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The Rest (Chapter 4) Pages 44-45

By Timothy Keller

Many people say, “Sure I believe that Jesus is a great teacher, but I can’t believe what they say about him being God.” That creates a problem, because his teaching is based on his identity claim. ... He is the One who created the world and then rested on the seventh day. Here is how historian N.T. Wright puts it: “How can you live with the terrifying thought that the hurricane has become human, that fire has become flesh, that life itself became life and walked in our midst? Christianity either means that, or it means nothing. It is either the most devastating disclosure of the deepest reality of the world, or it is a sham, a nonsense, a bit of deceitful playacting. Most of us, unable to cope with saying either of those things, condemn ourselves to live in the shallow world in between.”¹ He’s right. I believe you’ll see that in the end, you can’t simply *like* anybody who makes claims like those of Jesus. Either he’s a wicked liar or a crazy person and you should have nothing to do with him, or he is who he says he is and your whole life has to revolve around him and you have to throw everything at his feet and say “Command me.” Or do you live in that misty “world in between” that Wright says no one can live in with integrity? Do you pray to Jesus when you’re in trouble, and otherwise mostly ignore him because you get busy? Either Jesus can’t hear you because he’s not who he says he is—or if he *is* who he says he is, he must become the still point of your turning world, the center around which your entire life revolves.

Timothy Keller was born and raised in Pennsylvania and educated at Bucknell University, Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, and Westminster Theological Seminary. He was first a pastor in Hopewell, Virginia. In 1989 he started Redeemer Presbyterian Church in Manhattan with his wife, Kathy and their three sons. Today, Redeemer has more than five thousand regular Sunday attendees and has helped to start nearly two hundred new churches around the world. Also the author of *Generous Justice*, *Counterfeit Gods*, *The Prodigal God*, and the New York Times bestseller, *The Reason for God*, he lives in New York City with his family.

¹ N.T. Wright, *For All God’s Worth: True Worship and the Calling of the Church* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans 1997), p.1