

WHO

IS

THE REAL

SUPERMAN

A Comparison Of Superman And Jesus Christ The Lord

By John Macdonald

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He comes from outer space.

He travels through time and quickly covers immense distances.

He is the only son of his father.

He comes as a baby.

He is hidden from the view of all.

He is in disguise.

Finally, he is revealed.

He becomes the saviour of a world gone wrong.

Who is he?

He is Superman.

Watch him and you will see marvelous things.

But who is Superman?

There are many similarities of Superman to another Super man.  
There is another baby that was sent to Earth and has become saviour.

He is Jesus.

Jesus has powers beyond those of a normal man. He is considered a hero.  
Of course, Jesus is greater than Superman. Jesus is real. Superman is fiction.

Let's explore the similarities and differences between the two of them.

## **THE ORIGIN OF SUPERMAN**

Superman came from the planet Krypton. In the first Superman movie he was revealed to us as a baby named Kal-El. His mother was holding him and he was wrapped in cloths of red, blue and yellow, the Superman colors. His father, Jor-El, and his mother, Lara, loved him. Their family symbol was the famous S that Superman had on his chest and was the symbol of Superman. His parents believed that the sun of Krypton was near the end of its existence and that Krypton would be destroyed. In trying to warn the leaders of the planet, Jor-El encountered resistance. The leaders did not believe that their sun would be destroyed and they didn't want Jor-El to warn others or leave the planet. He agreed.

Jor-El did not want to have his son die as well as the planet, so he decided to help his son escape. Jor-El determined that Earth would be the best place to send his son in order to save his life. The father prepared a space capsule for the son to travel in and included supplies and educational material for the trip. Just at the last minute, as Krypton was starting to be destroyed, the father sent the space capsule off and the son survived the destruction of the planet. All life on the planet was ended.

The space capsule had the appearance of a star and it was seen flying on its way toward Earth. It traveled past planets and stars while the baby inside the capsule developed. The words of Jor-El were heard speaking to his son, teaching him. He talked about human history and some of the hopes of humans. One of the main reasons that Kal-El was sent to Earth was that the father thought that the son could be a helper to bring the people of Earth to their highest level of development.

“I have sent them you, my only son.”

Jor-El can be compared with God. Jor-El was wise, good and had power. He saw the future, and knew what had to be done. As the God of the Bible started the true story of Earth, Jor-El started the fictional story of Superman. The name Jor-El is related to the name for God in the Bible. One of the Hebrew names for God is “El”. It is in the original Hebrew version of the Old Testament (Job 27:11, Isaiah 14:13, Isaiah 40:18).

Just like the story of Superman, the story of Jesus started before his arrival here. Before God created anything, he knew that a saviour would be needed. It didn't fool him that humans caused problems on Earth. He knew that there would be hurts, crimes and wars. God planned to send a saviour to rescue the human race. God planned that his Son would go to Earth to save it (Isaiah 48:16). The Son of God agreed (Hebrews 10:5-7).

## **THE BIRTH OF SUPERMAN**

In the country sky over Smallville, a streak appeared. There was a crash. Out of the wreck and ashes of the space capsule appeared a naked young boy holding his arms out to love the first people he saw, Jonathan and Martha Kent. Martha knew that he didn't have any parents and she wanted to keep him. “All these years and as happy as

we've been, how I've prayed and prayed the good Lord would see fit to give us a child."

In the first emergency he faced, the boy stopped the back end of the truck from falling. He saved Jonathan from being crushed. His new parents stared at him in awe. He was dressed in only a cloth of red around his waist that his new mom had given him. They could see that he was a miracle child. There would be more amazing things to see in the future.

They had a respect and love for the special nature of the boy. They would care for this boy with all their hearts since he had been sent from heaven.

The baby story of Jesus is the most famous one of all time. It also involved visions in the sky. There was a star that led the wise men to Bethlehem to show where Jesus was born. On the night of his birth, an angel appeared in the sky over the town and proclaimed to the shepherds:

"Do not be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. Today in the town of David a saviour has been born to you; He is Christ the Lord. This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger."(Luke 2:10-12)

The shepherds went immediately to find the baby and then went and told the good news to all. God wanted the joy to be given to everyone.

Jesus is the greatest mystery of all time. It says that the baby was "Christ the Lord". This was not an ordinary baby, but he had two different positions. One was that he was "the Christ". This means that he was the one chosen to be the saviour of the world. The other position was "the Lord". This meant that he was God. Incredibly, he was both God and man at the same time. Because of this, he was infinite in worth. Therefore Jesus was the infinitely valuable saviour. He was the true "God-man" that Superman seems to be patterned after.

Joseph and Mary also treasured these words and sights in their hearts as Superman's parents had. They wanted to be loving parents of the treasure baby that had been given to them to care for.

It is interesting to compare the names of the parents of Superman and Jesus. They have the same first initials, J for Jonathan and Joseph, and M for Martha and Mary. Their human parents were very similar.

### **THE YOUTH OF SUPERMAN**

In the next scene of Superman, the boy dressed in red appeared again. Now he was in high school. His name was Clark and he was developing hopes for joining the life of his peers. Clark didn't like the bully of the school, but was uncertain about how to address the evil that he saw. He could run across the country faster than a train and jump to win the race at the crossing. He moved as a red streak until he made it home ahead of the bully. His human father supported Clark and encouraged him to consider that there was a greater purpose than scoring touchdowns.

When Jesus was twelve, he had some surprises for his parents as well. He was visiting Jerusalem with his parents for the Feast of the Passover, but he stayed at Jerusalem when his parents left for home. They thought that he was with the company of

travelers. When they realized that he wasn't with them, they returned to Jerusalem and searched for him.

“After three days, they found him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the teachers both listening to them and asking them questions. And all who heard him were astonished at his understanding and answers. And he said to them, ‘Why did you look for me? Didn't you know that I must be about my Father's business?’ But his parents did not understand what he spoke to them.” (Luke 2:41-50)

Mary and Joseph must have been amazed often at Jesus.

Clark did not know what his role was supposed to be in life. He didn't know his past, present or future. On the other hand, Jesus did know. Jesus had all of the knowledge of God. He could explain deep spiritual truths to the smartest people of his day. He even knew about the future and what his role was going to be. Jesus knew that evil existed. He knew how he would combat it and then defeat it.

