

Episode 6 Was Jesus who he said he was?

Bishop Jonathan Holland



1. What questions did people have about Jesus during his ministry?

“Who do you say I am?” This question arises during Jesus’ life and ministry. He asks the disciples, people ask it of him. One interpretation of Jesus’ story is that he grew into his own understanding of the role and his identity. Read the interaction between Jesus and the Canaanite woman. (Matthew 15:21-28) What a bold (or desperate!) woman!

What would it take for you to answer Jesus back demanding you have the right to petition him?

What do you think about the fact that people interpret the Gospel texts in a variety of ways? Does that sit well with you?

Identify the titles and descriptions you have heard or read about Jesus.

Explore the term “Son of Man” that appears to be Jesus’ choice descriptor. Look up some of the times Jesus referred to himself as “Son of Man”

- Matthew 24:34-44
- Mark 10:40-50

2. People wondered if Jesus was the Messiah. Can you explain what that idea was all about?

Read Matthew 16: 13-28 and imagine you were among the disciples when Jesus asked “who do you say I am?” What is your response?

3 Who did Jesus believe he was?

Why is it important to Christians that Jesus was fully human?

Bishop Jonathan tells this story in a way that makes the people come alive. What do you think Jesus felt at the time of John the Baptist’s death?

4. Who did people come to believe Jesus was?

Thomas is sometimes called “doubting”. Bishop Jonathan’s interpretation of Thomas’s reaction to the risen Jesus seems very possible: that of a person so filled with anticipation and longing that they just cannot bear to be disappointed.

It is fortunate for us that Thomas required such proof, so we have Gospel accounts of one person touching Jesus before they believed. Jesus was real enough after his resurrection that Thomas believed. "My Lord and my God". What proof is enough for you?

5. What struggles did the early Church have in trying to work out who Jesus was?

Over the years, Christology has struggled to define Jesus, and there have been some different interpretations of his God-ness along the way.

Take a moment to play with a description of Jesus that you might be happy to give a friend who asks "Who is Jesus?"

6. Why does this matter to Christians?

7. Why does Jesus being the Son of God matter to you?