

- a. “Jesus Christ is a teacher, a guru, or an avatar (an incarnation of Vishnu [– the name of the Hindu Temple on Ridge Road in Parma]).” Those names are actually high statements to make of Jesus, *but not high enough!* Jesus is *the Greatest Teacher, the Greatest Spiritual Leader!* We could also call Him *The Avatar*, since He is *Immanuel, God with us!* But the religion of Hinduism includes many Gods and many Avatars – thus Gods in the flesh, with Jesus being one of many.
- b. Jesus “**death does not atone for sins...**” **But the Bible says:** God “loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins.” (1 John 4:10 NIV)
- c. Jesus “**did not rise from the dead.**” **But the Bible says:** “Christ has indeed been raised from the dead...” (1 Cor. 15:20 NIV)

Conclusion: I want everyone to go to heaven, *so do you*, but such will not happen by our wishful thinking and hoping; instead, **by God’s work through His Word of Truth!**

The Lord said: “...my word that goes out from my mouth: It will not return to me empty, but will accomplish what I desire and achieve the purpose for which I sent it.” (Isaiah 55:11 NIV)

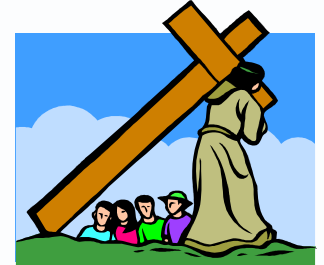
Therefore, **let us speak the truth – God’s Word of Truth – in love** so that all people may know and receive Jesus Christ – *the very Son of God, the only Savior of the world!* And all God’s people said: *Amen!*

This and other sermons are available on Bethlehem’s website: www.blc7500.com
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Bethlehem Lutheran Church, 7500 State Rd., Parma, Ohio 44134, 440-845-2230

Jesus → The Son of God?

Many say: “NO WAY!” Part 3

Based on Various Passages



3rd Sunday after the Epiphany – 2010
Sunday, January 24 → 8:15 & 10:45

Introduction: Dear friends, is Jesus THE SON OF GOD or NOT? Last week we learned these *sad* realities:

- Christian Science – They believe that Jesus ✦ **was not the Christ**, ✦ **did not suffer for sins**, ✦ **did not die on the cross**, ✦ **was not resurrected physically**, and ✦ **will not literally come back!**
- Unity School of Christianity – They believe that Jesus ✦ **was only a man**, ✦ **lived many times before**, and ✦ **was in search of His own salvation!**
- New Age – They believe that Jesus ✦ **is only a spiritual model** and ✦ **was a New Ager!**

To US those teachings are: ✓ odd, ✓ false, and ✓ sad.

For those groups we have already learned about, *and for others we will learn about today*, **let us have compassion on them by kindly pointing them to the TRUE JESUS CHRIST!**

Some OPINIONS and TRUTH about Jesus: (Some information in this section came from "Christianity, Cults & Religions" by Rose Publishing, Torrance, CA)

1. **Islam** – Over 1.5 billion agree:
 - a. "Jesus is one of the most respected of over 124,000 prophets sent by Allah." Sounds good, *but it's not enough*. **The Bible tells us about Jesus, who is also called the Word:** "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and **the Word was God.**" (John 1:1 NAS)
 - b. "Jesus was sinless, born of a virgin, and a great miracle worker, but **not** the Son of God." That statement is part *truth*, part *compromise*; but Jesus wants us to be HOT or COLD, *not LUKE WARM!* **For anyone who honestly and thoroughly considers what Jesus claimed, they must come to one of three conclusions:** **Jesus** → **was a liar**, → **was a lunatic**, or → **is the Lord** – the Savior, the very Son of God!
2. **Nation of Islam** – I'm not sure how many it includes, but this group sponsored the Million Man March in 1995:
 - a. "**Officially**, Jesus is a sinless prophet of Allah. **Privately**, Jesus was born from adultery between Mary and Joseph, who was already married to another woman." A sinless prophet, yes; *Jesus is Prophet, Priest, and King!* But also MORE THAN a Prophet – **the very Son of the living God!** Born from adultery, NO WAY! Instead, as the Bible declares and we confess: **Conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary!**
 - b. "Prophecies of Jesus' return refer to Master Fard [the founder of the Nation of Islam], **Elijah Muhammad** [one of

Fard's first disciples], or to **Louis Farrakhan** [the current leader]." **But what did Jesus say about His return?** "...if anyone says to you, 'Look, here is the Christ!' or, 'There he is!' do not believe it.²⁴ For false Christs and false prophets will appear...²⁶ So if anyone tells you, 'There he is, out in the desert,' do not go out; or, 'Here he is, in the inner rooms,' do not believe it.²⁷ For as lightning that comes from the east is visible even in the west, so will be the coming of the Son of Man." (Matt. 24:23-27 NIV)

3. **Judaism** – Includes about 14 million people, even though the teachings vary among the three groups: "Jesus is seen either as an extremist false messiah or a good but martyred Jewish rabbi (teacher)."
 - a. Again, Jesus is NOT looked upon nor trusted in as the promised Savior. Instead, those in Judaism believe that: "God will reward the good and punish the wicked."¹ So people become their own saviors.
 - b. However, the Bible declares this about Jesus: "...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." (Acts 4:12 NAS)
4. **Hinduism** – Some regard it as the oldest of the major religions, but **let's rightly understand that Christianity is the oldest**. Keep this sequence of events in mind: God created → man fell → God promised the Savior. *That was the beginning of Christianity!* With that said, Hinduism is a very large religion; over 1 billion agree:

¹ <http://judaism.about.com/od/abcsofjudaism/a/beliefsbasic.htm>