

QUESTIONS ABOUT JESUS



LORD, LIAR OR LUNATIC?



QUESTION

LIAR, LUNATIC, OR LORD?

It's a historical fact that Jesus of Nazareth claimed to be God. The words He spoke, the actions He performed, and the varied reactions He received from friends and enemies, all point undeniably to the reality that Jesus claimed to be God. Why else did he claim that he and God were one? Why else did He claim the authority to forgive sins? Why else did His friends follow Him as the Messiah? And why else did His enemies crucify Him for blasphemy?



Based on the biblical and extra-biblical evidence it is clear that Jesus claimed to be God. The question now becomes how do we respond to this historical figure named Jesus and His claims of being God incarnate and the saviour of the world? His claims are either true or false, and so we arrive at the trilemma popularised by English writer, C.S. Lewis. In regards to the identity of Jesus, there are 3 possible options. He was either a liar, a lunatic, or the Lord.



C. S. LEWIS

English writer and
Christian apologist



LIAR?

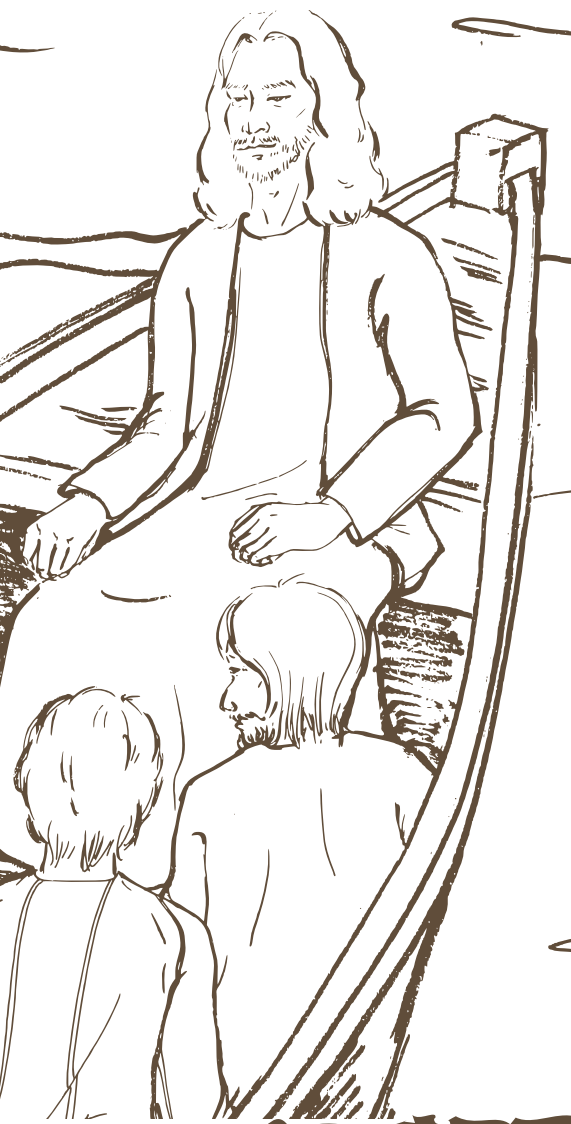
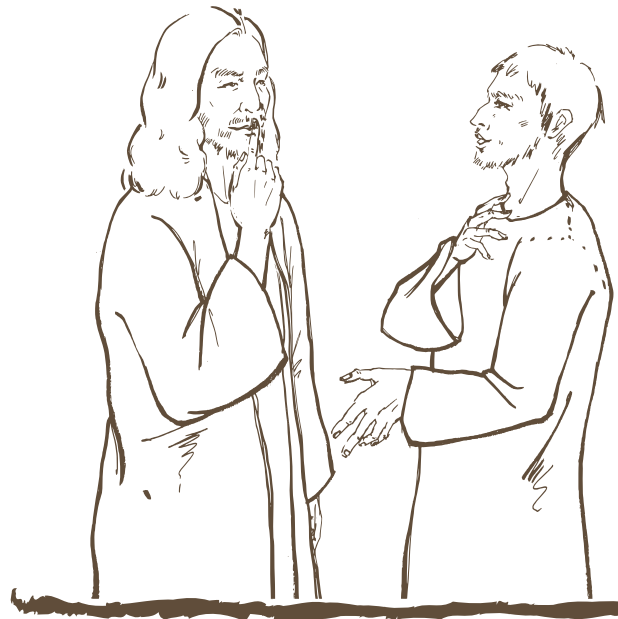
LUNATIC?

LORD?



MAYBE JESUS WAS A LIAR...

