



IS JESUS THE ONLY WAY TO GOD?

WHAT DID JESUS SAY ABOUT HIMSELF?

Matt 9:1-8 He has authority to forgive sin.
Mk 2:1-12
Lk 5:17-26

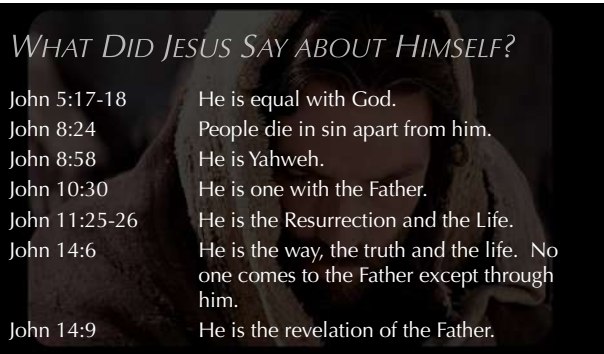
Matt 23:34-39 He sent the prophets to Israel.

Matt 26:62-65 He is the Judge of the world.
Mk 14:60-64
Jn 5:27



WHAT DID JESUS SAY ABOUT HIMSELF?

John 5:17-18 He is equal with God.
John 8:24 People die in sin apart from him.
John 8:58 He is Yahweh.
John 10:30 He is one with the Father.
John 11:25-26 He is the Resurrection and the Life.
John 14:6 He is the way, the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through him.
John 14:9 He is the revelation of the Father.



I am trying here to prevent anyone from saying the really foolish thing that people often say about him: "I'm ready to accept Jesus as a great moral teacher, but I don't accept his claim to be God." That is the one thing we must not say. A man who was merely a man and said the sort of things Jesus said would not be a great moral teacher. He would either be a lunatic – on a level with the man who says he is a poached egg – or else he would be the Devil of hell. You must make your choice. Either this man was, and is, the Son of God: or else a madman or something worse. You can shut him up for a fool, you can spit at him and kill him as a demon; or you can fall at his feet and call him Lord and God. But let us not come with any patronizing nonsense about his being a great human teacher. He has not left that open to us. He did not intend to.

C. S. Lewis, *Mere Christianity*

BETWEEN THE RESURRECTION & THE GOSPELS

AD 33 (April) Jesus dies and is resurrected.
AD 33-60 Primitive oral tradition (Q or "Quelle," meaning "source").

ON ORAL TRADITION

The conclusions of anthropological studies conducted on orally dominant cultures show a general historical reliability regarding the transmission of a narrative over time. Evidence shows that if tradents (people entrusted with passing along stories) did not tell a story accurately they would be corrected by their audience, who generally knew the narrative framework that made up the story. Regarding primitive Christianity these tradents were no doubt the apostles and other witnesses to the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus.

See "Ancient Literacy and Oral Tradition" in *The Jesus Legend* by Eddy & Boyd

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PRIMITIVE CREEDS

For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures, and that he appeared to Cephas, and then to the Twelve. After that, he appeared to more than five hundred of the brothers and sisters at the same time, most of whom are still living, though some have fallen asleep. Then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles, and last of all he appeared to me also, as to one abnormally born.

1 Corinthians 15:3-8

PRIMITIVE CREEDS

There is but one God, the Father, from whom all things came and for whom we live; and there is but one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom all things came and through whom we live.

1 Corinthians 8:6

Compare to the Jewish Shema:
Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one.

Deuteronomy 6:4

PRIMITIVE HYMN

[Jesus], being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage; rather, he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to death – even death on a cross! Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Philippians 2:6-11

Compare to Isaiah 45:22-23
 Turn to me and be saved, all you ends of the earth; for I am God, and there is no other. By myself I have sworn, my mouth has uttered in all integrity a word that will not be revoked: Before me every knee will bow; by me every tongue will swear.

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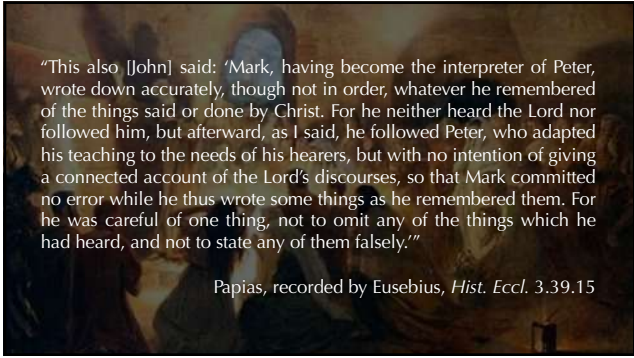
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AD 45-55 The first written Gospel: Mark

During the reign of Claudius, the all-good and gracious Providence, which watches over all things, led Peter, that strongest and greatest of the apostles . . . to Rome . . . proclaiming the light itself, and the word which brings salvation to souls, and preaching the kingdom of heaven . . . so greatly did the splendor of piety illumine the minds of Peter’s hearers that they were not satisfied with hearing once only, and were not content with the unwritten teaching of the divine gospel, but with all sorts of entreaties they besought Mark, a follower of Peter, and the one whose Gospel is extant, that he would leave them a written monument of the doctrine which had been orally communicated to them. Nor did they cease until they had prevailed with the man, and had thus become the occasion of the written Gospel which bears the name of Mark.

Eusebius, *Hist. Eccl.* 2.14.6-15.1







ARE THE GOSPEL ACCOUNTS RELIABLE?

AD 100 Oldest known manuscript (P⁵²).

AD 125-250 Extant papyrus Gospels manuscripts.

Extant witnesses that reference Jesus' deity prior to the 4th Century:

John 1:1 "the Word was God."
 John 20:28 "my Lord and my God."
 Romans 9:5 "the Messiah, who is God over all."
 Hebrews 1:8 "Your throne, O God, will last forever and ever."
 2 Peter 1:1 "our God and Savior, Jesus Christ."

HISTORICAL AGREEMENT

Honorable burial.

Matthew 27:57-61
 Mark 15:42-47
 Luke 23:50-56
 John 19:38-42

HISTORICAL AGREEMENT

Honorable burial.
 Empty tomb.

Matthew 28:1-7
 Mark 16:1-8
 Luke 24:1-3
 John 20:1-10

HISTORICAL AGREEMENT

Honorable burial.
Empty tomb.
Appearances.
Matthew, Luke and John. Mark is implied.
1 Cor 15:3-6



HISTORICAL AGREEMENT

Honorable burial.
Empty tomb.
Appearances.
Rise of Christianity.



RISE OF CHRISTIANITY

“What are we to do about reconciling the two contradictory phenomena? One attempt consists in saying that the man did not really say these things; but that His followers exaggerated the story, and so the legend grew up that he had said them. This is difficult because His followers were all Jews; that is, they belonged to that Nation which of all others was most convinced that there was only one God – that there could not possibly be another. It is very odd that this horrible invention about a religious leader should grow up among the one people in the whole earth least likely to make such a mistake. On the contrary we get the impression that none of His immediate followers or even of the New Testament writers embraced the doctrine at all easily.”

C. S. Lewis, “What Are We To Make of Jesus Christ?” in *Cod in the Dock*

