

Who was Jesus Christ? – Part 5

Introduction:

1. The title of our lesson is, “Who was Jesus Christ?” If you asked this question to 100 people on the street, you would probably be shocked at the answers.
2. What does the Bible teach about Jesus Christ? Who was Jesus Christ?

Jesus Christ was God in the flesh.

Jesus Christ was born of a virgin.

Jesus Christ was sinless.

Jesus Christ was the ultimate sin-bearer for all of mankind.

Jesus Christ was raised from the dead and is the everliving One.

1. The most dynamic event ever recorded in history is the resurrection of Jesus Christ. It ushered in a Christian faith which has altered the course of history, shaken entire continents, and has gone to the ends of the earth.
2. The resurrection of Jesus Christ is the cornerstone of our Christian faith. You cannot be a Christian if you deny the resurrection. 1 Corinthians 15:14-19
 - Without the resurrection of Christ, the Bible is a deceptive Book, Christianity is simply a dead religion, and we are dead in our sins, with no hope whatsoever. But praise God, He is risen! 1 Corinthians 15:20-22
 - Christ’s resurrection is a reality of history. You can prove it. You could go into a court of law and use the laws of authenticity that validate historical events, apply those same rules to the resurrection, and come away with historical certainty that He raised from the dead.
 - A person may debate what that event in history **means** (and only God’s Word defines the meaning), but there is no denying the **facts** of it.
3. The resurrection of Christ is what distinguishes Christianity from all the dead religious systems in the world.
 - Christ promised that He would be raised from the dead and return to this earth. No religious leader ever did this (Mohammed, Confucius, etc.). Only Christ dared to make this kind of a promise.
 - Even if another man did promise to come again, it would have no credence because the decayed remains of all the founders of the world’s religions occupy graves. It is Christ alone who left behind an empty tomb!
 - No other religious leader has substantiated his claim to reveal God and the supernatural by rising from the dead.
4. Jesus’ resurrection was a physical, bodily resurrection. This is important because if it was not a physical resurrection, then our bodies are destined to rot in the grave too.
5. Some have proposed that the disciples saw an apparition, a ghost, or a spirit. Some say they were hallucinating. The Bible clearly refutes this in Luke 24:36-43.

- Jesus has flesh and bones – this refutes the resuscitation theory. Does Jesus look like a man barely holding on and about to die?
 - Jesus has hands and feet. cf. Matthew 28:9
 - Jesus is seen eating.
 - Jesus invited Thomas to touch him in John 20:27.
6. The Bible states that Jesus walked the earth for forty days after His resurrection and showed Himself alive by many “*infallible proofs*.” Acts 1:3
- “Infallible” means “incapable of error.”
 - There are over a dozen recorded appearances of Christ in Scripture. One appearance was to over 500 people at one time. 1 Corinthians 15:4-8
7. Some have proposed a fraud theory. They say the resurrection was a well-orchestrated hoax and the disciples were a bunch of conspiratorial liars. They say that Jesus’ body is still dead. Let’s consider a few facts:
- From the beginning, Christianity was a public faith, not a secret society. Any evidence of argument for Jesus’ resurrection was open to investigation and challenge. All the Jewish leaders had to do to stomp out Christianity forever was simply produce the body of Jesus. They possessed the political power and motivation to do it, but they could not do it.
 - Prior to the resurrection, the disciples were cowering in a locked room for fear of the Jews (John 20:19). They had all forsaken Jesus at the cross (Matthew 26:56) and Peter vehemently denied Him out of fear (Matthew 26:69-75).
 - After seeing the resurrected Christ for forty days, these same men stood before the very leaders that crucified Christ and boldly proclaimed that He had risen and that He was Lord and Christ (Acts 2:22-24, 32-33; 4:5-12; 5:26-32, 40-42). They had the guts to make this claim within walking distance of the site where they said it happened.
 - They were ordered to cease, and refused to do it. Something dramatic happened to transform these man from cowering wimps to some of the bravest, boldest men to walk the earth.
 - Despite disapproval and persecution from the religious leadership of Israel, they convinced thousands of people that Christ had risen from the dead, including a great number of the priests (Acts 6:7).
 - In five years, Christianity had spread to Samaria and Damascus (Acts 8-9), and within forty years to Rome (the center of the empire where Nero lived).
 - Saul of Tarsus, a man of culture, training, and promise, saw the risen Christ, and Saul (the proud student of Gamaliel) willingly gave up everything and became a social outcast on the strength of his conviction.
 - All of the apostles ended up dying cruel deaths as martyrs.
 - After considering these facts, the fraud theory seems rather outlandish and ridiculous and impossible.
8. We can rest assured that Christ is not here, He is risen! And because Christ was victorious over death, we too can be victorious (1 Corinthians 15:54-57; cf. Philippians 3:20-21).
9. This is how the apostles could die cruel, martyr deaths. They had seen with their own eyes the One who Paul says, “...*abolished death and has brought life and immortality to light through the gospel*.” 2 Timothy 2:10