

C. S. Lewis said, "A man who was merely a man and said the sort of things Jesus said wouldn't be a great moral teacher. He'd be either a lunatic on a level with a man who says he's a poached egg or else he'd 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."

Still others make the wrong, but "confident assertion" that hundreds of years after Christ, radical Christians made up all Jesus' claims.

Paul E. Little, associate professor of evangelism at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School and author of many books including, *Know Why You Believe*, wrote, "Modern archeology verifies that the four biographies of Christ were written within the lifetime of people who saw, heard, and followed Him. These gospel accounts contained specific facts and descriptions confirmed by those who were eyewitnesses." Little went on to write, "The late William F. Albright, a world-famous archaeologist with Johns Hopkins University, said there is no reason to believe that any of the Gospels, were written later than A.D. 70."

The eyewitness validity and Christ's own words were what made these writings so impactful and make assertions that they were manufactured centuries later ring hollow and false.

Again, Dr Walter Martin co-author with Ravi Zacharias of the book *Kingdom of the Cults*, said, "It should be carefully noted that Jesus did not say, "I am one of the equally good ways" or "I am a better way than the others, I am an aspect of truth; I am a fragment of the life." Instead, His claim was absolute, and allegiance to Him as the Savior of the world, was to take precedence over all the claims of men and religions."

BUT JUST BELIEVING THE FACTS ABOUT JESUS ISN'T ENOUGH.

It's been said that having Jesus Christ as Lord of your life is not so much a matter of belief or non-belief but receiving or rejection. Many will "miss heaven by 18 inches."

The Pen Illustration: John 3:16 / John 1:11-12

This simple illustration clarified, for me, the biblical role Jesus wanted to play in my life... and accepted Him as Savior and received Him into my life as Savior and Lord.

Be sure you have this essential of Christianity established in your life. A personal relationship with Jesus... and the Jesus who is God incarnate, Savior, Lord, coming King. It's never too late to ask Him into your everyday... in fact, it is essential. Don't get off course and miss eternity by just 18 inches.

Next Week:

We'll talk about the Word of God being the only authoritative source of God, His will, and His plan for us all.

The inspired Word of God is an Essential to true biblical Christianity.

Purpose of this series: To clarify and solidify essential truths of the Christian faith. **If these truths are missing, incorrect, or incomplete** from our personal belief matrix we are not living biblical Christianity.

Dr. Walter Martin... Baptist minister, author, and founder of The Christian Research Institute wrote,

"When people say, 'I believe in Jesus', look them straight in the eye and ask, 'Which one?'"

Our Warnings:

The 1 in 60 Rule:

"For each **degree off** in the way you're heading, you'll be off course 1 nautical mile over a 60-mile distance."

THIS WEEK... CORRECT DOCTRINE OF JESUS IS ESSENTIAL

Acts 4:12

1 John 2:22,23

Philippians 2:9-11

Be aware of "confident assertions" that lead us off course.

Timothy 1:5-7

Be careful of a world system interested in rating numbers, not truth.

We do not depend upon media for affirming and building our faith.

We rely on the essential of God's Word (next week).

1 Thessalonians 2:13

PEOPLE WHO CONFIDENTLY MAKE FALSE TEACHINGS ABOUT JESUS.

Also take care of whom we listen for truth about Jesus.

Some incorrectly say that Jesus never said He was God.

But this "confident assertion" is clearly false: John 8:8:56-59

Note the reaction of Jesus' audiences... even His enemies: John 10:30-33

Others falsely claim that Jesus only taught moral lessons and rarely made any claims about Himself.

But, again, this “confident assertion” is clearly false:

Let’s hear from Jesus Himself:

“I am the Bread of Life” – John 6:35

“I am the Light of the World” – John 8:12

“I am the one who bears witness about myself” – John 8:18

“I am the door. If anyone enters by me, he will be saved” – John 10:9

“I am the good shepherd” – John 10:11

“I am the Son of God” – John 10:36

“I am the resurrection and the life” – John 11:25

“I am the way, the truth, and the life no one comes to God except by me” – John 14:6

“I am the true vine” – John 15:5

FALSE TEACHINGS ABOUT JESUS FROM THE WORLD’S RELIGIONS

Teacher and author, J. Warner Wallace, a former Cold-Case Detective, Senior Fellow at the Colson Center for Christian Worldview, and Adjunct Professor of Christian Apologetics at Talbot School of Theology, Biola University, sums up what many world religions believe about Jesus:

*“**Jews** believe Jesus was Mary’s son, was a teacher (Rabbi), had many disciples, was respected, performed miracles, claimed to be the Messiah and was crucified on the cross. They also acknowledge His followers reported Jesus was raised from the dead. But assert He is not God or the Messiah.”*

***Muslims** believe Jesus was born of a virgin, is to be revered and respected, was a prophet, a wise teacher who worked miracles, ascended to heaven, and will come again. But they deny that He is God.”*

***Ahmadiyya Muslims** believe Jesus may have been born of a virgin, was a prophet and wise teacher, worked miracles, and was crucified on a cross. But also state He is not God.”*

***Bahá’í** believe Jesus came from God, was a wise teacher who had a divine and human nature, worked miracles, and was crucified and resurrected as an atonement for humanity. But also claim He is not God.”*

***Hindus** believe Jesus was a holy man, a wise teacher, and is a ‘god’. But, they teach He is not THE GOD. Many Hindus believe that Jesus was a good teacher and perhaps one of their 330 million avatars. An avatar is an incarnation of the impersonal, supreme being that Hindus believe fills the universe.*

***Buddhists** believe Jesus was an enlightened man and a wise teacher. But don’t believe He was God.”*

***New Age** adherents maintain Jesus was a wise moral teacher. Most adherents to the **New Age Movement** believe that Jesus was a great enlightened teacher who realized that He was god, just like we all can realize we are god. They say he was a wonderful example, but absolutely not THE GOD.”*

Other religions believe that God created Jesus and Satan as equal brothers in nature or that Jesus was merely an angel who is just one of many “gods.”

Throughout most of the world there is universal agreement... Jesus was a good man, strong moral teacher, and an example for us all.

But does Jesus’ own words give us that option?

12 RADICAL CLAIMS OF JESUS

He said:

He is exactly the “same essence” as God – John 10:29

He is eternal – John 8:58 / John 17:5

He is the Messiah – Matthew 16:16 / Matthew 26:63 (see the reaction in verse 65)

He comes to save the entire world from sin and judgement – John 12:47

He forgives sins – Luke 5:19 (see reaction in 21) / Matthew 9:2

He gives life (forever) – John 11:58 / John 10:28

No one can come to God except through Him – John 14:29

He gives a peace you can’t get anywhere else – John 14:27

He will bring people back to life – John 6:44

He was, Himself, going to die and come back to life – Mark 9:30 / John 2:19-22

He can call 72,000 angels by command – Matthew 26:53

He has a kingdom “off-planet” – John 18:36

Is Jesus insane? Or a liar? Or...?

A nice, moral, good, spiritual leader, who was a prophet and teacher is not an option.