

Title: **Who Was the Jesus of History, Really?**

Text: **Matt. 16:13-17**

Date: **April 24, 2022**

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Big Idea

Who do you say that Jesus is? There is no more important question in all the universe that a human being could endeavor to answer. And it is a question that each one of us must answer for ourselves.

The whole complex of the Christian faith rises or falls with the person and work of Jesus. If he is not who he said he is, if he has not done what the Scriptures say he did, then it all comes crumbling down and we Christians are most to be pitied (1 Cor. 15:19). Therefore, the place to begin one's investigation into Christianity is with an investigation into the person and work of Jesus (the Christ) himself. Who is he? Who do you say that he is?

Option #1: Legend

VARIATION #1: HE NEVER EXISTED

VARIATION #2: HE IS BURIED UNDER EMBELLISHMENT

Fundamental Improbabilities

Early Composition

Counterproductive Content

"As a literary historian, I am perfectly convinced that whatever else the Gospels are they are not legends. I have read a great deal of legend and I am quite clear that they are not the same sort of thing." – C.S. Lewis

Option #2: Luminary

"I am trying here to prevent anyone 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 patronising nonsense about His being a great human teacher. He has not left that open to us. He did not intend to." – C.S. Lewis

Option #3: Liar

"[The character of Jesus] has been not only the highest pattern of virtue, but the strongest incentive to its practice; and has exercised so deep an influence that it may be truly said that the simple record of three short years of active life has done more to regenerate and to soften mankind than all the disquisitions of philosophers and all the exhortations of moralists." – William Lecky

Option #4: Lunatic

We walk by those madmen on the road and have forgotten what they were muttering about by dinnertime. But Jesus' words have been echoing through the chambers of history for millennia now. Why? Because they are sound and wise and unmistakably sane. Truly, it is not the one speaking these words who is the fool, but any who would choose to disregard them!

Option #5: Lord

Jesus is not a legend. He is not a mere luminary. He is certainly no liar nor lunatic. He is the Lord! But is he *your* Lord?!



Reflection Questions

- If you were among the disciples in Matthew 16 and Jesus were to press the matter on you personally, what would your answer be? Who do you say that he is? Why?
- After hearing this sermon, has anything shifted in your opinion of Jesus—who he was in history, who he is to you personally? What evidence seemed compelling? What evidence still seemed lacking? What questions or objections do you still have (if any)? Would you want to learn more?

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Our Mission & Values

Mercy Hill Church exists to help restore us to God, neighbor, and city through the good news of Jesus Christ.

FAITH: The Way Back to God | We are redeemed to enjoy intimate relationship with God. This value presses our church *upwards* in love

COMMUNITY: The Way Back to Christ, adopted in the Beloved relationship with his people. This value presses our church *inwards* in love for

MISSION: The Way the Embassy of Christ, Savior to be his value presses our church *outwards* in love for the

the Bride of Christ, created and relationship with him. This value presses our church *upwards* in love for God.

Neighbor | We are the Family of and brought into covenantal relationship with his people. This value presses our church *inwards* in love for

Back to City | We are commissioned by the ambassadors. This value presses our church *outwards* in love for the

Your Next Steps

When approaching the Christian faith and life, it can be confusing to know where to even begin. Come find us at the Next Steps table after the service—it would be our joy to help you along in the journey! And if you're a visitor, we have a special gift bag for you. Don't miss it!



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Welcome to Mercy Hill Church.
We are so glad you've joined us today!

Announcement Spotlight

Ever Wondered?

Thanks for joining us today for our first installment in the Ever Wondered? sermon series. About once a quarter, we're looking to deliver new content for this series. On these particular Sundays, we'll tackle tough questions that those skeptical or curious about Christianity might be asking. Today, we'll try to answer the question: *Who Was the Jesus of History, Really?*

We invite you to linger after the service and enjoy fresh coffee and donuts. And if you're new here, we have a special gift bag for you back at the Next Steps table. Be sure to grab one before you go!

If you have any questions, feel free to reach out to us at info@mercyhillchurch.org.

All Church Hangout - Next Sunday!

Meaningful community is hard to find in Silicon Valley, even in the church. Our congregation is spread out all over the city. But there is one day of every week when we all commit to gather together and worship our God: Sunday. It seems strategic to take this pre-existing momentum and work with it in an attempt to develop deeper community within our body. Therefore, on occasional Sundays throughout the year we will invite the church to enjoy picnic-style afternoons together immediately following the service.

The Plan: After service, bring or buy your lunch and join us at the tables out back for a picnic-style afternoon.

If you have any questions, feel free to reach out to us at info@mercyhillchurch.org.

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