

WHY SHOULD I KNOW WHO JESUS IS?

It is generally experienced that people find new meaning and purpose in life, when they truly realise and understand who Jesus is. This short article wants to help you understand, from the Bible, how you too may know him.

In the Bible we read the following:

God the Father said about Jesus:

"This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased." (Matthew 3:17)

A voice came from the cloud, saying, "This is my Son, whom I have chosen; listen to him."(Luke 9:35)

Moses, an important leader and prophet of Israel said about Jesus:

Deuteronomy 18:15,18,19:

15 The LORD your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among your own brothers. You must listen to him. 18 I will raise up for them a prophet like you from among their brothers; I will put my words in his mouth, and he will tell them everything I command him. 19 If anyone does not listen to my words that the prophet speaks in my name, I myself will call him to account.

John the Baptist, a great prophet during the days of Jesus on earth, said about Jesus:

"I have seen and I testify that this is the Son of God". (John 1:34)

Jesus said about Himself:

"I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me". (John 14:6)

The miracles of Jesus clearly testify to his divine nature, meaning that although he was born as a man, he is the Son of God - yes, he is God:

- Jesus healed people with terminal illness.
- Jesus healed those who were physically disabled.
- Jesus restored sight to the blind and hearing to the deaf.
- Jesus walked on water.
- Jesus fed 5,000 men and their families with only 5 loaves of bread and two fish!
- Jesus raised the dead.
- Jesus rose from the dead, never to die again.

Jesus was killed by crucifixion and on the third day rose from the dead:

Matthew 20:17-19

17 Now as Jesus was going up to Jerusalem, he took the twelve disciples aside and said to them, 18 "We are going up to Jerusalem, and the Son of Man will be betrayed to the chief priests and the teachers of the law. They will condemn him to death 19 and will turn him over to the Gentiles to be mocked and flogged and crucified. On the third day he will be raised to life!"

The historical fact of the death of Jesus by crucifixion is not queried by anyone. Both the New Testament and sources outside of the Bible are a hundred percent certain that it did happen.

- Josephus (Jewish historian born around 37 AD and died 100 AD) refers to Jesus' death (Antiquities 18.3.3).
- Tacitus (AD 55-120), a renowned historian of ancient Rome wrote around 115 A.D. that Christ was "executed" by Pilate (Annals 15.44).
- The early enemies of Christianity (e.g., Celsus and Lucian), also conceded that Jesus was put to death.

- The Jewish Talmud (most important book of the Jewish faith, apart from the Law of Moses) states, "On the eve of the Passover Yeshu [Jesus] was crucified."
- Paul, a missionary apostle of the first century, was a well educated Jewish theologian before he became a Christian and he wrote:

1 Corinthians 15:1-6a:

Now, brothers, I want to remind you of the gospel I preached to you, which you received and on which you have taken your stand. By this gospel you are saved, if you hold firmly to the word I preached to you. Otherwise, you have believed in vain. For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures, and that he appeared to Peter, and then to the Twelve. 6 After that, he appeared to more than five hundred of the brothers at the same time...

Therefore, because Jesus is alive, I can also live for ever and ever...

Paul assures us that Jesus was not only killed by crucifixion, but certainly rose from the dead on the third day and that hundreds of eye witnesses attested to the core truth of the Christian faith, namely that Jesus died, that he rose from the dead and never died again, and that he leads, protects and inspires his followers and his Church even today.

Because Jesus died and rose from the dead, we can know for certain that we are saved by him. Whether we live or die, we are comforted by the truth that we belong to him and that neither life or death or our sins can separate us from God ever again.

Because he lives, those who follow him are certain that they will go to heaven when they die and share God's glory and joy for ever and ever.

You too may know and follow Jesus:

John was Jesus' best friend while he was on earth and he also took care of Mary, the mother of Jesus, after he went to live in heaven. John knew Jesus, his family and friends personally and also knew the circumstances of his death and he was an eye witness to the fact that Jesus rose from the dead. John wrote the following:

John 5:24.

Jesus said: "I tell you the truth, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me, has eternal life and will not be condemned; he has crossed over from death to life.

1 John 5:13

I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God so that you may know that you have eternal life.

Do you know Jesus?

He is alive and can be known!

You too can be his follower and belong to him while you are alive and be with him when you die.

There are more than one option you can follow to learn more about Jesus:

1. **You can read the New Testament** of the Christian Bible, starting with a book called, "The Gospel of John". (The fourth book in the New Testament).

There are twenty-one short chapters in John's Gospel and it can easily be read in 3 to 4 hours. It can change your life - and the outcome of your death - to own this knowledge! You can also read the Bible on the Internet at <http://www.biblegateway.com/> , go to Bible Booklist and choose "John" on the list.

2. If you want to follow Jesus or know more, **email me** at andries@centurionwest.co.za and I will gladly answer any questions and discuss this with you.

3. Or you may right now, **kneel before God and pray** this prayer: (Read it out loud).

Dear God, my Father in heaven, thank you that you welcome me as your child amongst your people and that you will look after me and all my needs. Thank you that you forgave my sin, because Jesus paid the penalty for my sins on the cross.

Dear Lord Jesus, I want to follow you. Please help me to do so, even when it is difficult and it requires many sacrifices. Please help me always to remember that you are alive and will protect and inspire me. I believe in you, Lord Jesus - please let my faith grow every day.

Make me part of your people on earth, Lord Jesus, and show me where to join a church where you are loved, worshipped and obeyed.

I am so glad that I am saved. Help me to show you, Lord, with my whole life, how grateful I am.

Thank you Jesus, for everything you did for me and for listening to and answering my prayer.

Amen.

How to learn how to be a follower of Jesus:

You can use the internet, your local news paper or billboards where you live, to find a Christian Church that will be able to teach you a lot more about being a follower of Jesus.

Look for a church that claims to be Bible-based and says that it believes in God, the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, the Holy Trinity.

Or if you live in South Africa, you can email me at andries@centurionwest.co.za or phone me at 012-656-7750 and I will certainly help you to find a Bible-based church close to your home.

The map to our church can be found at "contact" on the homepage of this website, (www.centurionwest.co.za)

Our responsibility as followers of Jesus, is to also tell others about him.

If you are a Christian, you are welcome to distribute this article by email, or print it out and give it to someone seeking salvation. You are also more than welcome to place this article (unchanged) on your website, should you own one.

If you already attend a Bible-based church, never forget to invite those who do not know Jesus, to come to church with you!