



MESSAGE BIG IDEA

With intention or by default, every person answers the question, “Is Jesus really God?” The overwhelming evidence points to the truth of his divinity.

SCRIPTURE

Matthew 16:13 – 20

OPENING DISCUSSION

Those are fascinating statistics. You might be interested to know that the Barna group also found that 92% of US adults believe Jesus is a real historical person. It has become popular in recent years for people to claim Jesus wasn't a historical person, but that is not the consensus of historians believing and unbelieving. One popular, agnostic scholar, Bart Ehrman wrote a recent book on this topic.

BIBLE DISCUSSION

The setting Jesus uses curious. He doesn't make direct reference to it, but the Matthew points it out, which is significant. Biblical narratives don't always give us a lot of details, so when we are given them, especially when they are geographical, we should sit up and take notice. This makes it also hard for us to know exactly what to take away from it. At the very least it seems Jesus wasn't saying that he was one among many options, but that he is the Messiah, the true king, and this in the shadow of the Emperor of Rome who had been worshipped as a God through the Imperial Cult.

ADDITIONAL MATERIAL

“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 patronizing nonsense about his being a great human teacher. He has not left that open to us. He did not intend to. . . . Now it seems to me obvious that He was neither a lunatic nor a fiend: and consequently, however strange or terrifying or unlikely it may seem, I have to accept the view that he was and is God.”
–C.S. Lewis

What do you think of Lewis' reasoning?

RESOURCES

How Is Jesus Different? (exploreGod.com/video-how-is-jesus-different)

Can You Like Jesus But Hate Religion? (exploreGod.com/can-you-like-jesus-but-hate-religion-video)

The Historical Jesus (exploreGod.com/the-historical-jesus)

Who Is Jesus? (exploreGod.com/who-is-jesus)

Book - *Simply Jesus*, N. T. Wright