

Recap: Last Week we looked at:

Problems of what is wrong in the world and why there is suffering.

How choosing to go our own way and the things we do wrong actually separate us from God.

At the heart of the Christian faith is a relationship with Jesus – So today we are going to spend some time together looking at “who is Jesus.”

When you look at Jesus one thing is clear he has made a massive impact on our world:-

Many nations laws have been shaped by the teaching of the bible.

Our calendar is set by His birth.

Every main religion feels it has to say something about Jesus.

His birth and death – are two main holidays we celebrate.

Billions of people believe in him today and say that they have a personal relationship with him.

His name is used as a swear word....

Discuss – What do you know / think about Jesus and who do you think he is?

Teaching point 1 : - “ Jesus a man of history”

Many people when they think about Jesus put him alongside fictional characters like Winnie the Pooh, or Santa Claus. Yet historians have proven without doubt that Jesus did indeed exist within human history / that he is a historical figure. Jesus far from being a made up myth has more evidence to prove conclusively his existence than almost any other ancient historical figure. In fact today you can go to modern Israel and see the historical sites of where Jesus lived, ministered, died and rose again.

Christian Evidence for Jesus’ existence:-

There are more than 5,300 known ancient Greek manuscripts of the New Testament. Altogether there are 24,000 ancient manuscripts testifying to the historical facts of Jesus’ birth, life, death and resurrection. This is more historical documentation for who Jesus was, when he lived and what he did than almost any other figure in ancient human history.

Non-biblical evidence for the historical Jesus:-

Roman historian – called Cornelius Tacitus – Born AD 52 – 54 writing in the time of Nero about Jesus and the early Christians:-

“ But Nero falsely laid the guilt of the fire of Rome on the persons commonly called Christians. Christus the founder was put to death by Pontius Pilate, Procurator of Judea in the reign of Tiberius.

Jewish Historian – Flavius Josephus – Born AD 37

“ At this time there was a wise man called Jesus. And his conduct was good and he was known to be a virtuous. Many people from the Jews and other nations became his disciples. Pilate condemned him to be crucified and die. His disciples reported that he appeared to them three days after his crucifixion and that he was alive; accordingly he was perhaps the Messiah concerning who the prophets have spoken about.”

In many other non Christian sources Jesus is spoken about and the details of his life are given substantial concrete historical evidence – as to make them fact.

The Encyclopaedia Britannica says this about the independent secular accounts of Jesus of Nazareth:-

“ These independent accounts prove in ancient times even the opponents of Christianity never doubted the historicity of Jesus. This has been disputed for the first time, but on **inadequate grounds** by several authors at the end of the 18th, 19th and at the beginning of the 20th centuries.”

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