### **THE SOLITUDE OF SUPERMAN**

Clark's adopted parents could not give him answers about his life. They could only say that he must be there to do something good. Through the death of his father and the time of wondering, Clark decided to search for his future. He traveled to the North Pole following the power of the crystal that was left from the space capsule. He threw the crystal into the midst of the ice and snow. An amazing fortress formed right before his eyes. He had so many questions.

In the fortress, he saw images of his father in the form of a video recording powered from an information crystal. He heard the words of his father and could learn about where he had come from, but he had no living connection with his parents or former home. Clark gradually learned how to use the powers that were inside him. Eventually the powers would be used for their full purpose.

Jesus must have felt like he was in a strange place too. His adopted home, Earth, could not understand the perfect love that he had for others or God. Some people were his enemies and the evil of the world was a force against him. He was so unique that no person could really understand, advise, or comfort him perfectly.

Jesus felt the presence of his Father. Even with the visual and oral reminders of his father, Clark was still alone. He was in solitude even in the fortress that was made for his comfort and support. In contrast, Jesus was never in solitude from his Father. One day Jesus looked up and said:

“Father, I thank you that you have heard me. I knew that you always hear me, but I said this for the benefit of the people standing here, that they may believe that you sent me.” (John 11:41-42)

Jesus knew all the words of God from the Old Testament and he knew God's plan for the future. At times, Jesus sought solitude from the crowds of people away from the towns in lonely places. He sometimes prayed all night, or woke early in the morning to start his day in prayer (Luke 6:12). Through prayer, Jesus felt God's presence and love more deeply. God's infinite power came to Jesus to do the miracles of God. Sometimes

Jesus heard God's audible voice (Mark 9:2-7).

We also can know our heavenly Father. This Father loves us in purity and truth. He wants us to be with him every day in Bible reading, conversation (prayer), and thought.

### **THE SECRET MISSION OF SUPERMAN**

Superman was a mystery and he had secrets. People didn't learn about his human disguise, Clark Kent. They didn't know about the details of his fortress, or instructions from his father. For twelve years in the fortress of solitude, the knowledge of Jar-El was revealed to his son.

“You are Kal-El...even though you have been raised as a human being, you are not one of them. You have great powers only some of which you have yet discovered. Your powers will far exceed those of modern man. Let your leadership stir others. Serve its collective humanity. Live as one of them, Kal-El. Discover where your strength and your powers are needed. Always hold in your heart a pride of your special heritage. They can be a great people, Kal-El. They wish to be. They only lack the light to show the way. For this reason above all, their capacity for good, I have sent them you, my only son.”

All of the Superman movies indicate his efforts and desire to encourage the good in people. This mission is continually being promoted. He put himself at the service of the President of the United States, police officers and others in authority. For example, in Superman 4, when he arrived on the scene of a fire, he asked the fire chief, “How can I help?”

His father also gave him a law. The law was that it was forbidden for him to interfere in human history. It was difficult to be the super power that he was, but still to put himself under the authority of the humans of the planet. However, he was usually successful at doing this.

There was some secrecy about the mission of Jesus also. He often told people whom he had healed of diseases not to tell others about what had happened. He knew that fame would make life more difficult for him. One man who was healed of leprosy went out and began to talk freely, spreading the news. As a result, Jesus could no longer enter towns openly but stayed outside in lonely places. Yet the people still came to him from everywhere (Mark 1:45).

The biggest secret about the mission of Jesus was that he would be crucified and then be raised from the dead. The people of that time had no idea that their saviour would die. They had the expectation that he would reign as their king. In fact, Peter took Jesus aside and rebuked him for talking about dying and rising again (Mark 8:31-32). This message that Jesus would die did come out occasionally but it was usually ignored by the crowds. The words of Jesus were an amazing part of his ministry. His words were not always understood and it required thought and faith to get a full understanding of what he meant.

In contrast to Superman, Jesus did want to change the history of the world. He wanted to heal the sick and bring hope and salvation to all who would accept his forgiveness. Jesus did not accept that evil and suffering were a proper part of life or things that shouldn't be

corrected. Jesus healed and saved many people from their sins, and he is still healing and saving people now from their sins.

### **THE WORLD OF SUPERMAN**

Superman was sent to our world. This was now his world. Through different movies, Superman saw our world during several decades, starting in the great depression of the 1930's. Superman was portrayed as a helper for a variety of situations through the past. However, the world of Superman was not the real world. It was the movie world.

The life of Metropolis was very different from Smallville where Clark started out. The sights and sounds of humanity were filled with complexity, strengths and weaknesses. Many crimes were met by Superman during his adventures. There is a word that seems to describe his world in a fitting way. It is the word "needy". Superman was repeatedly being asked to fill the desperate needs of the world.

The real world that we live in now is also needy. It is crying and groaning. The world is always looking for something more. Unfortunately, the needs are infinite. The need for money is so great that most people cannot afford to live like they want. The emotional needs are so great that many people are unhappy. Our greatest need is to find someone to take our sins away so that we can go to heaven. God can't allow sin in heaven and people are sinners by nature and by the sins that we do. We need a saviour.

Superman gave some happiness to people in the movie world. Jesus, however, gives real happiness in the real world. Jesus gives inner peace and joy. Jesus says:

"My peace I give you... do not be afraid." (John 14:27)  
"Remain in my love so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete."  
(John 15:11)

### **THE REVEALING OF SUPERMAN**

In the first Superman movie, it took the desperate situation of a malfunctioning helicopter and a woman screaming to cause Clark to use his super powers. It was Lois Lane, the woman that Clark had been starting to love, that was in trouble at the top of the Daily Planet building. Only a miracle could save her. She fell out of the helicopter and it was the time for the revelation of the "man of steel". Superman rose and grabbed her. He carried Lois and the helicopter back to the top of the building. She asked him, "Who are you?" He replied, "A friend." Then Lois fainted. In the next scenes we saw what else he could do. He stopped crimes and even cared for lost kittens. He stood for truth and justice.