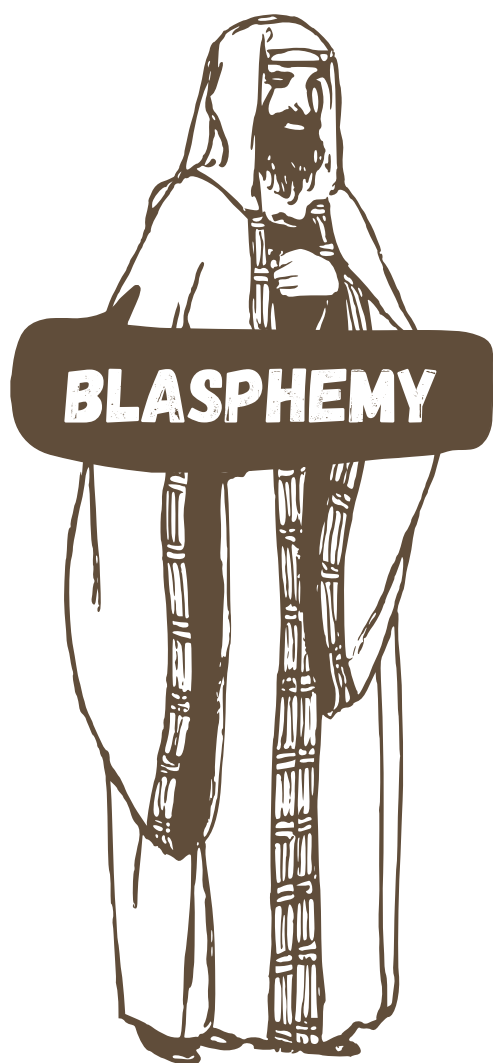
Maybe the claims of Jesus were false. Perhaps Jesus deliberately misrepresented Himself and intentionally lied about being God. Maybe Jesus was simply a liar.



This position is extremely unreasonable. It goes against everything we know about Jesus of Nazareth. Even the harshest of critics acknowledge that Jesus was a wise, moral, teacher. By all accounts Jesus lived a morally perfect life. This contention is extremely difficult to accept given the exceptional character of Jesus.

The contention that Jesus was a liar not only stands in contradiction to everything else we know about Him, it is also difficult to accept any possible motives Jesus had for lying.

**WHAT DID JESUS
STAND TO GAIN BY
LYING ABOUT BEING
GOD?**



Maybe Jesus was a political strategist who lied about being God in order to gain power and lead His people - the Jews - in overthrowing their Roman oppressors? On the surface, this sounds like a reasonable theory. However, given the time and culture in which Jesus lived, claiming to be God in order to garner the support of the Jews is arguably the most foolish thing someone could've done.

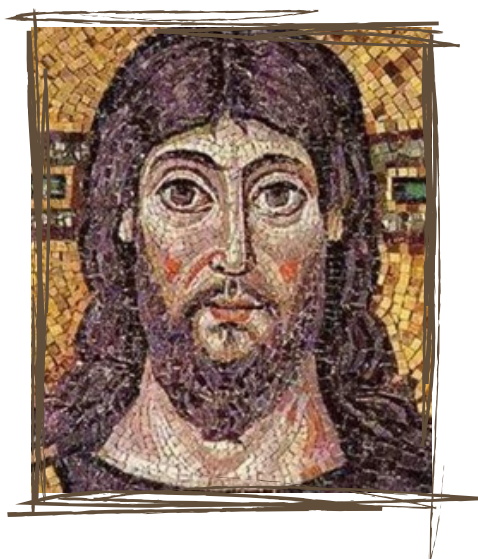
Such claims were met by the Jews with anger, rage, hostility, opposition and most seriously, charges of blasphemy.

The idea that Jesus was perhaps simply a foolish political revolutionary is a twisted, reductionist view of Jesus.

Such an understanding is untenable in light of everything else we know about Jesus, His life, His message, and His purposes.



JESUS THE POLITICAL REVOLUTIONARY?



Maybe Jesus was a religious charlatan. Maybe He lied about being God in order to become rich and famous with lots of possessions, and in pursuit of other hedonistic pleasures? This idea seems ridiculous to even contemplate. Time and time again Jesus preached about the dangers of the love of money and fame and earthly possessions.

- ✘ POWER?**
- ✘ MONEY?**
- ✘ FAME?**
- ✘ HONOUR?**
- ✘ POSSESSIONS?**

All that we know about the wisdom and purity of Jesus's life renders such an understanding of Jesus untenable. Religious charlatans are eventually exposed as frauds.



However, Jesus's miracles, good deeds, and sacrificial life demonstrate that He was genuine.

