

03

WHO IS JESUS?

What people have said about Jesus

Jesus' relationship with God

Jesus' mission

Jesus the restorer

03 : WHO IS JESUS?

Another \$64,000,000 question that has provoked much discussion (and argument!).

Many have scorned Him and rejected His very existence, even though the very fact that He walked on the earth has been well documented by non-religious historians. Others concede He existed, but see no point in His being a part of their lives. Still others make fun of Him or use His name as a curse or swear word.

**PAUSE FOR
THOUGHT**

*Who do YOU think
Jesus is (or was)?*

WHAT PEOPLE HAVE SAID ABOUT JESUS

*I think that he was a prophet. I've had a difficult time coming to terms with Jesus Christ as the Son of God -
Ronnie James Dio (Heavy metal singer/songwriter)*

"I like your Christ, I do not like your Christians. Your Christians are so unlike your Christ." - Mahatma Gandhi

Wherever you go, there are three icons that everyone knows: Jesus Christ, Pele, and Coca-Cola – Pele

*I am an historian, I am not a believer, but I must confess as a historian that this penniless preacher from Nazareth is irrevocably the very centre of history. Jesus Christ is easily the most dominant figure in all history –
H.G. Wells*

*Truth, according to the Christian faith, is God's love for us in Jesus Christ. Therefore, truth is a relationship -
Pope Francis*

JESUS' RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD

When Jesus walked on the earth His words and actions caused much division among people and nations. Just the mention of His name could cause riots, as He Himself had already intimated.

As we have already seen, Jesus is the Son of God. He was both fully human and fully God. He experienced everything that we as humans experience which enables Him to fully relate to us and what we go through in our lives and because of this allows us to relate to Him. He was completely devoted to His Father. He did nothing without His Father's approval – but this wasn't an overbearing, stifling relationship but rather one that gave Jesus freedom in knowing who He was, and the contentment of knowing He was loved and valued.

Jesus, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage rather, he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness.

PHILIPPIANS 2:6 -7

Jesus was utterly secure in His identity, because He knew both His origin and His destiny.

The religious authorities in His day though wanted to get rid of Him, for He was a challenge to their hypocrisy. He became the subject of much discussion and debate.

However, His real reason for coming to the earth was to restore the broken relationship between men and women and God the Father.

JESUS' MISSION

Primarily Jesus came to earth to show people God's love. While they had heard about this from their religious leaders, they failed to observe anything of it in their traditions and practices. Instead these leaders tended to lord it over the people, failing to practice what they preached - leaders who should have known better.

But they were just interested in themselves and what they could get out of their position to better their lives. Everything they did was for people to notice them.

People on the whole were very opinionated as to whom Jesus should and should not relate to, but He wanted to show the impartiality of God's love towards people.

He backed all this up with miracles and healings that again showed God's loving concern for people. So they devised a plan to get rid of Him – execute Him - and that would be that problem solved!

Although the religious rulers and people thought that was the end of Jesus - though He repeatedly said that although He was going to be killed, He would rise from the dead on the third day- they didn't believe Him.

Jesus answered and was saying to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of Himself, unless it is something He sees the Father doing; for whatever the Father does, these things the Son also does in like manner.

JOHN 5:19

The religious leaders of that day were schooled in the Law – God’s instructions to His chosen people, the Jews.

However, over the centuries this Law, instead of being like a ‘signpost’ leading people into a greater revelation of their God, had, through human misinterpretations and addition of man-made traditions, totally distorted its true purpose. Much of Jesus’ condemnation was for the religious rulers and how they had misled the people away for a proper relationship with God.

So we see that a greater part of Jesus’ mission was to bring a sense of balance back into people’s relationship with God.

JESUS CAME TO RESTORE OUR BROKEN RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD

Jesus also came to earth to restore the broken relationship between us and God. As we shall see in the next chapter, after 3 years of ministry the religious rulers had had enough of Jesus and the way He embarrassed them over and over again.

How were they to get rid of Him? They had tried several times but He just seemed to slip between their fingers. They found the answer in one of Jesus’ disciples who agreed to betray Him for a couple of hundred quid!

Nevertheless, after Jesus’ crucifixion a few days’ later reports started circulating that He had in fact come back to life after three days being in a sealed and guarded tomb. This was startling news and people, including His followers, had a hard job of getting their heads around this.

But although it seemed His mission had failed, yet He was in fact fulfilling all that His Father had sent Him to do.

Remember how He (Jesus) told you, while He was still with you in Galilee ‘The Son of Man must be delivered over to the hands of sinners, be crucified and on the third day be raised again?’ Then they (the disciples) remembered his words.

LUKE 24:6-8

NOTES: