

King of Kings

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[0 : 00] What a Savior we worship. Thank the Lord for him. Have you ever called someone by the wrong name? Have you ever misidentified someone?

Or maybe you've been misidentified. You're thinking, Pastor Colin, you just got here. You've done that to me. You've called me the wrong name. It will happen again.

And it's an embarrassing moment. But it's embarrassing, especially if you realize your mistake. And you say to the person in haste, that wasn't your name.

But then you can't remember it. You just want to melt into the pavement. But as embarrassing as that is, we've all been there.

We can chuckle because we think, yeah, I've done it before. Or I've been called the wrong name before. It's not a big deal. It's a simple mistake. We can move on.

[1 : 01] But we can't say the same about misidentifying Jesus. That is a far more costly blunder. We misidentify a person at Woody's.

Momentary embarrassment, that's what's at stake. We misidentify Jesus. And our eternal souls are at stake. So here is the question this morning.

Who is Jesus? We need to correctly identify Jesus. We need to rightly understand who He is.

So if you ask someone on the street, or maybe that person that you wrongly named at Woody's. If you took a poll and you ask the question, who is Jesus?

There would be lots of answers. Moral teacher. Misunderstood. A revolutionary. A good man. A prophet.

[2 : 01] So who is He? Lots of people say lots of different things. But what we want to know this morning is, what does the Bible say? What does the Bible tell us about who Jesus is?

Well, the Bible contains four distinct accounts of Jesus' life. Written by four different men. Three of which actually lived alongside Jesus for three years.

And the fourth man, he was a meticulous, detailed author. Who depended upon immense eyewitness testimony. And spent lots of time preparing that testimony.

And collecting it together for his account. That man's name was Luke. Now Luke didn't personally witness the life and ministry of Jesus Christ. But he talked to those he did.

And he read the accounts of those who did. And he wanted to write an account. An account of Jesus' life, death, and resurrection. And he wanted to make sure that it was credible.

[3 : 06] So open with me in your Bibles to Luke chapter 1. It's the third book in the New Testament. You've got Matthew, Mark, Luke.

Should be about two-thirds of the way through your Bible if you have one. Luke chapter 1. And we're going to be starting right at the beginning of Luke.

Luke. Luke. Luke chapter 1.

This is the word of the Lord. Amen. Inasmuch as many have undertaken to compile a narrative of the things that have been accomplished among us. Just as those who from the beginning were eyewitnesses and ministers of the word have delivered them to us.

It seemed good to me also, having followed all things closely for some time past, to write an orderly account for you, most excellent Theophilus, that you may have certainty concerning the things you have been taught.

[4 : 11] So Luke, he sets out to give us the truth. He makes that his goal, his objective. He wants to write this orderly account.

And why does he want to write that? That we may have certainty about what we've been taught. He writes so that we can know for sure this is who Jesus is.

So we're going to walk through Luke's gospel account in an orderly manner. And we are going to answer the question, who is Jesus, together from Luke's account. But to answer that big question, we have to ask and answer three other questions.

So here's the first question. Who do others say Jesus is? Question number one. Who do others say Jesus is? You see, in reading Luke's account, he doesn't give us the final definitive answer right away.

He helps us to see what everyone else is saying about Jesus. How is everyone else answering the question, who is Jesus? And we're going to see how none of them are giving us the right answer.

[5 : 22] So let's see first what Jesus' neighbors said about him. So we're in Luke 1. Turn over to Luke chapter 4. Just maybe one, two pages over.

Luke chapter 4. And we'll begin reading in verse 16. Luke 4, beginning in verse 16. And he, Jesus, came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up.

And as was his custom, he went to the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and he stood up to read. And the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was given to him. He unrolled the scroll and found the place where it was written, The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor.

He has sent me to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor.

And he rolled up the scroll and gave it back to the attendant and sat down. And the eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on him.

[6 : 33] And he began to say to them, Today this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing. And all spoke well of him and marveled at the gracious words that were coming from his mouth.

And they said, Is not this Joseph's son? So who did Jesus' hometown neighbors say that he is? They say he's just an ordinary man.

Is this not Joseph's son? You see, Jesus had just made a really shocking statement. He had done what no other person had probably ever done in Nazareth.

Teachers would often get up on the Sabbath and teach from the law. But Jesus did something very unexpected. He read from the scriptures. And then he said, In essence, what you just heard is about me.

And what was the people's response? It was a question. Is this not Joseph's son? In other words, isn't this just an ordinary man? We grew up with him.

[7 : 37] We know him. We know his family. This is the carpenter's son. How can he say that scripture is fulfilled in him? How can he say that Isaiah's words are about him?

How can he say that the spirit of the Lord has anointed him, is upon him? Those are some massive claims. Isn't this just Joseph's son?

They were confused. Who is Jesus? And Jesus' neighbors say, An ordinary man. How about Jesus' enemies?

What do they have to say about his identity? We're just going into chapter 5 of Luke. If you're already there in chapter 4, into chapter 5 we'll begin reading in verse 17.

Verse 17. On one of those days, as he, Jesus, was teaching, Pharisees and teachers of the law were sitting there, who had come from every village of Galilee and Judea and from Jerusalem.

[8 : 41] And the power of the Lord was with him to heal. And behold, some men were bringing on a bed a man who was paralyzed, and they were seeking to bring him in and lay him before Jesus.

But finding no way to bring him in because of the crowd, they went up on the roof and let him down with his bed through the tiles into the midst before Jesus. And when he saw their faith, he said, Man, your sins are forgiven.

And the scribes and the Pharisees began to question, saying, Who is this who speaks blasphemies? Who can forgive sins but God alone?

So Jesus was beginning to have a reputation. People were hearing about him. The religious leaders heard of him, and they said, We want to know more. We want to identify who this Jesus figure is.

We see there in verse 17 that they were coming from every village in Galilee and Judea and from Jerusalem. Because Jesus was somebody they wanted to better understand.

[9 : 45] And here in Luke chapter 5, Jesus claimed to do something that only God can do. He claimed to forgive the sins of this man.

Now the religious leaders who were there, they understand that only God can forgive sins. And for as much as the religious leaders wanted power and authority, even they knew where to draw the line.

Even they knew only God can forgive sins. We're not even going to claim to be able to do that. But Jesus had. And so Jesus had crossed the line in their minds.

He claimed power and authority that only God possesses. So there's really only two options here when we boil it down. He either is who he claims to be, or he isn't.

He either is God, or he isn't. And the Pharisees said, he isn't God. They said, who is this who speaks blasphemies?

[10:51] They didn't look at Jesus and say, God is among us. They looked at Jesus and they said, he insults God. He defames God. How dare he say he can forgive sins?

Because they thought, he isn't God. And so just like Jesus' neighbors, the religious leaders are convinced that Jesus is only a man. And he's a man who's causing trouble for them.

They were the religious authorities of the day. People were looking to them for answers about God. And Jesus was stealing their thunder. He was claiming to have greater authority than them.

And people were listening to him. So that made Jesus public enemy number one of the religious leaders. Instead of bowing down to worship him, they would conspire together as to how to kill him. Who is Jesus? Jesus' enemies say, blasphemer. So Jesus' neighbors, they get him wrong. Jesus' enemies obviously get him wrong.

[11:58] How about Jesus' forerunner, John the Baptist? John was supposed to prepare the people for the arrival of Jesus. He was supposed to be helping people to correctly identify Jesus.

So how would he answer the question, who is Jesus? Jump two more chapters in your Bible with me to Luke chapter 7. Luke chapter 7.

Here in Luke 7, Jesus has been very active, teaching and preaching and healing all over the region of Judea. And word comes to John about Jesus' activity.

We'll read just verses 18 and 19 to begin. Luke 7 verse 18. The disciples of John reported all these things to him.

And John, calling two of his disciples to him, sent them to the Lord, saying, Are you the one who is to come, or shall we look for another? Now why would John ask that question?

[13:04] That's a surprising question for him to ask. Are you the one who is to come, or shall we look for another? Didn't he know who Jesus was?

John expected Jesus to do a lot. Because the Old Testament promised the coming Savior would do a lot. The Old Testament promised that the coming Savior of God's people would indeed save them.

He would save God's people, and he would judge God's enemies. And so John was expecting Jesus to do exactly that. The people needed saving from a very obvious enemy in John's mind. The Romans. The Romans. The Romans were in power, and they were oppressing God's people. So John expected Jesus to kick the Romans out of Jerusalem.

John expected Jesus to establish his throne in Jerusalem. To reign in righteousness. To bring peace. But Jesus is doing none of that.

[14:11] He's preaching on hilltops. He's saying things like, love your enemies. Do good to those who hate you. He's telling the people to pay taxes to Caesar.

He's not making any moves to take power at all. And the fact that Jesus is not coming in all of his glorious power to rule and to reign as king, that's confusing to John.

That leads John to ask the question, are you the one who is to come? Or shall we look for another? John was thinking, maybe this is a case of mistaken identity.

Who is Jesus? And John the Baptist says, maybe not the promised Savior I thought he would be. You see, John knew something of Jesus.

