



We are a gospel-centered church in Orange County committed to spread the Good News of God's love to everyone. We invite you to join our family-oriented, culturally diverse congregation.

Whether you are investigating the claims of Jesus or are a mature believer, we want you to connect with others and grow in your relationship with God and other Christians.

Celebrating Resurrection Sunday

Do We Really Know Jesus?

April 21, 2019

Since Jesus died on the cross on a Friday and rose from the grave on Sunday, we meet today! God has commanded us to always be together (not alone) as the church: to remember the day Jesus raised to life to reveal Himself truly as Lord and Savior. But do you really know Jesus? I would like to show you 3 stories of 3 men who identified Christ as Lord from the beginning of His ministry, at His death and after His resurrection. Let us look at (#1.) **the LIFE of Jesus** as we read about a man named John the Baptist who knew Jesus very well but was still unsure if He was the Messiah or not. Reading John 1:19-34

¹⁹ And this is the testimony of John, when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, "Who are you?" ²⁰ He confessed, and did not deny, but confessed, "I am not the Christ." ²¹ And they asked him, "What then? Are you Elijah?" He said, "I am not." "Are you the Prophet?" And he answered, "No." ²² So they said to him, "Who are you? We need to give an answer to those who sent us. These men were seeking an answer from John to know who he was and why he was doing. We know that John was baptizing people for their repentance from sin. So they continue to question him saying, "What do you say about yourself?" ²³ He said, "I am the voice of one crying out in the wilderness, 'Make straight the way of the Lord,' as the prophet Isaiah said." ²⁴ (Now they had been sent from the Pharisees.) ²⁵ They asked him, "Then why are you baptizing, if you are neither the Christ, nor Elijah, nor the Prophet?" ²⁶ John answered them, "I baptize with water, but among you stands one you do not know, ²⁷ even he who comes after me, the strap of whose sandal I am not worthy to untie." ²⁸ These things took place in Bethany across the Jordan, where John was baptizing.

Now, I'm sure most of you know this but John was the cousin to Jesus. He grew up with Jesus and knew him as a relative, a family member. Look, it says in verse 26 that John says "among you stands one you do not know" emphasizing Christ, Elijah, or the Prophet, whom they were looking for, is among them. But what strikes me is that John did not realize who this man was as Messiah until the next day.

²⁹ The next day he saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, "Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!" ³⁰ This is he of whom I said, 'After me comes a man who ranks before me, because he was before me.' ³¹ I myself did not know him, but for this purpose I came baptizing with water, that he might be revealed to Israel." ³² And John bore witness: "I saw the Spirit descend from heaven like a dove, and it remained on him. ³³ I myself did not know him, but he who sent me to baptize with water said to me, 'He on whom you see the Spirit descend and remain, this is he who baptizes with the Holy Spirit.' ³⁴ And I have seen and have borne witness that this is the Son of God."

Here, JESUS was identified as the LAMB of God by JOHN The BAPTIST. He did not identify Jesus as another man, as Elijah, as a prophet, nor did John identify him as his family, relative or cousin but the Lamb of God! Notice in verse 33 of John's confession – "I myself did not know him, but he who sent me to baptize with water said to me, 'He on whom you see the Spirit descend and remain, this is he who baptizes with the Holy Spirit.' John's followers were baptized for a picture of their commitment to turn away from this sin and turn toward God. Because they were openly professing this repentance, it gave liberty to other followers in keeping them accountable. Jesus' first sermon began with the same imperative. John, being the last Old Testament prophet was told by God to watch for this sign of the Spirit descending and remaining; **This man, John, CONFESSED Jesus can SAVE us from our SIN** in verse 29. **This man, also, WITNESSED Jesus being identified as the SON of GOD** in verse 34. Some say Jesus is not God and that Jesus Himself never said He was God. He did of course multiple times in phrases and Old Testament titles for God; this is the very reason why so many Jewish people hated Him because Jesus stated he was God. However, at this point Jesus did not have to say it, God the Father did Himself.

What does this have to do with us?

The major problem with our culture today isn't the issues of people not believing in God; but that most people don't know the God they do believe in.

Whatever god they believe in, most really don't know anything about it. Especially some who would say they are Christian and believe in God yet truly do not know him personally. They don't know God's name, his desires, his language and word, his purpose, nor do they know his Son Jesus. Our future generations are becoming even more illiterate of who God is because of the defiance toward a biblical standard. We retaliate against a holy, biblical standard. Our future generations are becoming even more illiterate of whom God is because of the deportation of a Christian morale. We eliminate any Christian morale that may interfere with our agendas. Lastly, our future generations are becoming even more illiterate of who God is because of the distance created between the church and the rest of the world. We segregate this life as a Christian thinking we act a certain way in church and a different way the rest of the time away from it.

Ex: model Christ in your home

When I lived in Arkansas and was pastoring a church. I had a family who would always bring their children to our church but the parents would never stay. Then, I got a phone call from the mother and asked if I can come visit their family at their house. They wanted me to visit their 9-year-old son named Dillon. The reason is that the mother said something about God one day at the house and he turned and looked at her and said "who is God?" She did not really know what else to say except what she remembered about God and Jesus from when she was in church many years ago. She was frightened to think her child had no concept of God and Jesus as the Son of God. The issue is that Jesus was never mentioned or spoken on a daily basis around the house or the dinner table. God was completely absent from this child's life because it was absent from the family's life. So, I sat at the table and shared with them about creation, the fall of man had messed up the relationship with God, the redemption and rescue plan of Jesus and how we have restoration to fully know who God is. **Do you know Jesus personally?**

The next person we will look at today is a man who could care less about church or about Jesus at all. This man was a Roman official who only cared about himself and his duty to Rome. Why would this man even consider knowing Jesus? Yet at the death of Jesus we see something amazing happen. Turn with me to Matthew 27:50-54, as we look at our second point in your notes – **The DEATH of Jesus**. While we were sinners, away from God, even against God – the bible says "But God... But God demonstrates His love toward us that while we were sinners Christ died for us." This centurion, a Roman official, could care less about Jesus; Jesus still was willing to forgive him. Listen to what it says...