Superman was the purest fictional super hero. He was strong. He was fast. He could fly. He did heroic things. He was good. He seemed to be all that a hero could be. Superman solved the problems that were put in front of him and the crowds were amazed by what he did.

When Jesus was revealed to the nation of Israel, they were also looking for help. They had read in the Old Testament of the Bible that a saviour would come and free them from the pains of this world. They had suffered as the result of sickness, poverty and Roman domination. It was John the Baptist who declared:

“Someone is coming soon who is far greater than I am, so much greater that I am not even worthy to be his slave. I baptize you with water but he will baptize you with God’s Holy Spirit.” (Mark 1:7-8)

One of the first miracles that Jesus did was to cure a woman that had a fever and was in bed. He went to her, took her hand and helped her up. The fever left her and she could lead her normal life. That evening the people brought to Jesus all of the sick and demon-possessed from the whole town. The people gathered at the door, and Jesus healed many who had various diseases (Mark 1:30-34). Jesus was a hero and crowds followed Jesus wherever he went.

The glory of Jesus was revealed in degrees. Sometimes the glory shone through in amazing brightness. One day that revealed a greater amount of glory was when he took Peter, James and John and led them up a high mountain, where they were all alone. There he was transfigured before them. His clothes became dazzling white, whiter than anyone in the world could bleach them...Then a cloud appeared and enveloped them, and a voice came from the cloud:

“This is my Son, whom I love. Listen to him!” (Mark 9:2-7)

Peter never forgot this experience. He still thought about it when he wrote a letter to other believers about thirty years after the resurrection of Jesus (2 Peter 1:16-18).

Just as Superman identified himself as “a friend”, Jesus was identified as a “friend of sinners”. This title was given to him by his enemies because he spent time with people whom they considered to be inferior or unholy. He always wanted to be with people and be friends with them. He went to peoples’ homes for meals and gatherings of all types. The term “friend of sinners” has grown to mean that he is the friend of all of us since we are all sinners. Jesus never turned anyone away because they weren’t perfect. Instead, because of his holiness, their hearts and lives were blessed as they believed in him. Jesus announced the change that happened to Zacchaeus the tax collector:

“Today salvation has come to this house, because this man, too, is a son of Abraham.” (Luke 19:9)

Jesus was the kindest friend to his followers and they always enjoyed his company. He is still a friend to his followers today. The Bible is referring to Jesus when it says:

“There is a friend who sticks closer than a brother.” (Proverbs 18:24)

### **THE WORK OF SUPERMAN**

Kal-El had been told by his father to serve the “collective humanity” of Earth. As Clark Kent, he worked for the Daily Planet. Clark helped make the Daily Planet a good and true newspaper. He wanted people to learn and be able to respond properly to every situation.

“In the times of fear and confusion, the job of informing the public was the responsibility of the Daily Planet, the great metropolitan newspaper whose

reputation for clarity and truth had become a symbol of hope for the city of Metropolis.”

As Superman, he responded to the emergency needs of the planet. He helped everyone that he could. In the movie “Superman Returns”, he rose above the world and he listened to it. He could hear emergency sirens indicating the needs and crimes of society. He could hear the cries of children, women and men that were in trouble and suffering. Superman traveled around the globe that night solving many problems. The news reports the next day flashed from country to country with language after language reporting the good deeds that Superman had done.

Later, Superman took Lois up for a ride and he talked to her:

**Superman:** “Listen...”

**Lois Lane:** “I don’t hear anything.”

**Superman:** “I do. I hear everything. You wrote that the world doesn’t need a saviour, but every day I hear people crying for one.”

Superman was saying to Lois, that the world needed Superman. The world truly was in need. Gradually, Lois learned to agree with Superman.

Jesus also had work to do. His work was to do the will of his Father in heaven. The Bible says that he always pleased the Father. As a child, he did the work of a child. He obeyed his parents. He helped his human father, Joseph, in the work of a carpenter. At the baptism of Jesus, at about the age of thirty, God assessed his life up till that point when the voice came from heaven saying:

“This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased.” (Matthew 3:17)

After his baptism Jesus did miracles to heal and help people. He taught amazing things and used his words to provide life for the soul. He woke early and stayed up late. One story tells of four men who brought their paralyzed friend to be healed by Jesus. They had to lower him down through a hole in the roof of the building where Jesus was healing the sick. When Jesus saw their faith he said:

“Son, your sins are forgiven... take up your mat and go home.”

And the man got up. Jesus forgave the man’s sins and took away all of the guilt that the man had ever had. He freed the man to be joyful and full of energy again (Mark 2:1-12). What a deliverer Jesus is!

The greatest work of Jesus was to pay for the sins of the world on the cross. Just as he was dying, he said:

“It is finished.” (John 19:30)

He had finished the payment for sin and he could rest from his work. His death was not defeat. Instead, he was placing his soul into the hands of his heavenly Father in trust that his Father would care for him until it was time for Jesus to live again.

## THE STRENGTHS OF SUPERMAN

Superman movies were exciting. There were many disasters that occurred and Superman had to show how fast, strong and capable he was. He was the hero that Metropolis loved. In “Superman Returns”, he saved a planeload of people from crashing into a baseball stadium filled with fans. They applauded when the plane touched down. Awesome!

Superman’s greatest powers were his physical powers such as flying, running, strength, and resistance to heat, shock, or injury. Other powers included his super cold breath, sensitive hearing and laser eyes.

Because of his super powers, Superman was able to perform many things. One of his greatest abilities was to stop storms of nature while they were in progress. He could enter into the centre of the storm and blow the storm apart. Sometimes he could hold rocks together with his power and an earthquake would calm down.

Jesus had super powers as well. He was able to heal all kinds of sickness. He could even heal when he was not at the person’s side. One day a Roman officer needed help:

“Lord, my servant lies at home paralyzed and in terrible suffering.”

Jesus: “Go! It will be done just as you believed it would.”

And his servant was healed at that very hour (Matthew 8:5-13).

The greatest healings that Jesus did was to make dead people live again. He raised from the dead a number of people, including Lazarus, the brother of Mary and Martha (John 11:1-45), the son of the woman from Nain (Luke 7:11-17) and the daughter of Jairus (Mark 5:35). Everyone was amazed. There is also another record of how the resurrection of Lazarus continued to have an effect. People continued to come to visit Lazarus and he must have had a great story to tell since “many were putting their faith in Jesus” (John 12:9-11).

