

Who is Jesus?

Intro: There is no surprise that Jesus Christ is central to Christianity—after all, it was named after him. However, there are a lot of different beliefs about who Jesus is under the sociological labeled umbrella called *Christian*. Early in church history, there was a group of Christians called Arians led by Bishop Arius who believed that Jesus was divine, but that he was not God. Arius taught the Jesus was a created being who did not exist before his birth and that he was not equal with God. Arius' views created quite a controversy in the church and Emperor Constantine called for a council of the Bishops to meet in Nicaea and discern the truth. In the end, after searching the Scriptures, praying, and much discussion, the council determined that Jesus was, in fact, God incarnate (in the flesh).

There are of course other thoughts about who Jesus is. No credible historical scholar discredits the existence of Jesus as a historical figure—Jesus is not a fictitious Robin Hood. There's too much evidence even outside of the Bible. However, those not of the faith have claimed that Jesus wasn't God, but that he was simply a good man, a great teacher, or one of the prophets. But Jesus did not give any of those as one of the options we could make. Jesus made some specific claims. Today, you will have an opportunity to decide for yourself who Jesus is based on your own search of the Scriptures.

What the Bible Teaches: Break into Groups of Four, read the following Bible verses, and discuss the questions. You may want to jot down notes and thoughts on the back of this page.

John 13:13; John 10:30; John 8:12, 19; John 5:17-21. In these verses, what did Jesus say about who he was?

Mark 8:27-30; Philippians 2:5-11; John 20:28-29; Colossians 1:15-20. In these verses, who do others say Jesus is?

John 14:6-7; Colossians 1:13-14; Luke 19:10. It is difficult to separate who Jesus is from what Jesus said about his purpose. According to these verses, what was Jesus' purpose?

What I Believe: Take ten minutes for silent reflection and thought. Ask yourself what you believe about who Jesus is. Use the back of this page to formulate a response to the question:

“Who is Jesus?”

Write your final response here: _____

Articulations: Pair up with one other person and share your response with one another. Take five minutes each. Try to *not* look at your written statement; instead, try to tell your beliefs from your heart. This will prepare you to share whenever you are asked about what you believe.

Therefore: Jesus said His followers should Go and make disciples (Matthew 28:19-20). One of the first steps in making disciples is being ready and able to share the reason for the hope we have (1 Peter 3:15), in other words, knowing what we believe, why, and then being able to share it. Sharing your faith is important. This week, find someone—it can be *anyone*—and articulate your belief about this issue. If you have an unchurched/unreached friend whom you can share with, all the better (you can always say you have a homework assignment from church and you'd like to share it with them). Be ready to talk about your experience next week over the meal at your House Church.