

Introduction:

1. What is the most important question you will ever answer?
 - a. Not what is the most important question you will *ask*—but that you will *answer*.
 - b. It is not the questions you will answer on a test at school, a job application, or the census.
2. The most important question, the one with the most profound consequences is about the man that is at the center of the most important book in the world. The question: “Who is Jesus?”
 - a. The question has been asked now for about 2,000 years. Men have given a variety of answers, some good and some not so good.
 - b. And now, at this point in time, as history unfolds, it becomes your turn to answer the question.
 - c. As you answer, you need to know that there are consequences, no matter which way you answer. If what the Bible says about Him is true, then how you answer will determine your eternal destiny. So, we need to get the right answer. But to answer, we need first to know...

The Lesson:**I. Who Jesus is not.**

- A. Jesus is not a myth.
 1. You need to rule that out in the beginning. All reasonable, sound thinking people know that Jesus is a real historical character. But not all men are reasonable.
 - a. Men like Bill Maher contend that the “...Bible stories are myths, silly little stories...” (celebatheists.com).
 - b. The Christ myth theory appealed to Karl Marx, and it became the official view within Marxism. The Communist government of the Soviet Union adopted this view and taught it in public schools in Russia (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christ_myth_theory).
 - c. In 2005, playwright Brian Flemming produced a feature-length documentary “*The God Who Wasn't There*.” Flemming concludes “that it is highly improbable that the Christian savior ever actually lived” (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Brian_Flemming).
 2. In order to draw such conclusions, men must ignore plain historical facts.
 - a. The date on every newspaper, monument, government buildings, etc. all testify to the fact that 2,000 years ago Jesus lived. We mark our time from Jesus’ birth. But in recent times, there has been an effort to avoid this fact. The use of AD (Anno Domini—year of our Lord) is being dropped in many places in favor of CE (Common Era).
 - b. The New Testament documents themselves testify that Jesus is not a myth.
 - c. Thousands of pages of writings of early followers of Jesus speak of Him as real.
 - d. The existence of Christianity and the church cannot be explained by a myth.
 - e. Jews (Josephus), Romans (Pliny), Syrians (Mara)—who lived in the first and second centuries (at the very beginning of Christianity) all testify of the reality of Jesus.
 3. Jesus is real. He is not a myth. You need to know the truth, because it will be challenged!
- B. Jesus is not just a man.
 1. Indeed, He was a man; everyone recognized that, Matthew 9:3; 13:24; 26:72; 27:19; 8:20.
 2. But, you cannot limit Him to merely being a man. This erroneous view sometimes speaks of Him as being a great teacher, but nothing more; or, a true prophet, but nothing more.
 3. If He was just a man, how would we explain His unique birth in Matthew 1:23? How would we explain His actions and words, John 3:2; John 8:51, 58. These are not the words and actions of one who is just a man.
 4. Jesus was a man, but He was more than that. You need to know that for your faith’s sake!
- C. Jesus is not a sinner.
 1. This is surely one of the most unique things that may be said of Him. Every ordinary person who reaches adulthood becomes a sinner. He did not! How can we explain that? You know that you became a sinner; I became a sinner. What normal person is an exception?
 2. Jesus is an exception. But the fact that He is an exception says He is not a normal person. See the challenge Jesus puts out to His enemies in John 8:46. I won’t say that to my enemies or even to my friends. Jesus could say it and no one could answer it.
 3. Jesus could say things like this because He was not a sinner, 1 Peter 2:22-24.

II. Who Jesus is.

- A. Jesus is the Christ (Matthew 1:1). The New Testament begins with this important fact.
1. But in order to understand the importance of Jesus being the Christ, we need to go back to the Old Testament. The word Christ is the Greek word for the Hebrew word Anointed or Messiah. Anointing was a common thing that was done throughout the Old Testament. Men were often anointed with oil to set them apart for special roles like kings, prophets, and priests. Throughout the Old Testament the prophets spoke of someone that God would appoint to be the Messiah. The Christ would bring joy, salvation, and deliverance to the people by bearing the sin of the world (Isaiah 53:6, 12).
 2. The New Testament is clear that Jesus is the Christ (Acts 8:30-36). More importantly, it was God who put His stamp of approval on Jesus as the Messiah (Acts 2:36).
 3. Why do we need to know that Jesus is the Christ?
 - a. Because this is the entire theme of the Scriptures. That someone is coming, someone has come, and one day He will return again. That someone is Jesus.
 - b. If you don't know Jesus is the Christ, then you don't know what the Bible is all about.
- B. Jesus is the Son of God (Romans 1:1-4).
1. It's through the resurrection that we can know that Jesus is the Son of God. It was Jesus who prophesied that He would die but would raise Himself again (John 2:19; 10:17-18). The resurrection of Jesus is the undeniable proof that points to the fact that Jesus was more than just a man.
 2. It helps us to see that Jesus was God in the flesh (John 1:1-3, 14). This fact is so undeniable that even those who opposed Jesus understood He was God's Son.
 - a. The centurion soldier understood that Jesus was God's Son (Matthew 27:54).
 - b. The demons understood this important fact (Mark 5:6-7).
 - c. Even Paul, who opposed the church, eventually understood this fact (Romans 1:4).
 - d. We can know it too when we pick up our Bibles (John 20:30-31).
 3. Because Jesus is God's Son, He must be our authority in everything we do. All that we do must be done in His name (Colossians 3:17).
 - a. When we go home this afternoon we will treat our spouse right, because that's what He wants us to do.
 - b. We will work hard tomorrow on the job because that's what He wants us to do.
- C. Jesus is our Savior (Romans 5:6-9).
1. Man has prided himself in being able to resolve problems. One area where man has excelled in providing solutions is in the medical field. Through medical technology we have been able to overcome the flu, smallpox, and polio that at one time would be a death sentence. We have pills, shots, and surgeries to solve medical problems. But despite all of these solutions, no one can solve the deadliest disease known to man: sin.
 - a. Millions have followed Buddha and Buddhism that tell them to live a moral life. But it doesn't take away sin.
 - b. Others have followed Hinduism, but it rejects the very idea of sin, and therefore can't provide a solution.
 - c. Many have followed Islam that promotes doing good works, but it will not provide the answer of saving us from our sins.
 2. The only place we can find our solution is in Jesus (Romans 5:6-9). We need to know that Jesus is our Savior because all of us are in need of being saved (Romans 3:23; 6:23). We need to know that He is the only way to eternity with God (John 14:6).

Conclusion:

1. Who is Jesus? He's our Savior. He wants all of us to be saved (John 3:16). Maybe someone here in the audience now knows for the first time who Jesus really is. If that's the case, why not obey Him and be saved (Mark 16:16)?
2. For those of us who already know, have already confessed His name, and have been immersed into His death, let's make sure that we continue to live a life that reflects our relationship with Him.