

This Is Jesus Msg 1
 Jesus Forgives My Sin
 Sermon preached by Dr. Rick Mandl
 Eagle Rock Baptist Church
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My name is Rick and I'm excited that you're here today for the kickoff of our new series called "**This Is Jesus**" which is a series that will lead us up to Easter.

If you are new here, Easter is a big deal for us, and we try and give you multiple ways to engage and prepare for that celebration.

How many of you know when Easter is?

April 12th

You'll be hearing more about that in the weeks to come.

One opportunity we provide is for you to join us in participating in an **Easter Fast**.

For those of you have never participated in a FAST before

What a FAST is, is a disruption.

The purpose of a FAST is to **disrupt our normal routine** in such a way as to create some extra space - -

And in that space we're encouraging you to pray

To draw closer to God

In a fast we say "No" to some things

We turn away from some things and turn to God instead

Some of us are giving up certain foods (or other things) with the goal that the craving that we might feel for that thing would be a reminder or a prompting to call out to God.

Fasting has become popular in our culture for physical benefit

The only difference is we're doing it for a spiritual benefit.

If you're joining in this fast I hope you'll experience God in a more powerful way.

Our teaching series during this season of LENT is called "**This Is Jesus**"

Our goal for this series, no matter where you are on your faith journey, our goal, and our hope is that at some point, you're gonna come face to face with the real Jesus.

I think this series is timely for all of us, whether you've been a Christian for a really long time, whether you've been following Jesus for a short amount of time, or whether this is your first time in church your entire life.

I think this is a timely series for all of us because what's coming up that you're going to see happening in our culture is an interesting phenomenon.

Every year at this time on television, in all kinds of media, you're gonna see these documentaries or

These Articles Coming Out

Between now and Easter on Sunday, April 12th, about who Jesus is.

They're gonna be talking all about Jesus.

You've gotta be really careful here because they're all gonna say something different.

They're all gonna have these different ideas and different opinions about who Jesus is.

It can be really confusing.

In fact, I did this quick search about what documentaries and things were coming out, or were going to be re-aired.

Some of them are brand new.

Some of them networks created years ago, and because recycling is so popular in our society, they are going to show them again.

Here's just a few of the ones that I found.

CNN, will be repeating their documentary called

"Finding Jesus: Faith, Fact, and Forgery."

The BBC has their own documentary called

"The Story of Jesus."

The History Channel has one called

The Real Face Of Jesus

It's about the Shroud of Turin and not necessarily one that I'd recommend.

PBS has a documentary called

"From Jesus to Christ."

Even National Geographic has a documentary called

"The Jesus Mysteries."

If there's one thing that all of these documentaries and articles have in common it's that they're trying to make sense of who Jesus is.

They're trying to convince you of their viewpoint.

Now, unfortunately, most of these documentaries are gonna rely more on opinion and conjecture than on the historical, firsthand accounts of the life of Jesus that we find in the Bible.

But in one sense, these documentaries do a favor for all of us because they do point to one undeniable truth

That Jesus today is still after 2000 years the most important and influential person who has ever walked the face of the earth, more than any king, more than any ruler, more than any politician.

Jesus has turned the world upside down.

He is the **Hinge Of History**

The calendar system that we follow – whether you're a Christian or an Atheist

All of History is split into BC and AD based on the birth of Jesus.

We're attracted to Him.

We're fascinated by Him.

We wanna understand who He is.

The search for the real Jesus is good because you wanna be sure you get this right.

I don't believe there's anything more important in life than for you to know who Jesus is because you don't wanna base your entire life on a lie.

You don't wanna spend your entire life following a mistruth.

You see, that's exactly what I wanna have happen for you during this series **"This is Jesus."**

Wherever you are in your faith right now, I hope this series helps you come face to face with the real Jesus so that you can know Him, so that you can know who He is like never before.

I think you'd agree that when it comes to the question of "Who Jesus Is" or "Who He Was" there's a lot of confusion.

