

## Countdown to Easter

*Is Jesus Really the Son of God?*

Mark 14:60-61

March 8, 2026 am

**Lord's Supper**

Countdowns are part of the fabric of our lives. As kids we count the days until school is out, or until our birthday arrives. Fiancé's countdown the days until their wedding. Next summer Jan and I will begin a countdown until football season. We use countdowns for important events or activities.

This morning we begin a 5-week countdown to Easter. During these weeks I want to address five key questions surrounding the Easter story. My hope is that it will not only provide a greater understanding of who Jesus is, but also cause us to have a growing anticipating of one of the most important dates on the Christian calendar. Today we'll start with the most important of the five questions. ***Was Jesus really the Son of God?***

On the night of His arrest, Jesus was brought before Caiaphas, the Jewish High Priest. This man was supposed to be the most important figure in leading people into a right relationship with God. He represented the people before God and God to the people. He was the icon of spirituality. But by the time of Christ, this highly spiritual position had become politicized and corrupted. So unspiritual was the high priest, that he did not recognize Jesus for who he was. Listen to the text.

**READ Mark 14:53-62**

We certainly don't have any warm, fuzzy feelings for the High Priest, but he did ask an important question, even though his motive was wrong. He was not seeking truth, but was trying to trap Jesus. But, setting aside his motive this morning, let's examine the question. ***Are you the Christ, the Son of the Blessed One.***

***Christ*** was the New Testament equivalent of the Old Testament word *Messiah*. Are you the Messiah? Do you claim that you are the one to be sent from God to deliver the people?

**Blessed One** was a Jewish way of avoiding saying the name of God. But it was clearly understood by those who heard the question that he was asking if Jesus was God? **It's still a good question.** Is Jesus the son of God? Is He divine? Or is he merely human? Let's consider three things.

**Did He claim to be God?**

**Is there any evidence that He is the Son of God?**

**What difference does it make?**

## 1. The Claims

Some say Jesus never claimed to be the Son of God. This is not true. On more than one occasion He spoke of his deity. He claimed to be God in human flesh. Let's look at a couple of those.

**A. Mark 14:62** In answering the High Priest, Jesus acknowledged that He was the Son of God. In a very clear response Jesus simply said, ***I am.*** Then added a statement that Caiaphas would see him sitting at the right hand of power and coming with the clouds of Heaven. No mistaking this. Jesus claimed to be the son of God.

**B. John 4:25-26** Jesus met with a Samaritan woman at the city well, while his disciples were in town doing some grocery shopping. In the course of the conversation the woman admitted her belief in a coming Messiah. Listen to the words of Jesus in response to her statement. ***I, who speak to you am He.*** I'm the one. I am Messiah.

**C. John 5:17-18** ***But He answered them, "My Father is working until now, and I Myself am working." For this reason therefore the Jews were seeking all the more to kill Him, because He not only was breaking the Sabbath, but also was calling God His own Father, making Himself equal with God.***

Once again Jesus claimed to be God. Once again it drove his enemies crazy. Once more it caused them to hate him even more.

#### **D. John 10:30** *I and the Father are one.*

Again, Jesus clearly declares His deity. Once more he claims to be divine. He and the Father were one. Same in essence. As the Father was God, so He, the son, was God.

Jesus really did claim to be God. I'm stressing this important point, for a reason. **When someone claims to be God, that demands a response.** This is not a statement of personal character or nature that can be ignored. **I might say "I'm a winter person." I like the cold. That statement can be ignored. I might say, "I'm a smart person." That's pretty subjective.** Maybe I am, and maybe I'm not. But it is not worth debating, nor does it demand a response.

But when someone claims to be God, either they are, or they are not. So, was Jesus God? He said so. What does the evidence say?

## **2. The Evidence**

**When a crime is committed, evidence is gathered to ascertain the truth. When breakthrough in science is announced, evidence is examined. When a bold claim is made, evidence should be available.**

Jesus made a bold claim, as did His disciples. Is there evidence?

### **1) Evidence from History**

The world was clearly changed by the life, death and resurrection of Jesus. He left a wake of change when he left this planet which still impacts us today. We continue to **divide history into two segments based upon the birth of Christ.**

He never wrote a book, yet he is the subject of more books than any other person. In three short years, Jesus changed world like no one.

### **2) Evidence from Messianic Prophecies**

The OT is filled with promises of the coming Messiah, the promised deliverer who would come to establish the kingdom of God.