Jesus also could control the forces of nature. Once, after teaching all day, he fell asleep in a boat. High waves began to break into the boat until it was nearly full of water and about to sink. Jesus was asleep at the back of the boat with his head on a cushion. Frantically they wakened him, shouting, “Teacher, don’t you even care that we are all about to drown?” Then he rebuked the wind and said to the sea, “Quiet down!” And the wind fell, and there was a great calm! And then he asked them, “Why were you so fearful? Don’t you even yet have confidence in me?” And they were filled with awe and said among themselves:

“Who is this man, that even the winds and seas obey him?” (Mark 4: 41)

Other powers included being able to walk on water (John 6:16-21), and make food for five thousand people from just two fish and five pieces of bread (John 6:5-14).

After his resurrection, new powers of Jesus became evident. For example, he could pass through walls into a locked room.

“On the evening of that first day of the week, when the disciples were together, with the doors locked for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and

said, 'Peace be with you!' After he had said this, he showed them his hands and side. The disciples were overjoyed when they saw the Lord." (John 20:19-20)

Jesus could even fly. On his last day on Earth, when they met together, they asked him about the future. "Lord, are you at this time going to restore the kingdom to Israel?" He said to them: "It is not for you to know the times or dates the Father has set by his own authority...."

"After he said this, he was taken up before their very eyes, and a cloud hid him from their sight. They were looking intently up into the sky as he was going..." (Acts 1:6-10)

This event is known as the "Ascension" and has been recorded in many famous paintings.

Superman was portrayed as being good and true. This is moral strength. In the first Superman movie, Lex Luthor described Superman this way:

"There's a strong streak of good in you, Superman, but then nobody's perfect, almost nobody."

Average citizens and the police knew that Superman would do what was good. He was considered a standard for the truth and the answer to a problem.

Jesus was good and true to an even higher standard than Superman. This was God's standard. Jesus kept all of the laws and regulations of God perfectly. The Bible says that Jesus was:

"tempted in every way, just as we are - yet was without sin."  
(Hebrews 4:15)

Since Jesus never sinned, he became a perfect sacrifice. He earned the reward for keeping the law. That reward is eternal life for anyone that trusts in him for salvation.

"Everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name."  
(Acts 10:43)

### **THE LIMITATIONS OF SUPERMAN**

Superman had limitations. Even though he was a hero, there were things he could not do. Superman could even be hurt and killed. This added to the drama of the movies as the dangers for him appeared.

Superman could not see through lead. This problem allowed his enemies to keep danger hidden from him. In the first movie, he almost died when there was a kryptonite rock hidden in a lead box.

Superman couldn't heal the sick or do other miraculous things. He could look at a hurt person and see if there was a broken bone, but he couldn't heal it. He would have been of no use in a hospital where people were dying from sickness.

Superman was not a perfect law keeper. He disobeyed the law of not interfering in human history. He broke that law in the first Superman movie when he got angry that Lois had died in the rockslide. He flew up into the air in a rage, and even though he saw

images of his father warning him not to interfere in human history, he used his super speed to cause Earth to turn backwards for a few revolutions. This caused time to go backwards and he had time to save Lois from dying.

The most important limitation of Superman was that he was vulnerable to kryptonite. He was almost killed on a number of occasions when he was exposed to it. In the first Superman movie, it seemed as though he would drown in Luthor's swimming pool when the kryptonite was around his neck. In "Superman Returns", he was stabbed and bleeding because of a kryptonite knife. The kryptonite blade could go through the defenses of Superman's "steel" body.

Jesus appeared to have limitations as well; however, it is difficult to say how limited he was. This is one of the greatest mysteries of the Bible and really can't be explained by humans. The Bible says that he lowered himself into the form of a man and that he allowed himself to suffer the problems of being human (Philippians 2:5-8). However, the Bible teaches that Jesus was also God at the same time (John 10:30). This means that what might appear to be a weakness on the part of Jesus only appeared when he stopped his power from coming out. Jesus also wanted to keep his power secret so that he didn't become too famous. Some of the seeming limitations of Jesus are listed below:

It seems that Jesus became tired and he slept (Mark 4:38). However, he was able to keep such a pace that his disciples could not stay awake as long as him (Mark 14:31-41).

It seemed that at times Jesus couldn't do miracles for some people (Matthew 13:54-58). However, these were people that didn't believe in him. This really was a lesson about the importance of keeping their hearts loving and kind. Those who refused to be willing to listen to him did not get the reward of his power. Jesus was whipped, humiliated, and then nailed to the cross and he died. It may seem like he was defeated and was helpless before those that crucified him. However, Jesus had said before any of his sufferings that he would give his life because he chose to (John 10:17-18). He said on another occasion that he could have had twelve legions (at least 36,000) of angels to defend him (Matthew 26:52-54). This indicates that no one could have hurt him unless he had allowed it.

### **THE ENEMY OF SUPERMAN**

In every movie, Superman faced crime and criminals. Superman also had an arch enemy named Lex Luthor. Luthor developed a dislike and then a hatred for Superman. As well, he had a desire to be mightier than Superman. Luthor claimed to have the greatest criminal mind of all time and during his plans to get rich he devised plans for the destruction of Superman. His strategy succeeded in bringing Superman to the brink of destruction in movie after movie.

The movies portrayed Lex Luthor as an evil man. By examining his words and actions, the details of his evil character are evident. In the first Superman movie, he discussed his plans with Superman:

**Superman:** "Is that how a warped brain like yours gets its kicks? By planning the death of innocent people?"

**Lex Luthor:** "No, by **causing** the death of innocent people."

Luthor's actions time and again show that he hated the life around him. In the first Superman movie, he fired missiles to destroy millions of people. In "Superman Returns", he actually caused a new continent to form that would have killed millions more. Death was something he wanted to cause. Only Superman's heroism was able to stop the severe destruction and carnage that Luthor was causing.