Who Was Jesus (VIDEO)

<https://www.sermonspice.com/sermon-illustrations/6035/who-was-jesus>

Many people are confused today about WHO JESUS IS or WAS

Many people were confused 2,000 years ago.

I wanna begin our search today in the New Testament book of Matthew.

In this book, Jesus has this encounter with His disciples.

Now, Jesus, keep in mind, had been with His disciples for several years.

They had spent time with Him.

They've had had long discussions with Him.

They've had heard Him teach.

They've had seen Him perform miracles.

They've had been in huge storms with Him.

They've had been kicked out of towns with Him.

They've had spent this time with Jesus, yet even they are confused about who Jesus really is.

You see, they know about Jesus, but they don't fully know the real Jesus yet.

By the way, this is exactly where some of us are right now.

We're at different levels of knowing Jesus.

Maybe you're here today, and you're a Christian and you go to church, but you know in your heart you don't really know Jesus like you should.

You know Him on a surface level, but you know that there's something missing.

Because of that, even though you go to church, sometimes you feel like your faith is superficial, and you're living on the superficial level when it comes to this.

For others of you, maybe you're here today, and the only reason you're here is because a friend invited you.

Or maybe you're here because something about Jesus really fascinates you.

You know some things about Jesus, but you don't really know Him.

You've never personally experienced who Jesus is.

You see, this where the disciples were in this story we come to in Matthew 16 Jesus turns to his disciples and says, **"Hey, listen, I got a question for you.**

"Who do people say that I am?"

He's asking them - the people around us, who are they saying that I am?"

"Well,' they replied, 'some say John the Baptist,

That you, are him come back from the grave.

That's one theory.

Some say that you are Elijah, and others say Jeremiah or one of the other prophets."

Matthew 16:14

They have these answers,

But then Jesus makes it very personal

He asks His disciples the only question that really matters.

What I believe is the most important question of life and one that all of us, every one of us, will have to wrestle with and answer for ourselves.

Here's the question that Jesus asked his disciples, by the way, this question is going to be the foundation of this entire teaching series.

Let's read it out loud together beginning with. . .

"Then Jesus."

Are you ready? Go.

"Then Jesus asked them, but who do you say I am?"

Jesus says, "It doesn't really matter what other people say about me.

What matters is, who do you say that I am?"

The truth is, as Easter approaches, you can turn on the History channel or CNN and they're going to try to tell you who Jesus is.

You have friends in your life who don't really know anything about The Bible who've got their opinions, and they'll try to tell you who Jesus is.

They'll give you their opinion, but none of that really matters.

What really matters and what Jesus really cares about today is this,

"But who do you say I am?"

I believe it's the most important question you will ever be asked in life.

It probably shouldn't surprise us that Peter - the most outspoken of all of Jesus' disciples, had an answer.

Simon Peter answered,

"You are the Messiah, the son of the living God."

And he was right.

We know he was right because of how Jesus responded to his answer.

Peter says, **"You're the messiah the son of the living God."**

Jesus replied,

"You are blessed, Simon son of John, because my father in heaven has revealed this to you. You did not learn this from any human being."

Jesus is saying **"Peter, you didn't come up with that on your own.**

Nobody told you that,

It was God who revealed that to you."

Let's pause here for a moment. . . just so that we can make sure we understand exactly what it is that Peter is saying. . .

The word that Peter uses there when he says **"You are the MESSIAH"**

The Greek word **Christos** simply means **"anointed one."**

As such, the **Greek word Christos** is **identical with** the **Hebrew word Messiah**, which simply means "anointed one."

Now **this is important** because **some people think** that **Jesus Himself never claimed to be the Messiah**, that He **never presented Himself as the Messiah**, that He **never claimed to be God in the flesh**, that this was something all made up about Him in the centuries after that."

People who think that are ignoring scripture, because again, right here in Matthew 16, right after Peter said that, what did Jesus say?

What he said was. . .

"You are blessed, Simon son of John, because my father in heaven has revealed this to you. You did not learn this from any human being."

And again, this was not the only time that Jesus ever said these things about himself.

