

Week 5: Is Jesus Really God?

Before the Meeting...

- The presence of Jesus in your meetings is the most important aspect of your gatherings. He transforms meetings into momentum in people's lives. So please take time to worship and pray together each week.
- Remember to combine these resources with the exploreGod.com materials.

During the Meeting...

Break the Ice (choose one)

1. Briefly tell the group about your "best friend" growing up? What caused you to be so close?
2. What superhero did you want to be when you were young and why? Did you ever dress up as him or her?

Watch Video 1: Pulse of the World on Jesus

Discuss from among the following:

1. Discuss the Explore God (EG) provided questions as applicable (see EG material).
2. Note that several people in the video indicated their "wish" that Jesus was actually God. Why might this be so? (*Example: people today are looking for a hero, a savior – as exemplified in the recent resurgence of films featuring comic book heroes.*)

Watch Video 2: The Curiosity Collective: Is Jesus Really God?

Discuss from among the following:

1. Discuss the Explore God provided questions as applicable (see EG material).
2. When did you come to fully believe in Jesus as being God? What ultimately led you to this conviction?
3. Many people believe that Jesus was a good man but not God in flesh (and that He never claimed to be God). Invite volunteers to read the following statements that Jesus made about Himself. From these, what can you conclude about Jesus' beliefs concerning Himself? What did He want His followers to believe about Him?
Direct claims: John 14:6, 14:9, 6:35, 8:12, 8:36, 11:25-26, Matthew 10:40, 11:28, Mark 14:61-64; Indirect claims: Mark 2:5 (forgiver), Matthew 25:31-32 (judge)
4. Of the following "proofs" concerning the deity of Jesus, which do you find most compelling personally and why: Historical proofs for Jesus outside of the Bible (see Sunday's message and attached "Heavy Research" file), the spread of the Gospel around the world, the existence of Christianity itself after 2000 years of outlandish claims, the continued life change that Christ's followers experience, the "love of Christ" that motivates Christians to serve others? Other proofs?

5. Because Jesus became fully human, we know that He is able to relate to all of the joys and challenges of human existence. (Ask a volunteer to read Hebrews 4:15 aloud.)
What are some implications of having a God who understands our experience so well? (Examples: Positive – we don't have to be ashamed of our weaknesses or failures, a God who 'understands' is comforting rather than threatening to us, etc. Negative – we can tend to imagine God in "our" image rather than our being made in his image, we can become so casual in our relationship with Him that we fail to take our own sinfulness seriously, etc.)
6. According to Acts 10:8-9, it is impossible to be a Christian and believe that Jesus is anything besides the unique Son of God Who really lived, was crucified, and resurrected. What might the lives of many Christians demonstrate about who Jesus is to on-looking non-believers? Does your level of personal obedience to Christ reflect belief in Jesus as a "good" man or in Jesus as "God"?

Inspire

Before a prayer/ministry time in your group, take time to thank Jesus for who He is (eternal God), for becoming a man, for dying & resurrecting, and for His daily presence in our lives. Perhaps invite your group members to recount aloud (as worship) what he/she was like before meeting Jesus and how He has changed your lives.

Prayer & Ministry

Note: It might be helpful to break the group into groups of 3 or 4 to respond to the following questions and for mutual prayer & ministry.

1. One of the speakers in Video 2 pointed out that "the love of Christ" compelled people in the New Testament to serve others and to take the Gospel everywhere. If this is one of the strongest proofs of Jesus' ongoing life and divinity, in your opinion how well is your life communicating that message of love? Who specifically is the Holy Spirit asking you to love better, and in what specific way(s)?
2. Take time and invite group members to share any personal needs for which they would like prayer as a group. Go for it!

After the meeting...

- Email *The Historical Jesus* (attached .PDF) to your group for further light reading.
- For those wanting greater detail, send the file *Is Jesus Really God – Heavy Research Notes* (attached .PDF).

Pastor Dwayne's Further Recommendations:

- For anyone finding it difficult to trust the New Testament as a valid source of information about Jesus, encourage them to consider the attached chart *Evidence for NT*, which compares the amount of source material for the NT with other "accepted" historical documents.
- Great brief Explore God video: [Jesus, God or Fraud?](#) – Challenges us to decide who we believe Jesus was: bad, mad, or God (similar to CS Lewis' reading below)
- Print & discuss the C.S. Lewis' excerpt from *Mere Christianity: Lunatic, Devil, or God?* (.PDF attached)
- [Who Is Jesus?](#) Is a 3-minute Explore God video that highlights how Jesus broke down barriers between people, revealing that Jesus is the kind of person that we would want God to be like.