But he's not seeing the full picture. He's not getting what's most important to know about Jesus. And that is so important. Understanding the full picture of who Jesus is.

[15:14] So many people understand something of who Jesus is. We've seen it in our Bibles this morning. It happens today. We understand something of who Jesus is.

But we're only dealing in half-truths. You know who loves to deal in half-truths? Satan does. He loves it.

It is one of his favorite strategies. All the way back in the Garden of Eden. In Genesis chapter 3. How did Satan get Adam and Eve, the first man and woman, to sin in the garden? He didn't command them to. He didn't just hand them the fruit saying, We all know what God said. We all know that it's sinful. But just go for it anyways. He tricked them. He deceived them into sinning. And a really effective way to deceive someone, to trick someone, is to tell them a half-truth.

[16 : 16] Not a full-out lie. A half-truth. And so in Genesis 3, Satan leads with this question to Eve. Did God actually say, You shall not eat of any tree in the garden?

That's a half-truth. God had said something about not eating from a certain tree, but Satan twisted his words to say any tree. Or how about when Satan tells Eve what will happen when she eats the fruit?

He says, When you eat of it, your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good from evil. That's another half-truth. Their eyes were opened, and they did know good from evil.

But that knowledge didn't lead them where they thought that it would. Adam and Eve expected, If we eat this fruit, we are going to have happiness and delight. We are going to be like God in a place like God.

But instead, it led to their shame. It led to their condemnation. There are lots of half-truths that Satan is peddling about Jesus as well.

[17 : 30] He was a good man. But he was more than a good man. He was a prophet. But he was more than a prophet.

He was a moral teacher, but he was more than a moral teacher. Do you know who Jesus is? Do you know what is most important to know of who Jesus is?

Because who we understand him to be really, really matters. If we get it wrong, the Bible teaches us, we are talking about the difference between life and death.

Lots of people understood in the Bible something of Jesus. But they were only dealing in half-truths. So what about Jesus' friends?

Surely his closest friends would know who he was. Surely they would be able to identify him correctly. Finally, turn over to Luke chapter 9.

[18 : 36] Here in Luke chapter 9, Jesus does something really interesting. In Luke chapter 9, Jesus poses the question himself.

Who am I? Have you ever asked that question? Who am I? We sometimes ask that question at low points in our lives.

When we're struggling with purpose or with meaning. When we're having a crisis of identity. It's in those most introspective, fragile moments that we're looking for an answer.

Who am I? That's not what Jesus is doing here. He's not confused like we can be. He's not unsure of who he is. He certainly isn't looking for meaning or for validation from his disciples.

He knows who he is. And his disciples are about to find out as well. Beginning in verse 18 of Luke chapter 9. Now it happened that as he, Jesus, was praying alone, the disciples were with him.

[19 : 41] And he asked them, Who do the crowds say that I am? And they answered, John the Baptist. But others say, Elijah. And others, that one of the prophets of old has risen.

So Jesus is alone with his disciples. And he asked, Who do the crowds say that I am? And the disciples give a variety of answers. There's no real consensus on the identity of Jesus.

John the Baptist. Others say Elijah. And others, that one of the prophets of old has risen. So we know all the identities surrounding Jesus that have been proposed.

They know what people are saying about Jesus. But then Jesus gets a little more personal with his disciples in verse 20. Then he said to them, But who do you say that I am?

And Peter answered, The Christ of God. So Jesus cuts straight to the chase. He's not concerned, ultimately, with what the crowds are saying about him.

[20 : 44] Because the crowds aren't with him right now. His disciples are with him. He has the disciples in front of his face. And so he asked the disciples, Who do you say that I am? And Peter gives an answer.

He says, The Christ of God. And he's right. It's true. Jesus is the Christ of God.

The Christ is the promised Savior of God's people. He's the one who is to come and to deliver God's people. To save God's people. And Peter was right.

That's true of Jesus. But the story doesn't end there. And so we pick up the reading a few days later in verse 28. Still in Luke 9, verse 28.

Now about eight days after these sayings, he took with him Peter and John and James and went up on the mountain to pray. And as he was praying, the appearance of his face was altered and his clothing became dazzling white.

[21 : 51] And behold, two men were talking with him, Moses and Elijah, who appeared in glory and spoke of his departure, which he was about to accomplish at Jerusalem. Now Peter and those who were with him were heavy with sleep.

But when they became fully awake, they saw his glory and the two men who stood with him. And as the men were parting from him, Peter said to Jesus, Master, it is good that we are here.

Let us make three tents, one for you and one for Moses and one for Elijah, not knowing what he said. These last words are very revealing for Peter.

