

WHO IS JESUS? #1

John Edwards

The answer to this question is as controversial as it is consequential.

JESUS HAS EVER BEEN A PERSON OF MISTAKEN IDENTITY. It is not that Jesus suffered an identity crisis, in which He groped to find Himself, as dramatized in theater. Jesus knew who He was, from whence He came, and where He was going. “...for I know whence I came, and whither I go...” (Jn. 8:14). The many “I am” statements of Jesus are evidence of the cognizance of Jesus. When the high priest asked Jesus, “Art thou the Christ, the Son of the Blessed?”, He answered, “I am...” (Mk. 14:61-62).

Rather, the masses have had incorrect perceptions of the nature and mission of Jesus. Many of the views of those of the same time period of Jesus ran counter to the true person of Jesus. In His own city He was regarded as a blasphemous man as “...certain of the scribes said within themselves, This man blasphemeth” (Mt. 9:3). The Pharisees attributed His works to Satan when they said, “He casteth out devils through the prince of the devils” (Mt. 9:34). He was accused of being a law-breaker (Mt. 12:1-2). His generation perceived Him as “...a man gluttonous, and a

winebibber...” (Mt. 11:19). “When Jesus came into the coasts of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, saying, Whom do men say that I the Son of man am? And they said, Some say that thou art John the Baptist: some, Elias; and others, Jeremias, or one of the prophets” (Mt. 16:13-14).

MANY TODAY GRAPPLE WITH THE QUESTION OF JESUS. Jews envision in the Messiah one who would stand up and restore the Davidic kingdom to its antiquity, build the temple in Jerusalem, gather the strayed ones of Israel together, and restore all laws. Since Jesus did not fulfill the mission of the Messiah as Jews have understood it, modern Jews deny Jesus is “...him, of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets, did write...” (Jn. 1:45).

The *Qur'an* gives insight into how *Muslims*, adherents of *Islam*, view Jesus. Muslims view Jesus as a messenger of Allah (As-Saff, 61:6); as just a man, rejecting the deity of Jesus (Al-Ma'idah, 5:72-73); as being raised up by Allah, denying the crucifixion of Jesus (An-Nisa, 4:157-158); and as a prophet inferior to Muhammad.

There are two prevalent views of Jesus within *Hinduism*, the dominant religion of India. The first view is that Jesus was one of the incarnations of God. According to another notion, Jesus spent His years between

the ages of twelve and thirty at the feet of Hindu masters in India, and it is their teaching that He then proclaimed during His ministry.

Buddhists see Jesus in different ways. To those who believe in Jesus as a follower of Buddha, He was not the Son of God in the literal sense, but an enlightened master who followed and taught the teachings of Buddha.

JESUS IS THE SON OF MAN. The phrase “Son of man” appears eighty-five times in the gospel accounts. The Son of man “...came down from heaven...” (Jn. 3:13); “...to seek and to save that which was lost” (Lk. 19:10); was betrayed, killed, and raised again (Mt. 17:22-23); and “...whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life” (Jn. 3:14-15).

As the Son of man, Jesus is the seed of woman (Gen. 3:15; Gal. 4:4), Abraham’s seed (Gen. 12:3; Acts 3:25-26), the lion of the tribe of Judah (Gen. 49:8-10), the star of Jacob (Num. 24:17), the Rod of the stem of Jesse (Is. 11:1), and the root and offspring of David (Rom. 1:3).

In referring to Himself as the Son of man (Mt. 16:13), Jesus identified Himself with the subject of Daniel 7:13-14. As the Son of man, Jesus is the possessor of supreme authority, the object of praise, and the monarch of an indestructible

kingdom.

In Hebrews 2:6-9, the writer quoted Psalm 8:4-6 and applied it to Jesus. As the Son of man, Jesus is our suffering reconciler — “... a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted” (Heb. 2:17-18).

JESUS IS THE SON OF GOD.

The human and divine natures of Jesus were united in the virgin birth of Jesus (Is. 7:14; Mt. 1:18-25), as “... God sent forth his Son, made of a woman...” (Gal. 4:4). The “Word” which was “... in the beginning with God” and “was God” “... was made flesh, and dwelt among us...” (Jn. 1:1-2, 14). Paul said, “And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up to glory” (1 Tim. 3:16).

Faith in the divine Sonship of Jesus rests upon recorded testimony (Jn. 20:30-31). The certainty of the historical record is seen in the “perfect understanding” of the historian and firsthand testimony of

credible witnesses (Lk. 1:1-4). Jesus (Mt. 26:63-64), John (Jn. 1:34), the works of Christ (Jn. 10:24-25, 36-38), the Scriptures (Jn. 5:39, 45-47), and the apostles (Lk. 24:48; 1 Jn. 1:1-3) all testify that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God.

The evidence of the divinity of Jesus culminates in the resurrection of Jesus. He is “... declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead” (Rom. 1:4).

As Peter said of Jesus, “... we believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God” (Jn. 6:69).

TEN THINGS THAT SAVE

John Edwards

Nowhere does the Bible say that a person is saved by any one thing alone. A number of things work together to bring about man’s salvation.

GOD. “For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour; Who will have all men to be saved...” (1 Tim. 2:3-4).

CHRIST. “And she shall

bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins” (Mt. 1:21).

GRACE. “For by grace are ye saved...” (Eph. 2:8).

FAITH. “But without faith it is impossible to please him...” (Heb. 11:6).

BLOOD. “In whom we have redemption through his blood...” (Eph. 1:7).

THE GOSPEL. “For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation...” (Rom. 1:16).

PREACHING. “... it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe” (1 Cor. 1:21).

WORKS. “Ye see then how that by works a man is justified...” (Jas. 2:24).

CONFESSION. “... with the mouth confession is made unto salvation” (Rom. 10:10).

BAPTISM. “The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us...” (1 Pet. 3:21).

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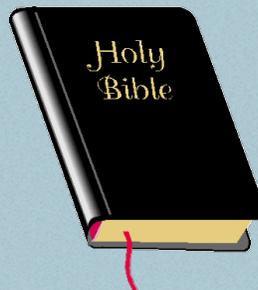
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