

The Man Who Is God

In the study/article titled *“Is God Real To You? He Can Be!”*, we saw that it is through Jesus Christ the Son of God who lived on this earth, in human form, as the Son of Man, is the only way we can come to know God. For God to become real to us.

Without Jesus Christ the Son of God we as human beings can know virtually nothing about God.

God is spirit, a completely different realm to the one we as fleshly beings live.

Between us and God is a great gulf that we cannot cross. God is altogether beyond our reach.

God had to come to us human beings, which He has done in Jesus Christ, who is both God and human.

John 1:1-2 [NIV] *“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning.”*

Who is this Word?

John 1:14 [NIV] *“The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.”*

The God who became flesh. We all know the account of His physical birth celebrated by Christians each year at Christmas time.

How do we come to know a person, any other human being?

By watching what they do and listening to what they say.

The life of Jesus Christ is extensively recorded for us in the Handbook For Life, the Christian Bible.

All too often people are quick to dismiss the Christian faith because of some inconsistency they can see in the professing Christian world around them.

Very seldom are such criticisms the result of an in-depth examination of the person of Jesus Christ Himself.

Who is Jesus Christ?

Jesus asked this question of His own followers.

Mark 8:27-29 [NIV] *“Jesus and his disciples went on to the villages around Caesarea Philippi. On the way he asked them, “Who do people say I am?” They replied, “Some say John the Baptist; others say Elijah; and still others, one of the prophets.” “But what about you?” he asked. “Who do you say I am?” Peter answered, “You are the Christ.”*

The disciples were convinced of the divinity of Jesus Christ by personal experience.

This is something we also can do through their accounts of His life and sayings.

1 John 1:1-3 [NIV] *“That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked at and our hands have touched, this we proclaim concerning the Word of life. The life appeared; we have seen it and testify to it, and we proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and has appeared to us. We proclaim to you what we have seen and*

heard, so that you also may have fellowship with us. And our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ.”

Christ’s miracles are strong evidence of His divinity.

Mark 2:3-10 [NIV] *“Some men came, bringing to him a paralytic, carried by four of them. Since they could not get him to Jesus because of the crowd, they made an opening in the roof above Jesus and, after digging through it, lowered the mat the paralysed man was lying on. When Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralytic, “Son, your sins are forgiven.” Now some teachers of the law were sitting there, thinking to themselves, “Why does this fellow talk like that? He’s blaspheming! Who can forgive sins but God alone?” Immediately Jesus knew in his spirit that this was what they were thinking in their hearts, and he said to them, “Why are you thinking these things? Which is easier: to say to the paralytic, ‘Your sins are forgiven,’ or to say, ‘Get up, take your mat and walk’? But that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins....” He said to the paralytic,*

When a paralysed man was brought to Christ. The scribes [the theologians of the time] knew exactly what Christ had implied by the statement *“your sins are forgiven”*.

Christ was making a direct claim to His divinity, for only God can forgive sins.

Another example is that of Thomas the disciple who was filled with doubt as to who Jesus really was.

John 20:27-28 [NIV] *“Then he said to Thomas, “Put your finger here; see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it into my side. Stop doubting and believe.” Thomas said to him, “My Lord and my God!”*

The personal experience of the risen Christ convinced Thomas.

Notice Jesus did **not** rebuke Thomas for calling him God!

But Jesus did gently rebuke him for not trusting in His divinity before.

Christ calmly accepted as a right the worship of His disciple.

What did Jesus Christ the God/man teach?

Two things are very clear about Christ’s teachings.

First, it is incredibly self-centred.

Secondly, if His teaching is true it is of very great importance to us today.

Human beings are hungry and thirsty for something that will satisfy a deep longing within them, that physical actions and possessions are unable to satisfy.

Christ said that He could fill that deep void.

John 6:35, 51 [NIV] *“Then Jesus declared, “I am the bread of life. He who comes to me will never go hungry, and he who believes in me will never be thirsty.” ... “I am the living bread that came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live for ever. This bread is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world.”*

Christ is the bread that satisfies.

John 7:37 [NIV] *“On the last and greatest day of the Feast, Jesus stood and said in a loud voice, “If anyone is thirsty, let him come to me and drink.”*

Christ is the living water that will satisfy our thirst.

