

# Jesus in History



Who was Jesus?

# Who was Jesus?



- ❧ *Rev\_12:11 And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their **testimony**, and they did not love their lives to the death.*
- ❧ Before we examine His impact, we are going to look at some **testimony** about who Jesus was, starting with His own words.
- ❧ *Mar 14:61 But He kept silent and answered nothing. Again the high priest asked Him, saying to Him, "Are You the Christ, the Son of the Blessed?"*

# Who is Jesus?



- ❧ *Mar 14:62 Jesus said, "I am. And you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Power, and coming with the clouds of heaven."*
- ❧ *Mar 14:63 Then the high priest tore his clothes and said, "What further need do we have of witnesses?"*
- ❧ Jesus own testimony about himself cleared it all up, Jesus claimed with His own lips to be the Christ, the Son of God!
- ❧ We will look at some testimony from some significant people on this.

# Napoleon Bonaparte

☞ “I will tell you. Alexander, Caesar, Charlemagne, and myself have founded great empires. But our empires were founded on force. Jesus alone founded His empire on love, and to this day millions would die for Him.



☞ I think I understand something of human nature, and I tell you, all these were men, and I am a man. Jesus Christ was more than man.”

# Napoleon Bonaparte



- ❧ “I have inspired multitudes with a devotion so enthusiastic that they would have died for me. But to do this it was necessary that I should be visibly present with the electric influence of my looks, my words, my voice. Who cares for me now removed as I am from the active scenes of life, and from the presence of men? Who would now die for me?”
- ❧ “Christ alone across the chasm of eighteen centuries makes a demand which is beyond all others difficult to satisfy. He asks more than a father can demand of his child, or a bride of her spouse, or a man of his brother. He asks for the human heart. He will have it entirely to Himself. He demands it unconditionally, and forthwith His demand is granted.”

# Napoleon Bonaparte



- ❧ “Wonderful! In defiance of time and space, the soul of man with all its powers and faculties becomes an annexation to the empire of Christ. This phenomenon is unaccountable; it is altogether beyond the scope of man’s creative powers.”
- ❧ “Time, the great destroyer, is powerless to extinguish this sacred flame. This is what strikes me most. This is what proves to me quite convincingly that Jesus Christ is God.”

# Napoleon Bonaparte - More



❧ "What a conqueror!--a conqueror who controls humanity at will, and wins to himself not only one nation, but the whole human race. What a marvel! He attaches to himself the human soul with all its energies. And how? By a miracle which surpasses all others. He claims the love of men--that is to say, the most difficult thing in the world to obtain; that which the wisest of men cannot force from his truest friend, that which no father can compel from his children, no wife from her husband, no brother from his brother--the heart. He claims it ; he requires it absolutely and undividedly, and he obtains it instantly.

# Napoleon Bonaparte - More



✧ Alexander, Caesar, Hannibal, Louis XIV strove in vain to secure this. They conquered the world, yet they had not a single friend, or at all events, they have none any more. Christ speaks, however, and from that moment all generations belong to him; and they are joined to him much more closely than by any ties of blood and by a much more intimate, sacred and powerful communion. He kindles the flame of love which causes one's self-love to die, and triumphs over every other love. Why should we not recognize in this miracle of love the eternal Word which created the world? The other founders of religions had not the least conception of this mystic love which forms the essence of Christianity.

# Napoleon Bonaparte - More



❧ I have filled multitudes with such passionate devotion that they went to death for me. But God forbid that I should compare the enthusiasm of my soldiers with Christian love. They are as unlike as their causes. In my case, my presence was always necessary, the electric effect of my glance, my voice, my words, to kindle fire in their hearts. And I certainly possess personally the secret of that magic power of taking by storm the sentiments of men; but I was not able to communicate that power to anyone. None of my generals ever learned it from me or found it out. Moreover, I myself do not possess the secret of perpetuating my name and a love for me in their hearts for ever, and to work miracles in them without material means.

