

From Pastor Ed: I hope you will join in "The 21 Day Wesley Challenge!"

For the next 21 days Crossroads is being challenged to daily reflect on a different question every day that will help us focus on our spiritual life during Lent. These questions were developed by the founder of Methodism, John Wesley. In weekly small groups Wesley would ask participants to reflect on and answer these questions.

Every day we will send the question of the day with a devotional to help you reflect. Please take a few minutes each day to read the devotional and write down your thoughts, reflections or answers to the question.

On Sunday we will be gathering for a brief thirty minute OT (overtime) in Wesley hall where we will have a chance to meet with others and discuss our thoughts/answers to at least one of the questions.

Day One Question One

"Is Jesus real to me?"

Day one devotional one: "Jesus IS REAL to me!"

(Thank you to Dr. Antipas Harper for the following devotional! I hope you will find this as inspiring as I did)

I have fond memories of growing up in Manchester, GA. We went to church four or five times a week. For the first hour or so of service, we had what we called "Devotional Service." The first hour or more was filled with spontaneous singing, prayer and sometimes we had what we called "Testimony Service" during the Devotional Service. Other times, Testimony Service was separated from the Devotional Service and placed after the preaching.

The late Sister Laurel Hartnett was a mother at the church who frequently sang during Devotional Service. One of her favorite songs was, "**Real, real; Jesus is real to me.**" If Sis Hartnett didn't sing this song enough, my mom would lead the same song. It was always a powerful worship experience. As they led the song, others would join in:

Real, real; Jesus is real to me
Oh, yes, He gives me the victory
So many people doubt Him
But I can't live without Him
That is why I love Him so
He's so real to me (repeat)

The lyrics were simple. In the African spiritual tradition, the chorus repeats over and over for about five minutes or more. We sang this testimony with intense conviction. In the African tradition, repetition causes the stirring of the Spirit. The more we repeated "Real, real; Jesus is real to me..." the more convicted we became that what we were singing is indeed true – Jesus is real!

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For us, the issue was not whether or not Jesus was a historical figure. That was a foregone conclusion. Our confession was a theological one – Jesus is indeed God!
We couldn't argue scientific rationales for the existence of God; but, our souls witnessed to an experience with the One who is greater than us all. When we called on Jesus, He responded to us. The simple things in life verified for us the realness of our Savior.

We didn't have a lot of material possessions. But, when we called Jesus, He answered with food to satisfy our hunger. We didn't have a lot of money. But, when we needed provision, we prayed in Jesus' name. He responded with necessary provision.

Our experiences with the living Lord taught us that what the Bible says about Jesus is true. We added another chorus of conviction – "You can't make me doubt Him. I know too much about Him."

We often testified that Jesus is greater than doubt, fear, and agony. Whatever we were going through at the time disappeared in the simple but profound testimony that Jesus is real.

You may not know biochemistry and trigonometry. You may not read Greek and Hebrew. But, let's consider our simple experiences that bear witness to what the Bible says. Let's get to know Jesus, and share the testimony – "Real, real. Jesus is real to me!"

As you start your day, repeat these words over your day,
Regardless of the doubts I face today, one thing I will hold on to. That is that Jesus is real.
Indeed, we serve a living Savior who is in the world today. He is alive and willing to help us through life's ups and downs. Jesus is real; God really loves us.

Now, take a few minutes to reflect on the question... "Is Jesus real to me?"

Follow the link to listen to "Jesus is real to me"
[Pastor Fleetwood Irving - Real \(Jesus Is Real To Me\)](#)