

Always Be Ready

Proclaiming the Gospel by Defending the Faith

August 5th: Who is Jesus?

Another conversation:

- Bahai religion (Remember the COLUMBO TACTIC)
- "I like Jesus, I try to follow a lot of his teachings, but I don't think he is supernatural or that he's the ONLY way to God."
- Tactic #2: Wile E. Coyote
- "So what you're saying is..."

Head: Jesus was very clear about who He is.

Jesus either directly or indirectly made many profound claims for Himself:

The Son of God (Matt 26:63-63)

Giver of eternal life (Jn 10:28)

One with the Father (Jn 10:30)

One who forgives sin (Mk 2:10)

The great "I Am" (Jn 8:58)

The light of the World (Jn 8:12)

The future Judge of the world (Jn 5:22-23)

The lamb of God (Jn 1:36)

The baptizer in the Holy Spirit (Lk 3:16)

The door of salvation (Jn 10:9)

The Savior (Jn 3:14-16)

The Messiah (Jn 4:26)

The healer (Lk 18:42)

- ➔ Jesus was very clear on who he is. He made claims about Himself that would be either true, or outright crazy lies.

The greatest claim: "I am the Way, and the Truth, and the Life; no one comes to the Father, but through Me" John 14:6.

- ➔ Jesus simply does not leave room for us to believe that He is simply a good moral teacher!
- ➔ CS Lewis called this the LUNATIC, LIAR OR LORD argument.

Matthew 16:13-17

¹³ Now when Jesus came into the district of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, "Who do people say that the Son of Man is?" ¹⁴ And they said, "Some say John the Baptist, others say Elijah, and others Jeremiah or one of the prophets." ¹⁵ He said to them, "But who do you say that I am?" ¹⁶ Simon Peter replied, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God." ¹⁷ And Jesus

answered him, “Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father who is in heaven.

Heart: What you think about Jesus is the most important thing about you.

What comes into our minds when we think about God is the most important thing about us. For this reason the gravest question before the church is always God Himself, and the most portentous fact about any man is not what he at a given time may say or do, but what he in his deep heart conceives God to be like. We tend by a secret law of the soul to move toward our mental image of God. This is true not only of the individual Christian, but of the company of Christians that composes the church... Among the sins to which the human heart is prone, hardly any other is more hateful to God than idolatry, for idolatry is at bottom a libel on his character. The idolatrous heart assumes that God is other than He is – in itself a monstrous sin – and substitutes for the true God one made after its own likeness...

Let us beware lest we in our pride accept the erroneous notion that idolatry consists only in kneeling before visible objects of adoration, and that civilized peoples are therefore free from it. The essence of idolatry is the entertainment of thoughts about God that are unworthy of him. It begins in the mind and may be present where no overt act of worship has taken place... Wrong ideas about God are not only the fountain from which the polluted waters of idolatry flow; they are themselves idolatrous. The idolater simply imagines things about God and acts as if they were true.

Before the Christian church goes into eclipse anywhere there must first be a corrupting of her simple basic theology. She simply gets a wrong answer to the question, “What is God like?” and goes on from there... The masses of her adherents come to believe that God is different from what He actually is; and that is heresy of the most insidious and deadly kind.

AW Tozer: (The Knowledge of the Holy)

“[Christ] is the image of the invisible God.” (Colossians 1:15)

Hands: Be intentional in speaking about Jesus.

- Don't just talk abstractly about God, talk specifically about Jesus. (What He said, did, what he's like)
- It makes your faith more tangible and more personal.

- WHEN people challenge your view of Jesus, remember that their improper idea of him is idolatry, so be ready and convicted to defend your idea of Jesus.

How did Jesus do it?

1. He built relationships.
2. He told stories.
3. He changed lives.

DYING FOR A LIE:

- The disciples spent a lot of time with Jesus, they knew him intimately, no one was closer.
- They risked their lives (and most died as martyrs) to spread the knowledge that Jesus was more than a rabbi, that he was in fact God in the flesh.
- Sane people are not willing to die for something they know to be a lie.