

## The Problem of Jesus

EMC Wednesday Night Bible Study - 6-1-16

### Review

#### The Problem of Jesus

His uniqueness in all of human history - Jesus can not be ignored or dismissed.

- Kenneth Scott Latourette - Christian historian from Yale
- J.S. Mill - philosopher, skeptic, and antagonist of Christianity
- William Lecky, one of Great Britain's most noted historians and a dedicated opponent of organized Christianity
- Jesus' life and teachings demand a \_\_\_\_\_

#### Jesus' Claim

Jesus was interested in who people thought that he was:

- Mark 8:27-29 - "Who do they say that I am?"
- World religions:
  - Islam - a messenger of Allah
  - Judaism - A "stumbling block"
  - Others - teacher, prophet, "manifestation" of God

Jesus claimed to be \_\_\_\_\_

- John 14:6 - the only way to God
- John 10:30 - "I and the Father are one." Claiming the same \_\_\_\_\_ as the Father.
  - The Jews' response in vv. 31-33 - "...we are going to stone you...for blasphemy, because you, being a man, make yourself God."
- John 8:58 - Not, "I was," but, "I am."
  - Yahweh = "I am who/that I am." Personal \_\_\_\_\_ of God revealed to Moses. Claiming both preexistence and identity.
  - Jews sought to kill him (cf. Lev. 24:16)
- Mark 14:61-62 - Son of Man, from Daniel 7:13-14
  - The priest's response in vv. 63-65 - "64 You have heard his blasphemy..."
  - Cf. Matthew 25:31-46 - the Son of Man will ultimately judge humanity
  - Cf. Mark 8:34-38 - our eternal destinies depend on our response to Him
- John 19:7 - "The Jews answered him, 'We have a law, and according to that law he ought to die because he has made himself the Son of God.'"
- Mark 2:1-12 - His power over the physical world as well as his \_\_\_\_\_ to forgive sins.
- Jesus accepts people's \_\_\_\_\_, something only reserved for God (cf. Matthew 2:11; 28:9, 17; Luke 24:52; John 9:38; 20:28)
- Thomas' in John 20:28 - "My Lord and my God!" - no correction/rebuke

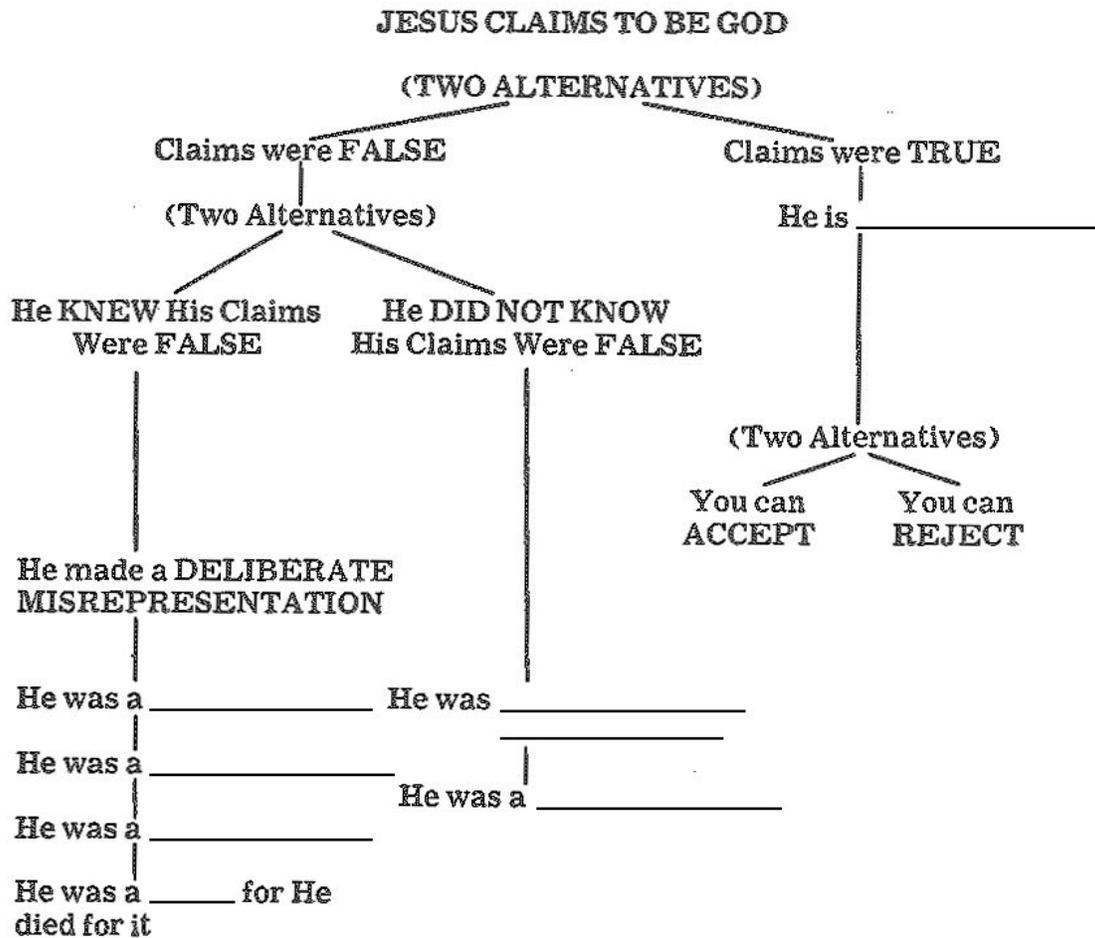
The apostles claimed he was God

- John's prologue (1:1-4, 14, 18) - the Word made flesh
- Acts 20:28 - Paul to the Ephesian elders - "God's blood"
- Colossians 1:15-20 - "image" and "fullness"
- Phil 2:5-11 - "form of God"

