

“Why is Jesus Supreme?”

John 8:48-59

Our world is filled with deception. Unscrupulous people prey on the ignorance or carelessness of others to cheat them out of their money or possessions. This problem has been around ever since sin entered the human family. Sometimes, we see things for sale with the tagline, “the genuine article.” It’s an attempt by the seller to reassure you as the buyer that what you’re looking at is the real, authentic product.

Hello friend, I’m J. Mark Horst, your host and I welcome you to *Hope for Today*. The program you’re listening to is produced by Heralds of Hope. We’re an international Gospel media ministry. Each week our Bible teaching broadcasts circle the globe in English and 21 other major languages. Tens of thousands tune in each week for spiritual nourishment and blessing.

Once when I was visiting a country in Asia, my host told me that he didn’t think there was a properly licensed copy of the Microsoft Windows in the whole country! They were all pirated or bootleg copies. The same was true in the myriad of shops along the streets selling brand name footwear and clothing. He told me that most of it was knock-offs from China.

Software, clothing, shoes, all those things really aren’t of much enduring value. If I’m taken advantage of by a dishonest or shrewd salesman, the consequences usually aren’t all that great. I may lose some money or end up with a worthless product.

But what if I’m deceived about the truth? What if I believe things about myself and the world that aren’t accurate? What if my beliefs about God and Jesus are inaccurate? What are the consequences of that? Deception in these areas can lead me to eternal ruin!

Having a correct understanding of who Jesus is requires getting our information from the proper source. And on this episode of *Hope for Today* Dr. Yoder will show us how to find that information in the proper source. If you’ve been tuning in regularly to *Hope for Today*, you know that we’re studying from John’s Gospel. Our Bible teacher for this series is the late Dr. J. Otis Yoder, founder, and president of Heralds of Hope. Here he is with today’s teaching; “Why is Jesus Supreme?” And our Scripture portion is John 8:48 to 59.

Christians over all the world believe that Jesus is different from all other people. He is supreme. There are certain others who look to Jesus as a great teacher, as an outstanding

reformer, as a prophet ranking with Moses. But Christians go farther in their belief. They believe Jesus is much more than a teacher or a reformer or a prophet. They believe He is the Son of God. They believe He is supreme. They do so on the basis of the records in the Bible.

In certain cases, His own words tell us this in the books of the New Testament called the Gospels. The arguments for His supreme position are established on the reliability of the record. Is the Gospel record true? Yes, my friend, it is true. I want you to read with me from John 8:48-59 and listen to the words of Jesus as He was talking with these people near Him.

48 *Then answered the Jews, and said unto him, Say we not well that thou art a Samaritan, and hast a devil.*

49 *Jesus answered, I have not a devil; but I honor my Father, and ye do dishonor me.*

50 *And I seek not mine own glory: there is one that seeketh and judgeth.*

51 *Verily, verily, I say unto you, If a man keep my saying, he shall never see death.*

52 *Then said the Jews unto him, Now we know that thou hast a devil. Abraham is dead, and the prophets; and thou sayest, If a man keep my saying, he shall never taste of death.*

53 *Art thou greater than our father Abraham, which is dead? and the prophets are dead: whom makest thou thyself?*

54 *Jesus answered, If I honor myself, my honor is nothing: it is my Father that honors me; of whom ye say, that he is your God:*

55 *Yet ye have not known him; but I know him: and if I should say, I know him not, I shall be a liar like unto you: but I know him, and keep his saying.*

56 *Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day: and he saw it, and was glad.*

57 *Then said the Jews unto him, Thou art not yet fifty years old, and hast thou seen Abraham?*

58 *Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I am.*

59 *Then took they up stones to cast at him: but Jesus hid himself, and went out of the temple, going through the midst of them, and so passed by.*

In this text, from the words of Jesus, we must acknowledge He made certain special CLAIMS that set Him apart from all others. Why is Jesus supreme? He is supreme upon the basis of several claims.

First, His Claim to Have Power Over Death.

His own people brought an accusation against Him. They said, “You are a Samaritan.” That was a mean thing to say in those days. They said, “You have a demon.” That also was a mean thing to say because that meant that He was deranged; He was mentally incompetent; He couldn’t think straight anymore. That was the accusation they

But Jesus gave them a refutation. He refuted what they said by saying, “I honor my Father, God; you dishonor me, but God honors me; I seek not mine own glory but the glory of Him who sent me.

And He made an affirmation. Did you notice as you read? He said, “If a man keeps my saying He shall never see death.” His sayings will liberate those who keep them from death, eternal death. In other words, Jesus is supreme because He claims to have power over death. Doesn’t that strike you as something special? Something different? Nobody else could make that claim. Of course not.

Secondly, His Claim to Have Direct Contact With God.

This claim sets Him apart as being Supreme. His accusers said, “Now we know that you have a demon.” This was confirmation in their hearts. They said Abraham is dead; the prophets are dead; everybody dies. How can He say that if one keeps His saying he shall not taste death? Is He greater than Abraham? They said, “Now we are sure that you must have a demon.”

But then Jesus gave a different presentation. He said, “My Father honors me” and you claim that He is your God. You have never known Him, really. I know Him in ways that you do not know Him. I have direct contact with God.

The Bible says in another place about Jesus that He is the only one who has ever seen God face to face. He was in the bosom of the Father before He became flesh and dwelt among us.

That sets Him off as being supreme because He has direct contact with God. That was His claim and it was correct.

The third claim which Jesus made was His Claim to Have Lived Before Abraham.

They denounced Him. They said, “You are not yet fifty years old and you have seen Abraham?” Well, if you begin to figure a little bit you soon find that Abraham lived many years before Christ was here on earth. Yes, many years.

But Jesus clarified this for them. He said, “Abraham rejoiced to see my day and he saw it.” I wonder how Abraham saw Jesus’ day. Well, I remember one time when God sent Abraham to Mount Moriah to offer his only son, Isaac, on the altar. God provided a ram to be slain in Isaac’s place and Abraham said, “In the Mount of the Lord, it shall be seen.” He saw the sacrifice of the ram for his son. In that way, I think, he saw the day of Jesus.

Then Jesus went on to say, “Before Abraham existed, I am.” Do you remember that, when Moses was sent by the Lord to Egypt to bring the children of Israel out, Moses asked the Lord, “What shall I say? Whom shall I say sent me?” And He said tell them, “I am hath sent you.” So Jesus could say, “Before Abraham existed, I am.” He claimed to have lived before Abraham and indeed He did.

Why is Jesus supreme? Because He is God in the flesh. He is not a human being trying to be God; He is God in the flesh. The eternal Word became flesh and dwelt among us. He has the right to claim power over death. He has the right to say He has direct contact with God. He has the right to say He lived before Abraham. He is supreme.

It is, therefore, very important, my friend, for you to have the proper relationship with Him. Have you responded in faith?

My friend, do you have a relationship with Jesus? He is offering you a relationship. John 3:16 tells you about it. *“For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but will have everlasting life. For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world might be saved through Him.”* You see, God loves you and doesn’t want you to perish. He doesn’t want you to be condemned to eternal punishment. But He will not force Himself on you; you must come to Him.

I hope this teaching has blessed you. If you have questions, write to us here at *Hope for Today*. We will take your questions to God's Word and find answers for you.

The quickest way for you to contact us is to send an e-mail to mail@heraldsofhope.org. That e-mail address is mail@heraldsofhope.org. Or you may write to *Hope for Today*, Box 3, Breezewood, Pennsylvania 15533. Remember, you can request a printed manuscript or an audio CD of this teaching, "Why Jesus is Supreme?" We'd be happy to send one to you.

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Now, I urge you to tune in next week as Dr. Yoder continues our study from John's Gospel with an important message titled "Understanding Yourself." You won't want to miss it. And until then, I urge you to keep looking for that blessed HOPE.