

Who Do You Say The Real Jesus Is?

- READING QUOTES FROM PAGE 268 THRU 269 FROM THE BOOK BY LEE STROBEL TITLED THE CASE FOR THE REAL JESUS
 - **SOME PEOPLE REDUCE JESUS BY:**
- REJECTING HIS UNIQUENESS
- REJECTING HIS MIRACLES
- REJECTING HIS DIVINITY
- TRANSFORMING HIM INTO JUST ANOTHER HUMAN BEING

SOME PEOPLE USE JESUS TO ELEVATE THEMSELVES BY

- **AFFIRMING THE DIVINITY OF JESUS AS LONG AS THEY TOO ARE INDWELLED BY THE SAME SPARK OF THE DIVINE**
- **COMMON STRATEGY OF MANY NEW AGERS AND Gnostics**
- **SETTING OUT TO CREATE THEIR OWN DO IT YOURSELF RELIGION, ONLY TO DISCOVER THAT THEY ARE gods THEMSELVES.**

WHETHER REDUCING JESUS OR ELEVATING OURSELVES, THE RESULT IS THE SAME:

- JESUS BECOMES OUR EQUAL AS SUCH,
- HE DOESN'T DESERVE OUR ALLEGIANCE OR OUR WORSHIP
- HE CANNOT JUDGE US OR HOLD US ACCOUNTABLE.
- HIS TEACHINGS BECOME MERE SUGGESTIONS THAT CAN BE ALLOWED OR DISREGARDED ACCORDING TO OUR WHIMS
- HE ISN'T OUR SAVIOR; AT MOST, HE IS A FRIENDLY GUIDE.

THE JESUS THAT SKEPTICS REFUSE TO TOLERATE AND ACCEPT THE HISTORICAL EVIDENCE AND THE FACTS THAT POINT PERSUASIVELY IN THAT DIRECTION AS:

- UNIQUELY DIVINE
- MIRACULOUS
- PROPHECY-FULFILLING
- RESURRECTED
- THIS WOULD PUT THEM IN THE PLACE OF BEING BEHOLDEN TO HIM. THEIR PERSONAL SOVEREIGNTY AND MORAL INDEPENDENCE WOULD BE AT RISK.
- THE PROBLEM IS:

“THAT’S THE REAL JESUS”

- The Gospel of John focuses on God's glory. Later generations will also shift back and forth between whether to follow the Synoptics in stressing knowledge or John in stressing love.
- Paul also focuses on mental activities, but not in the same way as the Synoptics, which equate renewing the mind with repentance.
- Instead, Paul sees the renewal of our minds as happening as we contemplate what Jesus did on the Cross, which then opens us to grace and to the movement of the Holy Spirit into our hearts.

- Like John, Paul is less interested in knowledge, preferring to emphasize the hiddenness, the "mystery" of God's plan as revealed through Christ.

TO WHAT HAS BEEN MENTIONED BEFORE, WE ALL HAVE TO MAKE THE DECISION TO BELIEVE THE FIRM FOUNDATION OF HISTORICAL FACTS THAT IS FOUND IN:

- THE RELIABILITY OF THE FOUR GOSPELS
- JESUS'S FULFILLMENT OF THE MESSIANIC PREDICTIONS

LET US NOT RELY ON FLIMSY EVIDENCE AND FEEBLE ARGUMENTS IN ORDER TO BUILD A MUCH WEAKER CASE FOR A FABRICATED JESUS BY:

- **IGNORING OR DENIGRATING THE FIRST-CENTURY EYEWITNESS-BASED GOSPELS OF THE NEW TESTAMENT AND INSTEAD MANUFACTURE A DIFFERENT JESUS OUR OF SECOND CENTURY OR LATER DOCUMENTS THAT LACK HISTORICAL CREDIBILITY.**

THE FOLLOWING CONCLUSIONS TO THIS WHOLE MATTER OF WHO IS THE REAL JESUS CAN BE SUMMED UP AS FOLLOWS:

- WE ARE NOT HIS EQUALS
- WE DO NOT OCCUPY THE SAME STRATUM OR POSSESS THE SAME STATUS
- HE IS GOD, AND WE ARE NOT. FOR MANY PEOPLE, THAT IS THE CRUX OF THEIR PREDICAMENT: IF JESUS IS GOD INCARNATE, THEN HE COULD DEMAND TOO MUCH.

C.S. Lewis said,

“The Christian way is different: harder, and easier. Christ says, “Give me All. I don’t want so much of your time and so much of your money and so much of your work: I want you; I have not come to torment your natural self, but to kill it. No half-measures are any good...Hand over the whole natural self, all the desires which you think innocent as well as the ones you think wicked the whole outfit. I will give you a new self instead. In fact, I will give you Myself: my own will shall become yours.”

THAT KIND OF SURRENDER SOUNDS SCARY
FOR MANY PEOPLE. BUT IF JESUS REALLY
IS GOD THEN,

HE REALLY DID SACRIFICE HIMSELF SO
THAT WE COULD BE FORGIVEN AND SET
FREE TO EXPERIENCE HIS LOVE FOREVER-
THEN WHY SHOULD WE HESITATE TO GIVE
ALL OF OURSELVES TO HIM?

WHO COULD BE MORE TRUSTWORTHY
THAN SOMEONE WHO LAYS DOWN HIS LIFE
SO THAT OTHERS MIGHT LIVE?

THIS IS WHAT JESUS HAS DONE. THE CHURCH HAS BEEN TELLING THIS SAME STORY FOR TWO MILLENNIA.

AS IMPERFECT AS THE CHURCH IS, THE CHURCH HAS PRESERVED FOR US THE FOUR GOSPELS THAT CONSTITUTE THE MOST RELIABLE REPORTS ABOUT JESUS.

THE CHURCH HAS FORMULATED THE ANCIENT CREEDS THAT EFFICIENTLY SUM UP THE IMPLICATION OF HIS LIFE AND MINISTRY;

JESUS IS FULLY GOD AND FULLY MAN WHO OFFERS FORGIVENESS, HOPE, AND ETERNAL LIFE AS A FREE GIFT TO ALL WHO WANT TO RECEIVE IT.

JESUS WAS ENTIRELY DIFFERENT AND NEW AND STUNNING SAID AUTHOR DON EVERTS.

There was just something so clear and beautiful and true and unique and powerful about Jesus that old rabbis would marvel at His teaching, young children would run and sit in His lap, ashamed prostitutes would find themselves weeping at His feet, whole villages would gather to hear Him speak, experts in the law would find themselves speechless, and people from the poor to the rugged working class to the unbelievably wealthy would leave everything...to follow Him.

THIS IS THE REAL JESUS, WHO ALL ALONG HAS BEEN ALIVE AND WELL AS HE DWELLS IN THE LIVES OF HIS PEOPLE-THE COMMUNITY WHOSE DOOR IS ALWAYS OPEN.