Jesus, too, had an enemy. The enemy of Jesus is the enemy of the human race. The name given in the Bible is Satan or Lucifer, also known as the devil. Just as Luthor worked to destroy people and Superman, Lucifer worked and works to destroy. Lucifer hates humans and hated Jesus. He wants every human dead. He wants destruction and carnage.

The similarity of the names Lucifer and Luthor is interesting. Both Lucifer and Luthor start and end with the same letters. Luthor has other similarities to Lucifer as well.

Lucifer's first act in history was to destroy the first people that lived on Earth, Adam and Eve. Lucifer had seen the beauty of God and the beauty of God's creation. When he saw the favored position that Adam and Eve had with God, he made plans to corrupt that position. Lucifer gave them the temptation of becoming even higher. He said that they could become like God himself. Lucifer seemingly offered them the highest position in the world. The requirement for them was that they would have to take his gift of the fruit from the tree in the garden. This meant disobeying God. They chose the side of Lucifer (Genesis 3:1-19).

With that agreement, Lucifer took over the control of all of the assets of Adam and Eve. Their dominion of Earth was given to Lucifer. He would have the future rights to anything that was born or built on the planet. Lucifer became the king of the planet. Later, when Lucifer tempted Jesus in the desert he showed Jesus all of the kingdoms of the world. Lucifer said that he would give all of the kingdoms to Jesus if Jesus would worship him. What a big temptation! Lucifer could truly offer them to Jesus because he truly had the control and reign over all of them. Fortunately, Jesus said no (Luke 4:5-7).

From Adam until now, Lucifer has reigned on Earth. Lucifer is described as a roaring lion seeking to devour (1 Peter 5:8). Lucifer is called a liar and a murderer (John 8:44-45). Lucifer encourages temptations and sinful activity (Matthew 4:3). The sin of people is evident in unfulfilled desires, arguments, wars, suffering and death. Lucifer has not been a good king.

### **THE SUFFERING OF SUPERMAN**

Each Superman movie included scenes of suffering for Superman. All criminals wanted to hurt Superman, and Luthor was the worst criminal causing Superman to suffer the most. Kryptonite was the greatest thing that was used to bring suffering to Superman. In the first Superman movie, Superman was drowning in Luthor's swimming pool. In the second movie, Superman was beaten up by General Zod and his allies. In Superman 4, Superman almost died because of Luthor's super hero. However, the scenes of greatest suffering came in "Superman Returns".

In “Superman Returns”, Luthor used some kryptonite and Superman’s power crystal to create a continent contaminated with millions of small pieces of kryptonite. Superman had to land on the continent to defeat Luthor. As Superman stood before Luthor, he could see sweat start to drip down Superman’s face. Luthor knew that Superman had become weak because of the closeness of the kryptonite. Luthor gave Superman a big punch. Luthor’s buddies got ready and started kicking Superman as he got up. They continued to smash Superman into the mud again and again as Superman staggered and crawled along. Luthor stabbed Superman deep into his side with a dagger that had a kryptonite blade. Luthor broke off the blade inside of Superman so that the poison would be trapped in his body. Then Superman was forced off of the continent so that he fell down into the ocean.

These images of Superman can be related to parts of the sufferings of Jesus. We can feel the pain of our saviour. We can be thankful for the sufferings that Jesus went through for our sake and see in an image what it cost Jesus to win our salvation for us. The love of Jesus was immense.

The greatest time of suffering for Jesus occurred during the last twenty-four hours of his life. The night before his death, in the garden of Gethsemane, Jesus prayed alone. His disciples couldn’t even stay awake to support him in his anguish. He was sweating in agony since he knew what was going to happen to him. He knew that sinful behaviour and sin itself was going to come all around him and kill him (Luke 22:39-46).

When Superman went to Luthor’s continent, it can be compared to many things about the battle of Jesus with Lucifer. One comparison that can be made is that Jesus came to enemy territory too. Planet Earth was Lucifer’s planet. Even though Earth had been created by God, it was taken over by Lucifer and made into a sinful place.

When Superman stood in front of Luthor, it can be compared to when Jesus allowed himself to be captured by soldiers and put on trial (Matthew 27:27-31). Luthor can symbolize Lucifer who had a part in causing the death of Jesus. When the sweat started to come down Superman’s face it indicated vulnerability. Jesus also made himself vulnerable to Lucifer and the power of sin when he started the process of giving himself up to the soldiers on the night before his crucifixion.

The scene when Luthor and his buddies beat up Superman can be paralleled to when Jesus was beaten and forced to carry his cross on the way out of the city of Jerusalem. It appears that Jesus must have staggered and fallen a number of times going out of Jerusalem since he didn’t carry the cross all the way to the hill where he was crucified, but he needed help from Simon of Cyrene (Luke 23:26). According to the Bible, Jesus didn’t have to suffer for us, but he could have had angels rescue him. Instead, he chose to continue to be led to the place where he was crucified. This demonstrates the amount of love that he had for us. He continued down the road of suffering for you and me, all the way to Calvary

### **THE SALVATION OF SUPERMAN**

After being beaten by Luthor and his buddies, Superman was forced off a cliff and fell into the ocean. This was an image of death. Superman was going down into the depths of death. However, Superman was pulled out of the water alive by Lois, her boyfriend Richard and Lois’ son Jason. They used Richard’s plane to fly Superman out of

the dangerous water near Luthor's continent. Lois was able to pull the kryptonite out of Superman's body. Superman recovered enough that he decided that he could return to face Luthor again. Lois and the audience wondered, "What is he doing?" But Superman was showing his love for the human race by returning to fight to save the planet from Luthor.

This time, Superman went to the base of Luthor's continent and lifted the whole continent up out of the water and then up through the atmosphere. In the movie, green daggers of kryptonite moved downward toward Superman and seemed to threaten him. Superman saw the danger of the kryptonite near him, but he continued his work of pushing the continent into space. He was enduring increasing agony as the kryptonite burned into him. The burden became heavier as he went further. He was weak, but determined. Superman weakly pushed the continent out into space so that it could never come back. It was seen moving away from Earth into space. The work was finished.

