

Jesus – Lord, Liar, Lunatic..... or Legend

1 Peter 3:15

“...but in your hearts honor Christ the Lord as holy, always **being prepared to make a defense** to anyone who asks you **for a reason for the hope that is in you**; yet do it with gentleness and respect,”

Jesus being God in the Flesh is not the Result of Legend but of indisputable FACT!

1.Oral Tradition

2.Memory

3.The value of Eyewitness testimony

4.Creeds

5.The EARLY dating of the NT MSS not giving enough time for “Legend/Myth” to develop

Jesus – Lord, Liar, Lunatic

C.S. Lewis

Now, as a literary historian, I am perfectly convinced that whatever else the Gospels are they are not legends. I have read a great deal of legend and I am quite clear that they are not the same sort of thing. They are not artistic enough to be legends. From an imaginative point of view they are clumsy, they don't work up to things properly. Most of the life of Jesus is totally unknown to us, as is the life of anyone else who lived at that time, and no people building up a legend would allow that to be so.

Jesus – Lord, Liar, Lunatic

C.S. Lewis

Lewis ruled out the option of Legend before he put forth this Trilemma

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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.

Jesus – Lord, Liar, Lunatic

C.S. Lewis

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.

Jesus – Lord, Liar, Lunatic

C.S. Lewis

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

Jesus – Lord, Liar, Lunatic

C.S. Lewis

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.

One Solitary Life

He was born in an obscure village, the child of a peasant. He grew up in another village, where he worked in a carpenter shop until he was 30. Then, for three years, he was an itinerant preacher.

He never wrote a book. He never held an office. He never had a family or owned a home. He didn't go to college. He never lived in a big city. He never traveled 200 miles from the place where he was born. He did none of the things that usually accompany greatness. He had no credentials but himself.

One Solitary Life

He was only 33 when the tide of public opinion turned against him. His friends ran away. One of them denied him. He was turned over to his enemies and went through the mockery of a trial. He was nailed to a cross between two thieves. While he was dying, his executioners gambled for his garments, the only property he had on earth. When he was dead, he was laid in a borrowed grave, through the pity of a friend.

One Solitary Life

Twenty centuries have come and gone, and today he is the central figure of the human race. I am well within the mark when I say that all the armies that ever marched, all the navies that ever sailed, all the parliaments that ever sat, all the kings that ever reigned--put together--have not affected the life of man on this earth as much as that one, solitary life.*

Attributed to James Allen Francis

Jesus' Claims

Metaphorical "I Am" Statements:

- I am the bread of life (John 6:35; 48, 51)
- I am the light of the world (John 8:12, 9:5)
- I am the door of the sheep (John 10:7,9)
- I am the good shepherd (John 10:11, 14)
- I am the resurrection and the life (John 11:25)
- I am the way, the truth, and the life (John 14:6)
- I am the true vine (John 15:1)

Jesus' Claims

Absolute Statements: The More Outrageous Claims

- John 6:20 (literally) and he says to them **“I AM (ego eimi) (don't)not fear”**
- John 8:24 **I told you that you would die in your sins, for unless you believe that I AM (ego eimi) he you will die in your sins**
- John 8:28 **“When you have lifted up the Son of Man, then you will know that I AM he (ego eimi), and that I do nothing on my own authority...”**

Jesus' Claims

THE MOST OUTRAGEOUS CLAIMS:

John 8:58 Jesus said to them, **“Truly, truly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I AM”** (ego eimi)

vs 59 So they picked up stones to throw at him but Jesus hid himself and went out of the temple

John 10: 30 - **I and the Father are one**

vs 31 The Jews picked up stones again to stone him

Jesus' Claims

THE MOST OUTRAGEOUS CLAIMS:

John 14:6-9

⁶ Jesus said to him, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. ⁷ If you had known me, you would have known my Father also. From now on you do know him and have seen him.”

