

WHAT THINK YE OF CHRIST?

Introduction Matt. 22 : 41, 42: "What think ye of Christ?"

World opinion is divided about the true identity of Jesus Christ. He is easily the most controversial figure of history. To millions of Christians, He is God made manifest in human flesh. To millions of non-Christians, He is just an ordinary man, perhaps the best man who ever lived, but nothing more. To millions of others He is just a name, a legend, a vague, mythical figure whose identity means nothing more than that of Santa Claus.

Those who worship Jesus believe that they have the best of reasons for doing so. They are eager to share with others the evidence that has convinced them of His Deity. The purpose of this lesson is to consider some of the chief reasons why millions of Christian people believe in Jesus as their Saviour, and worship Him as their God.

Discussion 1.—THE CLAIMS OF JESUS CHRIST

We cannot hope to exhaust His claims in one brief Bible lesson. We will therefore select just a few examples:

He claimed eternal pre-existence, and equality with God (John 17 : 5; 10 : 30).
 He claimed complete freedom from personal sin (John 8 : 46).
 He claimed to be the only means of saving access to God (John 14 : 6; 8 : 24; 10 : 9).
 He claimed power to forgive sins against God (Mark 2 : 5-10).
 He claimed power to foretell the future (John 14 : 29).
 He claimed power to conquer death, and to raise the dead (John 11 : 25; 6 : 47, 51).
 He claimed power to judge men, and decide their eternal destinies at the last day (Matt. 25 : 31-45).

As we consider these claims, three questions arise:

If God were to come to earth today, what higher claims could He make?

How much further could He go?

What shall we do with these stupendous claims of Jesus Christ?

There are only three ways in which we can classify Jesus, in view of His claims. Either:

He was utterly self-deceived,
 or, He was utterly dishonest,
 or, He was utterly truthful.

This is by far the greatest dilemma that ever confronted the human heart. How shall we solve it?

The claims of Jesus, standing alone, are not proofs. We must therefore ask: What evidence is there in support of these claims?

2.—THE CREDENTIALS OF JESUS CHRIST

By "credentials" we mean proofs of genuineness; evidences of good faith.

When Ulysses, the ancient Greek hero, returned home in disguise after many years of wandering, he proved his identity in an instant by a single feat of incomparable strength. In the presence of his rivals, he bent with ease his own great war-bow, which had lain idle during the years of his absence, and which could not be drawn by any weaker hand.

How does Jesus Christ prove His identity as God? By performing works that are worthy of God—works of incomparable strength—works that are obviously beyond the wisdom and power of man!