THESE ARE BUT A FEW EXAMPLES. HOWEVER, EVERY THEORY THAT CONTENDS JESUS INTENTIONALLY LIED ABOUT BEING GOD UTTERLY FAILS IN LIGHT OF THE EVIDENCE OF JESUS'S PERFECT LIFE AND CHARACTER.

2 **MAYBE JESUS WAS A LUNATIC...**

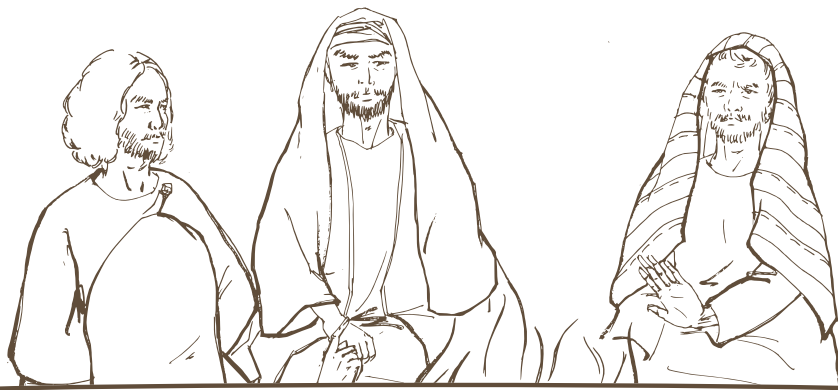
Maybe Jesus did not know that His claims of being God were false. Maybe He sincerely believed them to be true. Maybe He genuinely believed Himself to be God when He actually wasn't, and was therefore clearly insane or mentally disturbed.

On the surface, this theory seems at least possible because in the past there have been many instances of individuals claiming to be God before being exposed as crazy lunatics. Maybe Jesus is just another in a long line of crazies who claimed to be God. However, when one is aware of the life and character of Jesus the idea that He was insane, or at least experiencing psychological difficulties seems so unreasonable.



Psychologist Dr. Gary Collins notes that mentally disturbed individuals frequently display emotional and psychological tells. For example, inappropriate depression, vehement anger, or intense anxiety and paranoia.

However, as Christian apologist Lee Strobel argues Jesus never demonstrated inappropriate or unstable emotions or psychology. Such is clear when one studies the life and character of Jesus. He was never anxious, depressed, paranoid, or insecure. Jesus was loving, compassionate, sacrificial and wise beyond compare. The perfection of Jesus's life and character points undeniably to the fact He was of sound emotional and mental health.



JESUS, THE LUNATIC?



JESUS WAS CERTAINLY NOT A LUNATIC.

3 JESUS IS THE LORD



Jesus was not lying or crazy when He claimed to be God. The contention that Jesus's claims to deity were false either intentionally or unintentionally as we have seen are simply not tenable.



Jesus must've been telling the truth. Jesus really is the Son of God, the Messiah, and the saviour of the world. Unlike the other understandings of Jesus's identity, the claim that Jesus was telling the truth makes sense of His perfect life and character, His words and deeds, His message, the miracles he performed, the prophecies He fulfilled and His resurrection from the dead.



English writer and Christian apologist, C.S. Lewis beautifully explains the logic and implications of this trilemma in his work *Mere Christianity*.

Lewis writes...

"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 the 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

AS YOU INVESTIGATE THIS MATTER FURTHER IT'S IMPORTANT TO KEEP THE FOLLOWING POINTS IN MIND:

It's a historical fact that Jesus existed and claimed to be God.

His claims were either true or false

Jesus was either lying, a lunatic, or the Lord.

Jesus's perfect life and character clearly demonstrate He wasn't a liar or lunatic.

LIAR?



LUNATIC?



LORD?





NOTES:

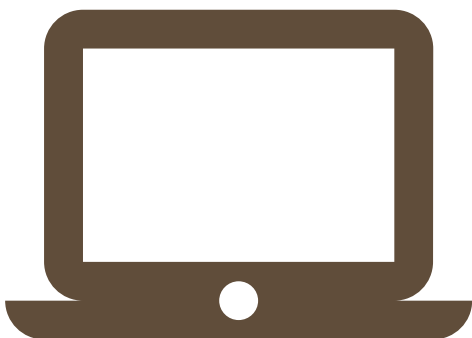
A series of horizontal lines for writing, starting from the top of the page and extending down to the bottom. A vertical line is positioned on the left side, creating a margin for the notes.



**SHARING AND DEFENDING
THE TRUTH OF CHRISTIANITY**

WWW.CONFIDENTFAITH.COM.AU

 confidentfaithaustralia@gmail.com



FOLLOW US ON SOCIAL MEDIA



 [confidentfaithaustralia](#)