Let me **very quickly take you** to just a **couple more places** where Jesus said **exactly the same thing** about himself.

In Matthew 26. . . the Jewish High Council. . . under the leadership of the high priest had arrested Jesus and were looking for a reason to put him to death.

The high priest said to him, "I charge you under oath by the living God: Tell us if you are the Christ, the Son of God."

How did Jesus respond?

"Yes, it is as you say,"

You read on a little further and you see that

The high priest tore his clothes and said, "He has spoken blasphemy!"

In Mark chapter 15

Pilate asks Jesus, "Are You the King of the Jews?"

Jesus replied, "Yes, It is as you say."

In John chapter 4, the woman at the well said to Jesus,

"I know that Messiah" (called Christ) "is coming.

And Jesus in response said. . .

"I who speak to you am he."

The last one I want to share with you (even though there are more) is from John chapter 10 Verse 31 tells us that. . .

The Jews picked up stones to stone Jesus,

In the Old Testament stoning was the penalty for blasphemy
Jesus said to them

"I have shown you many great miracles from the Father. For which of these do you stone me?"

Notice what they said. . .

33"We are not stoning you for any of these," replied the Jews, "but for blasphemy, because you, a mere man, claim to be God."

What you and I need to understand is that. . .

People in the FIRST CENTURY knew exactly who Jesus was claiming to be.

We need to make sure that

People in the TWENTY-FIRST century know exactly who Jesus claims to be.

Specifically, **we need to make sure that they understand** that Jesus claimed to be Jehovah God, wrapped in human flesh, the God-man, the Messiah of Israel, and the one and only Savior of the world.

This is how Jesus presented Himself, and this is how we must present Him.

If people want to **RESIST** Jesus, that's their right.

If they want to **REFUSE** Jesus, that's their right

If they want to **REJECT** Jesus,

and **RENOUNCE** Jesus,

and **RIDICULE** Jesus,

and **RIP** Jesus

and **REPROACH** Jesus, that is their right,

But the one thing we cannot allow people to do is to **is to REDEFINE** Jesus.

He is who He says He is, and Simon Peter got it right.

"You are the Christ, the Son of the living God."

Once we come to grips with who Jesus is.

It forces us to respond to what He said.

Some of you might hear that and think "**What do you mean?**"

Well it's a simple logical connection

If Jesus Christ is God in human flesh as Peter declared Him to be, **then everything Jesus said about everything** must be completely true, because **God does not lie.**

Can you agree with that?

We have to, for example, deal with what Jesus said about how a man or a woman becomes right with God and gets to heaven. . . .

“Jesus answered, “I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.” John 14:6

The message **may not be popular.**

It **may not be politically correct.**

It may be seen by some as **intolerant or narrow.**

“I told you that you would die in your sins; if you do not believe that I am the one I claim to be, you will indeed die in your sins.” John 8:24

Peter understood what Jesus was saying about who he was . . . and about how to get to heaven.

That’s why later on in Acts chapter 4. . . even after Peter had been thrown in Jail for proclaiming this message, he went right on preaching it - he said.

“Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to men by which we must be saved.” Acts 4:12

This is the message that Jesus came to bring.

This is the message that God has given us to proclaim. . . .

That Jesus Christ. . . GOD. . .

Second member of the trinity.

In every way equal to the other members of the trinity.

Not GOD with a little “g”

But GOD with a big “G”

One day about 2,000 years ago, Jesus initiated a rescue mission.

He left heaven to come to earth . . . to seek and to save those who were lost, and that’s everyone of us.

And we can be saved. . . we can be right with God. . . we can become sons and daughters of God by adoption into his forever family. . . only by way of the cross. . .

Only by trusting in what Jesus did there for us.

That’s the message that God has given us to share. . . .

That Jesus Christ left heaven – came to earth – to

Forgive Our Sins

Here’s the first step.

Number one, write this down.

To receive that forgiveness, number one,

I Admit I Need God's forgiveness.

That's the first step.

I admit, I need God's forgiveness.

Now, let's be honest, admitting that we need forgiveness ...

Admitting that we did something wrong, this is hard for us, right?

