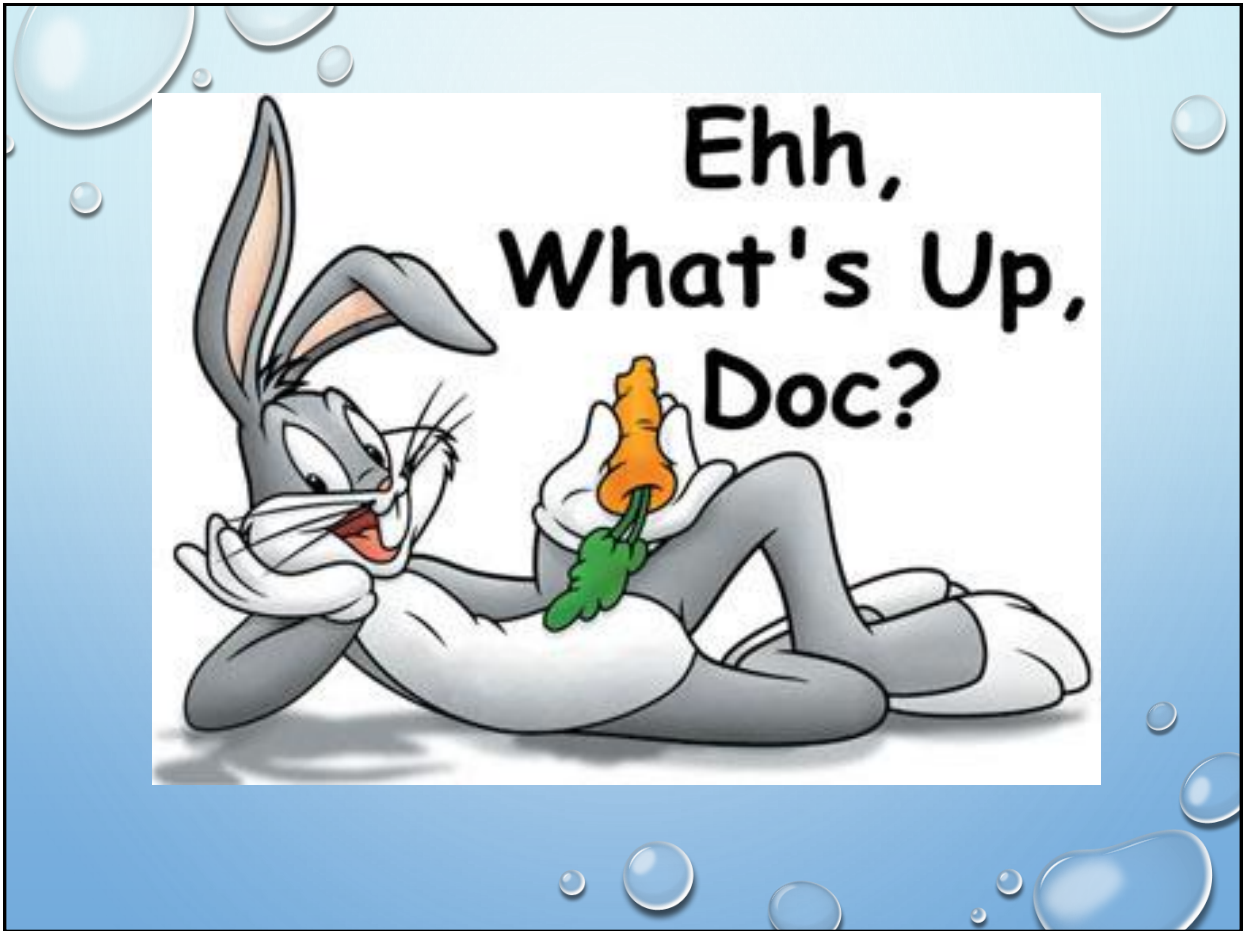




LIVING WITH PURPOSE

LEADER AND SAVIOR









WHO DO YOU BELIEVE JESUS IS?

- ^{ESV} **MATTHEW 16:15** HE SAID TO THEM, "BUT WHO DO YOU SAY THAT I AM?" ¹⁶ SIMON PETER REPLIED, "YOU ARE THE CHRIST, THE SON OF THE LIVING GOD."

