

# Life Matters

## Worksheet 2



How do you identify yourself? In the 1960's people were often defined by their musical and fashion choices, "Mod or Roker"? When we go on holiday we often see and hear how people identify themselves. When we are in a different country it's common to see more men wearing their teams football kit than when at home! When you're dipping your toes into the pool whilst on holiday in Spain your normal first question to the person next to you is 'Where are you from?' followed by 'What do you do for a living?' You are trying to identify these people to see if they are similar to you. If they are from Wales, then it's almost a guarantee that they will know someone or will be related to someone that you know! We identify ourselves in a variety of different ways. In our western culture what we do for a living often defines us. It is probably a heritage from our old 'class system' but when you think about this, it is a strange thing to do to identify yourself by the job that you do!

### QUESTIONS:

- **What questions do you ask people to find out more about them?**
- **How do you identify yourself?**

Of course, who we are really does matter. You can leave a prison at the end of the day if you work there, but you're not if you are a prisoner! You are allowed in the school staff room if you work there but not if you're a pupil. There are lots of different things in this world that you can do and plenty of places that you can go only if you have the right identity. In lots of places and in lots of different ways, it really matters who you really are.

I recently read the funny story of a man who had set up a family 'WhatsApp' group. All the family would regularly comment and give their opinions on the latest family news. All that is except the organisers Father. He would never comment on the group and when someone would ask him his view on the latest family developments, he would say that he had not heard the news before. The organiser could not understand why his Father did not know the family news, as the app was showing that he had seen the various postings. Eventually, after some investigation, the organiser discovered that the person who he believed to be his Father on WhatsApp was in fact a local plumber who had done a job at his house several years earlier! When he set up the group, he had mistakenly put the plumbers' number into the group instead of his own Father. It was a mystery why the plumber never left the group, nor why he didn't comment to say that this was a case of mistaken identity! In this case, getting his own Fathers identity really did not matter and gave many people an amusing anecdote! However, there are times when getting someone's identity wrong can be more than embarrassing and can have serious consequences.

If I was taken seriously ill when on a plane and the shout goes out for a Doctor, then I really want a Doctor of Medicine to step forward and not a Doctor of History or even Theology! If I get test results from some tests done in hospital, then I want my test results and not somebody else's. If I'm a juror in court then I want the witnesses to clearly identify the guilty person and not make a mistake. When I step off the runway and board an airplane to go on holiday, I want the pilot to be the experienced, qualified person and not the work experience youngster! Identity matters!!

When John begins his life story of Jesus, he wants his readers to understand who Jesus really is right from the very start. John starts the life of Jesus by starting before the beginning. You may think that this doesn't make sense. Instead of starting the life story of Jesus with the Christmas narrative, John goes further back in time.

John tells us in verse 1 of chapter 1 ***"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God"***. John is talking about the time when this world came into being. He uses a description that we translate as 'Word'. At the time of writing, the readers of John would have understood this 'Word' to be the 'unknown force' that gives life to everything. If you've ever seen the Star Wars films then you will have heard and seen the effect of 'the force' within these dramas. John says that this 'unknown force' is knowable, that this 'Word' is God and this, incredibly, is how John starts the story of Jesus.

John deliberately uses 'Word' as this also tells us of communication. We use words to communicate and describe and to give and gain knowledge. John is presenting us with a God who communicates with us. John presents us with a God that we can know, a God who is revealing Himself to us.

If you think that verse 1 contains a shocking statement then in verse 14, we get a greater surprise. ***"The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen His glory."*** The life-giving force, God, puts on flesh and lives with people like John. In simple terms, God becomes a man! God lives as a human being. God walks on this earth. No wonder this book that John writes is known as a gospel, which means 'Good News'. If this is true, then this is the most remarkable and dramatic news in all of history. God has become a man and lived with humans. We will see some of the massive implications of this in future studies.

We often think of God as being distant and silent and 'unknowable'. The one thing that we can understand in this life is what it is like to be a human being. We may not always understand other people, but we know what we are like. We know what it is to think, to dream, to eat, to sleep, to work, to have fun, to know sadness, to know friendship, to know love, to give love and many other things. God has come into the world as a human being and has experienced all these things as well.

That has two big implications for us (at least). The first is that God knows what you and I go through as human beings. He can sympathise with you and can know how you feel at times in your life as He has experienced the same life issues.

The second thing is that we can know God. Yes, we can study the life of Jesus and what we learn about Jesus, we learn about God. God has come to us as a human being so that we can know Him and experience Him for ourselves. If we understand human beings by the way that we and others act, then we can

understand what God is like by looking at this God-man Jesus.

## **QUESTIONS:**

- **Who did you think Jesus was?**
- **Have you ever considered that you can know God, by knowing Jesus?**
- **Have you ever realised that Jesus reveals what God is really like?**

How would you like to explore this life in Jesus Christ that John wants you to know? This is your opportunity and invitation to do that. There are currently millions of people around the world who have experienced what life in Jesus Christ is really like. Why not commit to spend some time for the next few weeks exploring this for yourself? These videos and studies will be appearing twice a week and we will attempt to answer any questions you have via our email address: [info@lfec.org](mailto:info@lfec.org)

In the next video and study, we will consider the evidence that John presents us with to show us that Jesus is doing things that only God can do. Look out for these on YouTube, Facebook or on our website:

[www.lfec.org](http://www.lfec.org)