⁸ Philip said to him, “Lord, show us the Father, and it is enough for us.” ⁹ Jesus said to him, “Have I been with you so long, and you still do not know me, Philip? Whoever has seen me has seen the Father.”

Testimony of Others

God's Own Testimony of Jesus:

Matt 3:17 “and behold, a voice from heaven said, “This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased

Matt 17:5 “This is my beloved Son, With whom I am well pleased; listen to him.

Testimony of Others

Demons as they were exorcised:

Matt 8:29 “and behold, they cried out, “What have you to do with us, O Son of God? Have you come here to torment us before the time?”

Mark 1:34b And he would not permit the demons to speak, because they knew him.

Testimony of Others

Luke 4: 33-35

And in the synagogue there was a man who had a spirit of an unclean demon, and he cried out with a loud voice, “Ha! What have you to do with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know why you are – the Holy One of God” But Jesus rebuked him, saying **“Be Silent and come out of him!”**

Testimony of Others

Crowds were ASTONISHED at him: Grk “to be beside oneself, struck dumb with amazement” used 12 times in the Gospels re: Jesus works

Matt 7:28 (*at the end of the Sermon on the mount*)

And when Jesus finished these sayings, the crowds were astonished at his teaching, for he was teaching them as one who had authority, and not as their scribes

Testimony of Others

Crowds were ASTONISHED at him:

Matt 13:54

...54 and coming to his hometown he taught in their synagogue, so that they were astonished, and said, “Where did this man get this wisdom and these mighty works?”

Vs 56 “Where then did this man get all these things?”

Testimony of Others

Crowds were AMAZED at him:

Matthew 12:23

And all the people were amazed, and said, “Can this be the Son of David?” But when the Pharisees heard it, they said, “It is only by Beelzebul, the prince of demons, that this man cast our demons”

Testimony of Others

Crowds were AMAZED at him:

Mark 1: 27

And they were all amazed, so that they questioned among themselves, saying “What is this? A new teaching with authority! He commands even the unclean spirits, and they obey him”

Was Jesus ever accused of being a liar?

Crowds were AMAZED at him:

Mark 3:22

And the scribes who came down from Jerusalem were saying, “He is possessed by Beelzebul,” and “by the prince of demons he casts out the demons.”

By saying Jesus was possessed by Beelzebul (Satan, the father of lies) they are implying he’s also a liar

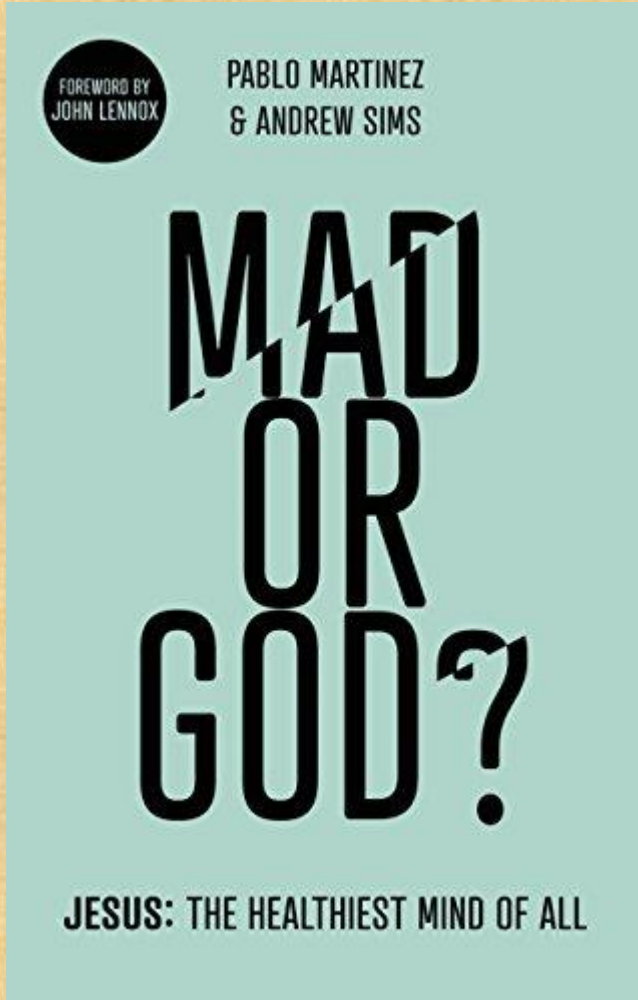
Was Jesus ever accused of being a lunatic or insane?