These scenes from the movie are similar to the story of Jesus who endured death so that he could save people by paying for their sins. Jesus came to this world even though he knew that sin was toxic to him. The scene of Superman carrying the kryptonite continent up out of the world reminds us of the sacrifice of Jesus on the cross. Our evil had to be removed from us so that we could be forgiven and made acceptable to God. Jesus also planned to push sin out of the world. The sin of mankind was all around him as he suffered on the cross. The Bible says that he was made sin for us, and the Lord laid upon him the iniquities of all of us (Isaiah 53:6). Jesus' Father attached the sin of the world to Jesus and darkness came upon the land for three hours while Jesus endured the punishment from his Father (Luke 23:44-45). Because of his punishment, we don't have to pay for our own sins. We can be made acceptable when we ask Jesus to forgive us and trust in him to be our saviour.

### **THE DEATH OF SUPERMAN**

Could Superman be killed? The horror of death is one of the strongest emotions that movie directors can bring their audience to. Death is the final enemy of mankind.

Superman drifted in space, exhausted from his efforts. He hung there with his arms outstretched to the sides. This pose was held for several seconds and we realized that he looked like he was dead. The world had seen that pose before in the most famous death of all time - the death of Jesus on the cross. Superman was certainly dead. He had given up his life in order to rid the world of the evil. He had lifted the evil planner, Luthor, the evil continent, and the evil kryptonite out of the water. Unfortunately, Luthor escaped in a helicopter, but Superman succeeded in getting rid of the continent and the kryptonite.

Superman stayed suspended in space until gravity started to exert its force on him and he started to fall toward Earth. He fell as a streak downward, and all of Metropolis saw him coming down. They watched as he descended to the ground and a thud sounded as he landed.

The next scenes showed him being brought to the hospital. The whole hospital was on duty for Superman. Treatment was uncertain and ineffective. A piece of kryptonite was found deep in the body of Superman. Finally, the doctors gave up and

could offer no hope.

Just like Superman in his fall, Jesus descended to the deepest part of death that he could go. Because of this, Jesus is able to raise up the deepest sinner. The accounts of the death of Jesus in the Bible and other records indicate that the early followers of Jesus saw and felt emotionally the death of Jesus. The Roman soldiers saw that he was dead so they decided that they didn't have to break his legs to ensure that death would occur. One Roman soldier pierced his side with a spear, just like Superman had been stabbed. Blood and water came out in separated form, indicating that death had already happened (John 19:31-34).

The length of the death pose of Superman is indicative of the importance of the event. Similarly, we are told in the Bible to remember the death of Jesus until he comes again. Every week, millions of people around the world look at a cross. Communion is a holy consideration of the sacrifice of Jesus. Remembering the love of Jesus for us personally helps us to be close to God and love God. We can get joy and strength for our lives, and hope for our future.

### **THE REST OF SUPERMAN**

Superman's body was given the best respect and care that was possible. His body was placed in a new and clean room. There was even a police officer placed at the door of his room to guard his body.

There was only one unofficial person allowed to see the body of Superman. It was the woman that had been the love of Superman. Lois was encouraged by Richard to go and see Superman in the hospital. In cautious respect she approached the room and entered. It seems that she was an uncertain woman. She had sadness in her, but not a deep despair. She didn't have the pure and strong love for Superman that she had had in earlier movies. She had other loves in her life now, including her son Jason and her boyfriend Richard. However, she did look with some care on Superman.

Lois had the idea of giving a final message to Superman. This would be the last time she would see him. He would most likely be lost from view forever. She spoke gently to him and then whispered a secret to him. She waited. She slowly turned away and led Jason from the room. She had her new family to care for. Superman could no longer keep her. Jason gave Superman a last kiss good-bye.

Just like Superman's body, Jesus' body was treated with respect and love. The body was taken down from the cross by Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus, two of Jesus' friends. The body was wrapped in clean cloths. The body was put in a new tomb and the tomb was sealed with a large stone. The women who had come with Jesus from Galilee followed Joseph and saw the tomb and how his body was laid in it (Luke 23:55). Guards were put on duty outside the tomb to keep watch (Matthew 27:57-66).

Jesus was dead from late Good Friday afternoon until dawn on Easter Sunday. This is counted as three days. It was the Sabbath. All of the people rested from work during this time. They were remembering the rest that God took at the end of the creation week. Essentially, they were waiting for God.

## **THE RESURRECTION OF SUPERMAN**

In the next scene of the movie, a nurse walked down the hallway, past the police guard and into Superman's room. Superman was gone! They checked the room and found that the window was open. What had happened?

The resurrection of Jesus was a surprise to everyone in Jerusalem. It is recognized as being the most amazing event in world history. Finally, when the Sabbath rest was completed, and regular life could be started again, Jesus fulfilled all of the hopes and symbols of regeneration and life.

“There was a violent earthquake, for an angel of the Lord came down from heaven and, going to the tomb, rolled back the stone and sat on it. His appearance was like lightning, and his clothes were white as snow. The guards were so afraid of him that they shook and became like dead men. The angel said to the women, ‘Do not be afraid, for I know that you are looking for Jesus, who was crucified. He is not here; he has risen just as he said. Come and see the place where he lay. Then go quickly and tell his disciples.’” (Matthew 28:2-7)

The news of the resurrection of Jesus spread everywhere. Jesus appeared to many people over a period of forty days after his resurrection. He appeared to individuals (John 20:16), groups (Acts 20:24-29), and a crowd of more than five hundred at the same time (1 Corinthians 15:6).

The details of the resurrection will be a mystery for all of eternity. Both the Father and the Son contributed to the power of raising Jesus (Romans 8:11, John 2:19). The words in the New Testament are based on the resurrection of Jesus and add information about the wonder of it. Even angels desire to look into the wonder of these things (1 Peter 1:12).

## **THE COLOUR OF SUPERMAN**

Red was the primary colour of Superman. Red was the main colour of Kal-El's baby cloths on Krypton. Martha gave him a red cloth around his waist for his first earthly clothes. When Clark appeared with his high school peers he had a red shirt. He ran down the country roads as a red streak. Although Superman's costume also included the colours blue and yellow, red was the most important colour. His cape was red and seemed to indicate the power of flight and speed.