Many stumble through life in the dark as to why we have life!

John 8:12 [NIV] *“When Jesus spoke again to the people, he said, “I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.”*

Christ is the light.

Matthew 11:28 [NIV] *“Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest.”*

Christ is the stress reliever.

John 14:6 [NIV] *“Jesus answered, “I am the way and the truth and the life. No-one comes to the Father except through me.”*

To follow Christ is the way we should travel in our life.

To listen to His Words is the way to having the truth about life.

Hebrews 1:1-3 [NIV] *“In the past God spoke to our forefathers through the prophets at many times and in various ways, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, and through whom he made the universe. The Son is the radiance of God’s glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word. After he had provided purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven.”*

Christ as Creator and Sustainer is the source of life itself.

If Christ withdrew His support the whole universe would evaporate.

John 15:1-4 [NIV] *“I am the true vine, and my Father is the gardener. He cuts off every branch in me that bears no fruit, while every branch that does bear fruit he prunes so that it will be even more fruitful. You are already clean because of the word I have spoken to you. Remain in me, and I will remain in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me.”*

Real satisfying fruitful lives depend on our close relationship with Christ.

John 11:25 [NIV] *“Jesus said to her, “I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in me will live, even though he dies;”*

Eternal life after our physical death is dependent on faith in what Christ promises and does.

John 10:11, 14-15 [NIV] *“I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep.” ... “I am the good shepherd; I know my sheep and my sheep know me, just as the Father knows me and I know the Father, and I lay down my life for the sheep.”*

Christ is the shepherd who willingly lay down His physical life for His followers [sheep] and still provides and protects His [sheep] followers today.

John 10:30 [NIV] *“I and the Father are one.”*

Meaning *“one in substance.”*

John 14:9 [NIV] *“Jesus answered: “Don’t you know me, Philip, even after I have been among you such a long time? Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, ‘Show us the Father’?”*

The context of this question and answer is important.

Christ had just told them that there would come a time when they would be tested and persecuted, and that He Himself would be crucified.

Their reaction to this news was understandable.

Why should they commit themselves to this way of life that Jesus had taught, let alone to a person who was going to be martyred?

The disciples then as now need to be assured of the divinity of Christ.

Today people are interested to hear about the Christian faith, but very unwilling to commit themselves personally.

Why?

Because today it is **not** easy to be a true disciple of Jesus Christ. You are a marked man or woman. It costs something.

Perhaps the most important of Jesus' claims to be God is found in a conversation He had with the Jews of His day.

John 8:56-59 [NIV] *“Your father Abraham rejoiced at the thought of seeing my day; he saw it and was glad.” “You are not yet fifty years old,” the Jews said to him, “and you have seen Abraham!” “I tell you the truth,” Jesus answered, “before Abraham was born, **I am!**” At this, they picked up stones to stone him, but Jesus hid himself, slipping away from the temple grounds.”*

The term “*I am*” was God's own name as revealed to Moses. [**Exodus 3:13-15**]

Jesus calmly took this divine title for Himself.

Nothing could be clearer as to Who He claimed to be.

Christ's character.

All of Christ's claims were supported by His character.

Let us ask His close friends, who were with Him constantly for over 3 years, and saw Him tried, tested and besieged by the crowds to the point of distraction.

How did Peter see Christ?

1 Peter 1:19 [NIV] *“but with the precious blood of Christ, a lamb without blemish or defect.”*

Without any defect.

1 Peter 2:22 [NIV] *“He committed no sin, and no deceit was found in his mouth.”*

Sinless and without guile.

What about John?

1 John 2:1 [NIV] *“My dear children, I write this to you so that you will not sin. But if anybody does sin, we have one who speaks to the Father in our defence, Jesus Christ, the Righteous One.”*

Christ was the “*righteous One*” that is without sin.

Let us ask Christ's enemies.

Some of them were engaged in a good deal of political mud-slinging. They falsely called Him "A wine-bibber", "a subversive element", "a friend of those whom society had rejected."

Yet what happened when they were called upon to seriously examine Christ's character?

John 8:46 [NIV] "*Can any of you prove me guilty of sin? If I am telling the truth, why don't you believe me?*"

No-one could convict Christ of sin.

