



Call Him liar, lunatic or Lord

“but who do you say that I am?” matt 16:15

while many have asked and offered to answer that question, it is a question each must answer for themselves. the evidence clearly shows that He was a historical person and that His life radically altered human history. the historian pelikan said: “it is from His birth that most of the human race dates its calendars, it is by His name that millions curse, and in His name that millions pray.”

due to His influence, Jesus has been transforming lives for almost two millennia. in the process, He has rewritten the direction and outcome of human history. it’s a fact that the teachings of Jesus have been a force of overwhelming good throughout the history of the world. unfortunately, it also is true that much harm has been committed in Jesus’ name — both by the Church at large, and by individuals seeking to use Him to further their own agendas.

to quote the great christian apologist c.s. lewis, “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 a level with the man who says he is a poached egg — or else He would be the devil of hell. 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.”

while many would call Him a first-rate ethicist supremely worthy of our attention and emulation, Jesus didn’t leave us that option. Jesus wasn’t interested in neutrality. He frequently taught that

His followers must be all in — or eventually be left out. when Jesus said, “I am the way, the truth, and the life,” He wasn’t making a meaningless, abstract statement. His divinity was central to His messages.

if Jesus knew He was not God, then He was lying. but if He was a liar, then He also was a hypocrite, as He told others to be honest, whatever the cost. and if he was a liar, then He was also a fool, as His claims led to His crucifixion.

so if Jesus wasn’t a liar, was He lunatic? is it feasible that He only thought He was God? a measure of your insanity is the size of the gap between what you think you are and what you really are. if i consider myself to be a great thinker, i am only an arrogant fool. if i think i am queen of england, i am probably over the edge. if i think i am a woman (when in reality a man without a functioning uterus) needing a tampax for their monthly period, i have fully departed the sunny shores of sanity. but if i think i am God, i am even more insane because the gap between anything finite and the infinite God is even greater than the gap between any two finite things, even a man becoming a woman.

so either a liar or a lunatic label? almost no one who has read the gospels can honestly and seriously consider either option. the beauty, the elegance, the human wisdom, the desirableness of Jesus emerge from the gospels with a force not to be denied by even the most hardened and prejudiced reader. the idea that Jesus was self-deceived or delusional is not compatible with the impression He left on history.

so, is Jesus really Lord? Jesus asked His disciples, “who do you say that I am?” peter responded, “You are the Christ, the Son of the Living God.” matt 16:15-16) like peter, each must decide to believe that Jesus made truthful claims about being God, i.e. “before abraham was, I AM.”

yes, the bible tells us that we each must choose for ourselves whether or not to accept Jesus as Lord — and be held accountable for our decision. can the bible prove that Jesus is God? no. proof does not require faith, but archeological discoveries continue to prove the bible’s legitimacy as a truthful document. so why wouldn’t we accept Jesus? His actions validated His words. His resurrection proved His deity.

we cannot put Jesus on the shelf as just a great moral teacher or just another prophet of God; evidence strongly favors Jesus as God Himself, visiting us in human flesh.

me, i call Him Lord! what do you call Him?