



EXPLORE GOD | IS JESUS REALLY GOD? | Week 5 February 17, 2019

**Tim 2:3-4, 2 Pet 3:9, John 3:16-17, Acts 4: 5-12, Rom 3:23; Rom 6:23,
Eph 2: 8-9, 1 Tim 2:5**

Opening: Over these weeks we are traversing the landscape of questions and doubt exploring some deep issues of faith. This week, we look at the question “Is Jesus really God?” We are confronted with diverse sources of doubt. Proof, in modern terms, is elusive. Let’s explore the arguments that support our faith.

Context: The craft of a magician, an illusionist, is to make the impossible seem so real that it shocks our physical sensibilities. We see a woman in a box sawed in two and she gets put back together and walks out on stage. Such is the kind of physical unbelief our culture has when confronted with the idea of God inhabiting earth, being crucified and appearing alive to His disciples before vanishing into heaven. Our modern rational minds struggle with such a thing being possible—just like the woman who was sawed in two. Fortunately, there are many layers of this story to explore. *How would you explain Jesus as God? Or perhaps you have a question. What question would you ask in relation to Jesus?*

Jesus is Radical—part 2: Last week Pastor Meyer made the point “Christianity teaches that Truth is not a principle, or a proposition, or a process, but a Person.” Today we ask who (or what) is this person? Christianity uniquely claims that this person, this Jesus, is God. No other world religion makes such a claim of their founder. *How do you respond to this statement? How would you set about trying to prove it is true or false?*

History Supports: Pastor Meyer makes this statement: “There is historical evidence dated to within a decade of Christ’s crucifixion of widespread Christian belief that Jesus was not merely a gifted person but actually God in the flesh”. *What comes up in you when you read this? If you were to debate this statement, which side would you want to argue, for or against? Why?*

The Evidence of Scripture: Centuries old writings, known and sacred to the Jewish faith at the time of Christ, include prophecy of the coming redeemer. In fact, the case for Jesus being God is made because prophecy confirms it, Jesus’ own claims affirm it, and Christ’s character is consistent with it. *How do you respond to this approach? Do you find this method of proof sufficient? Why or why not? Would it hold up in court?*

What do I believe?: Pastor Haskins makes the point “What we believe about Jesus shapes how we live with Jesus.” *How do you respond to that statement? How does it relate to our method and strength of proof discussed above?*

**The scriptural evidence:**

PROPHECY	JESUS CLAIMS	JESUS CHARACTER
Isa 7:14 Virgin Birth	Luke 4:21, Luke 23:43, Luke 6:5	John 4: 1-43, 8:1-11, 9:1-41
Micah 5:2 born in Bethel	Matt 16:16-20, Matt 9:2, 18:20	Matt 8: 28-34, 9:18-26
Zech 9:9 Palm Sunday	Matt 25:31-46, Mark 10:45,	Matt 26: 36-46, 62-64, 27:11-14
Zech 11:12-13 30 pcs of Silver	Mark 13:31	Luke 23:32-38
Isa 52-53 suffering servant	Matt 17:9, Luke 5:14 (secret)	John 17
Psa 16: 8-11, Psa 22	John 10:30-35, 6:26-27, 17:5	
	John 8:46, 10:18	

How does scriptural proof impact you? Do you find a compelling case? Or do you have questions of origin and quality? If you are concerned, can you say why to the group?

Shaping the way we live: Read Matt 16:15. Pastor Haskins asked us to live with this question: “What about you?” Jesus wants to know, personally, who you say that He is. If we cut through the proofs and all the arguments, this is far more important. “Who is Jesus for you?” *How does the answer shape your life? What impact on your daily decisions? How does it shape your priorities and values? How can you lean into the reality of what you believe?*

Practice of the Week: I have come that you may have life—abundantly!

Read John 10: 7-11 & 15:1-5. Consider these two passages about life. Who or what is your thief? What does it take to remove the “thief” and move toward abundance? Ask God to show you and write about it in your journal. In John 15, what does “abide” stir in you? Is there something that needs to be pruned? Is there something new God wants to grow on your branch?

Family Formation: The odds of a prophecy.

What can we pray about? Find something your child is interested in that’s going to happen tomorrow. Ask them to predict what will happen. A basketball or hockey score, the number of texts or Instagram’s they or Mom receives. The point is a prediction of the future that can be compared to reality when it happens. When the results are in, talk about the prophecies made in the Old Testament hundreds of years before the coming of Christ. The odds were 1 in 10¹⁷ that they would all come true ⁽¹⁾ and they did!

Additional Resources: *The Jesus I Never Knew*, by Phillip Yancey.

⁽¹⁾*Inside the Mind of Unchurched Harry and Mary*, p.37 by Lee Stroble

We’d love to hear from you!

If you have thoughts questions, comments, ideas on how to make these study guides more meaningful for you and your group, please let us know.

We also enjoy hearing how God is using these scriptures and study guides in your lives.

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