

**Historical fact:**

Although the majority of information about Jesus comes from the Bible, first century Roman historians, Tacitus, Pliny, and Suetonius also wrote about him. Tacitus refers to Christians, who “got their name from Christ who had been executed by sentence of the procurator Pontius Pilate in the reign of Tiberius.” Jewish writers, Josephus and the Mishnah, who were also anti-Christian, allude to Jesus’ virgin birth, miracles, divine claims, crucifixion, and the beginning of the Church.

**Piecing it together**



What have you learned in this study about Jesus that you did not know before?

What has been most helpful to you personally from this first study and discussion?

**What Jesus said**

“Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father” (John 14:9)

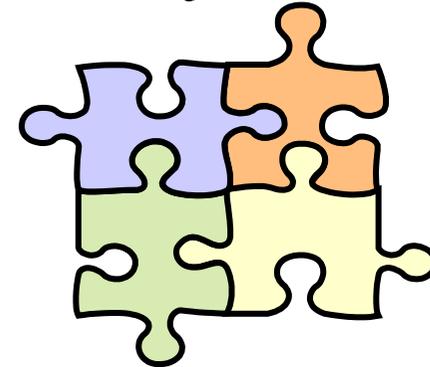
“I am the way and the truth and the life.

No one comes to the Father except through me.” (John 14:6)



Elim Community Church, Carlisle  
Senior Pastor: Alan Meyer, B.Sc., M.R.Pharm.S  
Church Offices: 14 Spencer Street, Carlisle, Cumbria CA1 1BG  
Tel: 01228 523991  
E-mail: Admin@elimcarlisle.org  
Website: www.elimcarlisle.org  
Making Christ known in Carlisle, Cumbria and the Borders in this and the next Generation

# Discovering Christianity



**A course designed to help people discover the basics of the Christian faith and put the pieces of their spiritual understanding together**

**Study 1: Where do I begin?**

**Jesus – the key to Christianity**

**Based on Luke 1:1 – 4:13**

## **Introduction**

In the 2001 UK census over 76.8% of people said they had a religious belief, 71.6% of these regarded themselves as “Christian.” However the figures for Church attendance have dropped significantly in the late 20<sup>th</sup> century and by 2009, only around 12% of the population regarded themselves as members of a Church. On an average Sunday, around 7.5% of the population attended Church, in 2007, but this is still more than double the figures who attended a professional football match on an average Saturday in 2010!

What strikes you about these statistics? Do they surprise you?

Many of the people who would claim to be “Christian” use the term in a very general way. What do you understand a Christian to be?

Read Acts 11:25,26 to discover where the term “Christian” was first used, around 44 AD. Who were referred to as “Christians”?

Jesus is the key to Christianity!



A disciple is a follower or apprentice of a leader or teacher, so if we want to understand Christianity, we need to understand what Jesus Christ taught.

## **Look at Luke**

**Read Luke 1:1-4.** What does this tell us about the way Luke got his information about Jesus and his purpose in writing?

### **Read Luke 1:28-33**

What did the angel say to Mary about Jesus when announcing his birth? What does this tell you about Jesus?

**Notes:** *The “throne of David” is a term the Jews would have understood, relating to God’s promise to King David to establish the throne of his kingdom forever. The “house of Jacob” refers to the Jewish nation, who represented God’s people on earth.*

### **Read Luke 2:10 – 14**

When the angels announced the birth of Jesus to the Shepherds, how did they describe Jesus?

### **Read Luke 2:21 – 40**

What do the reactions and prophecies of Simeon and Anna tell you about their understanding of who Jesus was?