Red symbolized Superman's power from the very beginning of the first Superman movie as well. The sun of Krypton was the first object seen in the movie. It was red in colour. In Luthor's schemes, he determined that the source of Superman's power was from Superman's former sun. Luthor's determinations were proven to be correct. In Superman 4, Luthor decided to create a super hero of his own. He used the power of the Earth's sun to create “Nuclear Man” and then when the sun shone on “Nuclear Man” he was powerful.

The red colour was seen at various times through the Superman movies. In Superman 2, Luthor's girlfriend wore a red coat and Lois wore red clothing. Red was the main colour of the restaurant where Clark Kent got beaten up by a local tough guy. In Superman 3, red was the colour of his homecoming sweater for his school team. It was

the colour of the seats in the bus on the way home. In Superman 4, Superman's red cape was recovered after Superman got defeated and disappeared. The cape was presented as a "holy" object to Lois in the Daily Planet office. Later, she gave it back to a very sick Clark Kent in his apartment. At the end of the movie, Lois had on a pair of red shoes that shone as she kicked up her heels in celebration that everything had turned out well. Red had won.

Red is also the main colour identified with Jesus. Red is the colour of the blood that flowed down the face and side of Jesus as he was dying. Blood was the evidence of his life being given to forgive people from their sins. A red robe/cape was put on Jesus before his crucifixion (Matthew 27:28). Jesus will be wearing a red robe/cape when he comes again. This indicates that it is his blood that is the power of his authority (Revelation 19:13). In heaven the angels praise Jesus, the Lamb of God, and his blood that gives the power to save. The sacrifice of Jesus will be celebrated forever as the most important event in history. The robe/cape that Jesus will wear forever will enable all to see the cost that it took to buy life back from sin and death. This time the life is eternal life. There will be no chance for this life to be lost since it was paid for with an infinite payment.

Red was the most important colour throughout the history of the people of Israel and also other nations. Red was seen often when blood came out of animals during sacrifice. The Bible says that "life is in the blood" (Genesis 9:4). On the first Passover, each family from the people of Israel put red blood from a lamb over the door and on the sides of the doorway to their house so that the angel of death would not pass into the house. The blood brought protection that night for the people and red was seen as a powerful colour (Exodus 12:1-30). That night is still remembered around the world in modern Passover celebrations. It was also at the feast of the Passover when Jesus suffered and died in Jerusalem (Matthew 26:1-5). Jesus was God's perfect lamb that had been symbolized in the sacrificed lambs from the years before him (John 1:29). At that Passover, Jesus gave his blood to buy an eternal protection for all who would believe that he was the infinite lamb and trust in him to forgive them for their sins.

Are you protected under the blood of Jesus? Have you put your trust in Jesus to save you from your sin and death and judgment?

### **THE ABIDING PRESENCE OF SUPERMAN**

In the final scenes of the movie, Superman appeared alive again. First he was in Jason's bedroom. He was looking affectionately at Jason while he was sleeping. We learned from Superman's words that Jason was the son of Superman. Superman's life was in Jason, just as Superman's father's life was in Superman. Superman said to Jason:

"You will be different. Sometimes you'll feel like an outcast, but you'll never be alone. You will make my strength your own. You will see my life through your eyes, as your life will be seen through mine. The son becomes the father and the father becomes the son."

Superman loved his son. Superman would be watching over his son into the future. Superman stayed for a few seconds near his son, and then it was time to go.

As Superman started to fly away, Lois saw him. She asked if they would ever see

him again. Superman replied:

“I’m always around.”

Then Superman was off again, flying over Earth, watching over it.

These are powerful images and words. They go to the heart of the idea that Superman is like Jesus. The images reflect the idea that the love of Jesus is a pure, personal and abiding love. His love is one that has touched each generation and will touch each new generation.

The scene of Superman in Jason’s bedroom is similar to the idea that Jesus is watching over his spiritual children while they sleep. The Bible teaches that Jesus never had any physical children or descendants. However, anyone who believes in him is “born again” into a spiritual family of believers. Jesus loves each person who believes in him and is acting for the well being of each one.

In contrast to Superman who is just fictional, Jesus is able to truly care for each of his children, all at the same time, in each place that they are. He knows every name and every care that his children have. He answers their prayers in accordance with his will. He also uses other people to answer their prayers.

The final words of Superman, “I’m always around”, are almost identical to some of the last words of Jesus to his disciples before he rose into heaven:

“I am with you always, to the very end of the age.” (Matthew 28:20)

These words have been an encouragement for Christians since the day Jesus left Earth. Jesus doesn’t always answer prayers in the way we want. However, he stays with us even through hard times. We live in a world where evil happens, but we can have faith “that in all things God works for the good of those who love him” (Romans 8:28). When his people stop to pray and listen to him, Jesus comes close and gives peace and promise. There are many words of comfort that can be found in the Bible and Jesus uses those words to calm troubled hearts.

Jesus is present in this life in the invisible world and he is the friend that can help his children into heaven in the next life. An example from the Bible that gives a picture of this was when Stephen, an early Christian, was dying. He looked up and saw a vision of heaven and Jesus standing ready to welcome him to heaven:

“Look, I see heaven open and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God... Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.” (Acts 7:55-59)

This passage should give us hope that Jesus is waiting for us and will care for us even though we may have to suffer to get there. More of his encouraging words include:

“Do not let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God; trust also in me. 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. 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.” (John 14:1-3)

When Superman was flying away over Earth, it seemed like the world was at peace. This is a beautiful picture and we can take comfort in it. Superman was watching and caring and Jesus is watching and caring. Every problem is under the watch of Jesus,

and each will eventually be fixed. It is a beautiful thing to be able to rest and trust in the love of God. The ending of the movie leaves us wanting to watch Superman more and see the wonder of his abilities. Likewise, it is a beautiful thing to consider the even greater abilities and words of Jesus.

### **THE HOPE OF SUPERMAN**

The title of the movie, “Superman Returns”, was very significant. The title is appropriate for the plot of the movie and the title is also instructive for an important spiritual reason.

The world had been hoping and praying for the return of Superman. He had been gone for five years and crimes were rampant. When Superman came he was able to bring solutions to the problems. He defeated Luthor and reestablished the rule of law. The hopes of the people were fulfilled. At the end of the movie, he continued to be there and provided strength and deliverance for the needs of the world.

