

There is no agreement on any information about this supposedly historical Jesus.

By way of amplifying the above point, what I mean is that, normally, a very well-known historical person—even one existing as long as two thousand years ago—would certainly be much better known to historians than is Jesus. For example, we know much more about Alexander the Great, who lived 200 years before the Jesus character is said to have lived.

Let's examine just a few points of reference that one might reasonably be expected to know about a person whose influence was so great that it literally change the course of history over the next two millenium.

- Looks? No one in the entire bible gives any definitive description of Jesus whatsoever. He is depicted in artistic works, ranging from the ninth century up to modern times, as everything from being rather short with a "male pattern baldness problem" to the tall, handsome Nordic Jesus with the neatly trimmed beard we all met in Sunday School. Secular scholar, Dr. William Harwood, an advocate of a "historical nobody" who served as a basis of the mythical Jesus, believes that Jesus was, "an odd looking man, balding, stooped, with joined eyebrows, and approximately 4 ft 6 in tall" (Mythology's Last Gods, p. 63). Enough said.

- Birth date? Biblical scholars of all stripes disagree as to the date of the mythical Jesus' birth. Dates range from about 4 BCE (the one most often quoted) to about 7 CA.

- Birthplace? The bible says Bethlehem. However, Jesus is constantly referred to as "Jesus of Nazareth." Scholars now understand that this was probably a linguistic confusion and perhaps an early mistranslation. Jesus was a "Nazarene," the title of a sect, not a name having geographical associations. Thus, as G. A. Wells explains, "'Jesus the Nazarene' is equivalent to, say, 'Henry the Quaker' or 'George the Methodist.'" (Wells, Did Jesus Exist, p. 147.) Furthermore, modern archeology has established that there was no such city as Nazareth in the first century. Dr. Harwood, mentioned above, argue strongly for the city of Capurnaum as a probable birth city.

- Personal character and/or moral worthiness? Although we heard all about the loving, compassionate Jesus in church, and how we ought to "turn the other cheek," we were not given the quotations that urged his followers to bring those that would not have me for their leader and "slay them before me." (Luke 19: 27.) We were told not to lie. However, we read about how Jesus lied when it suited him. (See Mattill, A. J. Sweet Jesus, p. 103) We remember the part about not stealing, but we heard nothing about Jesus' habit of stealing pigs, wheat, donkeys, cash, cows, olive oil, and figs. (op. cit. p. 31-33.)

Perhaps more critical than all of the above inconsistencies and silences is the confusion about what, exactly, was J.C.'s central message? The problem of discerning a "central message" is confounded not because there isn't one, but because there are too many. If one asks the average Christian what was Jesus' essential message to us, they look at you as if you must be the stupidest person they have ever met. Then, they explain patiently that, "God so loved the world that he sent his only begotten son to die for us so as to atone for our sins, and that if you would simply believe in him, you could have a sort of second life, ever-lasting, in a place called heaven." Now, at first you must try to ignore the sheer imbecility of what you just heard, and ask a few follow-up questions. You may ask something like, "Well, how can I 'believe on him' as the bible phrases it, when I am not clear about his full message and his teachings?" The Christian has a ready answer. "You can read the bible and there you will learn all about his wonderful message to us."

"I already did that," you might say, "but then I became even more confused." As mentioned above, there seems to be hundreds of messages, often with conflicting ideas and pronouncements. You might also add that you were a bit confused as to whether you should pay more attention to Peter's Jewish 'works-based' Christianity, or to Paul's Gentile 'faith-based' Christianity. You confess further confusion when you read about the early Gnostic Christian's 'knowledge' (Gnosis) based Christianity. Despite all your reading, you say, you are still "unclear on the concept." At this point the Christian will generally say something like, "Jesus loves you anyway" and walk away.

The summary point here is that because of the great amount of hopelessly conflicting information and the lack of any definitive information on everything about Jesus—his looks, lineage, biography, nature (three in one; one in three?), character, moral worthiness, message, etc.—it is clear, at least to this writer, that there is simply no one underneath this great pile of b.s. to see.