

Jesus is More than...

A man, a carpenter, a fisherman, a teacher, a historical figure, a prophet or any other titles that the world chooses to give Him. To many He was born, He preached and taught, was a radical who was eventually crucified and died. And that is where it ends for most people, but for the Christian that is just the beginning because we know He rose again. So where does this Christian journey start, how can you join and where does it end? The simple answer is, it starts with Jesus, joining is free and easy and it ends with Jesus. The world generally accepts that Jesus existed, as there are historical records to prove this, but any true Christian will tell you that Jesus is more than any title assigned to Him by a race that do not know where they came from, why they are here or where they are going. Jesus is our Saviour, He is God with us as told to us in the following scriptures when the angel came to reveal this to Joseph, the husband of Mary, who were Jesus' earthly parents.

Matthew 1:21

And she shall bring forth a son, and you shall call His name JESUS:
for He shall save His people from their sins.

And in verse 23:

Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call His name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us.

For those who do not believe that Jesus is the Son of God, this does not mean it is not so. Jesus was born to Mary, an earthly mother and a virgin, but it was not by the seed of Joseph His earthly father that He was conceived. If He had been conceived by an earthly father He would have been born in sin and corrupted by it like the rest of us. An unclean vessel cannot cleanse an

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unclean vessel; neither can be of benefit to the other. Jesus was born of the Holy Spirit as is confirmed in the Gospels and indeed throughout the Bible.

Matthew 1:20

Joseph, you son of David, fear not to take unto you Mary your wife:
for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit.

Joseph who was engaged to Mary knew she was pregnant and was considering ways to send her away discreetly to hide her shame so she wouldn't be humiliated; but God sent an angel to him to explain that she had not been unfaithful, and that this had happened through the work of the Holy Spirit. God alerted the world to this amazing event by placing a star in the sky that astrologers and wise men who read the stars would see and follow it to His birthplace to pay homage and reverence His Son.

FACT

The Bible does not state how many wise men came to see Jesus after He was born. Through time however and misconceptions, we have been lead to believe it was three. This number was possibly arrived at because the gifts mentioned were Gold, Frankincense and Myrrh, three gifts, three men! Not so, these were the gifts bestowed on Kings at that time and there would have been a lot of it from a lot of men.

Ask yourself this, would there really only have been three wise men and astrologers on the earth at that time studying the stars? An event so great would have attracted huge speculation, the news would have been spread far and wide. King Herod's attention would not have been drawn to three men covertly travelling across the desert and we know God did not hide the birth of His Son. The birth of Jesus had been prophesied throughout the Old Testament and John the Baptist preached on it daily in the New Testament so much so that they beheaded him for it.

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Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea and His birth was no mean feat. God protected Him all the way, the angels of Heaven would have been on high alert; I imagine Michael and the warrior angels were very busy fighting many spiritual battles during this time along with Gabriel and the messenger angels delivering messages in the heavens and in the earth. There is so much more that we have not been privy to and if it was necessary for us to know these details God would have put them in the Bible for us. Satan and his followers were trying very hard to prevent Jesus' birth but we know he could not and did not succeed.

Jesus started His public ministry at the age of thirty, He died and rose again three and a half years later. Not much is written about our Lord up to Him starting His public ministry, as God the Father gave Him time to experience life as a human being to understand our struggles, challenges, emotions and to prepare Him for His journey ahead. We have a limitless God awesome in greatness and power, existing before time began who decided to put Himself into a limited body, to feel pain, hunger, suffering and refusing to use His power to avoid it. That adjustment would have taken some doing. Jesus lived as normal a life as possible until He performed His first miracle which was turning water into wine. He had attended a wedding feast and they ran out of wine so Jesus instructed the servants to fill the water-pots with water and when the water was poured and given to the guests it was wine.

John 2:7-9

Jesus said unto them, Fill the water-pots with water. And they filled them up to the brim. And He said unto them, Draw out now, and bear unto the governor of the feast. And they bare it. When the ruler of the feast had tasted the water that was made wine, and knew not whence it was: (but the servants which drew the water knew;)

The two things that most people struggle with is that Jesus is the "Son of God" and that He performed "Miracles." There is so much to learn about our Lord

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that we cannot even begin to scratch the surface in these few pages. The Bible itself could not contain all the great things Jesus did when He was on this earth. This is why the best starting point when reading and studying the Bible is Jesus. You could spend your whole Christian life learning about the Lord and never exhaust the topic, there is always something more to learn and understand.

Discussing our Lord Jesus is a good thing and to be encouraged, however there are some discussions which are meaningless and serve no purpose other than to anger the participants. One such discussion which continues to be a 'bone of contention,' is Jesus' colour; was He black or white with blonde hair and blue eyes! Whilst there is nothing wrong with the question, I have witnessed people getting angry during these discussions when someone disagrees with their argument and they refuse to accept the truth. Jesus was not black, He was not white, He was not from Ethiopia, Europe, Africa, China, India; He was from Jerusalem, He was born a Jew. He lived in Israel so if we use these simple facts and let common sense prevail, He was of the same colour as the people from that part of the world whether it was two thousand years ago or not.

The many images we see of Jesus through the ages have been personal representations from individuals and whilst it is good that every race wants to claim Him, it should not be seen as an accurate or factual image of what He looked like; and of course, it shouldn't matter. All the arguments with one race claiming He was their skin colour and others not wanting to worship Him because of it, while some find pictures of earthly men and claim He looked like them, they are all redundant! Please don't get caught up with these useless discussions as they serve no purpose at all.

If you are still not happy with this simple but truthful explanation, ask yourself this questions. How does Jesus' colour in any way affect what He did for mankind? Does the colour of Jesus' skin have anything to do with what He

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did for us or the fact that we can only be saved through Him? If your answer is 'yes, if He was white I wouldn't have anything to do with Him' or 'if He was black I wouldn't have anything to do with Him,' then you definitely need Him. The colour of His skin is not important only what He did for us.

Jesus did many things to show the wonders of God's kingdom and still people refused to believe in Him. He did not raise the dead in secret, He did it publicly, He healed the sick publicly, He taught in the synagogues, thousands followed Him and listened to His preaching and teachings; but they still denied Him. There is no one else in the history of the world that had this level of impact on people's lives, no king, no ruler, no celebrity, no one! This tells me that no matter how much proof God provides for the world, all the signs and wonders that He shows, if people have made up their mind not to accept something they won't. Jesus' purpose was to reverse the damage Adam did to mankind by blessing us and removing the curse and He did this regardless of whether we accepted Him or not. Adam was born naked, clothed in God's glory and knew no shame; but by the time he, Satan and Eve had finished all this was reversed. When they sinned they had to be covered inadequately with the skin of animals to cover their shame so mankind became cursed. Jesus was born and clothed with the inadequate clothing of mankind, and had to endure shame and humiliation to have the inadequate covering stripped away to become naked and to be covered once again in God's glory.

Jesus came to do the will of the Father and that was to save us and to tell us of the Kingdom of Heaven, how much God loves us and what we need to do to find Him again. For this to happen He had to die for us. His pure uncorrupted innocent blood had to be shed to cover, protect, us from the power of Satan so that we would have free access to God once more and render Satan ineffective at the same time, but not powerless. When God looks at us now He no longer sees our sin, He sees the Holy covering that is the blood of His Son Jesus. This is not an easy concept to understand but it is the foundation of

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the Christian belief and if you don't understand it you are substantially weakened because everything that the Christian is, is as a result of this one act.

But why death you ask, why did Jesus have to die and why this emphasis on blood being shed?