Who Is This Jesus To The Eyewitnesses Of His Life and Character?

Intro:
A. As we examine this question - it is essential that we understand the:
   1. THE WEIGHT of Fulfilled Prophecy:
      a. Jesus fulfilled approximately 330 prophecies -
      b. The probability of any man fulfilling eight prophecies has been calculated as 1 in 10 to 17th power (100,000,000,000,000,000)!
      c. The probability of fulfilling just 48 prophecies is one in 10 to 157th power! - Peter Stoner
   2. MY FAITH IS BASED ON EVIDENCE - not sight but knowledge
B. But, my examination today and next week - has to do with the weight of the testimony of the eyewitnesses:
   1. What Changed their lives?
   2. What led them to death?
   3. And lastly can I have that same conviction even tho I have not seen like Thomas - John 20:27-29

II. THE APOSTOLIC WITNESS: The Apostles claimed to be “EYEWITNESSES” of His life, Death and RESURRECTION
A. When we look at the transformation in the lives of these eyewitnesses lives - it demands a verdict from all of us.
   1. Nathaniel said - “can any good thing come out of Nazareth...”
   2. How do we answer that statement?
      a. What do we see and know?
      b. Is it sufficient to cause Belief?
B. Read - “Who Moved The Stone intro....”
   1. Peter (the impulsive one) - Acts 10:39-42; 2 Peter 1:16-18
      a. Acts 10:39-42 (NKJV) - 39 And we are witnesses of all things which He did both in the land of the Jews and in Jerusalem, whom they killed by hanging on a tree. 40 Him God raised up on the third day, and showed Him openly, 41 not to all the people, but to witnesses chosen before by God, even to us who ate and drank with Him after He arose from the dead. 42 And He commanded us to preach to the people, and to testify that it is He who was ordained by God to be Judge of the living and the dead.
      b. 2 Peter 1:16-18 (NKJV) - 16 For we did not follow cunningly devised fables when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of His majesty. 17 For He received from God the Father honor and glory when such a voice came to Him from the Excellent Glory: “This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.” 18 And we heard this voice which came from heaven when we were with Him on the holy mountain.
   2. John (the beloved of God) – Jn 1:14; 1 Jn 1:1-3
      a. John 1:14 (NKJV) - 14 And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.
      b. 1 John 1:1-3 (NKJV) - 1 That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, concerning the Word of life—2 the life was manifested, and we have seen, and bear witness, and declare to you that eternal life which was with the Father and was manifested to us—3 that which we have seen and heard we declare to you, that you also may have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ.
   3. Paul (the persecutor, the enemy of the Cross) – Acts 22:6-10; 26:12-19 - this changed life must be accounted for.
      a. He was a pharisee, a religious scholar, a zealot for God in his faith as a Jew, yet in three days
he walks away from all of this - for WHAT?
(1) A lie?
(2) A deception?
(3) Or the Truth! ---- which is what?

b. Acts 22:6-10 (NKJV) - 6 “Now it happened, as I journeyed and came near Damascus at about noon, suddenly a great light from heaven shone around me. 7 And I fell to the ground and heard a voice saying to me, ‘Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me?’ 8 So I answered, ‘Who are You, Lord?’ And He said to me, ‘I am Jesus of Nazareth, whom you are persecuting.’ 9 “And those who were with me indeed saw the light and were afraid, but they did not hear the voice of Him who spoke to me. 10 So I said, ‘What shall I do, Lord?’ And the Lord said to me, ‘Arise and go into Damascus, and there you will be told all things which are appointed for you to do.’

c. Acts 26:12-19 (NKJV) - 12 “While thus occupied, as I journeyed to Damascus with authority and commission from the chief priests, 13 at midday, O king, along the road I saw a light from heaven, brighter than the sun, shining around me and those who journeyed with me. 14 And when we all had fallen to the ground, I heard a voice speaking to me and saying in the Hebrew language, ‘Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me? It is hard for you to kick against the goads.’ 15 So I said, ‘Who are You, Lord?’ And He said, ‘I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting. 16 But rise and stand on your feet; for I have appeared to you for this purpose, to make you a minister and a witness both of the things which you have seen and of the things which I will yet reveal to you. 17 I will deliver you from the Jewish people, as well as from the Gentiles, to whom I now send you, 18 to open their eyes, in order to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who are sanctified by faith in Me.’ 19 “Therefore, King Agrippa, I was not disobedient to the heavenly vision.

4. All of the apostles – Acts 1:1-4:
   a. Acts 1:1-4 (NKJV) - 1 The former account I made, O Theophilus, of all that Jesus began both to do and teach, 2 until the day in which He was taken up, after He through the Holy Spirit had given commandments to the apostles whom He had chosen, 3 to whom He also presented Himself alive after His suffering by many infallible proofs, being seen by them during forty days and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God. 4 And being assembled together with them, He commanded them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the Promise of the Father, “which,” He said, “you have heard from Me;

5. Over 500 others - 1 Cor. 15:3-8
   a. 1 Corinthians 15:3-8 (NKJV) - 3 For I delivered to you first of all that which I also received: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, 4 and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures, 5 and that He was seen by Cephas, then by the twelve. 6 After that He was seen by over five hundred brethren at once, of whom the greater part remain to the present, but some have fallen asleep. 7 After that He was seen by James, then by all the apostles. 8 Then last of all He was seen by me also, as by one born out of due time.

