

Who is Jesus?

Jesus said some interesting things about Himself, some of which angered the Jewish people of the time.

One thing He said is:

“I and the Father are one.” John 10:30 ESV

You might think that saying this was no big deal. Perhaps He simply meant that He and God had the same purpose.

The Jews that heard this, though, took great offense and were about to stone Him. Why?

The Jews answered him, “It is not for a good work that we are going to stone you but for blasphemy, because you, being a man, make yourself God.” John 10:33 ESV

Another time, Jesus said this:

But Jesus answered them, “My Father is working until now, and I am working.”
John 5:17 ESV

Again, something that many would find to be of no concern. So Jesus considered in some sense that God was His Father.

We are God’s creation. So God is, in a sense, our Father.

Hearing this, though, the Jews were very upset. Why? John, who documented this event, explained it this way:

This was why the Jews were seeking all the more to kill him, because not only was he breaking the Sabbath, but he was even calling God his own Father, making himself equal with God. John 5:18 ESV

Another time, Jesus was talking with some of the Jewish teachers when He said:

“Truly, truly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I am.” John 8:58b ESV

The result was this:

So they picked up stones to throw at him,.... John 8:59a ESV

Why? Because they understood that Jesus was saying that He was the “I Am” (eternally existing God) who revealed Himself to the Jews of the Old Testament. (See Exodus 3:14)

And once, when a paralyzed man was brought to Jesus for healing, Jesus responded this way:

And when Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralytic, "Son, your sins are forgiven." Mark 2:5
ESV

The Jewish teachers that were there had this reaction:

"Why does this man speak like that? He is blaspheming! Who can forgive sins but God alone?"
Mark 2:7 ESV

Jesus claimed to be equal with God. The Jewish people of the time understood that.

So how should we respond to those claims? There are three main possibilities.

- 1 – He was lying. He knew He wasn't God but said those things anyway.
- 2 – He thought He was God but was mistaken; that is, He was crazy.
- 3 – He was God and is Lord.

If He was a liar, one must ask what further evidence there is for that. When He was on trial for His life, about to be crucified, why, if He lied, didn't He simply say that He was misunderstood and then correct the mistaken impression the Jews had?

If He was crazy, what other evidence do we have for that? Wouldn't there have been other signs?

As for Jesus being God and Lord, there seems to be significant evidence. It is recorded that He was able to calm storms (Matthew 8:23-27), that He could heal the blind (Matthew 9:27-31, John 9:1-38) and the lepers (Luke 17:11-19), and that He raised the dead (Matthew 9:18-26, Luke 7:11-17, John 11:1-44). (Other events could be cited.) The culminating evidence was His own resurrection from the dead (Luke 24:5-6, John 20:19-29).

Some might say that there never was a person named Jesus. But there is no doubt that a Jewish teacher named Jesus lived. Witness the establishment of Christmas and Easter holidays and the calendar we all live by (BC – before Christ and AD – Anno Domini (the year of the Lord)). Why have any of these if there never was a person of great significance named Jesus?

Some might suggest He was simply a good teacher. But how could we consider Him to have been a "good" teacher if He lied about who He was: God in the flesh? What kind of "good" teacher is one who lies?

No, the only real choices are liar, lunatic, or Lord. The evidence would seem to point to the latter. He was and is Lord.

So, why should one become a disciple of Christ – a Christian?

One major reason is because of who Jesus is: God. Being a Christian begins with a belief in this foundational truth.

But does simply knowing Who Jesus is make you a Christian?

Simply recognizing who Jesus is DOES NOT make you a Christian.

There is an event recorded in the Bible telling of the time Jesus met two demon-possessed men. Upon seeing Jesus:

And behold, they cried out, "What have you to do with us, O Son of God?"
Matthew 8:29 ESV

Knowing who Jesus was did not make them Christians. But knowing who Jesus is can provide one reason for becoming His disciple.

In the previous section, we found three things that go into being a disciple of Christ: Disciples/students are those who set themselves to learn from a teacher, to live out the teachings and, according to Jesus, will, when fully taught, become like their teacher.

So, what were some basic things that Jesus wanted His disciples to learn?

A good place to start is to learn why He came – to learn His purpose in coming to Earth. And in learning that, there will be a second reason to become His disciple.

Read on.

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