

Christ in Prophecy

Conference 62: Dr. David Reagan on the Divinity of Jesus

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Opening

Tim Moore: Was Jesus really God in the flesh, or was His divinity simply something that His superstitious disciples dreamed up? Stay tuned.

Part 1

Tim Moore: Greetings in the name of Jesus, our soon returning King, and welcome to Christ in Prophecy. I'm Tim Moore sitting in for Dr. Reagan. I am the Associate Evangelist for Lamb & Lion Ministries, and I am also Dr. Reagan's designated successor.

We are in the process of showing you excerpts from our annual Bible conference; whose theme was Contending for the Faith. During the past four weeks we have shared with you portions of the six presentations that were made at our conference this year. If you missed any of those programs, you can find them posted at our website at lamblion.com.

This week we are going to see a portion of Dr. Reagan's presentation that concluded the conference. It was titled, The Divinity of Jesus: Myth or Reality? Here now is Dr. Reagan:

Portion of Dr. Reagan's Presentation

Dr. Reagan: The divinity of Jesus is the central truth of the Bible. It is so fundamental that Christianity stands or falls on it. If Jesus was not God in the flesh, then His sacrifice for our sins was meaningless and we have no hope. Satan is absolutely determined to convince mankind that Jesus was someone other than God in the flesh. A few when He came the first time, a few recognized Him as the prophet that Moses spoke of back in the book of Deuteronomy. Many, many thousands of years ago Moses said to the children of Israel before they entered the land, "A day will come when the Lord will raise up a prophet among you." And when Jesus performed many of His miracles like the feeding of the 5,000, they would come up to Him and say, "Are you the prophet?" And He knew exactly what they were talking about. They asked John the Baptist, "Are you the prophet?" John the Baptist was a prophet, but He denied being The Prophet because he knew what they were talking about when they asked, "Are you the prophet?" It was a reference to the Messiah.

Most of the people though in Jesus' time were ambivalent about His identity. For example, some said He was simply a good man. Others believed He was a reincarnation of John the Baptist, or Elijah, or Jeremiah, or one of the prophets. Some said He was the illegitimate child of fornication. And some said He was a Samaritan with a demon. All of these you find in the Scriptures.

Nothing has changed in 2,000 years. The satanic attack continues to this day. Liberal theologians tend to dismiss Jesus as simply a good man. Now these are people who claim to be

Christians. They say, "Well, He's just a good man. But He certainly was a person who was not God in the flesh. And if He thought that he was deceived." The greatest apologist of the 20th Century, the greatest defender of the faith was this man, C.S. Lewis who didn't become a Christian until he was in his 30's. In his book "Mere Christianity" he dealt decisively with this issue of saying, "Well, Jesus, yes, was a great man, a good man, but that's all He was." Here is what he wrote, he said, "A man, who was merely a man and said the sort of things Jesus said would not be a great moral teacher. No, he would either be a lunatic on the level with a man who says he is 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 madman or something else. 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."

All Christian cults today as Eric just pointed out, all of them deny His supreme divinity. The Mormons for example claim He was the brother of Lucifer, one of several thousand gods created by the super God. Modern day Hollywood has desecrated Jesus in movie, after movie, after movie.

This book, "The Jesus Mysteries" goes to the extreme of claiming that He is nothing but a myth, that He never really existed. Despite the fact that there are few persons in ancient history for which there is more written, and eyewitness accounts. The authors claim that Jesus was nothing but a figment of His disciples' imaginations. As we near the time of Jesus' return, the attacks on Him and His identity will intensify. Satan knows Bible prophecy; He can see the signs of the times that indicate that we are living in the season of the Lord's return. And as those signs intensify and have intensified Satan has launched an all our campaign to convince the world that Jesus is a fraud. Over and over he has done this. For example, he rallied a group of so-called New Testament scholars that Eric referred to who formed a discussion group known as The Jesus Seminar. This was their logo. And the reason that's their logo is because what they would do--now these are people, every one of these were seminary professors claiming to be Christians. And they would meet say once every three months. And what they would do is they would assign everybody in the seminar several chapters of the Gospels to read. Then they would come together three months later, and they would vote on every saying of Jesus in that assigned scripture. So, every verse was voted on. And they passed an offering plate, and if you believed that Jesus did not say it, you put a black bean in. If you believed He might have said it, you put a grey bean. If you think He probably said it, you put a pink bean. And if you think He said it, you put a red bean. And as a result of all that voting on every statement that Jesus made, they put out a book called, "The Five Gospels" in which they concluded that there are only 15 statements in the Gospels that Jesus actually said. They said, "Everything else His disciples made up." In the Lord's Prayer they said, "The only thing He said was 'Our Father Who Art in Heaven' and they made up the rest of the prayer." Now, these people are teaching in seminaries. These are people who claim to be Christians. And the reason the book is called, "The Five Gospels" is because they also concluded that the apocryphal Gospel of Thomas, which was completely rejected by the early church, they said it was the most reliable of all the Gospels, and it is a gnostic Gospel. So, they included it and said, "It should be included in the New Testament as one of the Gospels."

Actually, there is an irony in these attacks. For they are evidence that Jesus was really God in the flesh. Why else would Satan motivate such attacks? We don't see similar attacks on Mohammed, or Buddha, or Krishna. Nor do we hear their names being used as curse words. Why is it that worldwide the name of Jesus is used as a curse word? The only explanation I can

think of is a supernatural one, namely, Satan is actively involved in motivating universal hatred of Jesus because he knows that Jesus was God in the flesh and is God in the flesh.

Now, concerning the biblical evidence of which the publication that you are going to receive. Look at that 18-wheeler, Jesus Christ is Lord not a swear word. But anyway, in the publication you're going to receive I'm going to give you extensive biblical evidence of the divinity of Jesus. And my conclusion is that with all this evidence in the Bible itself if there is a professing Christian who says they do not believe Jesus was God in the flesh, they simply do not believe that the Bible is the Word of God.

I will start with the witness of Bible prophecy itself, which almost every one of our speakers has mentioned and I have many verses I could use but I'm just going to use one, Isaiah 7:14, which says, "The Messiah will be Immanuel, which means God with us." God with us. Jesus was the Messiah. He claimed to be the Messiah. The Scripture say He was the Messiah. He therefore was God with us.

Then let's take a look at the witness of Trinity. A good example here can be found in 2 Corinthians 13:14 where it says "The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you." But you know there are many, many statements like that throughout the New Testament that are a witness of the Trinity itself.

And then there are the statements that Jesus Himself made about His divinity. He often referred to it in His statements. For example, in Luke 22:70 when the Sanhedrin Council asked Jesus point blank, point blank, "Are you the Son of God?" He responded, "Yes, I am." I don't know how that could be any clearer. And Jesus also claimed many Messianic titles which He applied to Himself, titles that were recognized by the Jewish people as being Messianic titles. The Messiah who would be God in the flesh. For example, He referred to Himself as: the Messiah, as the Son of Man, the Son of God, the Son of David, the King of the Jews, and the Prophet. All of these were Messianic titles that He applied to Himself.

For example, consider when He came into Jerusalem riding on a donkey and He pointed out that this was a fulfillment of Bible prophecy concerning the Messiah, the one who would be God in the flesh. Or consider Isaiah 61 where the Messiah, where Jesus was in the synagogue in Nazareth and He turned over to Isaiah 61 and began to read it. And He said in Isaiah 61 it says, "Today this Scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing." What did He read there? He read in Isaiah 61, "That He was the Messiah, being full of the Spirit, and had come to proclaim the favorable year of the Lord. And then He adds, "Today this Scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing." That is a claim of divinity on the part of Jesus.

Further Jesus claimed to have a very unique relationship with God the Father, as when He said in John 8:19, "If you knew Me, you would know the Father also." Or again in John 12:45, "He who beholds Me, beholds the One who sent me." How in the world can you get around that? Jesus is claiming to be God in the flesh. Jesus further witnessed His deity by forgiving people of their sins; only God can do that. The Pharisees recognized that when He forgave people of their sins, they in fact said to Him, "Who do you think you are? God?" "Well, yes."

And He also did so by performing a host of miracles. And the people themselves recognized that these miracles were such that they could only be performed by God. Another biblical source of His divinity is the testimony of angels and demons. Yes, angels and demons. For example, when the angel Gabriel appeared to Mary to tell her that she would be the mother of the Messiah he said to her in Luke chapter 1, "He will be called the Son of the Most High." That means He would be divine. And when Jesus confronted demon possessed people like the Gadarenes demoniac, one of the demons within that man cried out and said, "What do I have to

do with you, Jesus, the Son of the Most High?" Often the demons that He would confront, the demons would confess Him as being the Son of God.

And then there is the witness of the apostles themselves, in verse, after verse, after verse, the apostles Peter, John and Paul affirmed the divinity of Jesus. Here's an example Matthew 16:16, Peter's saying, "You are the Messiah, the Son of the Living God," the confession he made there of Jesus' divinity. And then there was Thomas, doubting Thomas who encountered Jesus after His resurrection and he fell on his knees and he cried out, "My Lord, and my God." And Jesus did not rebuke him for saying that.

Whoever wrote the book of Hebrews, whoever that was, affirmed the divinity of Jesus over and over from the beginning of the book until the end of the book. For example, in Hebrew 1:3 the very opening of the book he says, "He, Jesus, is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of His nature." Nor should we overlook the many biblical characters who proclaimed the deity of Jesus based on their interaction with Him. People like Simon and Anna; when Jesus was brought to the temple to be dedicated they immediately recognized Him as being the gift of God to the world, of God in the flesh, and they picked Him up and thanked God for letting them live long enough to see the Messiah come.

And then there were people like the magi who came from Persia to honor Him shortly after His birth. There was John the Baptist who proclaimed Him to be the Lamb of God. There was the Centurion at the cross who said, "He must have been the Son of God." And finally, there is the direct testimony of God Almighty Himself, of Yahweh. For example, at the baptism of Jesus there was a voice from heaven that came and said, "This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased." And this testimony was of course repeated by God the Father to the Apostles who were there at the time of the transfiguration of Jesus when He showed them the glory that He had left behind in Heaven, and the glory that He would one day reclaim. As you can see from this voluminous, voluminous biblical evidence, and I've only just touched the hem of it. The divinity of Jesus is not some Johnny-come-lately concept that was invented by a group of first century superstitious peasants who desired to make a God of a man; that is the usual theme in all of these books that are written by so called Christian theologians. Well, these were just ignorant fishermen, they weren't educated, and they just simply decided long after Jesus died that they would just make Him into a God. That's nonsense. The divinity of Jesus was foretold in Hebrew prophecy. It was affirmed in the life teaching and miracles of Jesus. It was confirmed by God the Father Himself. One would have to deny the Bible as the Word of God in order to deny the divinity of Jesus. And that brings us to a very real problem.

And the problem is this: All the biblical evidence that I have just presented to you carries little, or no weight at all with non-believers because they do not accept the Bible as the Word of God. And so, there is one more form of evidence that I think needs to be mentioned. This is the evidence for the non-believer. I have in mind the millions of lives that have been radically transformed over the past 2,000 years as a result of people placing their faith in Jesus as their Lord and Savior. We just saw a walking, living example of it in Eric Barger. I've got pictures of him when he was a spaced-out drug, high on drugs, playing a guitar in a rock band. I have pictures of that. I tell you God took that man and his wife and completely turned them around 180 degrees when they met the living Jesus who is God in the flesh. And that is the example we need to refer to.