I mean, this goes against everything in our human nature.

You see God created me, God created me, he loves me, he has this plan for my life,

So he says, "Hey, Rick, I want you to live your life this way. I want you to follow this way."

Sin is where I say, "You know what, God?"

No thank you. I know what the Bible says, I know what you want me to do, but I'm going to turn my back on you and I'm going to live my life my own way. I'm going to make my own choice. I'm going to be my own God."

And I rebel against God.

That is called sin and when I sin it separates, my choice, it separates me from God.

It breaks my relationship with God and we all sin.

That's what the apostle Paul writes in Romans 3:23 in your notes.

This is in the New Testament of the Bible.

Paul writes for ... how many people?

Everyone. He says,

“For everyone has sinned.” We all fall short of God's glorious standard.” Romans 3:23

We all sin, me included.

Let me just be honest with you as we begin this series today.

Even as a pastor, I'm as big of a sinner as anyone in this room because we all mess up, we all fall short of God's standard because God is perfect and his standard is perfection.

None of us is perfect, none of us can reach that standard so we all sin.

Sometimes it's a big sin, it's a big sin that everyone sees and it's embarrassing.

Sometimes it's a small little sin that nobody seems to see.

The thoughts that I think

Or when I know God wants me to do something and I decide not to do it.

We all sin, whether it's a big sin or a small sin, the consequence of that sin is always the same.

Here again is how, the apostle Paul describes it again in the Romans chapter six verse 23.

He writes,

"For the wages of sin is . . .

What?

Death

Circle that word, death. Paul writes,

"For the wages of sin is death,

Now understand when he says death here, he's not talking about a physical death, he's talking about spiritual death.

He's talking about being separated from God's peace, presence, power, from God's purpose for your life in the here and now.

He's also talking about being separated from God for all of eternity.

About your sin keeping you from heaven and you spending all of your existence separated from God.

That's why the Bible says sin is such a big deal.

That's why we have to deal with it.

Now, fortunately for us, that's not the end of the verse.

There's a "but" in here,

"For the wages of sin is death,

That's the BAD news. . .

The verse continues and says . . .

but the free gift of God is eternal life through Christ Jesus our Lord." Romans 6:23

You see, Jesus is the Messiah.

He's God's gift to us to pay the penalty for all sins.

To overcome the consequences of our sin.

To overcome that separation that we feel in our life between us and God.

To give us eternal life, but it begins with an **ADMISSION**.

It begins when you and I are willing to humble ourselves and admit that we're not perfect.

That we have rebelled against God, that we have fallen short.

That we have sinned, that we'll never be perfect.

That we need God.

Can you do that?

Wherever you are on your faith journey, can you admit that you need God?

That you have sinned, that you have fallen short and that you need forgiveness.

Let me tell you, until you do, your sin is going to stand between you and God.

You'll never be right with God.

First, the first step to Jesus forgiving my sin is I have to **Admit That I Need That Forgiveness**, but it doesn't end there.

The Second Step to receiving God's forgiveness is this, write this down.

I Believe That Jesus Is The Messiah.

I believe that Jesus is the Messiah.

To receive salvation, to receive God's forgiveness and all that comes with it, it's not enough just to know intellectually that Jesus is the Messiah.

I must believe it in my heart.

I must embrace it with all that I am, that Jesus is ... who he says he is.

Belief is important because I won't put my trust in something or someone that I don't believe in.

I can't trust someone if I don't believe in them.

I need to believe that Jesus is the Messiah and because of that I put my trust in him.

I have faith that he'll forgive my sins.

I trust that my eternity is secure in him because I believe he is who he says he is.

Our MEMORY VERSE for this week, again, comes from the New Testament, the Gospel of John, chapter three, verses 16 and 17.

This is one of the most famous verses in The Bible, so

**Let's read this out loud together beginning with,
"For God"**

"For God loved the world so much that he gave his one and only Son, so that everyone who believes in him will not perish but have eternal life. God sent his Son into the world not to judge the world, but to save the world through him." John 3:16-17

He says, "Listen, everyone who believes in him, that Jesus is who The Bible says he is, will not perish, but have eternal life."

