

## Column – Discovering Jesus

Jesus continues to fascinate and even to make money for secular publications. He was featured, for example, on Mar. 4, 2025, on the cover of a special edition of Time magazine, along with the title, “Jesus, Who He Was, Who He Is. His miracles. But why the fascination with someone who lived 2000 years ago? What sets Jesus apart from other great men of history? Who was He?

There have been many answers to this question. Some will answer: a great teacher, a passionate prophet, one who welcomed children and gave new dignity to women, a miracle worker, a friend of the downtrodden, one who believed so strongly in His cause that He was willing to die for it.

Some over the years have put these observations together, throwing in some imagination of their own, and come up with a Jesus, meek and mild. We see this in some artistic depictions of Him. But there is just one problem with this assessment, Jesus was more complex still as we discover in John 8.

Here Jesus is pictured as a fierce controversialist. Far from meek and mild, He holds his own in a debate, does not mind calling out His opponents and exposing the falsity of their arguments, and manifests a belief in objective truth (so unlike many in our modern culture who believe in multiple ‘truths’ and who are quick to affirm everything and everybody).

And in the same chapter we find Him making audacious claims for Himself. He says He existed before Abraham and equates Himself with the divine voice that spoke to Moses out of the Burning Bush. He startles His opponents by saying, “Before Abraham was, I AM.” So plain were His words that they took up stones and began hurling them in His direction. For them, He was guilty of blasphemy.

But, can Jesus back up His claims? In the Gospels in the New Testament, we get our answer. Here we find Him doing what only God can do: turning water into wine, multiplying loaves and fish, forgiving sins, restoring sight to blind eyes and strength to palsied limbs and giving life to the dead (both the physically and spiritually).

The final validation of Jesus' claims comes on Easter morning when the One Jesus speaks of as Abba raises Him from the dead. In so doing, the Creator God says, "This really is my beloved Son, hear Him."

As Easter approaches, it is appropriate that both believers and non-believers, the convinced and the curious, examine (or re-examine) the claims of Jesus. For believers, it is an opportunity to become better equipped to answer questions from those outside the Church and make the case for Christ. For unbelievers, this is an opportunity of a lifetime. If Jesus is indeed the one He claims to be, He can change the direction of your life, give new purpose and hope, and put a new man in the suit you are wearing.

*ALMIGHTY God, who through thine only-begotten Son Jesus Christ hast overcome death, and opened unto us the gate of everlasting life; We humbly beseech thee that, as by thy special grace preventing [going before] us thou dost put into our minds good desires, so by thy continual help we may*

*bring the same to good effect; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Ghost ever, one God, world without end. Amen.*  
(Collect for Easter Day, Book of Common Prayer)

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