

“Jesus Was Just A Man!”

Lesson 2

INTRO:

- A. The numbers are increasing of people who are denying the Divinity of Christ. In the place of His divinity, many are saying Jesus was a good moral man or a prophet who said and did a lot of good things.
- A. While they nod their heads to such statements about Christ, they fail to see how flawed their reasoning really is.
- B. C.S. Lewis, who was a professor at Cambridge University and at one time was an agnostic. He writes:
 “I am trying here to prevent anyone saying the really foolish thing that people often say about Him: ‘I’m ready to accept Jesus as a great moral teacher, but I don’t accept His claim to be God.’ That is the one thing we must not say. A man who was merely a man and said the sort of things Jesus said would not be a great moral teacher. He would either be a lunatic — on a level with the man who says he is a poached egg — or else he would be the Devil of Hell. You must make your choice. Either this man was, and is, the son of God: or else a madman or something worse.
1. Lewis goes on to say: “You can shut Him up for a fool, you can spit on Him and kill Him as a demon; or you can fall at His feet and call Him Lord and God. But let us not come up with any patronizing nonsense about His being a great human teacher. He has not left that open to us. He did not intend to.”
- B. It was prophesied He would be born of a woman, a virgin and she would conceive of the Holy Spirit. **Isaiah 7:14** “*Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: Behold, **the virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and shall call His name Immanuel.***”
1. Fulfilled. **Matthew 1:18** “*Now the birth of Jesus Christ was as follows: After His mother Mary was betrothed to Joseph, **before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Spirit.*** 19 Then Joseph her husband, being a just man, and not wanting to make her a public example, was minded to put her away secretly. 20 But while he thought about these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, ‘Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take to you Mary your wife, for **that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit.** 21 And she will bring forth a Son, and you shall call His name JESUS, for He will save His people from their sins.’ 22 So all this was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Lord through the prophet, saying: 23 **‘BEHOLD, THE VIRGIN SHALL BE WITH CHILD, AND BEAR A SON, AND THEY SHALL CALL HIS NAME IMMANUEL,’ which is translated, ‘God with us.’**”
- C. The Scriptures state that Jesus is Divine/God. **John 1:1,14** “*In the beginning was **the Word**, and the Word was with God, and **the Word was God.** 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.”*
- Philippians 2:5** “*Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, 6 who, being in the form of God, **did not consider it robbery to be equal with God,** 7 but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men.*”

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1. Jesus claimed to be Divine/God. He didn't leave any other option open. His claim is either true or it's not. **John 8:58** *“Jesus said to them, ‘Most assuredly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I AM.’”*
 - a. Recall how God, the Father, identified Himself to Moses in **Exodus 3:14** *“And God said to Moses, ‘I AM WHO I AM.’ And He said, ‘Thus you shall say to the children of Israel, ‘I AM has sent me to you.’”*

D. If Jesus is not who He said He was, here are the alternatives:

1. He was a liar! — that makes Him a flat out deceiver!
2. He was a lunatic! — that says He was sincere but crazy!
3. He was a legend! — that would be the doings of His disciples!
4. He was Divine! — then He is the Messiah, Deity, God, and Savior!

I. **WAS JESUS A LIAR?** (Remember, behavior reflects personality!)

A. **Mark 14:61-64** *“But He kept silent and answered nothing. Again the high priest asked Him, saying to Him, ‘Are You the Christ, the Son of the Blessed?’ 62 Jesus said, ‘I am. And you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Power, and coming with the clouds of heaven.’ 63 Then the high priest tore his clothes and said, ‘What further need do we have of witnesses? 64 You have heard the blasphemy! What do you think?’ And they all condemned Him to be deserving of death.”*

B. Lying is contrary to His character:

1. **John 8:44-47** *“You are of your father the devil, and the desires of your father you want to do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own resources, for he is a liar and the father of it. 45 But because I tell the truth, you do not believe Me. 46 Which of you convicts Me of sin? And if I tell the truth, why do you not believe Me? 47 He who is of God hears God's words; therefore you do not hear, because you are not of God.”*
2. **John 18:37** *“Pilate therefore said to Him, ‘Are You a king then?’ Jesus answered, ‘You say rightly that I am a king. For this cause I was born, and for this cause I have come into the world, that I should bear witness to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth hears My voice.’”*
3. If He was a liar why did men have to try and entangle Him in His words? **Matthew 22:15** *“Then the Pharisees went and plotted how they might entangle Him in His talk.”*

