

# Coach House Church

# BEACONS

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## WHAT'S SO DIFFERENT ABOUT JESUS

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27TH JANUARY 2021

Throughout history lots and lots of people have claimed to be God or God's chosen leader on earth. There are so many cults around the world, that have convinced many people. There are also many other religions. So what's so different about Christianity? What makes Jesus different from all those other "messiahs"?

There are lots of ways that Jesus is different to others but we are going to focus on the influence of His ministry, the prophecies about Him and His resurrection.

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### So what makes His ministry different to others?

Firstly, most people that convince others they're messiahs are in it for their own gain. They want to be the messiah for money or fame or power. However, this was not Jesus aim. He and his disciples were poor nomads. He said to a rich man that wanted to know the way to heaven that he had to give up his riches, not to Jesus but to the local poor. In Luke a man said that he wanted to follow Jesus and his response was "Foxes have dens and birds have nests, but the Son of Man has no place to lay his head." He didn't live a life of money and riches.

His aim was also not fame. Yes, crowds followed Him in His three years of ministry but often when people were healed Jesus would tell them not to go and speak about Him but to go and show themselves to the priest and give an offering to God.

Thirdly, He wasn't about power. He served His disciples and loved them. He even washed their feet, their dirty, smelly, sweaty feet. The disciples were more about power than He was and when the disciples were arguing about who was greatest, this was Jesus response in Mark 9:35 "Sitting down, Jesus called the Twelve and said, 'Anyone who wants to be first must be the very last, and the servant of all.'" So Jesus was talking about becoming more of a servant, not grabbing power.

All of these show that He must have really known that there was more to this life than the physical. Otherwise He would have grabbed at the material things that so many try to grasp.

Because of how Jesus acted, He became very influential, so much so that He has become the most famous person in the world. A man born in a small backwater town

in Israel has become the almost universal symbol of kindness and love. There was a Jew that was part of the Sanhedrin, the rulers of the Jews, that recognised that whatever humans do, if something is from God it will stand. The rulers were talking about what they were going to do about these new Christians. This is recorded in Acts 5:34-39 "But a Pharisee named Gamaliel, a teacher of the law, who was honoured by all the people, stood up in the Sanhedrin and ordered that the men be put outside for a little while. Then he addressed the Sanhedrin: "Men of Israel, consider carefully what you intend to do to these men. Some time ago Theudas appeared, claiming to be somebody, and about four hundred men rallied to him. He was killed, all his followers were dispersed, and it all came to nothing. After him, Judas the Galilean appeared in the days of the census and led a band of people in revolt. He too was killed, and all his followers were scattered. Therefore, in the present case I advise you: Leave these men alone! Let them go! For if their purpose or activity is of human origin, it will fail. But if it is from God, you will not be able to stop these men; you will only find yourselves fighting against God". Gamaliel knew that God's will would be done either way.

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## The last key piece of evidence were the miracles

Another difference is that details about Jesus' life were predicted before He was even born. This is a really key piece of evidence that Jesus was actually the son of God, as a human can't change events before their own birth, or orchestrate where they were born or how certain events happen in their lives. Let's look at one of these prophecies. It was said in Micah (written in about the 6th century bc) "But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, though you are small among the clans of Judah, out of you will come for me one who will be ruler over Israel, whose origins are from of old, from ancient times." This sounds like it is talking about Jesus. Someone who is of old, who lived before, who will be ruler over Israel. And in fact Jesus was born in Bethlehem, in Judah, because of a census. His parents weren't from there, but from Nazareth.

The last key piece of evidence were the miracles that Jesus performed. If someone came up to you today and said they were God, you would probably ask them to prove it by performing a miracle. Now Jesus rarely performed miracles for that reason but He did perform many signs and wonders. He healed many people.

There was a time in the bible where Jesus was asked by the Jews what sign He could show them to demonstrate that He was who He said He was and He answered "Destroy this temple, and I will raise it again in three days." By this He meant destroy His body or kill Him.

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## we can have a personal relationship with Him

Now we know that once we have died there is nothing we can do to bring ourselves back, so if someone could do that, if someone could go to the other side and tell you what to expect, that would be pretty amazing. But the thing is that Jesus has done that! He showed that He had beaten death once and for all.

The final part of what makes Jesus so different is that even though He lived 2000 years ago, we can have a personal relationship with Him and through Him have a personal relationship with God. This relationship is one that billions of people in the world have discovered and one that makes a massive difference to every day life. It frees us of the sin and all the things in life that trap us. We might still go through hard times but we have an everlasting hope for the future.



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