

“Who Is Jesus?”

As the church nears the celebration of Easter, we must remember that the one who died on the cross was unique. Crucifixion was a Roman form of execution for criminals. Many died on a cross. The controversy is not whether Jesus of Nazareth was crucified on a cross outside Jerusalem. It is a historical fact verified by extrabiblical accounts. However, what makes the message of the gospel unique is the identity of the one who died on the cross. Who was he?

Well, let’s consider what Jesus says about himself. In John 8:58, Jesus declares, “Truly, truly I say to you, before Abraham was, I am.” “I Am” is the name God revealed to Moses as the eternal Lord (Exodus 3:15). By saying “I Am” Jesus forges an unbreakable link to the God of Israel and himself. He extends the reach of the Son back to eternity. This means that the Son of God never came into being. He always was, is, and will be.

According to John 5, the Father shares his essence with the Son and the life He has in himself (v. 26). The Son shares equally in divinity, glory, and honor with the Father. This helps us make sense out of Jesus’s statements that claim he is equal to God Himself (John 5:18). There is no other Son of God who shares the divinity, glory, and honor with the Father.

This claim is solidified by his use of “Truly, truly”. We might say, “Truth times two.” The double “truly” is a literary device used to place a claim beyond all doubt and question. Christ’s use of it gives his words a ring of authority, certainty, and finality.

Because Jesus is “I Am”, he did not progress to become a god. Scripture reveals that Jesus is the one-of-a-kind Son for all eternity, with the same divine nature as the Father. He is also eternal deity (John 1:1; 8:58) and is immutable (Heb. 1:10-12; 13:8), meaning he did not progress to deity but has always been eternally the Son of God.

Why does it matter that Jesus is the eternal Son of God? Because he is the eternal Son of God, begotten, not made, then his sacrifice to atone for your sins is also eternal. You can’t add anything to the work of Jesus on the cross to improve it. His work is sufficient because He is everlasting.

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