

Lord, Liar or Lunatic

But who do you say that I am?~ Matthew 16:15

Why is it that by in large people can speak of God and few get upset, but as soon as someone mentions Jesus, many become agitated and want to stop the conversation?

Few doubt the existence of Jesus, he after all is a historical figure and although he only lived on this earth for approximately 33 years His impact was undeniable! Time is even marked by His birth and physical death, by way of BC and AD. So, what makes Jesus so different from other religious leaders such as Buddha, Mohammed or Confucius? Stating the obvious - His claim to be the Son of God meant that He was much more than that of a prophet or teacher and people took notice! The real difference is that these leaders and others never claimed to be God, but Jesus did. That is what makes Him so different from other religious leaders. Telling everyone that He was the Son of God was without a doubt an astounding claim. The claim to be the Son of God also meant that He was the only avenue to a relationship with God the Father, the only source of forgiveness for sins, and the only way of salvation.

The name Jesus and His claim to be God was met with a variety of responses, just as the name of Jesus does today. For many his claim to be the only way of salvation is too exclusive and narrow minded to want to believe. In our US culture today, I imagine many would say that Jesus is a racist, in that He excludes those who do not come to Him for forgiveness.

Ever wonder what the name Jesus Christ means? It is actually a name and a title. The name Jesus is derived from the Greek form of the name *Jeshua* or *Joshua* meaning "Jehovah-Savior" or "the Lord saves. The title *Christ* is derived from the Greek word for *Messiah* (or the Hebrew *Mashiach* – Daniel 9:26)" and means "anointed one." The Scriptures attribute characteristics to Him as being self-existent, omnipresent, omniscient, omnipotent and possessing eternal life. Jesus received honor and worship that only God should receive. During His confrontation with Satan, He stated, "*You shall worship the Lord your God and serve Him only*"(Matthew 4:10). And when asked by the religious leaders of the day about being the Christ He tells them "*I and the Father are One*"(John 10:30). Needless to say, their response was immediate rage followed by a desire to stone Him then and there! His Name demands a response!

CS Lewis who was once an agnostic and professor at Cambridge University wrote: "You can shut Him up for a fool, you can spit at 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 Him being a great human teacher. He has not left that open to us. (Clearly ...with words such as these: "*I am the way the truth and the life, no one comes to the Father except through Me*"(John 14:6).) He did not intend to."

Who do you say Jesus is: Lord, Liar or Lunatic?

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