8:49-50 "I am not possessed by a demon," said Jesus, "but I honor my Father and you dishonor me. [50]I am not seeking glory for myself; but there is one who seeks it, and he is the judge."

John 8:51 "I tell you the truth, if anyone keeps my word, he will never see death."

John 8:54-56 Jesus replied, "If I glorify myself, my glory means nothing. My Father, whom you claim as your God, is the one who glorifies me. [55]Though you do not know him, I know him. If I said I did not, I would be a liar like you, but I do know him and keep his word. [56]Your father Abraham rejoiced at the thought of seeing my day; he saw it and was glad."

John 8:58 "I tell you the truth," Jesus answered, "before Abraham was born, I am!"

John 9:4-5 "As long as it is day, we must do the work of him who sent me. Night is coming, when no one can work. [5]While I am in the world, I am the light of the world."

John 9:35-37 Jesus heard that they had thrown him [a man healed of blindness] out, and when he found him, he said, "Do you believe in the Son of Man?" [36]"Who is he, sir?" the man asked. "Tell me so that I may believe in him." [37]Jesus said, "You have now seen him; in fact, he is the one speaking with you."

John 10:7-9 Therefore Jesus said again, "I tell you the truth, I am the gate for the sheep. [8]All who ever came before me were thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not listen to them. [9]I am the gate; whoever enters through me will be saved. He will come in and go out, and find pasture."

John 10:10 "The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full."

John 10:14-15 "I am the good shepherd; I know my sheep and my sheep know me— [15]just as the Father knows me and I know the Father—and I lay down my life for the sheep."

John 10:17-18 "The reason my Father loves me is that I lay down my life—only to take it up again. [18]No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have authority to lay it down and authority to take it up again. This command I received from my Father."

John 10:27-29 "My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me. [28]I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one can snatch them out of my hand. [29]My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all; no one can snatch them out of my Father's hand."

John 10:30-31 "I and the Father are one." [31]Again the Jews picked up stones to stone him.

John 10:34-36 Jesus answered them, "Is it not written in your Law, 'I have said you are gods'? [35]If he called them 'gods,' to whom the word of God came—and the Scripture cannot be broken—[36]what about the one whom the Father set apart as his very own and sent into the world? Why then do you accuse me of blasphemy because I said, 'I am God's Son'?"

John 11:25-26 Jesus said to her [Martha], "I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in me will live, even though he dies; [26]and whoever lives and believes in me will never die. Do you believe this?"

John 12:48-50 "There is a judge for the one who rejects me and does not accept my words; that very word which I spoke will condemn him at the last day. [49]For I did not speak of my own accord, but the Father who sent me commanded me what to say and how to say it. [50]I know that his command leads to eternal life. So whatever I say is just what the Father has told me to say."

John 14:1-4 "Do not let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God; trust also in me. [2]In my Father's house are many rooms; if it were not so, I would have told you. I am going there to prepare a place for you. [3]And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am. [4]You know the way to the place where I am going."

John 14:6 Jesus answered, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me."

John 14:9-11 Jesus answered: "Don't you know me, Philip, even after I have been among you such a long time? Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, 'Show us the Father'? [10]Don't you believe that I am in the Father, and that the Father is in me? The words I say to you are not just my own. Rather, it is the Father, living in me, who is doing his work. [11]Believe me when I say that I am in the Father and the Father is in me; or at least believe on the evidence of the miracles themselves."

John 14:12-14 "I tell you the truth, anyone who has faith in me will do what I have been doing. He will do even greater things than these, because I am going to the Father. [13]And I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Son may bring glory to the Father. [14]You may ask me for anything in my name, and I will do it."

John 14:16-17 "And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Counselor to be with you forever— [17]the

Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you."

John 14:19-21 "Before long, the world will not see me anymore, but you will see me. Because I live, you also will live. [20]On that day you will realize that I am in my Father, and you are in me, and I am in you. [21]Whoever has my commands and obeys them, he is the one who loves me. He who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I too will love him and show myself to him."

John 14:23-24 Jesus replied, "If anyone loves me, he will obey my teaching. My Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him. [24]He who does not love me will not obey my teaching. These words you hear are not my own; they belong to the Father who sent me."

John 14:26 "But the Counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you."

John 14:27 "Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid."

John 15:1-8 "I am the true vine, and my Father is the gardener. [2]He cuts off every branch in me that bears no fruit, while every branch that does bear fruit he prunes so that it will be even more fruitful. [3]You are already clean because of the word I have spoken to you. [4]Remain in me, and I will remain in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me. [5]I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing. [6]If anyone does not remain in me, he is like a branch that is thrown away and withers; such branches are picked up, thrown into the fire and burned. [7]If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be given you. [8]This is to my Father's glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples."

John 15:9-11 "As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Now remain in my love. [10]If you obey my commands, you will remain in my love, just as I have obeyed my Father's commands and remain in his love. [11]I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete."

John 15:16 "You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you to go and bear fruit—fruit that will last. Then the Father will give you whatever you ask in my name."

John 15:23-24 "He who hates me hates my Father as well. [24]If I had not done among them what no one else did, they would not be guilty of sin. But now they have seen these miracles, and yet they have hated both me and my Father."

John 15:26 "When the Counselor comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who goes out from the Father, he will testify about me."

John 16:5-6 "Now I am going to him who sent me, yet none of you asks me, 'Where are you going?' [6]Because I have said these things, you are filled with grief."

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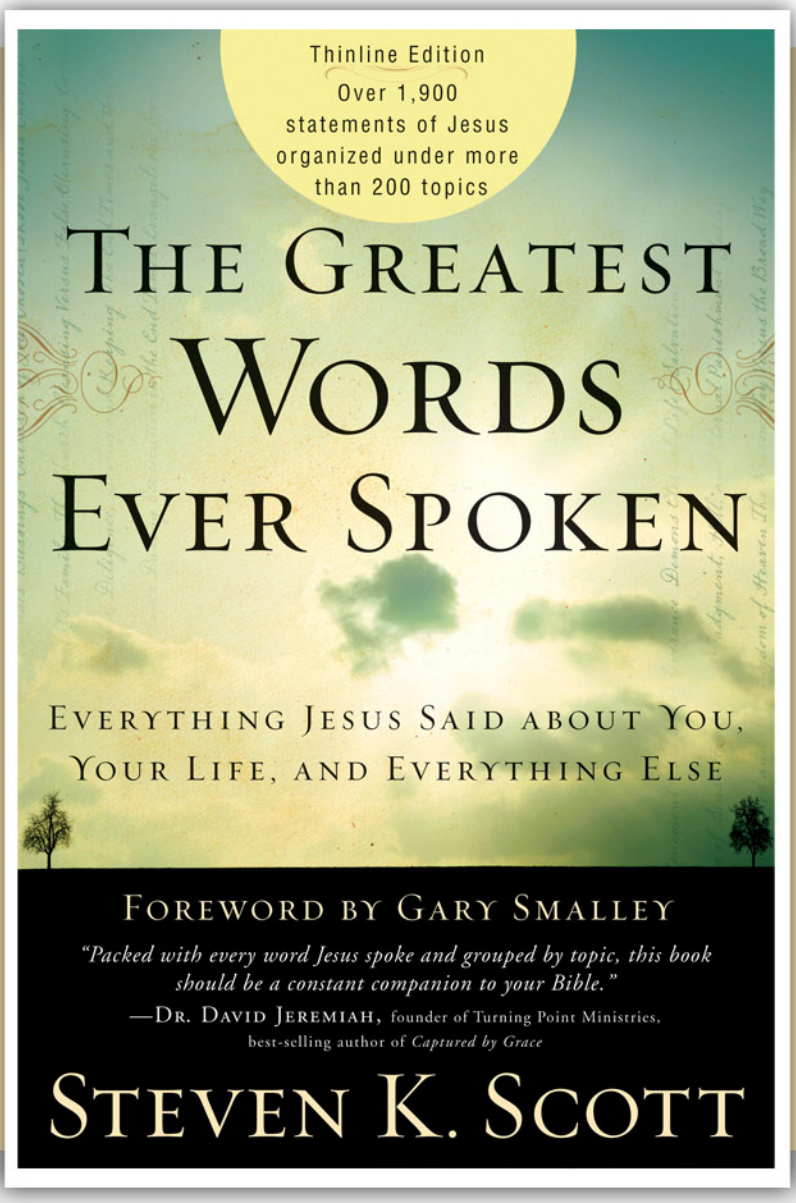

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