When I think of examples of people radically transformed by Jesus, radically the first one of course is one that you would probably think of too, the very first one that popped into my mind and that was John Newton. He was born in London and at the age of 19 he was shanghaied, put on a ship where he became involved in the horrific, but very lucrative slave trade that delivered Africans to England. In 1748 while he was serving as the captain of a slave ship, he

encountered a violent storm, very violent. He remembered that his mother had always told him that the God of the Bible loves to show mercy even to those who are beyond redemption. She had taught him that over and over, and he remembered it. And so, in the midst of that storm he dropped to his knees on the deck of that ship and he prayed the he would survive that storm. And he did, his ship was saved. And over the next few years as he grew closer to God, he gave up the slave trade. He accepted Jesus as His Lord and Savior. He became the pastor of a small English church. He became active in the movement to abolish slavery. And he began to write hymns, many hymns. And one of those is considered to be the greatest hymn in the history of the Christian church, "Amazing Grace," with that great statement, "Amazing grace, how sweet the sound that saved a wretch like me, I once was lost but now I'm found, was blind but now I see."

The second person that comes to mind is a very dear, personal friend, Jack Hollingsworth who went home to be with the Lord in November of 2017. Many of you here were at conferences in the past where he was our featured singer. And we always called him Jumping Jack because he was so full of the Holy Spirit that he couldn't stand still while he sang; he hopped around all over the place, kicked his feet in the air. And I'm sure he's doing that in Heaven right now. Dancing before the Lord and singing.

Well, Jack lived on the streets in an alcoholic haze for 20 years as a homeless person. He tried to commit suicide two times. Once he jumped off the Mississippi River bridge, and missed the water, but it had been raining a long time and he landed in soft mud and survived it. He broke a lot of bones, but he survived it. The second time he tried to commit suicide he went to the drugstore and bought a quart of rubbing alcohol and drank it and crawled underneath a truck at night to die. He woke up the next morning he was surprised he was alive. He was so sick he wished he were dead. He crawled out from under that truck and he said he looked up and it was a Salvation Army truck. And he said years later he remembered that, that God was determined he was not going to die.

In 1988 he wandered into a detox center in Lexington, Kentucky and he met a very tough little lady who was only like 4 foot 9 inches tall. I mean a little short, tough lady. Her name was Sally. He tried to con her, but she had heard every one of the cons, she saw through it. She told him he needed Jesus and he laughed at the idea. And that prompted Sally to get in his face as only Sally could, I mean she put her finger right in his face and she said to him, "I say to you in the name of Jesus that you will never, ever be able to get drunk again." And he looked at her and he said, "Lady, I'm a professional drunk. You're nuts." And he walked out. A week later he returned, and he said, "I've been drinking non-stop for a week and I can't get high. I just can't get high. Tell me more about this guy Jesus." And she did. And Jack received Jesus as his Lord and Savior.

Jack was instantly healed of his guilt. Jack was instantly healed and he and Sally a year later got married. They formed a ministry.

They formed the ministry called Acts 29, there are only 28 chapters, it means they are going on with the 29th chapter to keep proclaiming the Word. They formed a ministry called Acts 29, and for the next 20 years they were on the road teaching, preaching, and singing. In fact, Jack became the featured singer on our television program. Jack always relished telling people about his miraculous transformation. He would always say, "Jesus took this hopeless, helpless, wasted street bum and made a singing evangelist out of him."

We Shall See Jesus

Jack Hollingsworth:

We shall see Jesus
Just as He is
Once on a hillside
People were gathered
Hoping to see Him, as thousands were fed
He touched the blind eyes
Healed broken spirits
Moved with compassion
He raised up the dead
But once on a hillside
People were gathered
Watching as Jesus was crucified
No one showed mercy, to the one who had healed them
Yet, Jesus loved them
as He suffered and died
But once on a hillside, people were gathered
For Jesus had risen, and soon would ascend
And then, as He blessed them
Listen
He rose to the heavens
But He gave them this promise, to come back again.
And we shall see Jesus, just as they saw Him
There is no greater promise than this
And when He returns in His power and glory
Yes, we shall see Jesus
We shall see Jesus, just as He is!

Closing

Tim Moore: Can there really be any doubt that Jesus was God in the flesh, and that He is alive and well today, still transforming lives?

Well, folks, that's our program for this week. I hope it's been a blessing to you. Until next week, the Lord willing, this is Tim Moore speaking for Lamb & Lion Ministries, and saying, "Look up, be watchful, for our Redemption is drawing near."

End of Program