

THE WAY, THE TRUTH, AND THE LIFE

INTRODUCTION: Christian thinker C.S. Lewis once declared there are only three possible options for Jesus. He is either a liar, or a lunatic, or the Lord. Why aren't there any more options, like "a good man"?

How does God feel toward us?

- Ezekiel 33:11, "As surely as I live, declares the Sovereign LORD, I take no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but rather that they turn from their ways and live."
- 2 Peter 3:9, "He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance."

GOD _____ US AND WANTS US ALL TO BE _____.

What did God do because of his love for us?

- John 3:16, "God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life."
- 1 John 4:9, "This is how God showed his love among us: He sent his one and only Son into the world that we might live through him."

GOD _____ HIS LOVE BY _____ HIS ONLY SON TO _____ THE
WORLD FROM ITS SIN

How did God send his Son?

- Isaiah 7:14, "The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and will call him Immanuel" (God with us).
- Read Luke 1:26-36 for the announcement, and then Luke 2:1-7 for the fulfillment of Christ's coming.

GOD'S SON BECAME A _____ AS THE CHILD OF A _____ NAMED
MARY, BUT CONCEIVED BY THE POWER OF THE _____

Who then is Jesus Christ?

- Luke 2:11, "Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord."
- Romans 9:5, "From them [the Jews] is traced the human ancestry of Christ, who is God over all."
- 1 Timothy 2:5, "There is one God and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus."

JESUS CHRIST IS GOD'S _____, TRUE _____ YET ALSO FULLY TRUE _____

What did Jesus do during his life on earth?

- Hebrews 4:15, "We have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are, yet was without sin."
- Matthew 11:5, "The blind receive sight, the lame walk, those who have leprosy are cured, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the good news is preached to the poor."
- Matthew 20:28, "The Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."

JESUS LIVED A _____ LIFE IN OUR PLACE, DOING WONDERFUL THINGS FOR
_____, AND THEN _____ US BY GIVING HIS LIFE AS OUR RANSOM PRICE.

How did Jesus pay for our sins?

Luke 22, 23 (a summary): After three years of preaching, Jesus made his final trip to Jerusalem. He entered the city on Sunday where crowds received him enthusiastically. On Thursday he celebrated the Passover feast with his disciples, and then instituted the Lord's Supper. That same night he took his disciples to a park called Gethsemane, where he prayed intensely for the strength to face the ordeal that lay ahead. Judas, one of his disciples, then led Jesus' enemies to the place where he was praying. They arrested him and took him before the Jewish high court. The court found him guilty of death because he called himself God's Son. Then his enemies beat him, spit at him, and mocked him.

But before the death sentence could be carried out, the Roman governor had to give his approval. Therefore, Jesus was taken before Pontius Pilate for another trial. Pilate found Jesus innocent of all charges; yet he was afraid to deny the demands of the Jewish leaders. He tried to satisfy them in other ways, but finally, after Jesus had again been mocked, whipped, and beaten, Pilate let the Jewish leaders have their way. He ordered that Jesus should be crucified--a death normally reserved for heinous criminals.

Jesus was then led away, nailed to a cross, and placed between two thieves to die. From 9am to 3pm he hung on the cross, suffering even the agony of hell as he cried out, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" At noon the sky turned dark, and when Jesus died, an earthquake shook the ground. After Jesus was officially declared dead, some of his friends took his body and buried it in a manmade cave.

JESUS PAID FOR OUR SINS WITH HIS INNOCENT _____ AND _____

What happened next?

Matthew 28, Mark 16, Luke 24, John 20-21 (a summary): On the third day after his death, Jesus rose from the dead and left the grave unnoticed. An angel came and opened the grave so that all could see it was empty. Early that Sunday morning some of the women who had believed in Jesus went to visit his grave. There they saw that it was empty. Angels told them that Jesus had risen from the dead. Quickly they ran and told the good news to Jesus' disciples. Peter and John hurried to the grave. They found it empty with the grave clothes neatly folded. Another woman, Mary Magdalene, assumed that Jesus' body had been reburied or stolen. Through her tears she saw Jesus, but didn't recognize him until he spoke to her. Later that same day the other women actually saw him, as did two other groups of disciples. For the next forty days Jesus repeatedly appeared to his disciples, to confirm their faith and increase their understanding. Finally, he ascended physically back to heaven, leaving his joyful disciples with the gift of the Holy Spirit and the command to spread the news of his coming.

JESUS CONQUERED _____ AND RETURNED VICTORIOUSLY TO _____

Why is Jesus so important to us?

- John 14:6, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me."
- John 14:19, "Because I live, you also shall live."
- John 14: 27, "Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled, and do not be afraid."

ONLY JESUS PROVIDES _____ TO HIS FATHER, GIVING US _____ AND _____.

MARTIN LUTHER'S EXPLANATION ABOUT JESUS

I believe that Jesus Christ, true God, begotten of the Father from eternity, and also true man, born of the virgin Mary, is my Lord. He has redeemed me, a lost and condemned creature, purchased and won me from all sins, from death and from the power of the devil, not with gold or silver, but with his holy, precious blood and with his innocent suffering and death. All this he did that I should be his own, and live under him in his kingdom, and serve him in everlasting righteousness, innocence and blessedness, just as he has risen from death and lives and rules eternally. This is most certainly true.

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION:

- Do I believe that Jesus is fully God and fully man united in one person...or is he just a man to me?
- Do I accept the Bible's assertion that Jesus was born of a virgin...or is that too hard to believe?
- Do I believe that Jesus died and rose from the dead as he promised...or is that too hard to believe?

FOR NEXT TIME

Complete the worksheet for Lesson 4. NEXT LESSON DATE: _____