C. The Significance of this:
   1. The apostles by their testimony force us to make a decision – 1 Cor 15:12-15; John 20:30,31
      a. 1 Corinthians 15:12-15 (NKJV) - 12 Now if Christ is preached that He has been raised from the dead, how do some among you say that there is no resurrection of the dead? 13 But if there is no resurrection of the dead, then Christ is not risen. 14 And if Christ is not risen, then our preaching is empty and your faith is also empty. 15 Yes, and we are found false witnesses of God, because we have testified of God that He raised up Christ, whom He did not raise up—
in fact the dead do not rise.

(1) **John 20:30** (NKJV) - 30 And truly Jesus did many other signs in the presence of His disciples, which are not written in this book;

(a) **John 20:31** (NKJV) - 31 but these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name.

2. **Were they eyewitnesses, or false witnesses?** - **1Cor 15:14-15; 2Peter 1:16-18**
   a. **1 Corinthians 15:14-15** (NKJV) - 14 And if Christ is not risen, then our preaching is empty and your faith is also empty. 15 Yes, and we are found false witnesses of God, because we have testified of God that He raised up Christ, whom He did not raise up—if in fact the dead do not rise.
   b. **2 Peter 1:16-18** (NKJV) - 16 For we did not follow cunningly devised fables when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of His majesty. 17 For He received from God the Father honor and glory when such a voice came to Him from the Excellent Glory: “This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.” 18 And we heard this voice which came from heaven when we were with Him on the holy mountain.
   c. Why would men suffer extreme hardship, persecution, and martyrdom for a lie? **1 Cor. 15:18,19**

(1) **1 Corinthians 15:18** (NKJV) - 18 Then also those who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished.

(2) **1 Corinthians 15:19** (NKJV) - 19 If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men the most pitiable.

III. **Jesus is everything they claimed!**
   A. Jesus is the **Son of God** - **Rom 1:4**
   B. Jesus is **God in the flesh** – **John 1:1-3,14; Phil. 2:5-10**

   1. **John 1:1-3** (NKJV) - 1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2 He was in the beginning with God. 3 All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made.

   2. **John 1:14** (NKJV) - 14 And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.

   3. **Philippians 2:5-10** (NKJV) - 5 Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, 6 who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, 7 but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men. 8 And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross. 9 Therefore God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name, 10 that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth,

   C. He **died for our sins** – **Matt. 26:28**

   1. **Matthew 26:28** (NKJV) - 28 For this is My blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.

   D. **Was resurrected** and has all authority in heaven and earth - **Mt 28:18; Acts 2:36**

   1. **Matthew 28:18** (NKJV) - 18 And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, “All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth.

   2. **Acts 2:36** (NKJV) - 36 “Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ.”

   E. He **went to prepare a place for us** - **Jn 14:2**

   1. He shall come again - **Jn 14:3**

   2. No one can come to the Father but through Him - **Jn 14:6**
F. There will be a resurrection of the dead and ensuing judgment - Jn 5:28-29; 12:48
   1. John 5:28-29 (NKJV) - 28 Do not marvel at this; for the hour is coming in which all who are in the graves will hear His voice 29 and come forth— those who have done good, to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil, to the resurrection of condemnation.
   2. John 12:48 (NKJV) - 48 He who rejects Me, and does not receive My words, has that which judges him— the word that I have spoken will judge him in the last day.

IV. In Conclusion:
   A. It is with this evidence and so much more - but time will not allow us to cover in this lesson - That “I JOHN CRIPPSS” - am convinced and convicted that “JESUS IS THE CHRIST - THE SON OF THE LIVING GOD”
   B. I along with all others who will commit themselves to the search for TRUTH - will come to the very same conclusion that those who remained and followed Jesus came to so many years ago - John 6:66-69 (NKJV) - 66 From that time many of His disciples went back and walked with Him no more.  67 Then Jesus said to the twelve, "Do you also want to go away?"  68 But Simon Peter answered Him, "Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life.  69 Also we have come to believe and know that You are the Christ, the Son of the living God."
   C. Why Believe that Jesus is the Christ the Son of God!
      1. Because we have the testimony of the eyewitness accounts - The Apostolic Witness –
      2. And The Practical Evidence - that demands a Verdict from Us!
      3. In next weeks lesson we will look beyond the history, the prophecy and the eyewitnesses, and make it personal - Who IS JESUS to YOU?
   D. Can we help you PUT your faith in JESUS into CONVICTION today - by surrendering you heart and life to full obedience to HIS and the FATHER’S WILL.

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