

The Only One Who Qualifies

Introduction

Good morning, Lighthouse. It is time for the Word of God. The question is, are you ready for it? And if you're ready for it, are you good with plenty of it being read. The Only One who Qualifies. We live in a world where many aim to be "politically correct" especially those in our government leadership and education system. They strive for equality even when it comes to religious beliefs and religion figures. It is all about tolerance. At one point the world recognized tolerance as accepting that others have differing beliefs and it is their right to do so. Now it's used to be all about full acceptance of those beliefs and any objective truth doesn't exist. I ask those who claim objective or absolute truth doesn't exist. Are you absolutely sure about that? To claim objective truth doesn't exist is an objective statement. It is a self-defeating statement. There is an absolute truth and I'll tell you what the absolute truth is: It is Jesus.

Pontius Pilate the Roman governor over the Judea area at the time before sentencing Jesus to be crucified. I'm going to read the account of this from John 18.

John 18:33-40 (33) Then Pilate entered into the judgment hall again, and called Jesus, and said unto him, Art thou the King of the Jews? (34) Jesus answered him, Sayest thou this thing of thyself, or did others tell it thee of me? (35) Pilate answered, Am I a Jew? Thine own nation and the chief priests have delivered thee unto me: what hast thou done? (36) Jesus answered, My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence. (37) Pilate therefore said unto him, Art thou a king then? Jesus answered, Thou sayest that I am a king. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice. (38) Pilate saith unto him, What is truth? And when he had said this, he went out again unto the Jews, and saith unto them, I find in him no fault at all. (39) But ye have a custom, that I should release unto you one at the passover: will ye therefore that I release unto you the King of the Jews? (40) Then cried they all again, saying, Not this man, but Barabbas. Now Barabbas was a robber.

Little did Pilate know is that truth was standing right before Him. The truth that was exchanged for a thief and a murderer to be crucified. Today we are going to examine some of the questions and objections raised regarding truth claims. We are claiming that according to the Word of God the Bible that Jesus is the absolute truth, the only Savior. By default, this means anything differing is false.

Claim #1 isn't Jesus and the Bible just a copy of ancient pagan religions? He's just another god from a religion.

When I was 16 years old and a new Christian I was challenged by a friend of mine I witnessed many times too. He had me watch a conspiracy documentary that touched on Jesus' existence and US government. The claim is that Jesus is just a made-up figure, and you can find everything that mirrors Him from an Egyptian god named Horus. Here's the claims made about Horus:

- He was born on December 25 of a virgin (Isis Mary).
- A star in the East proclaimed his arrival.
- Three kings came to adore the new-born “savior”.
- He became a prodigious teacher at age 12.
- At age 30 he was “baptized” and began a “ministry.”
- Horus had twelve “disciples.”
- Horus was betrayed.
- He was crucified.
- He was buried for three days.
- He was resurrected after three days.

Now being young in both my age and my faith, I didn't know what to do or think about that information. But after real research on the claims and facts, these claims are all false.

The stories on Horus have no relation at all. Isis and Mary have no name link. Isis his mom being married was not a virgin nor is there anything about three kings and his birthdate. And by the way, the Bible never says Jesus' birthday neither that there were three kings. It was three gifts brought. Those are traditions. Horus also has no mention of teaching at twelve-year-old and he had only four semi god followers. It would be impossible to link crucifixion to his death seeming how crucifixion wasn't invented until way later by the Persians. And to associate ministry and baptism is just ripping off Christian terminologies and putting it to something else.

If you want to see relation with Egyptian gods and the Bible. You can find them in the 10 plagues. Each of those plagues represent and judged their god. All which are inferior to the one true God.

1. The first plague: Nile to blood, was a judgment against Apis, the god of the Nile, Isis, goddess of the Nile, and Khnum, guardian of the Nile.
2. The second plague: Bringing frogs from the Nile, was a judgment against Heqet, the frog-headed goddess of birth. Frogs were thought to be sacred and not to be killed. God had the frogs invade every part of the homes of the Egyptians, and when the frogs died, their stinking bodies were heaped up in offensive piles all through the land.
3. The third plague Gnats, was a judgment on Set, the god of the desert. Unlike the previous plagues, the magicians were unable to duplicate this one and declared to Pharaoh, "This is the finger of God."

