

The True Avatar

Answers the Question:

Who is Jesus, and what is His message?

Big Idea:

Jesus is the true incarnation, God in the flesh who came to this planet on a rescue mission: to save us from our sins.

Key Scripture

John 1:14

Would you ever make a movie? If so, what would you do? Let's take it a step further. What if you had pretty much unlimited time, equipment, and cash? That's the situation James Cameron found himself in a few years back, and the result is the visually stunning sci-fi cowboys and Indians movie called Avatar.

And when I say he had money, I mean he had bank. Cost estimates for Avatar run between 300 million to half a BILLION dollars. With that insane amount of money that dwarfs the gross domestic product of over a third of this planet, you better create an out-of-this-world place that rocks.

And James Cameron did that with *Avatar*. Don't expect any dialogue that would make Shakespeare nervous (i.e. "You are not in Kansas anymore. You are on Pandora, ladies and gentlemen" ...wow ...just, wow).

But do anticipate the 3-D cinematic equivalent of a 162-minute roller coaster ride that will leave you wishing for another round of Avatar.

By the way, do you know what "avatar" means? No, not "freaky blue creature that looks like a misshapen cousin of Jar-Jar Binks." It actually comes from the Hindu religion, meaning,

The descent of a deity to the earth in an incarnate form or some manifest shape; the incarnation of a god.

It's interesting, isn't it, that this movie was released around Christmas? Because at the heart of this holiday is the shocking, amazing, and breathtaking truth that the true Creator, Jesus, became the real incarnation of the deity to earth:

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning.

Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. In him was life, and that life was the light of men. The light shines in the darkness, but the darkness

has not understood it.

The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.

No one has ever seen God, but God's one and only Son, who is at the Father's side, has made him known (John 1:1-3; 14; 18).

Think about it...the eternal and all-powerful God wrapped Himself in human flesh to live on the planet He created and dwell with the inhabitants He formed from the dust of the ground.

In the film *Avatar*, the main character named Jake links with his own avatar so he can infiltrate the "Na'vi" creatures. But the God of the universe, named Yahweh, incarnated Himself as Jesus so He could accomplish the most important mission of all time:

"Joseph, son of David," the angel said, "do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife. For the child within her was conceived by the Holy Spirit. And she will have a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins" (Matthew 1:20-21).

As the Christian band 4Him says, "That's such a strange way to save the world." What a wild idea that God would step down from the throne of heaven and allow himself to be subjected to life in this evil and fallen world...and for what?

To die. The only way to save us from an eternity separated from God was for God Himself to pay the penalty for all our wrongdoing. And the only way for God to die was to take on humanity.

Jesus came into our world as a visitor to accomplish His salvation mission. He lived a perfect life and died a horrible death so we could have hope here on Earth and a glorious eternity in heaven.

If that doesn't rock your world, I'm not sure what could!

Alt-ernate Question

- What do you think it was like for Jesus while He lived here?
- How would you answer the question of "why did Jesus come to earth?"
- How does this truth change your perspective about the Christian life?
- What are some ways you could apply this truth to your life?

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