

## The Authenticity of Christ

When we refer to someone or something as authentic what do we mean? What words come to mind?

- Genuine
- Legitimate
- Valid
- Undisputed

When a jeweller is going to buy a diamond he needs to determine whether it is an authentic diamond or a fake – a worthless stone or glass that looks like a genuine diamond to the untrained eye. If diamonds are stolen and then recovered the authorities would call in the jeweller to testify to the authenticity of the diamonds. He, being an expert in diamonds, would be a reliable witness to testify to their authenticity. Someone who knows nothing about diamonds would not be a reliable witness in such a case and his testimony would not be valid.

In the same way Christ spoke of the witnesses that testify to His authenticity. He had just been speaking about His deity and the authority that the father had delegated to Him.

John 5: 31 – 47

### 1) The Testimony of John

- John's life purpose was to prepare the people of Israel for the coming of their Messiah.
  - Luke 3: 2 – 6 During the high priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas, the word of God came to John son of Zechariah in the desert. <sup>3</sup> He went into all the country around the Jordan, preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. <sup>4</sup> As is written in the book of the words of Isaiah the prophet: "A voice of one calling in the desert, 'Prepare the way for the Lord, make straight paths for him. Every valley shall be filled in, every mountain and hill made low. The crooked roads shall become straight, the rough ways smooth. And all mankind will see God's salvation'"
  - Luke 3: 15 – 17 The people were waiting expectantly and were all wondering in their hearts if John might possibly be the Christ. John answered them all, "I baptize you with water. But one more powerful than I will come, the thongs of whose sandals I am not worthy to untie. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire. His winnowing fork is in his hand to clear his threshing floor and to gather the wheat into his barn, but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire
  - John 1: 29 – 34 The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him and said, "Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world! This is the one I meant when I said, 'A man who comes after me has surpassed me because he was before me.' I myself did not know him, but the reason I came baptizing with water was that he might be revealed to Israel." Then John gave this testimony: "I saw the Spirit come down from heaven as a dove and remain on him. I would not have known him, except that the one who sent me to baptize with water told me, 'The man on whom you see the Spirit come down and remain is he who will baptize with the Holy Spirit.' I have seen and I testify that this is the Son of God.
- Even though Jesus did not need human testimony he referred to John's testimony as about Him as the Jews held John to be a prophet and spoke from God.

- If the Jews believed this and had listened to what John had said about Jesus they would have known that Jesus was in fact the authentic Messiah and Son of God. And knowing this they would have believed it and would have been saved.
  - Jesus doesn't accept testimonies of Himself from those who do not believe as their testimonies would not be true.
  - However He expects those who have believed in Him to be His witnesses – bear testimony of Him (Acts 1: 8)
  - Have you heard the testimonies of those who have believed in Jesus yet still doubt His authenticity?
- 2) The Testimony of the Work that the Father gave Jesus to do and finish
- Once again we look at the context in which Jesus was speaking. He had healed the man at the pool of Bethesda and had said “The Father is always at his work to this very day and I, too, am working.”
  - The work that he was referring to was that of His miracles – making people whole.
  - It isn't just what Jesus did but His whole attitude in doing it that testifies to His authenticity.
  - Great works are done by many people but great works done in absolute humility are done by very few.
  - Jesus wasn't seeking glory for himself. He even stated in v 31: “If I testify about myself my testimony is not valid”.
  - Not only were his works done in humility but they were done with great sacrifice and eventually unto death.
  - Thus it was the works of power done in absolute humility sacrificially, considering everyone else before Himself that testifies to His Authenticity?
  - But aren't miracles being worked today?
    - Yes, but are they being worked in absolute humility and sacrificially?
    - If not then we need to question their authenticity.
    - If we uphold the person doing the miracles more than the name of Jesus then they aren't bearing testimony to Jesus but to a man or woman.
- 3) The Testimony of the Father
- Matthew 3: 17 And a voice from heaven said, "This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased"
  - Jesus was declaring to the Jews that they didn't know the testimony of the Father because they didn't know Him.
    - They didn't know His voice – there was no relationship with God. If they had had a relationship with God they would have know that who Jesus was.
    - They had not seen His form – there spiritual eyes were closed to see the glory of God in Jesus.
    - John 8: 41 – 42 "We are not illegitimate children," they protested. "The only Father we have is God himself." Jesus said to them, "If God were your Father, you would love me, for I came from God and now am here. I have not come on my own; but he sent me.
  - When we believe in Jesus we become children of God having the Holy Spirit within us who testifies of the authenticity of Jesus and that He was sent by the Father.

- If someone goes to another country and tries to meet the governing authorities to establish governing links between the two countries he will not be accepted because he has not been sent by his country. He is not an authentic ambassador. But if his country sends him to another country with their authority and he has the paper work to prove it he will be well received by the other country as they will recognise him as an authentic ambassador of his country.
- Do we recognise Jesus as being authentic in that He has been sent by the Father?
- Do we have a relationship with the Father that would testify to this fact?

#### 4) The Testimony of the Scriptures

- Religious people use the scriptures to put together religious and legalistic treatises to establish a certain code of conduct and knowledge by which they expect everyone to abide by in order to please God and have eternal life.
- Jesus condemned this act and said that they think they have eternal life in the scriptures but do not come to Him to have eternal life.
- The scripture all point to Jesus and if we use the scriptures without coming to Him then we have missed the point of them.
  - Jesus is the central focus of the Bible with the law of Moses, the Prophets and the Psalms all pointing forward to Him
  - The Gospels all point to His life and work whilst He was on earth.
  - The Epistles look back and point to Him but also see Him in the church throughout history. They also point forward to His second coming and Christ in eternity.
- Do we know our Bibles but yet haven't come to Jesus?
- Do we read our Bibles yet fail to come to Him?
- Being able to quote the Bible and trying to live according its code of ethics will not bring salvation.
- Allow the Holy Spirit to give us insight on who Jesus is and then come to Him in humility acknowledging His authenticity because of the testimony of the scriptures

#### 5) The Fickleness of Man

- It is one of the many biblical paradoxes when Jesus said that he does not accept praise from men
- What he was saying is that he does not accept praise in the way of flattery from men who enjoy to be praised themselves
- Jesus condemned them for receiving praise from others but made no effort to obtain God's praise.
- People have pious religious appearances but will soon readily crucify Jesus not believing in his authenticity
- Have you truly believed in Jesus authenticity or do you crucify Him again and again by your words and actions?
- Are you faithful or fickle?