

Who is Jesus to You?

by Darlene Cunningham

I was riding in the back seat of a taxi, speeding over rough roads toward Phnom Penh, Cambodia after having just taught in the first YWAM Discipleship Training School in the city of Battambang. As the lush landscape whisked past in a blur, I was pondering the question Jesus posed to His disciples in Mark 8, “who do you say that I am?” Suddenly the Holy Spirit began “downloading” this message. I started writing furiously, line after line, and amazingly, was able to read what I had written when we disembarked from the taxi at our destination.

I would ask you this same question: “Who is Jesus to You?” Let us consider “Who is Jesus to us corporately as YWAM and the University of the Nations?” The same kinds of things we are doing as a mission and as a university in the areas of Evangelism, Training and Mercy Ministries were so on the forefront on Jesus’ heart—He was the perfect example of a model YWAM leader!

Consider Him together with me:

Jesus came to earth and lived in a physical body like you and me:

- He showed us how to live.
- He was God and man in one.
- He is the One who brings us to the Father.
- He had one purpose for coming to earth – that every human being would turn from sin and walk as redeemed people, in total union with God.
- Jesus, the Son of God, was the exact perfect representation of God.

Jesus can do for human nature what we cannot do for ourselves:

- He destroys the works of the enemy.
- He removes our damaged heredity--we are born again!
- He tears up and throws away the “old script”!
- With one touch, He can remove our pain and comfort our deepest sorrows.

Jesus can identify with every problem we face as human beings:

- He lived for 30 years in Nazareth with people who did not believe in Him.
- He had three years of public ministry met by a mixture of popularity, hatred and being false accusations.

Jesus was the perfect example of leadership:

--He called 12 men alongside Himself who were full of failures (and full of themselves!)

--He lived with them.

--He mentored them.

--He gave them a three-fold calling: evangelism, training and mercy ministry

--He sent them out--not as social reformers, but as men filled with God's passion, so that they could be agents of change to see society transformed.

--He led them to the Holy Spirit and told them they could not do God's work without Him.

Jesus was an excellent teacher, school leader and outreach director:

--He modeled what He taught (do, then teach).

--He valued feedback.

--He provoked His team to think.

--He encouraged them to ask questions and pushed them to look for the questions behind the question.

--He created a "safe" environment for question-asking and responded with grace even, when the questions seemed foolish.

--He was patient, even when it was perfectly obvious that they had forgotten half of what He had already told them.

--He was undaunted by their egos and weaknesses and even let their mothers get in the way!

Jesus prepared His disciples for outreach:

--He called them to action and gave them a great sense of purpose.

--He told them how to pack their suitcases.

--He placed them in teams.

--He told them who to see and who to stay with.

--He told them how long to stay and instructed them to move on if they were not received.

--He fully understood the value of debriefing.

Jesus was a talent spotter:

--He believed in youth.

--He called out the educated and uneducated; men and women; rich and poor; young and old; people of all ethnicities.

--He saw people that others didn't see – a Zacchaeus in a tree, a woman with a soiled reputation.

--He did not look at the outside and judge as others did, but went straight to the heart.

Jesus was a wonderful friend and cared about family:--He included His team in His thought processes

--He shared as many experiences with them as possible

--He visited the home towns of his team-mates and was concerned when a family member was sick

--He helped share their burdens

--He made sure, with His last breath, that His own mother was cared for.

Jesus was practical:

--He was a carpenter: He knew how to build and fix things.

--He was a chef: He prepared breakfast for his team

--He was a caterer: He provided and served fish and bread for 5,000 people.

--He was an event organizer: He planned a love feast

--He was a creative problem solver: He resolved a beverage problem at a wedding

--He was an expert on the science of fishing: He had an amazing capacity to know just where to fish for the maximum results with the least amount of effort.

Jesus knew how to discern God's will over His schedule

--He knew when to give himself 100%, so there was not even time to eat.

--He knew when to pull back from the crowd to pray and fast.

--He knew when to heal one and when to heal many.

--He knew when to do mass evangelism and when to do training.

--He knew when to speak to one person or go to the home of sinners.

--He knew when to have one-on-ones and when to discuss in small groups.

--He knew when to stay a long time in one place, and when to leave quickly.

--He knew when interruptions were part of the schedule, whether it was His good friend asking Him to bless a child or someone being let down though the roof on a pallet while He was speaking.

--He had His own sense of Divine timing and did not succumb to pressure even when His emotions were involved, or when those who were "organizing" Him pressed for a decision.

Jesus' leadership style was always appropriate:

- He did not care about titles – His own or anyone else's.
- He knew when to be directive.
- He knew when to confront and when to comfort.
- He knew which issues were major and which were minor; what was simply urgent and what was truly important in the long run.
- He always sought to give understanding for why He did what He did, so that others might learn.

Jesus understood authority:

- He taught His team about being under authority.
- He demonstrated before them perfect submission to the Father.
- He made it clear that He would not make independent decisions, but only do what the Father told Him to do.

Jesus showed no partiality:

- He had a passion for justice and was not afraid to upset the norms.
- He was comfortable mixing with the rich or the poor; rulers or prostitutes; and people of all ethnicities.

Jesus was sensitive to culture, but obedient to truth:

- He knew when to identify with the local culture.
- He knew when to cross cultural norms to stand for Truth.

Jesus was understanding and forgiving:

- He never stopped believing in close friends and leaders, even when they slept through His time of greatest need or denied Him.
- He regrouped His leaders and challenged His team to take the Gospel into all the world, even after they had failed Him.

Jesus didn't just tell His disciples who He was, He asked them: "Who am I TO YOU?"

Who is this Jesus to you and me?

- He is the Prince of Peace.
- He is our Hope.
- He is our Wonderful Counselor.
- He is the Mighty God.
- He is the Way, the Truth and the Life.

He is our Shepherd -- the overseer of our souls.
He is the true Light – the bright and morning star.
He is the Bread of Life.
He is the Beginning and the End.

He is the Christ...the Son of the Living God...the Savior of the World. There is no other Savior apart from Him!

“Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles, and let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us. **Let us fix our eyes on Jesus**, the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before him endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. **Consider him** who endured such opposition from sinful men, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart”
Hebrews 12:1-3.

Amen & Amen!

“Then I heard every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth and on the sea, and all that is in them, singing: ‘To him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb be praise and honor and glory and power, for ever and ever!’”
Revelation 5:13.

Who is this Jesus to YOU?

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