



Sermon Series: Why I believe part 1

Sermon Title: Why I believe... in God

Date: January 2, 2022

The questions: “Who is Jesus?” and, “What was His mission?” are at the root of every struggle and argument about faith. One of the most important questions Jesus ever asked is found in **Matthew 16:13-16**, and Peter concluded that Jesus was not simply a really good person, philosopher, or effective teacher. Peter’s declaration demonstrates an important principle.

(Big Idea) An open heart and honest inquiry will lead you to belief in Jesus.

Several powerful revelations that we find in the most concise representative portraits of His person: The accounts of Jesus’ life: Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John
Those four accounts reveal...

I. His Power

When we read the gospels we find a man who was not only a compelling teacher, but a worker of miracles. Jesus didn’t use his power simply to impress others. It was purposeful and strategic.

Among the multitude of miracles recorded in the bible, we see Jesus even confronted the power of death itself. John 11 records the raising of his friend Lazarus. Upon hearing that his friend was dead, Jesus waits four days. He then goes to the grave, reverses the decomposition that accompanies death, and commands him back to life. We can certainly understand why John 11:45 records, “Many... believed in him.”

Even the religious leaders who opposed Jesus didn’t deny His power to perform miracles. Rather, they asserted He did so by Satan’s power.

II. His Authority

Predictions or His Own death -

The gospels record on several occasions Jesus’ explanation that he would go to Jerusalem, suffer, be killed, then raised to life on the 3rd day (**Matthew**

16:21, 22). Jesus regarded his crucifixion as neither an accident nor a mistake (**Matthew 20:28**). Jesus' death by crucifixion and its meaning was predicted in prophetic writings hundreds of years prior to the event. **Isaiah 53:4–6, 12**

Predictions of His resurrection -

After Jesus' death a disciple of his buried him in a tomb he donated for the purpose. His own inner circle deserted him. The ones with the courage to do anything went to the tomb, found it empty and told the disciples. Even though the disciples themselves were at first skeptical, they eventually confirmed the truth of the event. Jesus himself appeared to the disciples over a 40 day period and proved himself to be the Lord of life. He wasn't a ghost or some other kind of apparition. On one occasion he challenged his disciples. **Luke 24:39**

Another time he called his doubting disciple by the name of Thomas to exercise faith (**John 20:27**). The resurrected Jesus cited predictions of his own resurrection (**Luke 24:46–47**). Christianity permeated the world on the basis of his resurrection.

Revelation #3. His Claims to Be God

CS Lewis has summarized the only 3 possibilities of Jesus' identity:
A Liar... A Lunatic... LORD of All

No one seriously suggest Jesus was or is either of the first 2. The only alternative that is really open to us is the 3rd ... that He really is the LORD of all the universe. Consider some of the statements Jesus made

John 10:7-9, John 6:48, John 8:12, John 11:25

Peter, who at the time of Jesus' crucifixion denied Jesus, later stood before the leaders of those who had opposed Jesus and boldly proclaimed Jesus as Savior. **Acts 4:12**

Many people regard Jesus as a great leader, teacher, prophet, or spiritual guide. But Jesus himself has not left that option open to us. The New Testament record is clear. Jesus was a powerful worker of miracles who lived a more credible life than anyone has ever lived, either before or since. He spoke with authority and made unique claims, asserting his equality with God. There were hundreds of witnesses who saw him as a resurrected and living person.

Discussion Questions:

- **What about the sermon stuck with you this week? What part challenged your thinking?**
- **Discuss some of the reasons that people reject Jesus' claim as savior. What have been some reasons that people have shared with you personally?**
- **What led to the change in Peter from denying he knew Jesus to proclaiming Him as savior?**
- **Some people claim Jesus never actually existed. What evidence would you point to that He did exist?**
- **To those who say that Jesus was just a man who taught good things, how can you guide them?**
- **To those who say that Jesus was just a good man, how can you guide them?**