THREE POSSIBLE ANSWERS

1. JESUS *IS NOT* THE CHRIST, THE SON OF THE LIVING GOD.
2. JESUS *MIGHT BE* THE CHRIST, THE SON OF THE LIVING GOD.
3. JESUS *IS* THE CHRIST, THE SON OF THE LIVING GOD



ASIDE: STORY DEVELOPMENT AND HIGHLIGHTS

GOD ANSWERS PRAYER

- ^{NAS} **ACTS 5:12** AND AT THE HANDS OF THE APOSTLES MANY SIGNS AND WONDERS WERE TAKING PLACE AMONG THE PEOPLE ...
 - THE ANSWER
- ^{NAS} **ACTS 4:30** WHILE YOU EXTEND YOUR HAND TO HEAL, AND SIGNS AND WONDERS TAKE PLACE THROUGH THE NAME OF YOUR HOLY SERVANT JESUS.“
 - THE PRAYER

GOD ANSWERS PRAYER

- ^{NAS} **ACTS 5:12** ...AND THEY WERE ALL WITH ONE ACCORD IN SOLOMON'S PORTICO.
 - THE ANSWER
- ^{NAS} **ACTS 4:29** "AND NOW, LORD, TAKE NOTE OF THEIR THREATS, AND GRANT THAT YOUR BOND-SERVANTS MAY SPEAK YOUR WORD WITH ALL CONFIDENCE,
 - THE PRAYER

CHURCH GROWTH: QUANTITATIVE

- ^{NAS} **ACTS 2:41** SO THEN, THOSE WHO HAD RECEIVED HIS WORD WERE BAPTIZED; AND THERE WERE ADDED THAT DAY ABOUT THREE THOUSAND SOULS.
- ^{NAS} **ACTS 4:4** BUT MANY OF THOSE WHO HAD HEARD THE MESSAGE BELIEVED; AND THE NUMBER OF THE MEN CAME TO BE ABOUT FIVE THOUSAND.
- ^{NAS} **ACTS 5:14** AND ALL THE MORE BELIEVERS IN THE LORD, MULTITUDES OF MEN AND WOMEN, WERE CONSTANTLY ADDED TO *THEIR NUMBER*;

CHURCH GROWTH: QUALITATIVE

- ^{NAS} **ACTS 5:15** TO SUCH AN EXTENT THAT THEY EVEN CARRIED THE SICK OUT INTO THE STREETS, AND LAID THEM ON COTS AND PALLETS, ... ¹⁶ ...AND THEY WERE ALL BEING HEALED.
 - CHURCH GROWTH PRECEDED THE MIRACLES
- ^{NAS} **ACTS 5:14** AND ALL THE MORE BELIEVERS IN THE LORD, MULTITUDES OF MEN AND WOMEN, WERE CONSTANTLY ADDED TO *THEIR NUMBER*;
 - CHURCH WAS GENDER INCLUSIVE FROM THE BEGINNING

KERYGMA PROCLAIMED

- ^{NAS} **ACTS 5:30** "THE GOD OF OUR FATHERS RAISED UP JESUS, WHOM YOU HAD PUT TO DEATH BY HANGING HIM ON A CROSS. ³¹ "HE IS THE ONE WHOM GOD EXALTED TO HIS RIGHT HAND AS A PRINCE AND A SAVIOR, TO GRANT REPENTANCE TO ISRAEL, AND FORGIVENESS OF SINS.



THREE POSSIBLE RESPONSES



1. OUTRIGHT UNBELIEF: THE SANHEDRIN

THE SECOND TRIAL

- ^{NAS} **ACTS 5:17** BUT THE HIGH PRIEST ROSE UP, ALONG WITH ALL HIS ASSOCIATES (THAT IS THE SECT OF THE SADDUCEES), AND THEY WERE FILLED WITH JEALOUSY; ¹⁸ AND THEY LAID HANDS ON THE APOSTLES, AND PUT THEM IN A PUBLIC JAIL. ... ²⁷ AND WHEN THEY HAD BROUGHT THEM, THEY STOOD THEM BEFORE THE COUNCIL. AND THE HIGH PRIEST QUESTIONED THEM, ²⁸ SAYING, "WE GAVE YOU STRICT ORDERS NOT TO CONTINUE TEACHING IN THIS NAME, AND BEHOLD, YOU HAVE FILLED JERUSALEM WITH YOUR TEACHING, AND INTEND TO BRING THIS MAN'S BLOOD UPON US." ... ³³ BUT WHEN THEY HEARD THIS, THEY WERE CUT TO THE QUICK AND WERE INTENDING TO SLAY THEM. ... ⁴⁰ AND THEY TOOK HIS ADVICE; AND AFTER CALLING THE APOSTLES IN, THEY FLOGGED THEM AND ORDERED THEM TO SPEAK NO MORE IN THE NAME OF JESUS, AND *THEN* RELEASED THEM.

ASIDE: IRONIC HUMOUR

- ^{NAS} **ACTS 5:17** BUT THE HIGH PRIEST ROSE UP, ALONG WITH ALL HIS ASSOCIATES (THAT IS THE SECT OF THE SADDUCEES) ...
- ^{NAS} **ACTS 5:19** BUT AN ANGEL OF THE LORD DURING THE NIGHT OPENED THE GATES OF THE PRISON, AND TAKING THEM OUT HE SAID, ...
- ^{NAS} **ACTS 23:8** FOR THE SADDUCEES SAY THAT THERE IS NO RESURRECTION, NOR AN ANGEL ...