# Napoleon Bonaparte - More



- ❧ Now that I languish here at St Helena, chained upon this rock, who fights, who conquers empires for me? Who still even thinks of me? Who interests himself for me in Europe? Who has remained true to me? That is the fate of all great men. It was the fate of Alexander and Caesar, as it is my own. We are forgotten, and the names of the mightiest conquerors and most illustrious emperors are soon only the subject of a schoolboy's tasks. Our exploits come under the rod of a pedantic schoolmaster, who praises or condemns us as he likes.
- ❧ What an abyss exists between my profound misery and the eternal reign of Christ, who is preached, loved, and worshipped, and live on throughout the entire world.
- ❧ \*\*\*

# C.S. Lewis



❧ “I am trying here to prevent anyone saying the really foolish thing that people often say about Him: I’m ready to accept Jesus as a great moral teacher, but I don’t accept his claim to be God.

That is the one thing we must not say. A man who was merely a man and said the sort of things Jesus said would not be a great moral teacher. He would either be a lunatic — on the level with the man who says he is a poached egg — or else he would be the Devil of Hell. You must make your choice.

# C.S. Lewis



❧ You must make your choice.

❧ Either this man was, and is, the Son of God, or else a madman or something worse. You can shut him up for a fool, you can spit at him and kill him as a demon or you can fall at his feet and call him Lord and God,

but let us not come with any patronizing nonsense about his being a great human teacher. He has not left that open to us. He did not intend to."

— C.S. Lewis, *Mere Christianity*

# Who is Jesus?



- ❧ *Mar 14:61 But He kept silent and answered nothing. Again the high priest asked Him, saying to Him, "Are You the Christ, the Son of the Blessed?"*
- ❧ *Mar 14:62 Jesus said, "I am. And you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Power, and coming with the clouds of heaven."*
- ❧ *Mar 14:63 Then the high priest tore his clothes and said, "What further need do we have of witnesses?"*
  
- ❧ *Now for our response!*

# Who is Jesus?



- ✧ Jesus claimed to be the Son of God, before the Jewish leaders, with His life on the line.
- ✧ Did Jesus lie, was He mad or was He crazy. These are our choices as no other choice is possible.
- ✧ Jesus was either a liar, a lunatic or the Son of God.
- ✧ *Author unknown*
- ✧ The first thing that we might say about Jesus is that his claims were false and he knew it, in which case he was a liar. If Jesus did not believe that his claims about himself were true, then when he made those claims he was lying.

# Who is Jesus?



- ✧ Jesus' claims about himself were so central to his teachings, though, that if they were lies then he can hardly be deemed a great teacher.
- ✧ If Jesus set out to systematically deceive people about who he was and how their sins were to be dealt with, then he was among the worst teachers that have ever walked the earth.

# Who is Jesus?



- ❧ The second thing that we might say about Jesus is that his claims were false and he didn't know it, in which case he was a lunatic. If Jesus believed that his claims about himself were true, and they weren't, then he was a delusional egomaniac. If an ordinary person believes himself to be God incarnate, then that person is, put quite simply, insane.
- ❧ Again, if this were the case, if Jesus taught that this is who he was and was mistaken, then he was as bad a teacher as there has ever been.

# Who is Jesus?



- ❧ The third thing that we might say about Jesus is that his claims were true, in which case he was, and is, Lord. If Jesus believed that his claims about himself were true and they were, then Jesus was not only a great human being, but was also God on Earth.
- ❧ Do we have any reason, though, to take Jesus' claims seriously? Many have argued that we do, that we have the strongest possible evidence that Jesus knew what he was talking about when it came to the supernatural. There is, it is argued, substantial historical evidence that Jesus was raised from the dead, endorsing his claims to religious authority.

# Who is Jesus?



- ❧ The Resurrection, it is said, was a divine endorsement of Jesus' teachings, God's confirmation that Jesus' teachings were true.
- ❧ If this is correct, then there can be no doubt as to which of the three positions concerning Jesus outlined above is the correct one. If there is significant evidence for the resurrection, then we have to take Jesus seriously.