Luke 23:14 [NIV] "*and said to them, "You brought me this man as one who was inciting the people to rebellion. I have examined him in your presence and have found no basis for your charges against him."*

Pilate, the Roman governor, after careful examination found Christ **not** guilty.

Let us ask Christ Himself

John 8:25-29 [NIV] "*Who are you?*" they asked. "*Just what I have been claiming all along,*" Jesus replied. "*I have much to say in judgment of you. But he who sent me is reliable, and what I have heard from him I tell the world.*" They did not understand that he was telling them about his Father. So Jesus said, "*When you have lifted up the Son of Man, then you will know that I am [the one I claim to be] and that I do nothing on my own but speak just what the Father has taught me. The one who sent me is with me; he has not left me alone, for I always do what pleases him.*"

Think how quickly the fantastic claims that Jesus Christ made would have been challenged if they had not been genuine.

No-one in the four accounts of Jesus Christ's life ever thought that He was just a man or a marvellous teacher, such a conclusion was impossible.

There was one person who tried to say this, limit Jesus to a teacher.

Mark 10:17-18 [NIV] "*As Jesus started on his way, a man ran up to him and fell on his knees before him. "Good teacher," he asked, "what must I do to inherit eternal life?" "Why do you call me good?" Jesus answered. "No-one is good, except God alone."*

What was Jesus saying to this young man? "Good teacher" is an impossible description. "*Either I am just a teacher, and in that case I am not good in God's eyes, I am a sinner like everyone else. Or, I am good, because I am God.*"

Therefore Christ is either very much more than a "good teacher" or very much less. [He is a "God/teacher"]

You may call Jesus Christ evil, deluded, devil-possessed, a madman or blasphemer, some did precisely this in His day.

But such judgements as these, when set against His character and teaching, tell us nothing about Christ, but a great deal about the character of the people who made such judgements.

Matthew 12:37 [NIV] "*For by your words you will be acquitted, and by your words you will be condemned.*"

Who then is Jesus Christ?

Some people think that they can sit down and discuss Christ and the Christian faith as they might discuss a scientific hypothesis.

This is **not** so.

God does **not** prove His existence by a series of propositions, He reveals Himself in a person.

The way in which we respond to a living person is very different and much more demanding than our response to a logical proposition.

Primarily this is a moral issue, a challenge to the will.

2 Thessalonians 1:8 [NIV] *“He will punish those who do **not** know God and do **not** obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus.”*

Paul tells us that judgement will come on those who do **not** know [have knowledge of] God and obey the message He brings through Jesus Christ.

A Christian is called a disciple of Christ, someone who follows, listens and obeys Christ.

People commonly ask the wrong questions about the Christian faith.

Is it helpful?

Is it satisfying?

Is it worth my while?

Such things are relatively unimportant.

The vital issue is:- Is it true?

Christ replies.

John 14:6 [NIV] *“Jesus answered, “I am the way and the truth and the life. No-one comes to the Father except through me.”*

Jesus Christ alone can lead us to the truth about God.

Jesus Christ alone can bring us into a living relationship with the Creator God.

Some people may protest, saying, *“it requires tremendous faith to believe all that is said about Jesus Christ.”*

“You cannot prove it conclusively, it goes far beyond logic and reason.”

“Perhaps you are wrong.”

Do you realise that in fact you cannot prove, logically, any person’s existence, even your own!!

It is a matter of personal experience.

The Christian belief is therefore a step of faith, for it cannot be proved mathematically or scientifically.

But it takes even greater faith to believe that Christianity is **not** true, only a fairy tale, that Christ's teachings is false.

It takes greater faith when confronted with the experience of Christians who all down through the centuries had lived and died because of a faith based on a delusion.

There is a mass of evidence for what the Christian believes.

Where is the evidence for the agnostic position?

The agnostic has to believe **only** with the authority of his own personal opinion, that all that Christ taught was either not true or not important.

Any person who tries to think honestly must ask themselves what it was that made Christ speak with such authority and why His message is so relevant for every generation including today's, in this modern world.

We live in a modern world that has been blinded to the reality and importance of Jesus Christ.

You don't have to remain a part of it if you truly believe that Jesus Christ is "*the way the truth and the life.*"