

Jesus Was a Good Person, Wasn't He?

In this evangelistic drama, our three not-so-bright heroes have a meandering conversation around the thought "Jesus was a good person, wasn't he?" They look briefly at where we get our ideas about Jesus from – the Bible, TV, thin air? - and whether those sources are reliable. Turns out, the Bible is a more reliable historical document than many other histories we accept as truth. And you can't say "Jesus was a good person" and leave it there, it doesn't add up. Because Jesus himself said he is the son of God...

Scene: very relaxed atmosphere, on holiday, sat on garden chairs or lying on a lounge in the sun, wearing summer gear and sun glasses. Picture up on big screen of the sun over a beach, sound effect of waves quietly lapping on the shore. All sat quietly, Geof's reading "BBC History" magazine, Derek has a puzzle book, Michelle's reading a gossip magazine. We reply slowly to one-another, because we are so relaxed, and we are giving our answers deliberate (if not deep!) thought. (The actor we are referring to is, of course, Jim Caviezel!)

Derek: You know who was a good person? Mother Theresa

Michelle: Yeah, she was a good person. And Ghandi, he was alright wasn't he?

Derek: Yes. And that "I have a dream" bloke

Michelle: Oh yeah, I've seen him do that on the telly

Derek: And Jesus

Michelle: No, I've never seen him on telly. Other than clips of Robert Powell and Jim, er, Cave-man being him

Derek: No, I mean, Jesus was a good person

Michelle: Oh right, yeah.... That Robert Powell on the telly being Jesus was back in the day weren't it?

Derek: Yes, where does the time go?

Michelle: You know who was even more back in the day?

Derek: Who's that then?

Michelle: Jesus

Derek: Yes, you're right, he was way back

Michelle: It's amazing we know about him at all

Derek: Yes, that Robert Powell did a good job in that TV series "Jesus of Nazareth"

Michelle: And Jim, um, Cavalier in that film

Geof: And the Bible

Derek: Eh?

Geof: The Bible did a good job at telling us about Jesus

Michelle: Oh, I don't know about that, I've not read it.

Derek: I had it read to me in Sunday School and school assemblies. And I saw the TV series and the film. Did you see the 2004 film, The Passion?

Michelle: Is that what the Jim Cav... Caviare one is called?

Derek: Yes

Michelle: No, too many swords and sandals, not my sort of film. I prefer a rom-com.

Geof: So, how did you conclude that Jesus is a good person?

Michelle: Well, he's famous isn't he? He's the one who said... er... "love your neighbour", which is nice, isn't it, and ... er....

Derek: Treat others as you yourself would like to be treated

Michelle: Oh yes, that's a good one. Very wise words.

Geof: He also said he's the son of God

Michelle: Did he? Maybe it's just that other people thought he might be, because he was so good

Geof: No, Jesus said it himself

Derek: How do we know Jesus said he was the son of God?

Geof: Because every time Jesus speaks in my bible, the words are printed in red. And that bit's in red.

Derek: Oh, right...

Michelle: Well, that's just daft. He can't have been the son of God.

Geof: Do you think Jesus lied when he said he's the son of God? Do good people lie?

Michelle: Um... Maybe the pressure of fame got to him, and he went a bit loopy-loo near the end. It can happen (*pointing to gossip magazine she's reading*)

Geof: So you think Jesus was unbalanced? Are unbalanced people a good role model?

- Michelle:** Um... Maybe, don't know...
- Derek:** Hang on, how do you know the bits in red in the bible are right? How do you know that was what Jesus really said? The bible might be wrong.
- Geof:** The bible's passed a test
- Derek:** A test?
- Geof:** Yes, there's a test, to test the historical accuracy of old documents and books, they have to pass it to be taken seriously. There has to be enough original manuscripts that say the same thing, and different documents surviving from the same time-frame that say some of the same thing, and archaeological evidence has to say the same thing happened too. The bible scores higher on that test than the writings of Julius Caesar, and people in the know take his writings as historical fact. So the bible gets a thumbs up for historical accuracy.
- Derek:** Well I never! Imagine that! History books having to take a test!
- Michelle:** I'm glad I'm not a history book, I don't like taking tests
- Geof:** Anyway, the point is, you can't say "Jesus was a good person" and leave it there, it doesn't add up. Because Jesus himself said he is the son of God. And he explained that he came to make sure that sins are paid for and justice is done. But because he loves us so much, he chose to cover the cost of our sins himself, so that way wrongs are paid for, and justice is done, but we can get off scot free.
- Michelle:** I don't remember Jesus saying any of that!
- Geof:** That's probably because you've not read the bible!
- Derek:** Or seen the film
- Geof:** Aren't you excited that Jesus came to save you?
- Michelle:** Um... I'd be excited if Jim Cav... Cavalcade came to save me. I'd like to be his "Person of Interest" ...
- Geof:** *(groans)*

Geof and Derek both throw cushions at Michelle