It can easily be demonstrated that Jesus has fulfilled a host of Old Testament Messianic prophecies. These prophecies were written at least 400 years before His birth. Consider these details prophesied.

Virgin Birth	Isaiah 7:14
Born in Bethlehem	Micah 5:2
Descendant of Abraham	Gen. 12:1-3
Descendant of Isaiah	Gen. 21:12
Tribe of Judah	Gen. 49:10
Descendant of David	Psalm 132:11
Miracle-Worker	Isaiah 35:5-6
Cleanse the Temple	Mal. 3:1
Rejected by the Jews	Psalm 118:22
Betrayed for 30 Pieces of Silver	Zech. 11:12-13
Crucified with Thieves	Isaiah 53:12
Side would be Pierced	Zech. 12:10
Buried in a Rich Man's Tomb	Isaiah 53:9
Gamble for His Garments	Psalm 22:18
Hands and Feet Pierced	Psalm 22:16
Betrayed by His Disciples	Psalm 41:9
Scourged and Spit On	Psalm 35:15
Face Would be Greatly Marred	Isaiah 52:14
He Would Be Resurrected	Psalm 16:8-10

Frank Harber in his book, Reasons for Believing

*In Jesus Christ 456 identifiable prophecies were uniquely fulfilled.*

Dan Story in his book, Defending Your Faith

*The chances of any man fulfilling just 8 such prophecies is a probability of 10 to the 17 powers. This figure, calculated by Peter Stoner, Professor Emeritus of Science at Westmont college has been confirmed by the committee of the American Scientific Affiliation.*

*Illustrate 10 to the 17<sup>th</sup> power. Suppose we take 10 to the 17 power*

*silver dollars and lay them on the face of Texas. They would cover all 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 only silver dollar and say that it is the right one. He would have the same chance of getting it right as that the prophets would have had of writing these eight prophecies and having them all come true in one man.*

### **3) Evidence from Miracles**

It is one thing to claim to be God. It is another thing to prove it. Jesus proved it with his miracles. Think of the miracles which He performed.

He healed a variety of sicknesses. Raised the dead.

Calmed storms. Caused a healthy tree to wither.

Multiplied bread and fish to feed 5000, then later 4000.

Delivered people from demon-possession.

Turned water into wine and just any wine, the best wine.

Restored a man's ear which had just been cut off.

Walked on water.

### **4) Evidence from the Resurrection**

The empty tomb. The condition and position of the grave clothes.

Testimony of the soldiers guarding the tomb – Bribed to tell a lie.

The fact that his dead body was never found.

Over 500 people saw him over a period of 40 days.

Changed lives of His followers. Willing to suffer and die.

People will generally not suffer and for what they believe is a lie.

The change in the apostle Paul.

The fact that the movement never died. It spread to new generations.

### **3. The Decision**

What do you do with a person who claims to be the Son of God and the only Savior? Great question. One that Pilate asked himself ***What will I do with this man, Jesus?*** You have two choices, and only two.

## 1) **Reject Him**

This is an option. You can, as many have done, decide that the idea of God becoming a Jewish carpenter is too bizarre. You can decide that Jesus is not who he claimed to be. And just walk away.

## 2) **Accept Him**

You can trust Him. This is the choice that I have made. After reading the claims and examining the evidence, I am convinced that Jesus is the Son of God. And because I believe He is, I trust all that He has said, and have committed my life to following Him.

### **So, what will you do with Jesus?**

**C. S. Lewis and others** are right when they say Jesus is either a

**Liar – He knew he wasn't God. But simply claimed to be.**

**Lunatic – He really thought himself to be God, but was not.**

**LORD – He is exactly who he said he was.**

**If you are wrestling** with this question and what to do with it, you are probably hearing two competing voices. One says *it's all just church talk. Nothing to it. Jesus was just a man. Nothing more.* Then there is that other voice encouraging you to accept the claims of Jesus. To trust Him. Yield your life to him. Which voice will you listen to?

**Pilate thought he could avoid making the choice.** But it doesn't work that way. He was forced to decide. Rather than asking for God's grace and forgiveness. He asked for a bowl of water. He even thought he could exempt himself from the consequences of his choice by washing his hands. In not choosing to believe in Jesus, He was choosing to reject Jesus.

**You can't sit this one out.** If the Bible is right, and I believe it is, we are already sinners, separated from God and doomed. To do nothing is to stay in that condition. One must by faith follow Jesus in order to be lifted from a path that leads to destruction and placed on a path that will lead to Heaven.

**So, what will you do with Jesus?**