



– K n o w i n g –

JESUS

A Worship Series for Saints & Sinners

Will the Real Jesus Please Stand Up? (2 of 6)

Sermon Series Focus

- *Knowing Jesus* means *experiencing* the person of Jesus as a disciple (learner) on the road to glorification
- This series looks at how “knowing Jesus and making him known” should be the heartbeat of every disciple
- The Father exalted the Son over all things, therefore we see that Christ is central and supreme, the first and last; there is no greater thing than knowing Jesus
- Since Jesus has been given this position of authority as the source of all Life, we will learn that everything hinges upon knowing Jesus and making him known

The Purpose of *Knowing Jesus*

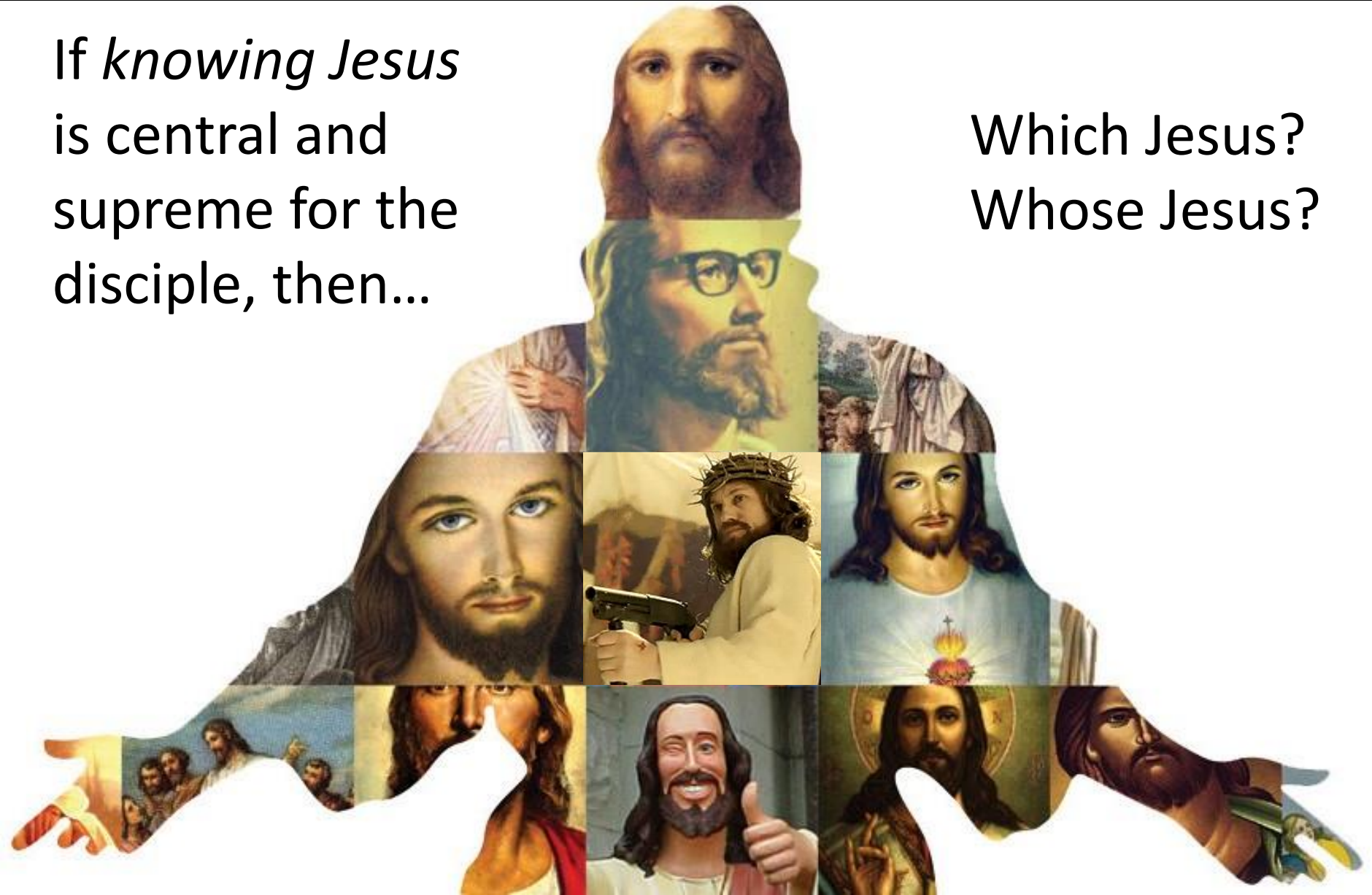
- To invite saints and sinners to follow the Jesus of history and of faith (i.e. *experience* the Jesus of the NT)
- To make *this* Jesus central and supreme in our life
- To move us beyond a head knowledge of Jesus and our faith (e.g. belief, doctrine, thoughts, etc.), recognizing the difference between “about vs. abiding” in Jesus
- To discover practices that help us *abide* and deepen a relationship with Jesus that is both “personal” and corporate in nature; personal does *not* mean private
- To consider the radical call of Jesus to follow (know) him and share him—make disciples who make disciples

Knowing Jesus in Six Sermons

1. Nothing Greater Than Jesus
2. Will the Real Jesus Please Stand Up?
3. Making Jesus Your Lord & Friend
4. Abiding in the Person of Jesus
5. Experiencing Jesus in Missional Community
6. An Invitation to Follow Jesus

If *knowing Jesus* is central and supreme for the disciple, then...

Which Jesus?
Whose Jesus?



