

Jesus Christ & Man's Religion

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No figure has impacted the history of civilization like Jesus Christ. He has indelibly left His mark on man's art, culture, science, politics, & religion. Even those who do not claim to be Christians, concede that the Lord Jesus' teachings were of the highest moral standards & that He expressed many noble sentiments. Doubtless the world would be a better place if people practiced the teachings of Christ's Sermon on the Mount. Sadly, the world bears little resemblance to the ideal paradise that the Lord Jesus spoke of. One may wonder at man's inability to live up to the unquestionably high standards of New Testament Christianity. In North America it is easy to say that one is a Christian; living like one is a far different thing.

The great divide between the Lord Jesus' ethical instruction and the evil that results in crime, oppression, terrorism, & other unrighteous acts that confront us has a simple explanation. Jesus Christ is the perfect man. He never uttered one word that he longed to take back, never had a sinful thought or desire. In every sense of the word He was sinless. Furthermore, the Bible also affirms that He is God. As 1 Tim.3:16 expresses it: "And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory." In contrast to Jesus' perfect humanity & deity, we are incorrigible sinners who fail miserably to achieve God's righteous standards.

Someone might protest that this is an unfair assessment of their condition. They admit that they are imperfect, & sometimes make mistakes. Nevertheless, they counter that they are religious, & do their best to please God; surely this must count for something with their Creator. Moreover, they point out that they are not as bad as other notable sinners like Adolf Hitler or Osama bin Laden. Certainly the Lord Jesus will take their good works into consideration, & overlook their sins.

The Bible is clear, however, that the Lord is a holy God & has one standard: perfection. "Who then can be saved?" you might ask. If acceptance before God demands perfection, who can meet such a standard? Thankfully, the Lord does not leave us to our own devices to surmount this obstacle. He provided a way of salvation by sending His Son, the Lord Jesus, to die for our sins on the Cross.