

The Second Great Truth About Jesus

His Deity

*The **second** of several studies by Major General Sir Laurence New
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In the first of these studies we saw that as ambassadors for Christ we are partners with the Holy Spirit. We have not only to live lives that are seen to be consistent with our faith, we have also to be able to explain the truths about Jesus to those to whom we have earned the right to speak. The first of these foundational truths is that unlike any other man who ever lived Jesus was, as the *Book of Common Prayer* so aptly puts it, “Conceived of the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, made man.” It is an inescapable truth, which Jesus clearly believed Himself, and which Mary and Joseph knew to be a fact, that He had been immaculately conceived.

Now we look at the Second Great Truth about Jesus—**His Deity**.

Some elements of the church cannot accept Jesus’ deity. They argue that he was merely **the greatest man who ever lived**. Paul, with his brilliant trained and inspired brain, rejects any claim that Jesus was merely the greatest man who ever lived. He insists that “God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ” (2 Corinthians 5:19).

The Gospel writers also will have none of it. John points to Christ’s own prayer, “And now, Father, glorify me in your presence with the glory I had with you before the world began” (John 17:5); to His insistence “I and the Father are one” (John 10:30); to His claim “The Father is in me, and I in the Father” (John 10:38); and to His assertion “Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father” (John 14:9).

It is true that Christ’s godliness made Him the most powerful **preacher and teacher** of all time. The Sermon on the Mount is surely one of the most profound series of truths ever taught. Even His enemies wondered at His power of his speech and his teaching. It is true that Jesus was the most **outstanding healer of all time**. The Gospels record such healings as Jairus’ daughter, Lazarus, the Centurion’s son, the sick man let down through the roof, the lame man at the Pool of Bethesda, the blind girl, the man so filled with demons that he was called Legion. It is clear also that He was a **superb strategist**, devoting hours to the training of his apostles, preparing them to be the leaders of the young church. **But none of this is enough.**

Christ’s claims about Himself leave no room for escape. Suppose a man was to stand before you and say: “I and the heavenly father are one. Do you want to find God; then come through me for I am the way, the truth and the life; no one comes to the Father but by me. Are you anxious sometimes about death? I am the resurrection and the life. If you believe in me you will never die to all eternity. I have the right to forgive your sins; one day I am going to come back to this world to judge all people of all time including you; and what happens to you for all eternity depends upon your response to my words...”

And suppose as he was speaking someone was to come forward to kneel in front of him, raise his arms and say “My Lord and My God.” What would you think if, as you watched, you saw him not only accept the man’s worship but rebuke him gently for being so slow to believe?

As CS Lewis once pointed out, all of these claims that Jesus made about Himself force any honest observer to choose one of only three possibilities; Jesus was either:

A fraud (and His apostles and witnesses with Him) or

A raving megalomaniac (which the evidence simply doesn’t support) or

The Messiah, to which all the Old and New Testament evidence points.

There is one further compelling piece of evidence which supports the claim of Christ’s deity. In face of unremitting temptation of the most subtle kind **Jesus was sinless**. Isaiah foretold this in Isaiah 53:9. The angel Gabriel told Mary that her Son would be without fault (Luke 1:35); a unique feature of His earthly life that the Gospels and the Epistles bear out. For those who refuse to accept the evidence of the Bible it will be challenging to point out that even the Koran agrees that Jesus of Nazareth knew no sin.

In witnessing to those who ask, we can as Christ’s ambassadors assert with total confidence that **Jesus was God in Christ, the Way, the Truth and the Life. His deity was and is beyond doubt.**

In the next study we will be reminded that without these solemn truths Jesus could never have died in our place.