

WHO IS JESUS?

The Two Most Critical Spiritual Questions — Part 1

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Jerry Clonch

I. WHAT WE KNOW

- A. Jesus was a historical figure.
- B. Jesus' teaching was compelling.
- C. Jesus has miracles attributed to Him.
- D. Jesus was sentenced to death on a cross.
- E. Jesus' tomb was empty.
- F. Jesus' followers claimed He rose from the dead.
- G. After the first Easter, the Jesus Movement exploded.

"Jesus and His disciples left Galilee and went up to the villages near Caesarea Philippi. As they were walking along, He asked them, 'Who do people say I am?' 'Well,' they replied, 'some say John the Baptist, some say Elijah, and others say you are one of the other prophets.' Then He asked them, 'But who do you say I am?' Peter replied, 'You are the Messiah.'"

Mark 8:27-29 (NLT)

II. WHAT JESUS CLAIMED

"God said to Moses, 'I am who I am. This is what you are to say...' I AM has sent me to you."

Exodus 3:14 (NIV)

"'Who do you think you are?' Jesus answered...'Your father Abraham rejoiced as he looked forward to my coming. He saw it and was glad.' The people said, 'You aren't even fifty years old. How can you say you have seen Abraham?' Jesus answered, 'I tell you the truth, before Abraham was even born, I AM!' At that point they picked up stones to throw at Him."

John 8:53-54, 56-59 (NLT)

"...I am the Son of God."

John 10:36 (NLT)

"The high priest asked Him, 'Are you the Christ...?' 'I am,' said Jesus."

Mark 14:61-62 (NIV)

"Jesus told him, 'I am the way, the truth, and the life...You still don't know who I am? Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father!'"

John 14:6, 9 (NLT)

FOUR OPTIONS

- 1. Lunatic
- 2. Liar

(continued)

3. Good Man, Prophet

4. Lord

III. THE VALIDATION JESUS SUGGESTED

The Resurrection

"... if there's no resurrection for Christ, everything we've told you is smoke and mirrors, and everything you've staked your life on is smoke and mirrors. Not only that, but we would be guilty of telling a string of barefaced lies about God, all these affidavits we passed on to you verifying that God raised up Christ—sheer fabrications, if there's no resurrection....But the truth is that Christ has been raised up..."

1 Corinthians 15:13-15, 20 (MSG)

The Non-Compelling Options

1. The Roman/Jewish authorities stole Jesus' body.

2. Jesus' followers experienced a mass hallucination.

3. It was a case of mistaken identity.

4. Jesus' followers went to the wrong tomb.

5. Jesus never really died.

The Compelling Options

1. Jesus' followers stole His body.

2. Jesus rose from the dead.