4. The fourth plague, flies, was a judgment on Khepri, the fly god. In this plague, God clearly distinguished between the Israelites and the Egyptians, as no swarms of flies bothered the areas where the Israelites lived.
5. The fifth plague, the death of livestock, was a judgment on the goddess Hathor and the god Apis, who were both portrayed as cattle. As with the previous plague, God protected His people from the plague, while the cattle of the Egyptians died.
6. Sixth plague, boils, was a judgment against several gods over health and disease (Sekhmet, Sunu, and Isis).
7. The seventh plague, hail and fire, attacked Nut, the sky goddess; Osiris, the crop fertility god; and Set, the storm god.
8. The eighth plague, locusts, again focused on Nut, Osiris, and Set. The later crops, wheat and rye, which had survived the hail, were now devoured by the swarms of locusts.
9. The ninth plague, darkness, was aimed at the sky and sun god, Horus, and Ra.
10. The tenth and final plague, the death of the firstborn males, was a judgment on all the gods and Pharaoh.

Putting Jesus on the level of these pagan gods are nothing but poor attempts. We should never be surprised that such unfounded claims are invented in the imaginations of unbelievers and passed along by others as fact. We are to expect this. Peter writes in his second epistle, 2 Peter 2:1-3 (1) But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction. (2) And many shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of. (3) And through covetousness shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you: whose judgment now of a long time lingereth not, and their damnation slumbereth not.

If it happened in the Apostle's time, of course it will happen in ours. The Bible can absolutely be trusted and is no rip-off of anything. Other religions rip off the Bible, not the other way around. The Bible can be trusted and absolutely Jesus can be trusted. He is not just another God; He alone is God.

Isaiah 44:6-8 (6) Thus saith the LORD the King of Israel, and his redeemer the LORD of hosts; I am the first, and I am the last; and beside me there is no God. (7) And who, as I, shall call, and shall declare it, and set it in order for me, since I appointed the ancient people? and the things that are coming, and shall come, let them shew unto them. (8) Fear ye not, neither be afraid: have not I told thee from that time, and have declared it? ye are even my witnesses. Is there a God beside me? yea, there is no God; I know not any.

Revelation 1:8 I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty.

There is no doubt He transcends all these false gods. Let's see what about what Jesus thought on Himself.

Claim #2 Jesus never claimed to be exclusive. That is what His followers preached, and the Church corrupted His sayings.

This was the parting words Jesus had to His disciples before being betrayed. After the last supper.

John 14:1-11 (1) Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. (2) In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. (If you look at 2 Cor 5 you'll see that His illustration with the word translated as mansion is talking about the new bodies prepared for us.)

(3) And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also. (4) And whither I go ye know, and the way ye know. (5) Thomas saith unto him, Lord, we know not whither thou goest; and how can we know the way? (6) Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me. (7) If ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also: and from

henceforth ye know him, and have seen him. (8) Philip saith unto him, Lord, shew us the Father, and it sufficeth us. (9) Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Shew us the Father? (10) Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? the words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works. (11) Believe me that I am in the Father, and the Father in me: or else believe me for the very works' sake.

This is just 1 passage of very many of Jesus' direct words on who He is. Did He claim to be exclusive? He absolutely did. Some who claimed themselves to be scholars claim that translators got the articles wrong, and that Jesus was just saying "I am a way, a truth and a life..." He isn't the only way. Just a way. It is true in the Koine Greek language articles are from the same word. Context will determine which way it is understood. This idea that Jesus is just one of many ways is easily refuted with His last statement in the verse. "No man cometh unto the Father but by me." That's enough to settle it, but if you do want to examine the original language. The phrase here for "I am" is not the usual way to refer to yourself. Normally it would just be the word "Ego" Jesus says "Ego Eimi" meaning, I alone, I myself." It is the same way God in the OT would say "I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, the God of Jacob." Let's expound on His statements.

1. Jesus is the only way: A way is a path or route, and the disciples had expressed their confusion about where He was going and how they could follow. As He had told them from the beginning, Jesus was again telling them "follow Me, believe in Me." There is no other path to heaven, no other way to the Father. Years later, this same truth was said by Peter to the religious rulers in Jerusalem. Peter didn't make this up. His direct source was Jesus: Acts 4:10-12. (10) Be it known unto you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead, even by him doth this man stand here before you whole. (11) This is the

stone which was set at nought of you builders, which is become the head of the corner. (12) Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.

