

#2 Jesus Human and Divine

Part 4

How do we know Jesus is really there?

The problem with having faith, Christian or otherwise, is that people of faith cannot prove it. We can say that we know there is a God. We can say that God is the only logical explanation to account for the existence of the universe. We can point to incidents, miracles, and events both big and small as examples of God at work in our lives and in our world. However, in our scientific, fact-driven 21st century, belief in a personal God who knows us better than we know ourselves is to many, a quaint superstition.

Several hundred years ago, the “Enlightenment” began. Born out of a desire and belief that human beings could over time acquire the knowledge to explain everything that happens in the world, the Enlightenment thinkers advanced the art of science to a methodical system whereby after numerous ideas and tests solid, verifiable facts would be produced. Facts that were not a the whim of the church or the ruler, but facts that applied to all humanity at all times in all places.

There is no doubt that the enlightenment thinkers laid the foundations that have resulted in an explosion of knowledge about how the world works. The earth is round, the earth orbits the sun, not the other way around, the matter we see around us can be separated into smaller components which have specific properties. These are just a few examples. We learned how the human body works, how diseases spread, how to grow food in more efficient ways. Our neighbor Benjamin Franklin was an early leader in exploring the properties of electricity.

In short, the discoveries that were being made in the 16 and 1700's could naturally lead people to believe that everything that happened was explainable. Naturally, that idea applied to religion and faith, which in the minds of many, worked actively to prevent the acquisition of spread of knowledge.

So, what does all of this have to do with knowing that Jesus is with us, not 2000 years ago, but now?

I, just like every other pastor, cannot and will not use the tools of science to prove the existence of God. Knowing Jesus is with you and me ultimately requires a leap of faith that science by itself cannot provide. Science can help us prove that a man named Jesus of Nazareth did exist. He did preach and teach in Israel. He performed healings that the people who were there could only explain as miracles. He was crucified and died and there were a substantial number of people who claimed to see him alive after his crucifixion.

However, the idea of faith is not confined to Christianity in particular and religion in general. When you look at it, science itself is faith based. We don't have time here, but I would suggest you look at “Physics and faith” an article in the December 5, 2011 issue of [Christian Century](#). Or

“God in Mathematics” in the April 19,2016 issue of Forbes Magazine. What might it mean for us if we understand science not as a collection of absolutes, but a cloud of ideas that appear to explain much, but still rest on a foundation of faith — just like the idea that Jesus is with us.

Grace and Peace to You!

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Please join us for Sunday Worship at 10:30!

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