

Just Thinking Apologetics #6

Jesus has garnered more attention than anyone in history. Who was Jesus? Few have made the absurd assertion that Jesus never existed. Among those holding this belief include: Tom Harpur, Gerald Massey (1828-1907) and Alvin Boyd Kuhn (1880-1963). New Testament scholar Dr. Craig Evans states that, “No qualified historian takes the theories of these men seriously.” Interestingly, these men claim that Jesus was a Jewish allegory stolen from the Egyptian Book of the Dead.

Some have claimed that Jesus was a madman, but is this best explanation? Jesus didn't speak as a madman; even his enemies were amazed at his teachings (Matt. 7: 28-29, Matt. 13:54, John 7:46). When Jesus spoke he inspired those who heard him. Lunatics are not known for inspiring others; the opposite is usually true. A lunatic can usually be identified by his words and actions. Jesus spoke and behaved in such a way that most scholars would consider him to be psychologically balanced.

It was Jesus claim to be on par with God (John 8:58, Matt. 26:64) that has caused some see him as a madman. However, Jesus backed up his claims with his teachings and the miraculous signs that he performed (Mark 2:5-12). Dr. Kenneth Samples rightly claims that, “Jesus transcends all categories concerning human mental health, emotional stability, and moral virtue.” C.S. Lewis said, “Either this man was, and is, the Son of God: or else a madman, or something worse.” The claim that Jesus was a madman is clearly not the best explanation.