Listen, if you want to know who the real Jesus is, this is at the heart of it because Jesus came into this world to save us from the consequences of our sins.

On the cross, Jesus took my sins upon himself.

My past sins, my present sins, my future sins that I will commit.

He took the punishment that I deserve upon himself, on the cross so that I could have life.

So that I could know God and have a relationship with God

And everyone who believes that Jesus is who he says he is, that he is the promised Messiah.

This verse tells us we will not perish, but we will have eternal life.

Let me ask you again – the same question that was asked of those people on the street.

The same questions that Jesus asked of His disciples

Who do you believe Jesus is?

What do you really believe about him today?

You need to decide this.

You need to wrestle with this.

You can't waver with this.

Do you know what amazes me?

We all know what we believe when it comes to whether you like an iPhone or an Android, right?

You know what you believe about that.

You know what you believe about politics, right?

You've established those beliefs.

In fact, you know what you believe about almost everything in life, that is except Jesus.

For some reason, we won't nail it down when it comes to Jesus.

And yet what you believe about Jesus is the most important belief that you'll ever have in this life.

I want to encourage you right now that if you've never believed in your heart that Jesus is the Messiah, that he is God's son, that he died on the cross because he loves you so that the sins that right now stand between you and a relationship with God can be wiped away.

If you've never believed in Jesus, do that today.

By the way, if you're a Christian ... maybe you're here today and you do believe or you did believe, but maybe some doubts have crept in and you're not living your life with confidence or certainty

...

During this series, even beginning today, this is an opportunity for you to reaffirm your belief.

That's why we're doing this series.

Either you can meet the real Jesus for the first time, or for some of us, we can meet the real Jesus again for the first time.

Look at what, in John Chapter 20 verse 31, the apostle John writes these words. He says,

"But these are written so that you may continue to believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God,

Underline those three words,

"continue to believe"

because isn't it true that there are times in our lives where we need to be in church, we need to be around other Christians, we need to be in a LIFE group, we need to be reading our bible because our faith needs to be encouraged.

It needs to be strengthened, we need to continue to believe. Then he continues,

and that by believing in him you will have life by the power of his name." John 20:31

Admit that you need forgiveness,
Believe Jesus is the Messiah, and then finally on the back of your notes ... here's the final step to receiving God's forgiveness.

I confess that Jesus is Lord.

See, the final step to getting right with God, to having your sins forgiven, is to confess that Jesus is Lord.

Not only do you believe that Jesus is who he says he is, but now what you're doing and you're saying, "You know what? Not only do I believe in you Jesus, but I'm going to make you the leader of my life. I'm going to follow you."

Again, the apostle Paul in Romans Chapter 10, he says this,

"If you confess with your mouth that Jesus is... Romans 10:9-10

What? "Lord."

Underline that word Lord.

He says,

"If you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord

And what that word "Lord" means is leader of your life.

"If you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is by believing in your heart that you are made right with God, and it is by confessing with your mouth that you are saved." Romans 10:9-10

Jesus doesn't need just another fan.

He wants you to be a follower.

He doesn't want you just to like him, he wants to lead your life.

He wants to be your Lord. He wants to be your leader.

He wants to be the decision maker in your life.

You see, when I say that Jesus is Lord of my life, I'm saying that he's God.

That he's the leader of my life.

I believe that he gave his life for me on the cross so I can trust him to show me how to live and what decisions to make.

Jesus is the leader, that's what it means that Jesus is Lord.

If you look at that passage, that word confess that I had you write down, that's important too because when you believe in Jesus, you then confess that he is Lord.

You don't just keep it to yourself.

When you become a Christian you confess it to others, you let others know.

Let me just show you two important ways to confess that Jesus is Lord.

If you're making the decision to believe that Jesus is Lord for the first time today, one of the ways that we try to make it easy for you to confess that is by using the communication tool that we call our

Connection Card

On the left-hand side at the top it says . . .