# Chuck Colson



---

❧ “I know the resurrection is a fact, and Watergate proved it to me. How? Because 12 men testified they had seen Jesus raised from the dead, then they proclaimed that truth for 40 years, never once denying it. Every one was beaten, tortured, stoned and put in prison. They would not have endured that if it weren't true. Watergate embroiled 12 of the most powerful men in the world-and they couldn't keep a lie for three weeks. You're telling me 12 apostles could keep a lie for 40 years? Absolutely impossible.”

— *Charles Colson, Special Counsel to President Richard Nixon from 1969 to 1973*

# Examining Just Eight Prophecies



- ❧ **Considered by the American Scientific Affiliation**
- ❧ **What are the chances that one man could fulfill all eight?**
- ❧ 1 *"But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting" (Micah 5:2).*
- ❧ 2 *"Behold, I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me" (Mal. 3:1).*
- ❧ 3 *"Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: behold, thy King cometh unto thee: he is just, and having salvation: lowly, and riding upon ... a colt the foal of an ass" (Zech. 9:9).*

# Examining Just Eight Prophecies



- ❧ 4 *"And one shall say unto him, What are these wounds in thine hands? Then he shall answer, Those with which I was wounded in the house of my friends" (Zech. 13:6).*
- ❧ 5 *"And I said unto them, If ye think good, give me my price; and if not, forbear. So they weighed for my price thirty pieces of silver" (Zech. 11:12).*
- ❧ 6 *"And the Lord said unto me, Cast it unto the potter: a goodly price that I was prized at of them. And I took the thirty pieces of silver, and cast them to the potter in the house of the Lord" (Zech. 11:13).*

# Examining Just Eight Prophecies



- ❧ 7 *"He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth" (Isa. 53:7)*
- ❧ 8 *"For dogs have compassed me: the assembly of the wicked have inclosed me: they pierced my hands and my feet" (Ps. 22:16)*

# Examining Just Eight Prophecies



- ☞ If these estimates are considered fair, one man in how many men, the world over, will fulfill all eight prophecies? This question can be answered by applying our principles of probability. In other words, by multiplying all of our estimates together, or  $1$  in  $2.8 \times 10^5 \times 10^3 \times 10^2 \times 10^3 \times 10^5 \times 10^3 \times 10^4$ . This gives  $1$  in  $2.8 \times 10^{28}$ , where  $28$  means that we have  $28$  ciphers following the  $2.8$ . Let us simplify and reduce the number by calling it  $1$  in  $10^{28}$ .*
- ☞ Written out this number is  $1$  in  $10,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000$ .*

# Examining Just Eight Prophecies



- ❧ This is the answer to the question: One man in how many men has fulfilled these eight prophecies? But we are really concerned with the answer to the question: What is the chance that **any man** might have lived from the day of these prophecies down to the present time and have fulfilled all of the eight prophecies? We can answer this question by dividing our 1028 by the total number of people who have lived since the time of these prophecies. The best information available indicates the number to be about 88 billion or  $8.8 \times 10^{10}$ .
- ❧ To simplify the computation let us call the number 1011. By dividing these two numbers we find that the chance that any man might have lived down to the present time and fulfilled all eight prophecies is 1 in 1017.

# Examining Just Eight Prophecies



- ❧ *Let us try to visualize this chance. If you mark one of ten tickets, and place all of the tickets in a hat, and thoroughly stir them, and then ask a blindfolded man to draw one, his chance of getting the right ticket is one in ten. Suppose that we take 1017 silver dollars and lay them on the face of Texas. They will cover all of the state two feet deep. Now mark one of these silver dollars and stir the whole mass thoroughly, all over the state. Blindfold a man and tell him that he can travel as far as he wishes, but he must pick up one silver dollar and say that this is the right one. What chance would he have of getting the right one?*
- ❧ This was just **eight** of forty eight prophecies. Imagine the chances of getting all of them fulfilled in one man!
- ❧ We may say, beyond all reasonable doubt. Jesus is Lord!

# The Last Proof of Jesus Divinity



❧ *Jesus is still alive*

❧ *Jesus still forgives*

❧ *Jesus still heals*

❧ *Jesus still blesses, right up to this day and beyond!*