Mark 3: 21

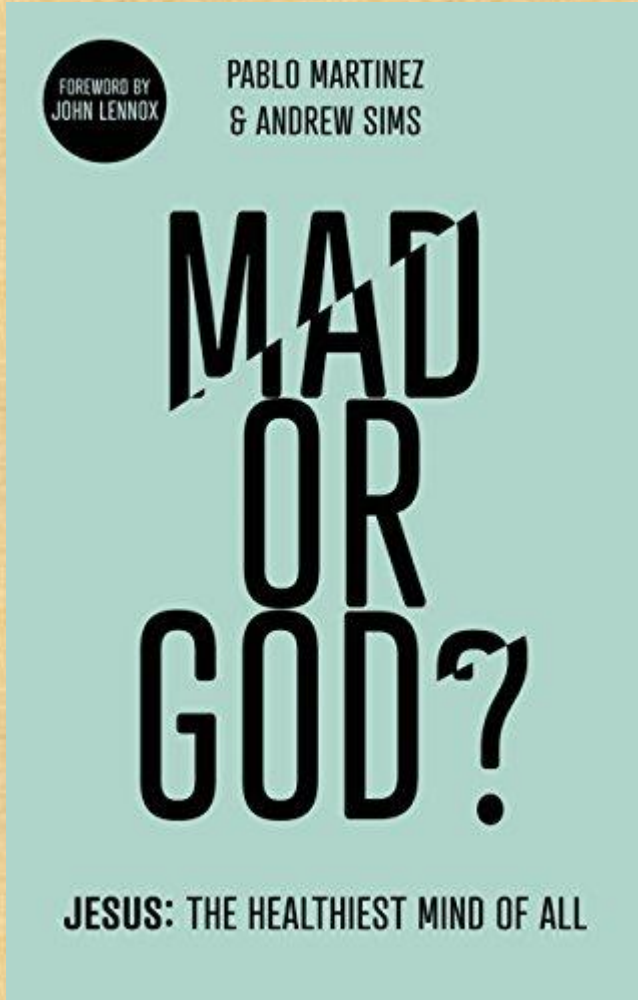
And when his family heard it, they went out to seize him, for they were saying, “He is out of his mind.” (But, later they came to faith)

John 10:20

There was again a division among the Jews because of these words.
²⁰ Many of them said, “He has a demon, and is insane; why listen to him?” ²¹ **Others said, “These are not the words of one who is oppressed by a demon. Can a demon open the eyes of the blind?”**