"Confess that Jesus is Lord, receive him as my savior."

You confess that decision by checking that box, you let our pastors and staff know so that we can be praying for you.

So that we can send you some books and materials that will help you on your journey

If you don't have a Bible, we'll give you a Bible for free.

Other churches do it differently, but this is how you could confess that decision here at ERBC.

If you're making that decision today you're like, "Yeah, I believe in Jesus. I confess that he's Lord for the first time."

Check that box and let us know.

Now, another way to confess that Jesus is Lord that's so important is by being baptized.

Baptism is where you publicly declare your faith in Jesus.

See baptism is more than just being dunked in water, it's a step of obedience.

It's a symbol as a Christian and it's your public statement of faith.

I know a lot of Christians who believe in Jesus Christ, but they've never officially made Jesus their lord by being baptized.

Either they were too ashamed to do it, they were too embarrassed, they couldn't find the time to do it and they put off this important confession of faith.

I just want to encourage you, if you're a follower of Jesus, if you're making that decision today or maybe you've been a Christian, but you've put off that step to be baptized ...

On the right-hand side, this is another confession.

Where it says, I'd like to learn more about taking the step of baptism.

You check that box and we will send you some information

Part of that is a link to a video that we've created that answers a lot of your questions about baptism.

Those are just two ways that you can confess that Jesus is Lord, so check those steps and as you do that, let me just share one more thought with you.

And it relates to this man . . .

C.S. Lewis

Was a professor at Cambridge University and one of the most famous Christian theologians of the last century, but before he became a Christian, he was a very famous agnostic.

He didn't know if he believed God existed.

He didn't know what he believed about Jesus

And at one point in his life, he was challenged with the same question that Peter was asked 2,000 years ago.

"Who is Jesus?"

C.S. Lewis began to pursue the answer to this question in his life and as he wrestled with this question, he **came to the conclusion that Jesus could never ever be viewed as just a good moral person or as a good teacher.**

I'd like to share a little bit of what he wrote about it.

It's a long passage.

I'm going to read it, but I put it up on the screen so you can read along as I read his quote.

Here's what he said, he said,

"I'm trying here to prevent anyone saying the really foolish thing that people often say about him, about Jesus. That I'm ready to accept Jesus as a great moral teacher, but I don't accept his claim to be God.

That is the one thing we must not say.

A man who's merely a man and said the sort of things Jesus said would not be a great moral teacher.

He would either be a lunatic on the same level with the man who says he's a poached egg - or else he would be the Devil of Hell. You must make your choice, either this man was and is the son of God, or else a mad man or something worse. You can shut him up for a fool, you can spit at him and kill him as a demon, or you can fall at his feet and call him Lord and God...

But let us not come with any patronizing nonsense about his being a great human teacher. He has not left that open to us, he did not intend to."

Then he concludes his remarks with this,

"Now it seems to me obvious, that he was neither a lunatic nor a fiend and consequentially, however strange, terrifying, or unlikely it may seem, I have to accept the view that he was and is God."

One day at the end of your life, you will have to stand before Jesus and you will have to answer the same question that Peter had to answer almost 2,000 years ago, "Who do you say that I am?"

What will you say?

Trust me, you don't want to be trying to figure out who you believe Jesus to be as you stand before him because then it's going to be too late.

You need to decide for yourself what you believe about the most influential person who has ever lived.

You need to investigate this, you need to take this seriously because in the end this isn't a history question, this is an eternity question.

This is a salvation question and how you answer this question when you stand before Jesus at the end of your life is going to determine whether you spend your eternity in heaven or in hell, with God or without God.

Today, as we prepare to pray and talk with God, how do you answer this question? "Who do you say that I am?"

Is Jesus a liar?

Is he a lunatic?

Or will he be the Lord of your life?

If today you choose that Jesus is Lord of your life, here's our final verse.

Here's God's promise to you.

Let's read it out loud beginning with **everyone**,

Are you ready? Go.

Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.

Would you bow your head with me right now?

Close your eyes, bow your heads, and close your eyes.

We're going to pray.