- Titus 2:13 - "our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ" (cf. II Peter 1:1)
- Heb. 1:3a - "He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature, and he upholds the universe by the word of his power."
- Heb. 1:8-12 - the Father to the Son:
  - V. 8 - "Your throne, O God, is forever and ever"
  - V. 10 - "You, Lord, laid the foundation of the earth in the beginning, and the heavens are the work of your hands"

**The Trilemma of Jesus**

C.S. Lewis' 3 options:



Who he is has implications

- John 20:31 - "these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name."
- Romans 10:9 - "if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved"

## Appendix - Quotes and Scripture References

### Quotes:

1. Kenneth Scott Latourette: "It is not his teachings which make Jesus so remarkable, although these would be enough to give him distinction. It is a combination of the teachings with the man himself. The two cannot be separated."
2. J.S. Mill: "About the life and sayings of Jesus there is a stamp of personal originality combined with profundity of insight in the very first rank of men of sublime genius of whom our species can boast. When this pre-eminent genius is combined with the qualities of probably the greatest moral reformer and martyr to that mission who ever existed on earth, religion cannot be said to have made a bad choice in pitching upon this man as the ideal representative and guide of humanity; nor even now would it be easy, even for an unbeliever, to find a better translation of the rule of virtue from the abstract into the concrete than to endeavor to live so that Christ would approve of our life."
3. William Lecky: "It was reserved for Christianity to present to the world an ideal character which through all the changes of 18 centuries has inspired the hearts of men with an impassioned love; has shown itself capable of acting on all ages, nations, temperaments and conditions; has been not only the highest pattern of virtue, but the strongest incentive to its practice. ... The simple record of these three short years of active life has done more to regenerate and soften mankind than all the disquisitions of philosophers and all the exhortations of moralists."
4. C.S. Lewis: "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 the 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. 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 with any patronizing nonsense about his being a great human teacher. He has not left that open to us. He did not intend to."
5. C.S. Lewis: "The discrepancy between the depth and sanity of his moral teaching and the rampant megalomania which must lie behind his theological teaching unless he is indeed God has never been satisfactorily explained."

### Scripture:

1. Mark 8:27-29 - "27 And Jesus went on with his disciples to the villages of Caesarea Philippi. And on the way he asked his disciples, 'Who do people say that I am?' 28 And they told him, 'John the Baptist; and others say, Elijah; and others, one of the prophets.' 29 And he asked them, 'But who do you say that I am?'"
2. John 14:6 - "I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me."
3. John 10:30-33 - "I and the Father are one. 31 The Jews picked up stones again to stone him. 32 Jesus answered them, 'I have shown you many good works from the Father; for which of them are you going to stone me?' 33 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.'"
4. John 8:58-59 - "Jesus said to them, 'Truly, truly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I am.' 59 So they picked up stones to throw at him, but Jesus hid himself and went out of the temple."
5. Lev. 24:16 - "Whoever blasphemes the name of the Lord shall surely be put to death. All the congregation shall stone him. The sojourner as well as the native, when he blasphemes the Name, shall be put to death."

6. Mark 14:61-652 - "The high priest asked him, 'Are you the Christ, the Son of the Blessed?'" 62 And Jesus said, 'I am, and you will see the Son of Man seated at the right hand of Power, and coming with the clouds of heaven.' 63 And the high priest tore his garments and said, "What further witnesses do we need? 64 You have heard his blasphemy. What is your decision?" And they all condemned him as deserving death. 65 And some began to spit on him and to cover his face and to strike him, saying to him, 'Prophesy!' And the guards received him with blows."
7. Daniel 7:13-14 - "I saw in the night visions, and behold, with the clouds of heaven there came one like a son of man, and he came to the Ancient of Days and was presented before him. 14 And to him was given dominion and glory and a kingdom, that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve him; his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom one that shall not be destroyed."
8. Mark 2:1-12 - "And when he returned to Capernaum after some days, it was reported that he was at home. 2 And many were gathered together, so that there was no more room, not even at the door. And he was preaching the word to them. 3 And they came, bringing to him a paralytic carried by four men. 4 And when they could not get near him because of the crowd, they removed the roof above him, and when they had made an opening, they let down the bed on which the paralytic lay. 5 And when Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralytic, 'Son, your sins are forgiven.' 6 Now some of the scribes were sitting there, questioning in their hearts, 7 'Why does this man speak like that? He is blaspheming! Who can forgive sins but God alone?' 8 And immediately Jesus, perceiving in his spirit that they thus questioned within themselves, said to them, 'Why do you question these things in your hearts? 9 Which is easier, to say to the paralytic, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Rise, take up your bed and walk?' 10 But that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins'—he said to the paralytic— 11 'I say to you, rise, pick up your bed, and go home.' 12 And he rose and immediately picked up his bed and went out before them all, so that they were all amazed and glorified God, saying, 'We never saw anything like this!'"
9. John 1:1-4, 14, 18 - "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2 He was in the beginning with God. 3 All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made. 4 In him was life, and the life was the light of men...14 And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth...18 No one has ever seen God; the only God, who is at the Father's side, he has made him known."
10. Acts 20:28 - "Pay careful attention to yourselves and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to care for the church of God, which he obtained with his own blood."
11. Colossians 1:15-20 - "15 He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. 16 For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created through him and for him. 17 And he is before all things, and in him all things hold together. 18 And he is the head of the body, the church. He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in everything he might be preeminent. 19 For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, 20 and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross."
12. Philippians 2:5-11 - "5 Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, 6 who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, 7 but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. 8 And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. 9 Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, 10 so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, 11 and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."