The title, “Superman Returns”, also reminds us of the hope of the return of Jesus to Earth. Christians have been waiting for the return of Jesus since the day he left. His last promise to his people was:

“Yes, I am coming soon.” (Revelation 22:20) (God-time!)

Also, two angels spoke to his disciples when they were watching him rise into heaven at the “ascension” saying:

“Men of Galilee, why do you stand here looking into the sky? This same Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, will come back in the same way you have seen him go into heaven.” (Acts 1:11)

There have always been faithful believers that have kept this hope since Jesus left. Faith has waxed and waned, but the words of promise have stayed the same. These words have held out hope that some day perfect, divine justice will occur and a correction will be made for all of the things that have ever gone wrong in history.

Jesus’ coming could have occurred in any generation and it may occur in this generation. Jesus wants us to always be ready and wanting him to come back and bring his kingdom to Earth.

“When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, he will sit on his throne in heavenly glory. All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate the people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. He will put the sheep on his right and the goats on his left.” (Matthew 25:31-33)

Just like Superman finally rewarded those who had been waiting for him, Jesus will reward those who are faithful in waiting for him.

“Therefore keep watch, because you do not know on what day your Lord will come. Who then is the faithful and wise servant, whom the master has put in charge of the servants in his household to give them their food at the proper time? It will be good

for that servant whose master finds him doing so when he returns. I tell you the truth, he will put him in charge of all his possessions.” (Matthew 24:42-47)

However, there are also warnings about not being ready for when Jesus comes back. There is the lesson of the bridesmaids who were foolish. It says that they forgot to bring enough oil for their lamps and they fell asleep. When the cry was heard that the groom had come, they were not ready and they had to go to buy more oil. While they were gone, the groom arrived and the wedding party went into the party hall. The doors were locked and the foolish bridesmaids were locked out.

Bridesmaids: “Sir! Sir! Open the door for us!”

Groom: “I tell you the truth, I don’t know you.”

“Therefore keep watch, because you do not know the day or the hour” (Matthew 25:1-13).

Interestingly, there is a similar lesson about being faithful in “Superman Returns”. Lois should have been waiting for Superman. However, from the beginning of the movie Lois was never ready for him. At the first appearance of Superman she was amazed along with the crowds, but she seemed to act like an outsider instead of his friend. She should have been his dear friend. She should have loved him more than all of the other citizens of the world. But she didn’t.

Before the return of Superman she had decided that she didn’t need Superman anymore. She had written a story called, “Why the world doesn’t need Superman”. She also had developed a relationship with Richard and was living with him. At one point in the movie she even told Richard that she had never loved Superman.

**Richard:** “Were you in love with him?”

**Lois:** “He was Superman. Everyone was in love with him.”

**Richard:** “Yes, but did you love him?”

**Lois:** “No.”

This is one of the saddest parts in the movie. In addition, Superman heard this conversation. He was trying to understand what his position was in the new relationships of Lois. When he heard these comments, he turned off his sensory powers and turned away. He had been rejected by the closest friend that he had ever had on Earth.

The consideration of Lois should help us to keep our love for Jesus pure and faithful until he returns. We can see the sadness of the situation described above. Lois gave up the treasure that had always been closest to her heart. Lois never had joy or hope in “Superman Returns”. Jesus wants us to love him more than anything else in the world.

Jesus wants to be our closest friend. Jesus encourages us to:

“Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with your all mind and with all your strength.” (Mark 12:30)

Jesus showed us his love already.

“As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Now remain in my love. 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. Love one another. Greater love has no one than this, that he lay down his life for his friends. You are my friends if you do what I command... I called you friends, for everything that I learned from my Father I have made known to you.” (John 15:9-15)

Jesus is so much more valuable than anything else in the world. He is the one that gives us life itself. He holds the world together by his power. He makes the sun shine and helps sustain the air that we breathe. He is the source of our power to breathe every breath we take. He wants us to remember him and love him first of all.

Jesus can heal our hearts, but he wants us to turn back to him.

“Return to the Lord, your God, for you have been crushed by your sins! I will heal you of your idolatry and faithlessness, and my love will know no bounds, for my anger will be gone forever! (Hosea 14:1,4)

Just like Superman still cared for Lois at the end of the movie, Jesus will still love us at the end of our lives, despite our weaknesses. “being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus” (Philippians 1:6). His sacrifice makes us acceptable to God.

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## **YOU CAN BE SUPER TOO**

In the first Superman movie, during the first flight with Superman that Lois ever had, she described him in her mind and we could hear her thoughts. She said:

“Here I am holding hands with a god!”

She was amazed. She was with Superman. This was one of the best feelings that the movies could give the audience. Maybe we could be with Superman, maybe we could fly with Superman, maybe we could be his friend. Almost everyone wanted to be his friend. He smiled at every person he could and that smile showed that he would even die for them.

In the stories of Jesus, almost everyone wanted to be his friend too. He was the true light that gives light to everyone (John 1:9). He is the best that the Father has to give to the world. He is the “God-man”. He knows everything, can do everything and can fix everything that has ever gone wrong in the past. He died for the world so that he can forgive and give comfort to us in all of our problems. Eventually, he will physically return and bring his kingdom that will be an eternally peaceful and joyful kingdom (Revelation 22:1-5).

Jesus wants to be our friend. He wants to be so close to us that he is holding our hand. He wants to smile at us more gloriously than Superman ever could. He truly died for us and says, “I want to be with you always, even to the end of the age”.

The question is, have you asked him to be your friend? If you ask him to be your friend and put your trust in him, he will forgive your sins. If you ask him to, he will give you eternal life. Jesus is the true “God” that Lois was looking for. We can see him in the movies, we can see him in our lives and then we can see him forever. I want to fly with Superman. What about you? I want to live forever with Jesus. What about you?

If you want to be super, ask Jesus to forgive you.

“Thank you Jesus for dying on the cross for my sins. Please forgive my sins and give me eternal life. I open the door of my life and receive you as my Savior and Lord. Take control of the throne of my life. Make me the kind of person you want me to be.”

Please contact us! – [info@realsuperman.net](mailto:info@realsuperman.net)