

What if Jesus Had Never Been Born?

Answers the Question:

Why did Jesus die on the cross?

Big Idea:

If Jesus had never been born, the world would be a very dark place with hope.

Key Scripture:

1 Corinthians 15:16-20

NO! Not the buttons! Not my gumdrop buttons!

Alright then! Who's hiding them?

Ok. I'll tell you. Do you know... the muffin man?

The muffin man?

The muffin man. Yes, I know the muffin man. W-who lives on Drewery Lane?

Well, she's married to the muffin man.

The muffin man?

THE MUFFIN MAN! She's married to the muffin man...

I'm pretty sure if you saw the first *Shrek* movie, you'll remember this classic reference. That's because the first *Shrek* movie is a classic - as in something that seems to just get better with time.

I don't know if you are a fan, but by all appearances this is the last installment of adventures in Far Far Away...so good, bad, or ugly, I'm definitely seeing this one.

Shrek Forever After borrows heavily from another classic movie often seen at Christmas called *It's a Wonderful Life*. In that film, the main character is given the gift of seeing how life would have turned out if he had he never been born, it was pretty much a mess. In *Shrek's* case, the world is also pretty much a mess. Puss-n-Boots is fat and lazy, Fiona is kind of a gang member, and a creepy little dude named Rumpelstiltskin is on the throne instead of Sir Justin Timberlake.

Well maybe that Rumpelstiltskin vs. Justin Timberlake part is sort of in sync, but overall the *Shrek* parallel world is a darker and crueller place to be, because Shrek is trying to be a savior on many levels. It's up to him to save his friends, restore his world and reclaim his one True Love.

This alternate reality stuff can really mess with your mind, but have you ever considered what the world would be like if Jesus had never been born? I would like to paint a picture that should fill you with appreciation for the immeasurable gift given to us on that first Christmas.

If Jesus had never been born, the world would be a much more primitive place where women are slaves of free men, children are sacrificed to idols, and the concepts of charity and love are all but missing from society.

But worst of all, if Jesus had never been born, there would exist only one spiritual destination for our eternal souls. Jesus Christ came to earth as a man to live a perfect life, die a horrible death, and rise from the grave so that the penalty for the world's sins would be paid in full...and eternal life made available to anyone who puts their faith in Him for salvation. Here's the way the Apostle Paul describes it:

If corpses can't be raised, then Christ wasn't, because he was indeed dead. And if Christ weren't raised, then all you're doing is wandering about in the dark, as lost as ever. It's even worse for those who died hoping in Christ and resurrection, because they're already in their graves. If all we get out of Christ is a little inspiration for a few short years, we're a pretty sorry lot. But the truth is that Christ has been raised up, the first in a long legacy of those who are going to leave the cemeteries (1 Corinthians 15:16-20).

In other words, a world without the birth, life, death, and resurrection from the dead is a world that is "always winter...never Christmas."**

But we can happily wake up from that nightmare, because 2000 years ago in a dark and dirty cave near Bethlehem, the cry of a baby started a shockwave of change that is felt just as strongly today as ever. Jesus Christ, God in the flesh, and God with us.

So the question I have for you is...

Has Jesus Christ entered into your world? If He has, then how much have you let Him change your world? He is the single most influential figure in all of history, but is He the centerpiece of your soul?

Let Jesus Christ set off a chain reaction of change in your life. I promise you'll have an amazing forever after!

** C.S. Lewis: Chronicles of Narnia

Alt-ernative Questions:

- What difference has Jesus made in your life?
- How can we make a difference in our world for Jesus' sake?
- 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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