For all of his good intentions, he had just put his foot in his mouth, not knowing what he was saying. It seems like a really innocent statement, doesn't it?

Let us make three tents, one for you, Jesus, one for Elijah, one for Moses. You could even say that was a really gracious offer. Can I make the three of you more comfortable?

[22 : 54] The problem, though, is that Peter is selling Jesus short. He's not understanding exactly who Jesus is, because in essence, he's saying you are right on par with Moses and Elijah.

We're going to make a tent for you and a tent for him and a tent for him. Right on the same level. So he may not be saying that Jesus is Elijah, like the crowds were saying, but he's not doing much better.

He's putting Jesus on par with Elijah. Peter doesn't really truly get who Jesus is. So Luke has made his point very clear.

Over and over again, we've seen in this book, no one really truly knows Jesus' identity. So we've answered the first question. Who do others say Jesus is?

They say prophet. They say ordinary man. They say blasphemer. They say lots of things. Now we come to the second question. Question number two.

[23 : 56] Who does God say Jesus is? Who does God say Jesus is? So everything in Luke's gospel account has been leading up to this moment on the mountain.

And it's in this moment when we've now seen Jesus' neighbors, his enemies, his forerunner, and his friends all misidentify Jesus. It's in this moment that God the Father breaks the silence.

He steps in and he sets the record straight. We finally get the answer. The answer to the question posed over and over again in Luke's gospel.

Who is Jesus? Follow along as I read in verse 34. As he was saying these things, a cloud came and overshadowed them and they were afraid as they entered the cloud.

And a voice came out of the cloud saying, this is my son, my chosen one. Listen to him. This is the answer we've been waiting for.

[25 : 02] Lots of people have said lots of things about Jesus, but they've all gotten it wrong. And God says, let me make it clear. This is my son, my chosen one.

You see, Jesus is God. But how can this voice from heaven, which we should understand to be God, how can the voice from heaven call Jesus my son?

There's a great mystery that no person can unravel. There is one God who exists eternally as three persons. The Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

Each is fully and completely God. But there are not three gods. There is one God. And he exists in three persons. See, Jesus is the second person of this Godhead.

He is God the Son. And God the Son took on human flesh. He became a man. He came and he lived on earth. But because he is God, he lived a perfect life in every way.

[26 : 10] He lived a sinless life in every way. None of us can say that of ourselves. And the perfect, sinless God-man, he was specially set apart.

He was chosen from eternity past. In perfect cooperation with God the Father and with God the Spirit, God the Son was set apart.

A plan was put in place. He was chosen for a very particular mission. To save his people from their sins.

And the only way to do this was for him to go to the cross and to die for his people. So Jesus was chosen for that very purpose. God the Father didn't just send anybody to die for his people.

He couldn't just send anybody. He sent his beloved Son, the only sinless one, his chosen one. God isn't the only person to ever call Jesus the chosen one.

[27 : 19] When Jesus was hanging on the cross, the Jewish leaders, they mocked him and they reviled him and they ridiculed him saying this, he saved others.

Let him save himself. If he is the Christ of God, his chosen one. Jesus could have saved himself. Jesus could have said, enough is enough. I'm getting down off of this cross. I'm tired of hearing what you have said. But he didn't get down.

And he didn't get down because he wasn't God's chosen one. It wasn't that he failed to get down because he's actually not the chosen one.

Jesus didn't get down off of that cross because he is the chosen one. The leaders mocked him. They said, if you are who you say you are, then you'll save yourself because that is what any natural man would do.

[28 : 25] But Jesus showed them because he is who he says he is, then he would save others and not himself. This is who Jesus is.

Jesus is the son, the second person of the triune God. Jesus is the chosen one, the anointed one, set apart to die for the sins of God's people, to save them by not saving himself.

This is who God says that Jesus is in Luke chapter 9. So what do you say? You've heard what others say about Jesus. You've heard what God says about Jesus.

But what do you say? Who do you say he is? That's the third question this morning. And that question only you can answer. Who do you say Jesus is?

Now the Bible says no other question is more pressing. No other question is of greater eternal significance for us to answer. And let me be clear.

[29 : 33] The Bible also says the answer isn't up for grabs. I don't know how you feel about buffet style restaurants, but God is not serving up to us a buffet style dinner here.

You can't pick and choose the identity of Jesus like you might pick and choose your dinner at a buffet restaurant. You might be tempted to say, well, I'd like to think Jesus is fill in the blank.

But the Bible helps us to see that all of our thoughts and our opinions and our ideas about Jesus, they don't hold weight if they don't square with the reality of who Jesus is.