RESULTS OF UNBELIEF

- MERELY THE PREACHING OF THE NAME OF JESUS PROVOKES AN IRRATIONAL ANGRY RESPONSE
- UNBELIEF RESULTS IN A PROGRESSIVE HARDENING OF THE HEART
- UNBELIEF CAUSES BLINDNESS TO THE WORKINGS OF GOD



2. UNCERTAINTY: GAMALIEL

AGNOSTIC ADVICE

- ^{NAS} **ACTS 5:34** BUT A CERTAIN PHARISEE NAMED GAMALIEL, A TEACHER OF THE LAW, RESPECTED BY ALL THE PEOPLE, STOOD UP IN THE COUNCIL AND GAVE ORDERS TO PUT THE MEN OUTSIDE FOR A SHORT TIME. ... ³⁸ "AND SO IN THE PRESENT CASE, I SAY TO YOU, STAY AWAY FROM THESE MEN AND LET THEM ALONE, FOR IF THIS PLAN OR ACTION SHOULD BE OF MEN, IT WILL BE OVERTHROWN; ³⁹ BUT IF IT IS OF GOD, YOU WILL NOT BE ABLE TO OVERTHROW THEM; OR ELSE YOU MAY EVEN BE FOUND FIGHTING AGAINST GOD."

RESULTS OF UNCERTAINTY

- THE PREACHING OF THE NAME OF JESUS RESULTS IN A RATIONAL YET NEUTRAL RESPONSE
- UNCERTAINTY RESULTS IN DISOBEDIENCE
- UNCERTAINTY CAUSES BLINDNESS TO THE WORKINGS OF GOD



3. GENUINE BELIEF: APOSTLES

THE SECOND TRIAL

- ^{NAS} **ACTS 5:20** "GO YOUR WAY, STAND AND SPEAK TO THE PEOPLE IN THE TEMPLE THE WHOLE MESSAGE OF THIS LIFE." ²¹ AND UPON HEARING *THIS*, THEY ENTERED INTO THE TEMPLE ABOUT DAYBREAK, AND *BEGAN* TO TEACH ...²⁹ BUT PETER AND THE APOSTLES ANSWERED AND SAID, "WE MUST OBEY GOD RATHER THAN MEN. ... ⁴¹ SO THEY WENT ON THEIR WAY FROM THE PRESENCE OF THE COUNCIL, REJOICING THAT THEY HAD BEEN CONSIDERED WORTHY TO SUFFER SHAME FOR *HIS* NAME. ⁴² AND EVERY DAY, IN THE TEMPLE AND FROM HOUSE TO HOUSE, THEY KEPT RIGHT ON TEACHING AND PREACHING JESUS AS THE CHRIST.

RESULTS OF GENUINE BELIEF

- THE NAME OF JESUS IS PREACHED WITH CONVICTION AND PASSION
- BELIEF RESULTS IN A PROGRESSIVE STRENGTHENING OF THE HEART
- BELIEF CAUSES RECOGNITION OF THE WORKINGS OF GOD



CONCLUSIONS

EVALUATE OUR FAITH

- ^{NAS} **2 CORINTHIANS 13:5** TEST YOURSELVES TO SEE IF YOU ARE IN THE FAITH; EXAMINE YOURSELVES! OR DO YOU NOT RECOGNIZE THIS ABOUT YOURSELVES, THAT JESUS CHRIST IS IN YOU-- UNLESS INDEED YOU FAIL THE TEST?
- ^{NAS} **HEBREWS 4:1** THEREFORE, LET US FEAR LEST, WHILE A PROMISE REMAINS OF ENTERING HIS REST, ANY ONE OF YOU SHOULD SEEM TO HAVE COME SHORT OF IT.

DISCOVER OUR PURPOSE

- OUR TRUE PURPOSE IN LIFE IS DERIVED FROM BELIEF IN THE TRUE IDENTITY OF JESUS
 - ^{NAS} **ACTS 5:31** "HE IS THE ONE WHOM GOD EXALTED TO HIS RIGHT HAND AS A PRINCE AND A SAVIOR, TO GRANT REPENTANCE TO ISRAEL, AND FORGIVENESS OF SINS.

- ^{NAS} **PSALM 2:11** WORSHIP THE LORD WITH REVERENCE, AND REJOICE WITH TREMBLING. ¹² DO HOMAGE TO THE SON, LEST HE BECOME ANGRY, AND YOU PERISH *IN THE WAY*, FOR HIS WRATH MAY SOON BE KINDLED. HOW BLESSED ARE ALL WHO TAKE REFUGE IN HIM!
- ^{NAS} **JOHN 1:12** BUT AS MANY AS RECEIVED HIM, TO THEM HE GAVE THE RIGHT TO BECOME CHILDREN OF GOD, *EVEN TO THOSE WHO BELIEVE IN HIS NAME*,
- ^{NAS} **ACTS 4:12** "AND THERE IS SALVATION IN NO ONE ELSE; FOR THERE IS NO OTHER NAME UNDER HEAVEN THAT HAS BEEN GIVEN AMONG MEN, BY WHICH WE MUST BE SAVED."