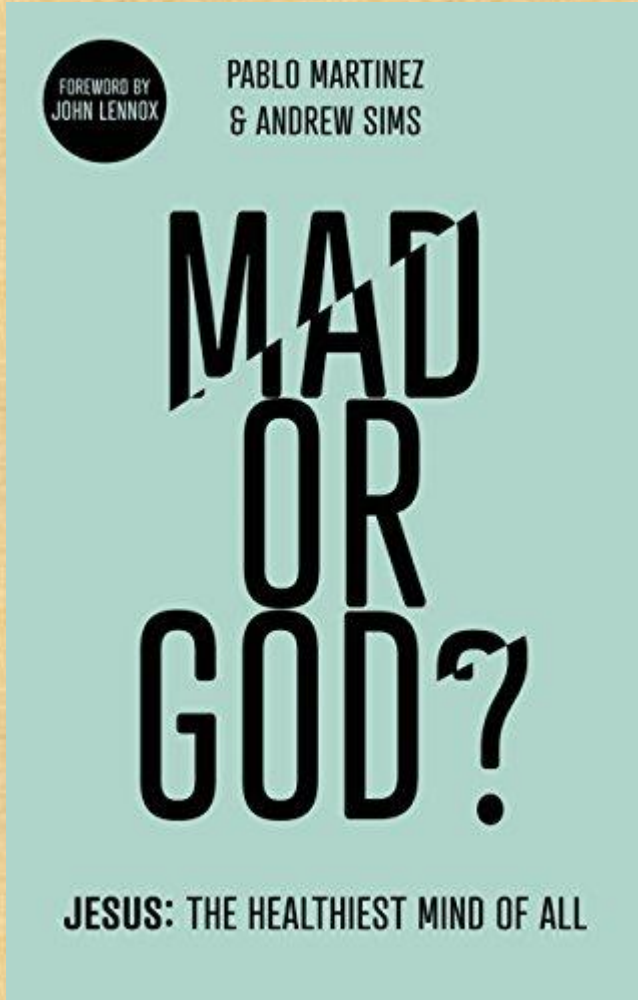


This book is by two Clinical Psychiatrists and examines Jesus' mental Health using known tools of Mental Health assessment



They evaluated Jesus in the following tests:

1. The test of psychiatry
2. The test of psychosis
3. The test of mental impairment
4. The test of character
5. The test of a consistent life
6. The test of relationships
7. The test of adversity
8. The test of influence
9. The test of his claims



Their conclusion:

No mentally sick person, or no evil man, would ever have been able to speak or behave in the impeccable and influential way that Jesus did, unless he really was what he claimed to be: God

William Lecky, one of Great Britain's most noted historians and an opponent of organized Christianity said,

“It was reserved for Christianity to present to the world an ideal character which through all the changes of eighteen centuries has inspired the hearts of men with an impassioned love; has shown itself capable of acting on all ages, nations, temperaments and conditions; has been not only the highest pattern of virtue,

Lecky (continued)

but the strongest incentive to its practice...The simple record of Jesus' three short years of active life has done more to regenerate and soften mankind than all the disquisitions of philosophers and all the exhortations of moralists"

Quote from MacArthur addressing C.S. Lewis' Trilemma

Now, the New Testament is written, clearly, to make it obvious to any reader that Jesus is not a lunatic. Lunatics don't heal sick people, raise dead people, and dominate demons. Lunatics don't speak the way Jesus spoke, think the way He thought. Lunatics don't act the way He acted. Lunatics don't attract women and children. Lunatics aren't marked by kindness and mercy and compassion.

Quote from MacArthur addressing C.S. Lewis' Trilemma

Nor is Jesus a liar. Nor is He the cleverest, perhaps, of all deceivers, because liars don't raise dead people either. Frauds don't heal sick people, don't banish disease from a nation for a duration of three years.

Quote from MacArthur addressing C.S. Lewis' Trilemma

Frauds don't dominate the world of demons either. And neither do frauds die and, having been buried, come out of the grave.

So, really, we're left with one alternative with regard to Jesus. Unless you want to join those who think He's a lunatic, or those who think He's the greatest liar of all time, you're left with one option, and that is the option that He is who He claimed to be; that He is God.

Quote from MacArthur addressing C.S.Lewis' Trilemma

And the evidence is in:

Virgin born, sinless life, power over the physical world, power over the spiritual world, power over life, power over death, power over creation. Clearly, He is Lord.

Bibliography & Other Sources

- “The New Evidence that Demands a Verdict”
Johsh McDowell
- “Christian Apologetics” Geisler
- “The Case for the REAL JESUS” Strobel
- “Can We Trust the Gospels?” Peter J. Williams
- “The Historical Jesus” Hamermas

Other resources:

- CSNTM.org
- Daniel Wallace – Lectures on Youtube
- Coldcasechristianity.com