We're just living in a fantasy world of our own destruction if we think, I'd like to think of Jesus like this. Jesus is God in the flesh.

Jesus is the King of God's kingdom who died, who rose again for the sins of His people that they might have eternal life.

[30 : 42] And that is true whether we like it or not. God isn't leaving it up to us to decide Jesus' identity. Who Jesus is, is who Jesus is, whether we agree or not.

His identity doesn't change with the times. Truth has been settled in the courts of heaven. We see that in Luke chapter 9. God has spoken and He's given the last word.

and He says, this is my Son, my chosen one. And then God puts an obligation on us. He gives us a command.

Listen to Him. God the Father says, listen to my Son. So we're all here this morning. We're listening. What does the Bible tell us Jesus is saying? Jesus says a lot. All of the Bible is God's word to us.

[31 : 45] Jesus is speaking in all of it. Here's one thing that He says. Repent and believe in the gospel. Repent and believe in the gospel.

What does Jesus mean by that? Jesus is telling us that we have a very serious problem. The problem of sin. Jesus is saying we are sinners deserving of God's wrath.

We have to see that terrible problem this morning. If we don't see the dire straits that we're in, we're not going to see the need for a Savior. But the gospel tells us this wonderful remedy, this good news.

The gospel tells us that Jesus died on the cross for sinners like us. He took God's wrath. God's wrath is His justified anger towards sin.

Jesus took that wrath in the place of sinners and then three days later He rose from the dead. He proved that God's wrath is turned away.

[32 : 52] He proved that death was defeated. And if death was defeated, sin was defeated too. We have a great problem of sin. We have an even greater Savior in Jesus.

And Jesus says, repent and believe in the gospel, which means turn from your sins and trust in Me to save you. Come and find life in Him today.

So how do you answer the question, who is Jesus? Now maybe you came here this morning and you already knew the right answer.

You half way tuned out this sermon because you thought, I know where He's going with this. He's going to say something true of Jesus in the Bible. But simply knowing the right answer isn't good enough.

You know who else knows the right answer? The demons. The demons know exactly who Jesus is. [33 : 55] Ironically enough, during Jesus' earthly ministry in the gospel of Luke, the demons got the answer right time and time again. Everybody else is giving all these wrong answers, but the demons, they know exactly who He is.

Luke 4.41 tells us that as Jesus drove demons out of people, the demons cried out, You are the Son of God.

They hated Him. They loathed Him. They wanted to see Jesus destroyed. They wanted Him on that cross hanging until He died.

They wanted Him cursed by God. So we can know the right answers and we can be far from God. Maybe this is your first time in a church service today.

Or maybe this is your 500th time in a church service and you have heard sermon after sermon after sermon preached. You know the Bible better than any other book.

[35 : 01] But God is not looking for skilled Bible quizzers. God is not seeking for them. God is seeking worshipers. We can know with our minds but our hearts can be far from God.

So don't be quick to say, I know who Jesus is. Don't be quick to think, I'm good with God. I'm alright. The religious leaders in Jesus' day, they were quick to say, I'm good with God.

I'm alright. And they were also quick to say, I know who Jesus is. And they were far from Him.

Instead of calling on His name in faith, they called Him a blasphemer.

So who do you say that He is this morning? And not just with your head, but with your heart. How do you answer that question? Because the Bible says, if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved.

Turn to Christ today in humble, sincere repentance. God is gracious to save sinners like us. Let's pray together.

[36 : 20] Heavenly Father, I pray that You would open eyes this morning. I pray that You would unplug ears this morning. That Your Word would indeed do just as You have promised.

that it would go out and not return empty or void. Father, I pray that You would save sinners in Your grace. I pray that You would save those in our midst this morning in a way in which only You can, only You can bring death to life.

Only You can bring dead hearts to life. I pray You would do that work. And those who perhaps have never been to church before and they're just now hearing the Word preached, I pray that You would be working in their heart that You would save them by Your Spirit.

and I pray for those who have been a part of our church for years and years and years that Your Word would pierce their hearts this morning as well. And Father, for those of us who know You in a saving way, who are walking in relationship with You, I pray, Lord, that knowing who Jesus is would never grow stale for us.

That we would rejoice that You have saved us and that we would look to Jesus and see what a worthy Savior He is and what a worthy Lord He is that we follow Him in obedience with our lives.

[37 : 37] Help us to that end to not grow stale. Help us to that end to continually be delighted in Christ, to be overflowing with love for Him. And again, Lord, You are the one who saves.

You are the one who in Your grace brings life. We pray that You would bring life this morning. We pray all these things in Jesus' name. Amen.