

DOES GOD MATTER?



Many people say of Jesus that he's great for some people but he's not for me. Jesus seems irrelevant, unattractive or boring to them. However, many people know almost nothing of what he said and claimed. The claims of Jesus led the Oxford professor C.S. Lewis to conclude that :

"Christianity is a statement which, if false, is of no importance, and, if true, of infinite importance. The one thing it cannot be is moderately important."

BIG QUESTIONS

Life is full of big questions. Many people are so busy and distracted they never give much time to think about them. Others avoid the big questions finding them too difficult or too threatening. A few brave and thoughtful people express their questions very honestly, like Limp Bizkit:

"Does anybody really know the secret, or the combination for this life or where they keep it... I analyse every second I exist, beating up my mind every second with my fist." - Limp Bizkit, MI2

The big questions, 'Who am I?' 'What's life all about?' 'What happens when I die?' are fundamental to how we invest our lives. What will satisfy and fulfil us as people? If we don't ask what life's all about and where we're going, then we've no idea where we'll end up. It must be a terrible thing to get to the end of your life and to look back and ask, as many do, 'Isn't there any more to it than this?' Limp Bizkit sadly concludes:

"Life's a lesson, you learn it when you're through."

It seems to me a bit late by then. If he's authentic, Jesus is incredibly relevant and important to everyone because he offers answers to the big questions: Who am I? What's life all about? What happens when I die? What's more, if the answers to those questions affect what we invest our lives in, we need answers as soon as possible.

LIFE

"There will be no solution to the suffering of mankind until we reach some understanding of who we are, what the purpose of creation was, what happens after death. Until those questions are resolved, we are caught." - Woody Allen

"What good is it for a man to gain the whole world, and yet lose or forfeit his very self?" - Jesus

Society is more than a little confused about what's really important, as one car sticker says: 'He who dies with the most toys wins'. Really? People run after all sorts of different things: popularity, money, status, spirituality, family, power, possessions, fame, comfort and so on. How can we know what will really fulfil us? One ancient Greek philosopher sought 'some word from God' on which to set sail on the ocean of life, but he couldn't find one and so 'headed off on a raft of my own best intentions.'





The Bible claims to be a word from God who designed both the universe and us and knows the point of it all. It helps us to see what's really important and what life's all about. Further, it offers us the chance to get to know God. In the context of this friendship with him we discover 'the secret... the combination for this life'. We discover what truly fulfils us and God begins to work in our hearts to transform us into the sort of people who can enjoy life to the full.

LOVE

"Loneliness is a killer" – Seal, Killer

"For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life." - The Bible

The world is full of lonely people. Loneliness isn't a rare problem - it's epidemic. We all need to know that we're loved for who we are, that we matter to someone else. We long to be understood and cared for. But when we live in a world that's so messed up and there's so much we're ashamed of locked away in the back of our lives, where will that love, understanding and forgiveness that we need come from? Would people want to know us if they really knew what we were like?

In spite of knowing everything that has happened in our lives and all that will happen, God loves us passionately as individuals. We can't blow his love however badly we screw up. He longs to forgive us of all that we've done wrong and to transform us to love like he does. However, he won't impose his love on us, we must choose to embrace it.

DEATH

"Is there any meaning in my life which will not be annihilated by the inevitability of death which awaits me?" - Leo Tolstoy

"I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in me will live, even though he dies; and whoever lives and believes in me will never die." - Jesus

Death is a great leveller. No amount of wealth, status or fame amassed in your lifetime is the least help to you when you die. A dead king is no better off than a dead slave. Death is universal and inevitable. Jesus, however, claimed that death was not the end. He offers us eternal life now and new bodies when he comes back to kick evil out of his world. That is his offer of forgiveness and new life. The critical question for us will be how did we respond to God and Jesus in this life? The answer to that question determines our eternal destiny.

They're huge claims; that the designer of the world has a book out, that God loves us unconditionally and that we're accountable to Jesus for our life. But if they're true and our life's course and destiny rest on whether we embrace Jesus or whether we reject or ignore him, then Christianity has the most relevant message there could be for everyone everywhere.

