

"Jesus is the Answer"

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Sometimes I walk into a classroom full of eager learners. Most of the time I walk into a classroom of people who just want the right answer.

When I was a kid, I went to catechism class. I was excited to be there. I wanted to learn more about my faith. I was even curious to learn about the faith of others. One morning, our regular teacher was ill, so we had the pastor for a substitute.

Things were different that day. Our regular teacher was very sincere, but our pastor was dead earnest. It was as if he was certain we ought to know what was in the chapter we had just prepared for class. He didn't just want us to know the right word to fill in the blanks; he wanted us to know why that answer was correct. This was frightening to the members of my class whose goto answer was, "Um...Jesus?!"

Truth is, I really believe that Jesus is the answer. Trouble is, it's still important to show your work. Jesus isn't the answer in the same way that $6 \times 7 = 42$, unless you're taking a test in a catechism or world religions class. Jesus as an idea, like forty-two as an idea doesn't get us very far. Even the metaphysical 42, begs to be associated with some forty-two things. And Jesus, well, the name of Jesus is powerful because it is the name of God.

Here it's important to distinguish between the Name as a word and the name of the Word. At the name of Jesus every knee will bend, but ultimately that is because I and everybody with knees will see him as he is. Who is the beginning and the end of all things? The Alpha and Omega, Jesus is the answer.

When I'm confused and don't know what to do in a situation. When I want to know how to live and what I must do to gain eternal life, I turn to the moral teacher who shows me what he would do and what I should do. Jesus doesn't just have the answer; Jesus is the answer.

If I feel like I am trapped and enslaved to sin and circumstance, and I am most likely correct in that assessment, I know that I need a liberator. I need One who has the power to forgive sins. Who can forgive sins but God alone? Because he is God, Jesus is the answer.

When I look around this world and see that it is a vale of tears. When people don't make sense. When I need to persevere. I need the encouragement and the inspiration to take up my cross and follow..., who? The crucified and risen Jesus is the answer.

But if Jesus is the answer, then it's essential that he's more than just a name. More than just a word or a guess. I need to be able to show my work, because now and in the end, I am not studying for the test. I need to be ready for Life.