



Who is this Jesus?

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What difference does it make who Jesus is? He lived 2,000 years ago, so how could that matter today? The truth is, knowing who Jesus is can mold your character, impact your belief system, and change your lifestyle. And more than that, it will determine your eternal destiny.

To discover who Jesus is, we can begin by reading what is written about His birth. Seven hundred years before Christ was born, the prophet Micah said that **“One would come out of Bethlehem whose beginnings were from eternity past” (Micah 5:2)**

The Bible also teaches that Jesus was born of a virgin after being conceived by the Holy Spirit, and angels sang to announce His arrival. All of this makes Him very exceptional. In **(Colossians 1:16)**, we read that **“by Him all things were created.”** So Jesus did not originate at birth, but was pre-existent with the Father in heaven, and was born into the world He Himself had created.

Next, consider His life. He was raised in Nazareth and worked at His earthly father's trade as a young man. But when He was only twelve, He discussed theology in the temple with the religious leaders of His day. **(Luke 2:46-49)** It is clear that at this point, He was now about His heavenly Father's business. John the Baptist acknowledged Jesus as **“the Lamb of God who takes**

away the sin of the world” (John 1:29), and a voice from heaven confirmed, **“This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well-pleased” (Matthew 3:17).**

When it was time to launch His ministry, Jesus, filled with the Holy Spirit, began preaching that the kingdom of heaven is at hand. **(Matthew 4:17)** He taught that, if a soldier says to go one mile with him, we should go two. And if someone slaps our cheek, we should offer the other cheek as well. The people had never heard such things, but more than that, they had never experienced teaching with this kind of authority. It was obvious He was no ordinary teacher.

Then there were the miracles. At Jesus' command, the blind could see, the deaf could hear, and the paralyzed could walk. He healed all kinds of sickness and cast out demons. Thousands were fed with just a few loaves of bread and a handful of fish. He walked on water, calmed a raging sea, and even raised the dead. Yes, He was a miracle worker, but that wasn't the reason He came. It was clear that He was sent from God, and in reality, He was God in human flesh.

The crowd flocked to Him, eager for His touch. Many loved Him and believed in Him. But not everyone did. Some were indifferent, and others, including the religious leaders, despised Him. Although His was a life of absolute sinless perfection, there were those who sought to

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destroy Him. Today, many people still choose not to believe in Him. When I come across someone who says, "I don't believe all this about Jesus," I like to ask, "What is it about Him you don't believe? What is it that He ever said or did that you disagree with or can prove wrong?" Because, you see, He never ceased to be God. Whatever He was doing, He was both God and man at the same time.

One of the best ways to understand someone is to find out what he thinks about himself. Jesus said many, many things about who He was. He said that He is the Son of God (**Matthew 16:16-17**), that He and the Father are one (**John 10:30**), and that the Father is the One who sent Him. (**John 5:37**) He also announced that He did not come to be served, but to serve and that He came to give His life as a ransom for many (**Matthew 20:28**). He came as a substitute payment in behalf of humanity. He agreed with His accusers when they called Him "**King of the Jews.**" His "**I am**" statements from the book of John reveal that He claimed to be the Good Shepherd who loves the sheep (**John 10:11**), the Bread of Life who can prevent hunger (**John 6:48**), and the True Vine who abides in us as we abide in Him. (**John 15:1**)

Jesus also said He was the Door to Heaven (**John 10:9**), and in **John 14:6**, He expanded on that thought: "**I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me.**" That statement has caused many people to back away, thinking, "What a bigoted, egotistical statement! How narrow-minded to think that the only way to Heaven is through the person of Jesus Christ." And yet, this man called Jesus is exactly who He says He is. He is the Good Shepherd. He is the Bread of Life. He's the way, the truth, and the very life itself. Because, you see, in order for us to have eternal life, we must receive Jesus Christ as our personal Savior.

Now, if you believe all the other things Jesus said, but decide He can't be the only way to Heaven, then you are saying He told partial truths or lies. You

can't have it both ways. Either Jesus is who He says He is, or He is not. So you cannot say, "Jesus is a good man, a wonderful teacher, an effective preacher, a great healer, philosopher, and humanitarian, BUT..." Whenever your belief in Christ's validity has caveats, you make Him a liar. When it comes to all that He said about Himself, either He is a counterfeit and a fraud, or He is exactly who He says He is, the eternal Son of the living God, the Savior of the world, and the One who will some day judge each one of us.

And of course, to find out who Jesus really is, we have to look at His death. From the biblical accounts, it is obvious this was no ordinary death. His crucifixion was plotted by the religious leaders; the same men who had exaggerated the requirements of the Mosaic law and then coerced the people to obey in minute, burdensome detail. These same men were jealous of Jesus because their position of authority was threatened by His popularity with the crowds. So, in spite of the fact that they enforced the Law with others, these men were so ungodly that they were willing to lay aside one of the most basic principles in Scripture: "**You shall not murder**" (**Exodus 20:13**). They were committed and determined, at all cost, to kill this man Jesus. They felt so threatened by Him that they were totally blinded to the truth of who He was.

The death of Jesus was plotted by those who hated Him. And it was performed by Roman soldiers, a group that had no earthly idea what they were doing. They crucified two thieves, between whom they crucified the living God, clothed in human flesh, the sinless One born of a virgin, who began His ministry in the power of the Holy Spirit. He never harmed anyone. He never rebelled against the government. He never violated the law. It was a death He in no way deserved, and therefore, it looked like a vicious plot and a tragedy. But remember what Jesus said? that He came to do His father's will and to give His life as a ransom for many. So why was He dying? Because, together with the Lord Jesus Christ and the Holy

Spirit, God the Father had planned His death before the world ever began, knowing that man would sin against Him and be hopeless and helpless to save himself.

On the cross, it was not simply a man dying; it was an awesome, eternal scene in which God the Father placed upon His Son the sin-debt of all mankind, past, present, and future. And then God unleashed the full force of His wrath to punish Jesus instead of you and me.

There is one more aspect to investigate if we really want to know who the man Jesus Christ is we have to go beyond His death. That is not possible to do with anyone else, of course, but because Jesus is the Son of God and the living God, He did exactly what He had promised: He rose from the dead. Even His disciples were shocked, though He had told them ahead of time. With His resurrection, Jesus settled once and for all that there is life after death, not just for Himself, but for all who believe on Him. (**John 11:25-26**) His resurrection also proves that everything He ever said is true.

Jesus said He is coming back. Can we believe that? Yes, because the Bible says so, and also because all the other promises Jesus made that could possibly be fulfilled in His lifetime came to pass exactly as He had said.

Knowing the truth of who Jesus is means you are confronted with a decision: Will you believe the testimony of the Scriptures and receive Him? Or will you turn your back on truth and walk away to face a hopeless eternity? **Next time you see a manger scene remember who's lying there; His life, His death, His words about Himself, and His resurrection. Jesus is not just a baby; He is the Son of God, sitting at the Father's right hand, with all the sovereign power of the universe, and with the offer of eternal life to anyone who believes on Him.**





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