

Why Jesus?

Matthew 16:13-17

“I find great irony in the fact that Jesus changed the entire course of history but was ignored by historians of his day. Historians tended not to care about Galilean peasants who neither wrote books nor led armies.”

-William Willimon, author of *Why Jesus?*

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?”

Matthew 16:13-17

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.

Matthew 16:13-17



1. Man's Invention. Matthew 16:13-14

"If Jesus had never lived, we would not have been able to invent Him."

- The disciples had heard Jesus referred to as:

-John the Baptist

-Elijah

-Jeremiah

-One of the Prophets Walter

Wink "People who listened to him at the time said things like, 'We've never heard anyone talking like this' and they didn't just mean his tone of voice or his skillful public speaking. Jesus puzzled people then, and he puzzles people now."

-N.T. Wright

"Historically, it is quite doubtful whether Christ ever existed at all, and if he did we do not know anything about him."

-Bertrand Russell, British philosopher, author of Why I Am Not a Christian.

John answered them, "I baptize with water, but among you stands one you do not know, even he who comes after me, the strap of whose sandal I am not worthy to untie."

John 1:26-27

2. Divine Revelation. Matthew 16:15-16

Peter confesses Jesus is the long-awaited Messiah and Son of the Living God.

"No man can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him." John 6:44

"And this is the judgment: the light has come into the world, and the people loved the darkness rather than the light because their works were evil."

John 3:19

“If you’d told me a year before...that I’d wind up whispering my sins in the confessional or on my knees saying the rosary, I would’ve laughed myself cock-eyed. More likely pastime? Pole dancer. International spy. Drug mule. Assassin.”

Novelist, Mary Karr

3. Christ’s Invitation. Matthew 16:24-26

Who you say Jesus is will determine everything about how you follow Him.

Then Jesus told his disciples, “If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will find it. For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world and forfeits his soul? Or what shall a man give in return for his soul?”

Matthew 16:24-26

For through the law I died to the law, so that I might live to God. I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.

Galatians 2:19-20

“We’ve lost the real Jesus-or at least exchanged him for a newer, safer, sanitized, ineffectual one...In our subculture Jesus would have never been crucified-he’s too nice.”

Jefferson Bethke, author of *Jesus > Religion*

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