

# WHY JESUS?

## 1 John 1:1-3

### INTRODUCTION

- A. "Why did my Savior come to earth?"
  - 1. An important question which calls us back to the fundamentals of our understanding of who Jesus was and what was His purpose.
  - 2. The Gospels ask that same question.
  - 3. In their answers, you learn more about the significance of Christ's life and death and about his importance to us.
- B. Most of us understand that Jesus came to save us from our sins.
  - 1. His death, burial and resurrection are the crux of his coming.
  - 2. The Gospel writers devote about a third of their space to the final week of Jesus' life.
  - 3. The writers were emphasizing His death as the primary reason for His coming.
- C. The gospels give us a great deal of information on Jesus that has little to do with his eventual suffering.
  - 1. What about his teachings, the parables, and the object lessons preserved in the gospel accounts?
  - 2. One of the reasons for Christ's coming involved the "education" of mankind: the teaching of moral precepts, social responsibilities and religious attitudes.
- D. There is one other thread running through the Gospels, that constitutes another answer to the question, "Why did my Savior come to earth."
  - 1. It is in this thread that you will discover something about Jesus that will touch you as much as the rest and may well motivate you in a way the others cannot.

### I. THE HIDDEN GOD.

#### A. Moses and the Encounter on Sinai

- 1. 3500 years ago - Moses on Sinai surrounded by God's glory in the "Tent of Meeting"
- 2. **Read Exodus 33:18-23**
  - a. The *beauty* [of the encounter]:
    - 1) Moses' desire to see God - "Show me" (vs 18)
    - 2) God's desire to be known - "I will" (vs 19)
  - b. The *tragedy* - there is also the prohibition against seeing God's face (vs. 20).

#### B. The Same Theme Runs Throughout the Old Testament.

- 1. The *beauty* –
  - a. David expresses the desire to see God.
  - b. Psalm 27:4, 7-9a
- 2. The *tragedy* - there is always a penalty associated with seeing the face of God.
  - a. The usual rule: "*No one may see me and live.*"
  - b. God often warns against coming into His presence.
  - c. People to whom He does appear cover their faces or fall to the ground in fear.
- 3. The knowledge most Old Testament characters had of God was secondary.
  - a. They heard descriptions of God and read about His attributes.
  - b. They witnessed the results of His presence, and the effects of His work.
  - c. They listened to words He spoke from the prophets and even heard the distant rumblings of His voice.
  - d. But there was no direct vision of His features, none of the intimacy implied by a face-to-face, eye-to-eye relationship.
  - e. Though there was contact with God, it was contact from a distance and at arm's length.

## II. GOD BECAME FLESH.

1600 years after Moses, another man took up this theme. There was a difference, however. Whereas Moses begged God to show his face, John thanked God for having done so. What Moses was told he could not see, the Apostle claimed to have beheld.

### A. The Encounter. Mt. 4:21-22; Mk. 1:19-20

1. For John, the encounter with God happened not on a mountain top but in a fishing boat. There were no clouds or fire present, only nets and the smell of fish.
2. It wasn't dramatic at all - he simply met a man who asked him to leave his business and become a disciple. John had no idea what he was stepping into as he stepped out of that boat.
3. How long it took John to awaken to God in Jesus there is no way to tell. Somewhere between the call and the crucifixion, John began to realize that in Jesus he had found not just a good man or a great prophet but the literal embodiment of God himself.

### B. The Witness.

#### 1. Read John 1:1-5, 14-18

- a. The Word was God (vs 1)
- b. The Word became flesh (vs 14)
- c. The Word made God known (vs 18)
  - i. *exegeomai* - "has made him known," "declared" or "explained."
  - ii. Jesus, the explanation of God!

2. **Read 1 John 1:1-3a** - John saw, heard, and even touched that which Moses was forbidden to see. John touched God, and it is out of a sense of astonishment for that fact that John writes.

### C. The Claims.

1. This is not just John's *interpretation* of the life of Jesus.
2. Jesus himself made the claim that He had come to show us the invisible God.
  - a. **Jn 8:19** - "*You would know my Father also.*"
  - b. **Jn 12:44-45** - "*... he sees the one who sent me.*"
  - c. **Jn 14:6-9** - "*Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father.*"
3. This is John's message, a message learned from Jesus himself: Jesus was God; Jesus became flesh; Jesus reveals the Father to us.
4. That carpenter wet from baptism, that young man cleansing the Temple, that tired traveler resting by a well in Samaria was the God of the universe come to visit.
5. In his words, in his actions, in his thoughts and character John recognized the exact impress of Jehovah. Studying the personality and character of Jesus uncovered for John the heart of the Father and was able to see him face to face.
6. No wonder the apostle Paul would write: 2 Cor. 4:6.

## III. THE ILLUSTRATED MAN.

### A. Man and the Image of God

1. Man was made to be like God.
  - a. **Read Genesis 1:26-27**
  - b. In creating man, God formed a manifestation of himself. We also were like God.
2. But, man perverted the image with the Fall.
  - a. With the coming of sin, the image was perverted.
  - b. After the first few chapters of Genesis, man as God's image completely disappears. God also disappears into invisibility.
3. Man forgot who he himself was.
  - a. We talk about something being "human" or "inhuman."
  - b. The truth is that we don't know what man is supposed to be. He is supposed to be like God, but when God withdrew, we lost our model of what humanity was to be like.

## **B. Christ as the Perfect Man and the Perfecter of Men**

1. Christ, the "image of God" (he is often referred to in that way throughout the N.T.) is the representation of what God designed us to be.
  - a. In Jesus, we discover what we were meant to be from creation.
  - b. As we look at him, we not only see God, we see the ideal man.
2. It is through Christ that we are given the power to become like God once more.
  - a. The life, death and resurrection of Jesus is constantly cast in terms of its power to transform and renew man so that once again he images the God who created him.
  - b. 2 Cor. 3:18

## **CLOSING**

- A. "Why did my savior come to earth?"
  1. Certainly, he came to save us.
    - a. And he also came to teach us.
    - b. He came to **show** us – God.
    - c. And he came to show us what God intended us to be.
  2. Matthew 13:16-17