

Why Jesus and not another leader?

We look on many of our political and religious leaders with suspicion. Our wariness is justified. Many politicians vote themselves pay raises while asking the taxpayers to sacrifice. Numerous televangelists yield to greed and sexual antics. Public leaders who don't speak the truth, and don't live up to the standards they set for others don't deserve to lead animals, let alone human beings.

Jesus walked his talk. Compare Jesus to other great religious leaders and philosophers. He preached love and forgiveness. Others have done the same. But many of them used political, economic, and military clout in order to win and maintain converts. Jesus continually refused offers of position and authority. He built no buildings as worship places. He wished no shrines or monuments other than those in human hearts, he and didn't want his followers to erect them. His first century followers kept those instructions. Later ones have not.

Jesus emphasized honoring God, living a pure, honest life, and sacrificing oneself to aid the helpless. He lived what he taught. During his ministry, he apparently owned no house, didn't run a business, and probably had only one set of clothes. Yet Jesus didn't see life as meaningless as Buddha did, who lived 500 years before him.

If we honor God and care lovingly for others as Jesus taught, life is purposeful. Begging God to forgive his greedy, power-minded killers, Jesus died an excruciating death. Look at your religious leaders closely. If they use political or military force, build expensive buildings, and accumulate funds, be suspicious. **“Foxes have holes and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has no place to lay his head,” *Matthew 8:20.***