2. Jesus is the only truth: Psalm 119:142 “Thy righteousness is an everlasting righteousness, and thy law is the truth.” Jesus equated Himself often with God's Law and authority and standard of righteousness when He would tell His followers "But I say unto You . . ." He fulfilled the law perfectly. And consider what He later prays in the garden: Sanctify through Thy truth, Thy Word is truth.” He is the incarnate Word of God - the source of truth.

3. Jesus is the only life. What gives this statement much significance is that He has been telling His followers about His impending death. Now He says He is the source of all life. Later in the same dialogue, He says this:

John 14:19 Yet a little while, and the world seeth me no more; but ye see me: because I live, ye shall live also. If not for His resurrection, none of us would live.

After He the feeding of 5000 and more, He preached this to the crowd.

John 6:47-51 (47) Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me hath everlasting life. (48) I am that bread of life. (49) Your fathers did eat manna in the wilderness, and are dead. (50) This is the bread which cometh down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof, and not die. (51) I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world.

We will see later that this message from Him was not well received. Jesus declared that He was going to lay down His life for His sheep, and then take it back again. He spoke of His authority over life and death as being granted to Him by the Father. The deliverance He was about to provide was not a political or social deliverance (which many of the Jews were seeking), but a true deliverance from a life of bondage to sin and death to a life of freedom in eternity.

Jesus is indeed exclusive, but He is inclusive. He laid His life down for all and through Him; anyone can be saved.

In regard to the claim that His followers and the church corrupted His words to teach He was the only way. What was there to gain if so? These conspiracies are not new considering the rumor that was spread that the disciples had stolen Jesus' body. It would be as if their thought process was "Let's make up all these lies and twist things so we can endure great persecution and death."

Claim #3 Isn't that just bigotry and intolerance to believe Jesus is the only way? What about all those other religions and faiths?

Is it really bigotry and intolerance when He was the only one who qualifies? All those other religions out there have this in common. They all teach it's what you can do. You need to these things to achieve it. You need to change. Jesus did all the work, He lived it and died in your place because you could not. He is the one who changes you.

No other person has ever lived a perfect life. No other person has ever been a Prophet, Priest and King all at once. An unfortunate truth is many will die in their sins because they are depending on religion. They want anything but Jesus. Its an offense to mankind's pride knowing there is nothing they can do but save themselves. They stand condemned already if they have not yet been born again.

Even while Jesus was on earth. Many turning their backs on Him and leaving in hopes of finding another savior. He had a crowd of over 5000 and He reduced the crowd to 12. John 6:67-69 (67) Then said Jesus unto the twelve, Will ye also go away? (68) Then Simon Peter answered him, Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life. (69) And we believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God.

May we all have that same faith in Jesus as He did. We are not swayed by any of the objections or attacks. They should only strengthen our faith and confidence in Him. Only through Jesus is eternal life.

Conclusion

One of the saddest things I've seen firsthand is someone presented with the Gospel with clarity, they then reject it because they're so caught up with religion or whatever reason and they reject Him. We do not teach and preach Jesus is exclusive and the only way because we just hate everyone else. It is because there is no one else that can save. And there is nobody that He can't save. He is the only that can deal with your sin problem. Religion will not and cannot save you. Only Jesus can. He did that by dying in your place on that cross. The only one who never sinned bore our sin. God's righteous wrath was poured out on His perfect only begotten Son. He was treated as if He lived my life and I was treated as if I lived His. If He had stayed dead, that would've been the end, but on the third day – He proved He was the Savior, the One true God who conquered death. He offers new life. You don't have to live with all this shame, empty feelings, brokenness, and hopelessness. Sin and religion will bring nothing but sorrow and false sense of security. It is Jesus alone that changes people. He truly saves. The Bible teaches that anyone who will place their trust in the Gospel will be saved and have eternal life – The death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus for our sin. I love that line in the hymn tis so sweet to trust in Jesus. O for grace to trust Him more. We can trust Him with our eternal destiny, and we can trust Him with anything in this life now. He is the only one who qualifies to be our Savior and to give life and life more abundantly.

Let's pray.