

THE UNIQUENESS OF JESUS AND THE 21ST CENTURY

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Pastor Jeff Robinson

LUKE 24:25-27



JESUS OF NAZARETH IS IN A CLASS OF HIS OWN.

Luke 24:25-27

And he said to them, "O foolish ones, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken! ²⁶ Was it not necessary that the Christ should suffer these things and enter into his glory?" ²⁷ And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he interpreted to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself.

Q: Why did Jesus call them foolish?

A: Because they first subjected the data to their experience. Nothing like that had ever happened before.

Reasons why Jesus of Nazareth is in a class of His own:

1) **Origin:** because He has none – John 1:1
In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

John 3:16

"For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life." (NASB).

Only begotten = "the only one of its kind or class, unique (in kind) of something that is the only example of its category."¹

2) **Classification:** Fully God & fully human – Philippians 2:6-7
who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, ⁷ but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men.

Isaiah 53:3

He was despised and rejected by men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief; and as one from whom men hide their faces he was despised, and we esteemed him not.

"He [Jesus] is not an avatar, above suffering and only appearing as a human being. He is the one who exists above worldly sufferings in supreme equanimity. He is the one who endures worldly sufferings in steadfast faith, hope, and love." – Keith Ward²

3) **Character:** Impeccable integrity – Romans 10:4
For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes.

4) **Works:** Command over nature (The Gospels).

Q: How does this relate to the 21st century?

"10 Breakthrough Technologies 2017," MIT Technology Review³

- "Reversing Paralysis: Scientists are making remarkable progress at using brain implants to restore the freedom of movement that spinal cord injuries take away."
- "Paying with your face: Face-detecting systems in China now authorize payments, provide access to facilities, and track down criminals. Will other countries follow?"
- "Practical Quantum Computers: Advances at Google, Intel, and several research groups indicate that computers with previously unimaginable power are finally within reach."
- "The 360-Degree Selfie: Inexpensive cameras that make spherical images are opening a new era in photography and changing the way people share stories."

Q: What relevance does Jesus have in the 21st century?

A: Jesus' resurrection guarantees:

- 1) Ultimate **justice** over evil: Will Good triumph over Evil?

Acts 17:31b

"he has fixed a day on which he will judge the world in righteousness."

- 2) Personal **value**: Does my life actually matter?

- 3) Possibility of a **relationship** with God: Can God be known?

- 4) **Hope** beyond the grave: What happens when I die?

"Atheism: no God, no hope.

Buddhism: no God, dead founder, no hope.

Hinduism: many gods, no hope.

Islam: one dead prophet, no gospel.

Christianity: One living God, whose Son, Christ Jesus, was raised from the dead in space-time history to defeat the snare of sin and death."

– Douglas Groothuis

¹ William F. Arndt, Frederick William Danker, & Walter Bauer, *A Greek-English lexicon of the New Testament and other early Christian literature*, 3rd ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 658.

² Keith Ward, *Religion & Human Nature* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998), 197.

³ MIT Technology Review, "10 Breakthrough Technologies 2017," <https://www.technologyreview.com/lists/technologies/2017/>.