



Jesus and why Christians believe he matters

KS4 RELIGIOUS STUDIES

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Who was Jesus?

Jesus was a Jewish teacher and spiritual leader who lived in **Judea** (modern-day Israel) around **2,000 years ago**, roughly from **4 BCE to 30 CE**. He taught people about love, forgiveness, and living ethically. **Jesus** travelled around teaching in synagogues and outdoor spaces, gathering followers called **disciples** who listened to his message and learned from his example.

The main sources we know about **Jesus** come from the **four Gospels** (accounts written by **Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John**) in the **New Testament** of the Christian Bible. These were written by followers after his death, recording his teachings, miracles, and life events.

What do Christians believe about Jesus?

Christians believe **Jesus** was more than just a teacher—they believe he was the **Son of God**. This is called **the Incarnation**: the idea that God became human in the form of **Jesus** to live alongside people and show them how to live.

Think of it like a parent writing a story and then stepping into that story as a character to show their children exactly how the tale should unfold.

Christians also believe that **Jesus** died on a cross (called the **Crucifixion**) as a sacrifice for human wrongdoing, and that he **rose from the dead** three days later (the **Resurrection**). This is the most important event in the Christian calendar, celebrated at **Easter**.

Why is Jesus important to Christians?

Jesus is central to Christianity because **Christians** believe his death and resurrection offer **salvation**—a spiritual rescue or forgiveness for all people. By believing in **Jesus** and following his teachings, **Christians** believe they can have a relationship with God and live better, more loving lives.

Think of it like a bridge: **Jesus** connects humans to God, allowing them to be forgiven and find peace.

Jesus' teachings on love, compassion, and forgiveness form the foundation of **Christian** ethics. His most famous teaching is the **Sermon on the Mount**, which includes the **Beatitudes** (blessings for the humble, merciful, and peaceful) and the **Golden Rule**: treat others as you would want to be treated.

Today, about **2.4 billion Christians** worldwide follow **Jesus'** teachings and see him as God's greatest gift to humanity. He remains the central figure of their faith, inspiring how they live, worship, and treat one another.