

# Jesus and Truth

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Over two thousand years ago, a man walked the earth claiming to be from a realm beyond time and space. Without political influence or formal credentials, his life and teachings dramatically altered history. His name is Jesus Christ.

Unlike other prominent figures whose legacies are confined to history books, Jesus remains a central figure in countless publications, documentaries, and debates. With over two billion followers worldwide, people still ask, **“Who is the real Jesus Christ?”**

## **Was Jesus a Historical Figure?**

While some skeptics argue that Jesus was a myth, historians widely affirm his existence. Nine non-Christian historians mentioned Jesus within 150 years of his death—equivalent to the number who documented Tiberius Caesar, a Roman Emperor of the same era. Moreover, over 5,800 New Testament manuscripts recount Jesus' life and words, a historical record unparalleled in antiquity. New Testament scholar John A. T. Robinson asserts that the texts were written within the lifetimes of Jesus' contemporaries. He adds, “The wealth of manuscripts, and above all the narrow interval of time between the writing and the earliest extant copies, make [it] the best-attested text of any ancient writing in the world.”

## **Was Jesus Merely a Moral Teacher?**

Jesus is often regarded as the epitome of moral perfection. His actions exemplified love, compassion, and obedience to God's commandments. Historian Will Durant noted that Jesus “lived and struggled unremittingly for equal rights.” Similarly, Martin Luther King Jr. said of him, “Although crucified by hate, he responded with aggressive love.”

Unlike most teachers who focused on rules, Jesus emphasized love—toward God, others, and even enemies. French philosopher Jean-Jacques Rousseau remarked, “Plato's imaginary righteous man mirrors Christ's character.”

## **Was Jesus a Revolutionary Leader?**

In three short years of ministry, Jesus' influence has lasted over twenty centuries. Historian Philip Schaff observed, “Jesus of Nazareth shed more light on human and divine matters than all philosophers combined.”

His teachings inspired transformative movements:

- **Human rights** and equality.
- The abolition of slavery in Europe and America.
- Founding major universities like Harvard and Oxford.
- Establishing hospitals and charities.

As Yale historian Jaroslav Pelikan noted, “Regardless of what anyone believes, Jesus remains the dominant figure in Western culture.”

## **Was Jesus the Messiah?**

Ancient prophecies foretold the coming of a Messiah to redeem humanity. Jesus fulfilled over 300 Old Testament predictions, including his birthplace, lineage, and miracles. His followers, witnessing his healing of the blind and lame, recognized him as the Christ.

When Peter declared, “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God,” Jesus affirmed it. Yet, his declaration of being one with God outraged religious leaders, ultimately leading to his crucifixion.

## **Did Jesus Claim Divinity?**

Jesus claimed divine identity through his words and actions. When asked by Philip to reveal God, Jesus responded, “Whoever has seen me has seen the Father.” He further declared, “Before Abraham was, I AM,” using God’s sacred name for himself.

C.S. Lewis argued that Jesus' claims left only three possibilities: he was either a liar, a lunatic, or truly Lord. Lewis concluded, “A man who was merely a moral teacher would not say such things.”

## **Did Jesus Prove His Claims?**

Jesus' resurrection stands as the ultimate proof of his divinity. He predicted his death and resurrection, staking his credibility on this promise. After his crucifixion and burial, his followers claimed to have seen him alive. Over 500 eyewitnesses affirmed this, transforming his disciples from fearful fugitives into bold proclaimers of his message.

Journalist Frank Morison, a skeptic, sought to disprove the resurrection but instead concluded it was a historical fact. His book, *Who Moved the Stone?*, documents the evidence that changed his mind.

## **Why Does the Resurrection Matter?**

The apostle Paul explained, "Christ has abolished death and brought eternal life" (2 Timothy 1:9). Through his death and resurrection, Jesus offers forgiveness for sins and a path to eternal life.

Good deeds cannot earn salvation, as Paul emphasized: "It is by grace you have been saved, through faith—it is the gift of God" (Ephesians 2:8-9). Salvation is a gift, available to those who accept it.

## **How Can You Respond?**

You can receive Jesus' forgiveness and eternal life today by placing your trust in him. A simple prayer, offered in faith, can mark the beginning of a transformed life:

*"Dear Lord Jesus, thank you for dying for my sins. I accept you as my Savior and invite you into my life. Help me become the person you created me to be."*

If you prayed this prayer, you've taken the first step toward a life of purpose and hope.

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## References

1. John A. T. Robinson, *Redating the New Testament*.
2. Will Durant, *The Story of Civilization*.
3. Martin Luther King Jr., *Strength to Love*.
4. Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *The Social Contract*.
5. Philip Schaff, *The Person of Christ*.
6. Jaroslav Pelikan, *Jesus Through the Centuries*.
7. C.S. Lewis, *Mere Christianity*.
8. Frank Morison, *Who Moved the Stone?*.
9. Simon Greenleaf, *The Testimony of the Evangelists*.