

And that's the issue that Strobel, a staunch reporter, spent a lot of time investigating; ..he embarked on the journey in an effort to be an "honest reporter" and to dig deeper, based on his curiosity, into some key theological themes.

"I would do research, call people to ask questions," he said. "I didn't even keep very good notes."

When all was said and done, Strobel concluded that Jesus did, indeed, live, claim to be divine and was inevitably executed, with Strobel suddenly finding himself rejecting the notion that it was all "a legend."

Exploring all available information, Strobel said that it became evident that everyone — even Jesus' critics — agreed that Christ's tomb was empty following his crucifixion, though the debate centred on whether he truly came back, or whether the body was stolen.

Observing all of this biblical and outside information about Christ's life and ministry had a profound impact on Strobel, until one day he realised that the "scales had tipped."

"On Nov. 8, 1981, I went alone in my room and I thought, 'I've got to get down on paper the evidence that I've investigated for these two years,'" he said. "I began to write [and] finally, after many pages, I put down my pen and ... I realised it would take more faith to maintain my atheism than become a Christian."

Strobel said that accepting Christ meant leaving his past behind.

"I believed based on the historical data, but I had to receive this grace — the free gift of forgiveness and eternal life," he said. "I confessed a lifetime of immorality, a narcissistic, profane life ... and I confessed that and I received forgiveness."

When he walked out of the bedroom that day and told his wife about his decision, he said she cried with joy.

Years later, she suggested that he write "The Case for Christ," a book that retraced and expanded upon the initial journey of exploration that took him from atheism to Christianity more than a decade earlier.

"I want Christians to walk away evermore in awe of the grace of God, evermore grateful for his forgiveness and gift of eternal life," Strobel said. "But my hope is they will be so moved by God's grace that they can't keep it to themselves ... that they all turn around and tell someone else who needs it."



## Central Mountains Baptist Church

# FEBRUARY 11, 2018

### Intensely Investigating Jesus and the Bible

Journalist and pastor Lee Strobel was once an atheist who rejected any notion of the supernatural, but after spending two years interviewing experts and diving deep into theology, he says he found himself overwhelmed by the evidence for Jesus Christ's life, death and resurrection.

Strobel, who converted to Christianity in 1981, leaving behind what he said was a "narcissistic and profane" life, told us that it's his own story of becoming a passionate Christian that has shown him just how transformational such a conversion experience can be.

Flashing back to 1981, Strobel described being the legal editor for the Chicago Tribune when his wife, Leslie, who was previously an agnostic, became a Christian through a friend who lived in their condo complex.

It was what happened next that left Strobel, an atheist, profoundly intrigued.

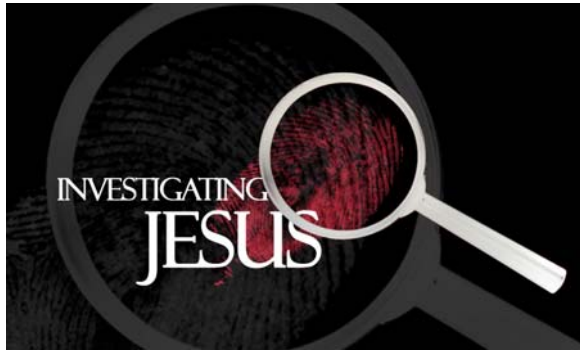
"It was the positive changes in her life that made me investigate if religion might be true," he said. "I began to look into questions — 'Where does science point? Where does history point? What about Jesus — did he ever claim to be the son of God?'"

Strobel said that the resurrection, though, was the lynch-pin for him. After all, anyone can claim to be the son of God, but Jesus' other proclamations, he said, upped the ante.

"If Jesus claimed to be son of God, died and then rose from the dead, that's pretty good evidence he's telling the truth," Strobel said. "That's the ballgame — the resurrection of Jesus."



# Insights for Living Investigating Jesus



**(Isaiah 53:3-7)** "He is despised and rejected by men, A Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. And we hid, as it were, our faces from Him; He was despised, and we did not esteem Him. {4} Surely He has borne our griefs And carried our sorrows; Yet we esteemed Him stricken, Smitten by God, and afflicted. {5} But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; The chastisement for our peace was upon Him, And by His stripes we are healed. {6} All we like sheep have

gone astray; We have turned, every one, to his own way; And the LORD has laid on Him the iniquity of us all. {7} He was oppressed and He was afflicted, Yet He opened not His mouth; He was led as a lamb to the slaughter, And as a sheep before its shearers is silent, So He opened not His mouth."

Philippians 2:5-11 describes Jesus in two contrasting ways:

## 1. He was \_\_\_\_\_, verses 5-8

**(1 Peter 1:20)** "He indeed was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you"

**(John 1:14)** "And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth."

**(Matthew 17:2)** "and He was transfigured before them. His face shone like the sun, and His clothes became as white as the light."

**(Mark 10:45)** ""For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many.""

**(Matthew 26:39)** "... "O My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as You will.""

**(Hebrews 12:2)** "...who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, ..."

**(Isaiah 52:14)** "... His visage was marred more than any man, ...;"

**(Matthew 2:23)** "And he came and dwelt in a city called Nazareth, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophets, "He shall be called a Nazarene.""

**(John 1:46)** "..., "Can anything good come out of Nazareth?" ... ""



Dalits of India

## 2. He is \_\_\_\_\_, verses 9-11

**(Ephesians 1:20-23)** "which He worked in Christ when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places, {21} far above all principality and power and might and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in that which is to come. {22} And He put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be head over all things to the church, {23} which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all."

**(Colossians 1:18)** "And He is the head of the body, the church, who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in all things He may have the preeminence."

**(1 Peter 3:22)** "who has gone into heaven and is at the right hand of God, angels and authorities and powers having been made subject to Him."

**(Revelation 5:9-13)** "... "You are worthy ...; For You were slain, And have redeemed us to God by Your blood Out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation, {10} And have made us kings and priests to our God; And we shall reign on the earth." ... {12} ... "Worthy is the Lamb who was slain To receive power and riches and wisdom, And strength and honor and glory and blessing!" {13} ... "Blessing and honor and glory and power Be to Him who sits on the throne, And to the Lamb, forever and ever!"

**(Revelation 20:11-15)** "Then I saw a great white throne and Him who sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away. And there was found no place for them. {12} And I saw the dead, small and great, standing before God, and books were opened. ... {13} The sea gave up the dead who were in it, and Death and Hades delivered up the dead who were in them. And they were judged, each one according to his works. {14} Then Death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. {15} And anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire."

**(Revelation 3:20)** ""Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me."