⁵⁰ And Jesus cried out again with a loud voice and yielded up his spirit.

⁵¹ And behold, the curtain of the temple was torn in two, from top to bottom. And the earth shook, and the rocks were split. ⁵² The tombs also were opened. And many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised, ⁵³ and coming out of the tombs after his resurrection they went into the holy city and appeared to many. ⁵⁴ When the centurion and those who were with him, keeping watch over Jesus, saw the earthquake and what took place, they were filled with awe and said, "Truly this was the Son of God!"

The CENTURION identified Christ as the SON of GOD in verse 54. I look at this commander and assume this guy never grew up believing in Yahweh. He probably thought the Jewish customs and morals were ancient or unfit for the modern world and that this God was irrelevant. How many of us know somebody or tend to think ourselves that God or His Church is irrelevant for our world today? We are not too far off from this man, but still yet after witnessing everything that went on that day, the Centurion was ready to see Jesus and know Him immediately. He identified Christ as the Son of God and **this man's CONFESSION suggests a CONVICTION over sin.** John 10:18 states Jesus' words that "No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have authority to take it up again. This charge I have received from my Father." It was the Roman soldiers, the Jewish religious leaders and people who had hung him on that cross killing the Messiah-the Christ. Yet Jesus says I give my life willingly. After all of the events that day, these soldiers were so afraid and fearful of what was happening that it led them to the awareness of sin. This is vastly different response to Jesus compared to their mockery beforehand. **This man's RESPONSE was an answer to Jesus' PRAYER** if we read in Luke 23:24 "And Jesus said, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." And they cast lots to divide his garments." Do you know Jesus personally like John? Do you want to know Jesus immediately like this Centurion? His eyes were opened and he immediately realized Jesus was the Son of God.

Well the final person we will look at today resembles you and me. This man had no excuses to not know Jesus personally, immediately or truthfully. He had every chance in the world to know Jesus much like you have the opportunity this morning. We have looked at the life of Jesus; the death of Jesus and now we will look at the Resurrection of Jesus found in John 20:24-29. I want to look at doubting Thomas, the disciple of Jesus as we look at **the RESURRECTION of Jesus.** John 20:24-29 states,

²⁴ Now Thomas, one of the twelve, called the Twin, was not with them when Jesus came. ²⁵ So the other disciples told him, "We have seen the Lord." But he said to them, "Unless I see in his hands the mark of the nails, and place my finger into the mark of the nails, and place my hand into his side, I will never believe." ²⁶ Eight days later, his disciples were inside again, and Thomas was with them. Although the doors were locked, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you." ²⁷ Then he said to Thomas, "Put your finger here, and see my hands; and put out your hand, and place it in my side. Do not disbelieve, but believe." ²⁸ Thomas answered him, "My Lord and my God!" ²⁹ Jesus said to him, "Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed."

Thomas had spent three solid years with Jesus during His ministry and teachings but still would not believe that Jesus had rose from the dead until he physically saw him face-to-face. Thomas was loyal but he was pessimistic about any future hope. The disciples scattered and ran away back to what they knew on that Friday but Sunday was coming. Jesus rose from the grave and the other disciples believed but Thomas needed proof. Look at what it says in verse 26-28, "Eight days later, his disciples were inside again, and Thomas was with them. Although the doors were locked, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you." ²⁷ Then he said to Thomas, "Put your finger here, and see my hands; and put out your hand, and place it in my side. Do not disbelieve, but believe." ²⁸ Thomas answered him, "My Lord and my God!" **Doubting THOMAS identified Christ as MY LORD and GOD** in verse 28. He doubted the resurrection of Christ but Jesus gave them peace by revealing Himself. Jesus lovingly met Thomas at the point of his weakness and Jesus will meet you at the point of any of your weaknesses. Jesus came and said to feel my hand and touch my side know me and believe Thomas. **This man's WEAKNESS of doubt was replaced with the STRENGTH of faith.** Also, **this man's CONFESSION is the GREATEST a person can make.** This confession of making Jesus "LORD and God" will be the greatest confession you shall ever make in your entire life. Do you know Jesus? Thomas was able to know Him truthfully.

Jesus knew that you and I would be here today to make a confession, a decision or declaration of who God is in our life. Will we be like John who grew to know Christ personally? We can! Will we be like the Centurion who never grew up hearing the gospel but when he did, he responded to Christ immediately? We can! Or will we be like Thomas who had questions, doubt and weakness yet God will give us peace in our hearts to truly know Him as Lord? Jesus said, "Blessed are those who have not seen me and still believe." Do you really know Jesus? Will you believe in Jesus today?

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Do We Really Know Jesus?

I. The _____ of Jesus *(John 1:19-34)*

- _____ was identified as _____ of _____ by _____
The _____. *(v 29)*
- This man _____ Jesus can _____ us from our _____. *(v 29)*
- This man _____ Jesus being identified as the _____ of _____
_____. *(v 34)*

II. The _____ of Jesus *(Matthew 27:50-54)*

- The _____ identified Christ as the _____ of _____.
(v 54)
- This man's _____ suggests a _____ over sin.
- This man's _____ was an answer to JESUS' _____.

III. The _____ of Jesus *(John 20:24-29)*

- Doubting _____ identified Christ as _____ and _____. *(v 28)*
- This man's _____ of Doubt was replaced with the _____
of Faith.
- This man's _____ is the _____ a person can make.
(v 28)