The Many Portraits of Jesus

Historical Jesus Studies

- Jesus the moral teacher
- Jesus the cynic preacher
- Jesus the prophet
- Jesus the Jewish reformer
- Jesus the revolutionary
- Jesus the anti-imperialist
- Jesus the gnostic guru

Socio-Political & Cultural

- Baby Jesus
- American Jesus
- Right-Wing Jesus
- Left-Wing Jesus
- Nice Therapist Jesus
- Feminist Jesus
- Social Activist Jesus

"It is not only possible, but actually highly likely, that the church has distorted the real Jesus, and needs to repent of this and rediscover who its Lord actually is."

N.T. Wright, *Who Was Jesus?* (pg. 18)

“I think people are hungry for Jesus, but they are starting to realize they have been fed a cheap American version, and they are rightly rejecting this counterfeit. Their rejection should be seen not as a rejection of Jesus, but a rejection of obscured versions of him. People are tired of being fed a watered-down version of Jesus. People are tired of an American Jesus. They want something that’s more undiluted... Those disillusioned with Christian culture simply long for a more authentic portrait of him. They want the real Jesus.”

Benjamin Corey, *Undiluted: Rediscovering the Radical Message of Jesus* (pg. 20)

John 14:6-10 NLT

⁶ Jesus told him, “I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one can come to the Father except through me. ⁷ If you had really known me, you would know who my Father is. From now on, you do know him and have seen him!”

⁸ Philip said, “Lord, show us the Father,
and we will be satisfied.”

⁹ Jesus replied, “Have I been with you all this time, Philip, and yet you still don’t know who I am? Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father! So why are you asking me to show him to you? ¹⁰ Don’t you believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me? The words I speak are not my own, but my Father who lives in me does his work through me.

1 John 1:1-3 NLT

¹ We proclaim to you the one who existed from the beginning, whom we have heard and seen. We saw him with our own eyes and touched him with our own hands. He is the Word of life. ² This one who is life itself was revealed to us, and we have seen him. And now we testify and proclaim to you that he is the one who is eternal life. He was with the Father, and then he was revealed to us. ³ We proclaim to you what we ourselves have actually seen and heard so that you may have fellowship with us. And our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ. ⁴ We are writing these things so that you may fully share our joy.

Embracing the Jesus of History as the Jesus of Faith (& vice versa)

How can we be sure that we're coming to know the Jesus that was *seen* and *touched* by his first followers?

1. We *accept* the entirety of the apostolic testimony about Jesus as recorded in the Gospels & Epistles of the NT;
2. We do not selectively *read* or cherry-pick verses that prop up a monochrome Jesus of our own bias and culture;
3. We read, reflect, and meditate on the Jesus of the NT and are being *visibly transformed* by his person through intentional prayer, worship, & missional community.

A Snapshot of the Real Jesus

- Accepted sinners AND told them to “go and sin no more”
- Preached forgiveness for all AND a judgment for the wicked
- Promised “abundant life” AND that people would hate you
- Told us to love neighbor & enemy AND then made enemies
- Brought “good news” to some AND bad news for others
- Was meek & mild AND turned over tables in the Temple
- Said yoke is easy AND that his teachings are hard to accept
- You can’t see him AND yet you *can* “see” him and know him
- He said it’s possible to serve him AND not really know him (e.g. “Away from me... I never knew you” Matt 7:22-23)

John 6:53-56, 60-64 NIV

⁵³ Jesus said to them, “Very truly I tell you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you. ⁵⁴ Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise them up at the last day. ⁵⁵ For my flesh is real food and my blood is real drink. ⁵⁶ Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood remains in me, and I in them.

⁶⁰ On hearing it, many of his disciples said, “This is a hard teaching. Who can accept it?” ⁶¹ Aware that his disciples were grumbling about this, Jesus said to them, “Does this offend you? ⁶² Then what if you see the Son of Man to where he was before! ⁶³ The Spirit gives life; the flesh counts for nothing. The words I have spoken to you—they are full of the Spirit and life.

⁶⁴ Yet there are some of you who do not believe.”

John 6:66-69 NIV

⁶⁶ From this time many of his disciples turned back and no longer followed him. ⁶⁷ “You do not want to leave too, do you?” Jesus asked the Twelve.

⁶⁸ Simon Peter answered him, “Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. ⁶⁹ We have come to believe and to know that you are the Holy One of God.”

Luke 9:21-24 NLT

²¹ Jesus warned his disciples not to tell anyone who he was. ²² “The Son of Man must suffer many terrible things,” he said. “He will be rejected by the elders, the leading priests, and the teachers of religious law. He will be killed, but on the third day he will be raised from the dead.”

²³ Then he said to the crowd, “If any of you wants to be my follower, you must turn from your selfish ways, take up your cross daily, and follow me. ²⁴ If you try to hang on to your life, you will lose it. But if you give up your life for my sake, you will save it.

Luke 9:25-26 NLT

²⁵ And what do you benefit if you gain the whole world but are yourself lost or destroyed? ²⁶ If anyone is ashamed of me and my message, the Son of Man will be ashamed of that person when he returns in his glory and in the glory of the Father and the holy angels.

Moving From About to Abiding

- We must derive and continually fashion our portrait of Jesus from the stories and experiences of his first followers as recorded in the New Testament, otherwise our view of Jesus will inevitably be shaped by outside forces
- It is important to simultaneously read about and reflect on the Jesus of the NT *while* engaging him in a life of prayer—being aware of his presence and listening for his voice
- The Spirit calls and invites us into new knowledge and fresh, personal experiences with Jesus, not sole reliance upon the past or the knowledge and experiences of others
- A critical question for the disciple: “Am I spending time reading, listening, and reflecting on the Jesus of the Gospels, entering into the story and his presence?”



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Sermon audio & slides in PDF can be downloaded at:
www.christiansburgmennonite.org