II. **WAS JESUS A LUNATIC?**

A. **John 8:51** *“Most assuredly, I say to you, if anyone keeps My word he shall never see death. 52 Then the Jews said to Him, ‘Now we know that You have a demon! Abraham is dead, and the prophets; and You say, ‘If anyone keeps My word he shall never taste death.’ 53 Are You greater than our father Abraham, who is dead? And the prophets are dead. Who do You make Yourself out to be?” 54 Jesus answered, “‘f I honor Myself, My honor is nothing. It is My Father who honors Me, of whom you say that He is your God. 55 Yet you have not known Him, but I know Him. And if I say, ‘I do not know Him, ‘I shall be a liar like you; but I do know Him and keep His word. 56 Your father Abraham rejoiced to*

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see My day, and he saw it and was glad.’ 57 Then the Jews said to Him, ‘You are not yet fifty years old, and have You seen Abraham?’ 58 Jesus said to them, ‘Most assuredly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I AM.’ 59 Then they took up stones to throw at Him; but Jesus hid Himself and went out of the temple, going through the midst of them, and so passed by.”

- B. **John 10:20** “And many of them said, ‘He has a demon and is mad. Why do you listen to Him?’ 21 Others said, ‘These are not the words of one who has a demon. Can a demon open the eyes of the blind?’”
- C. This, too, was contrary to His character!
 - 1. He was calm, He did not hallucinate nor was He involved in disconnected fantasies!
 - 2. When it came to His death He predicted it accurately:
John 12:32-33 “And I, if I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all peoples to Myself.’ 33 This He said, signifying by what death He would die.”
Matthew 16:21 “From that time Jesus began to show to His disciples that He must go to Jerusalem, and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised the third day.”
- D. His teaching produces peace of mind and heart!

III. **WAS HE A LEGEND?** (a non-historical or unverifiable story handed down by tradition from earlier times and popularly accepted as historical. Synonyms -- fable, myth)

- A. What did the sign say? John 19:19 “Now Pilate wrote a title and put it on the cross. And the writing was: **JESUS OF NAZARETH, THE KING OF THE JEWS.**”
- B. They didn’t follow fables, but eyewitness testimony. **2 Pet. 1:16-18** “For **we did not follow cunningly devised fables** when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, **but were eyewitnesses of His majesty.** 17 For He received from God the Father honor and glory when such a voice came to Him from the Excellent Glory: ‘This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.’ 18 And **we heard this voice** which came from heaven **when we were with Him** on the holy mountain.”
Acts 10:39-41 “And we are witnesses of all things which He did both in the land of the Jews and in Jerusalem, whom they killed by hanging on a tree. 40 Him God raised up on the third day, and showed Him openly, 41 not to all the people, but to witnesses chosen before by God, even to us who ate and drank with Him after He arose from the dead.”;
1 Corinthians 15:4-8 “and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures, 5 and that He was **seen by Cephas, then by the twelve.** 6 After that He was **seen by over five hundred brethren** at once, of whom the greater part remain to the present, but some have fallen asleep. 7 After that **He was seen by James, then by all the apostles.** 8 Then last of all **He was seen by me** also, as by one born out of due time.”

IV. **HE IS LORD!!!**

- A. **Acts 2:36** "Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ."
- B. This is consistent with the confession they all made!
 - 1. John the immerser. **John 1:29** “The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, ‘Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!’”

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- 2. Jesus’ disciples. **Matthew 16:15-17** “He said to them, ‘But who do you say that I am?’ 16 Simon Peter answered and said, ‘**You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.**’ 17 Jesus answered and said to him, ‘Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah, for **flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but My Father who is in heaven.**”
- 3. Martha. **John 11:27** “She said to Him, ‘Yes, Lord, I believe that **You are the Christ, the Son of God, who is to come into the world.**”
- 4. The Ethiopian. **Acts 8:37** “Then Philip said, ‘If you believe with all your heart, you may.’ And he answered and said, ‘I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.’”
- 5. Saul (after his conversion) **Acts 9:20** - “Immediately he preached the Christ in the synagogues, that He is the Son of God.”

Questions:

- 1. If talking with someone who believed Jesus was just a man, how would you use and explain John 1:1-3,14?

ANSWER:

- 2. From what we have studied, in what way was Jesus different from men which is proof He is Divine?

ANSWER:

- 3. **THOUGHT QUESTION:** Some, in their effort to disprove the divinity of Jesus, refer to Jesus’ statement in **Matthew 19:17** “So He said to him, “Why do you call Me good? No one is good but One, that is, God.” How would you refute their claim?

ANSWER:
