

Some Things To Consider Before You Attend

Jesus Christ Superstar

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Jesus Christ Superstar is a rock opera about the last seven days of the life of Christ before His crucifixion. Critics have given it rave reviews. Even some churches have sung its praises. Some have even hailed it as a means of presenting Christ to young people in a way they will understand and accept.

However, no one who examines it in the light of Scripture can be happy with the opera. It is impossible to see the *Superstar* as anything but one of the "false Christs" of whom the Lord Jesus Christ warned us (Matthew 24:24).

The fact is that *Jesus Christ Superstar* is a conscious blasphemy against Christ. According to the plain statements of its authors, it is a deliberate repudiation of the Christ of Scripture. Tim Rice, who wrote the words of the opera, stated, "Although the gospels seem largely accurate in their telling of the events of the crucifixion, one can see great flaws in their portrayals of both Christ and Judas." (*Seventeen* (magazine), March 1970, p.170) Rice produced a text that flagrantly denies the most important things the Gospels teach about Christ. He presents a false Christ.

Before you watch *Jesus Christ Superstar* there are some things you should weigh very carefully.

Before you watch *Jesus Christ Superstar* you should know that it gives Satan's description of Christ.

Tim Rice said, "The idea of the whole opera is to have Christ seen through the eyes of Judas, and Christ as a man, not as a God. And the fact that Christ himself is just as mixed up and unaware of exactly what he is, as Judas is." (Interview sent to radio stations in recorded and printed forms with the original album of *Jesus Christ Superstar*, band 2 of the recorded interview, p.5 of the printed interview.)

This is what the opera aims to teach -- a mixed-up Christ as described through the eyes of Judas. Such a description of Christ is simply Satan's description of Him. Jesus said of Judas, "Have not I chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil?" (John 6:70).

If you do not wish to fill your mind with Satan's evil misrepresentation of the Son of God, you should avoid *Jesus Christ Superstar*.

Before you watch *Jesus Christ Superstar* you should know that it presents Christ as a mere man, and an immoral one at that.

Tim Rice plainly stated that he did not believe that Jesus Christ was God (Interview, band 3, pp.9-10). His opera constantly drives home this denial of the Son of God. He has Mary Magdalene say, "He's a man, he's just a man." He even puts his blasphemy into the mouth of Christ. Replying to the cries for

healing from the crowd, *Superstar's* Christ says,

*There's too many of you -- don't push me
There's too little of me -- don't crowd me
Heal yourselves.*

This is a plain denial of the single most important truth of the gospel, the deity of the Lord Jesus Christ. "Without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh" (I Timothy 3:16).

Jesus Christ Superstar not only strips Christ of His deity but even of His morality. The opera presents Mary Magdalene as a prostitute who says of Christ,

*He's a man, he's just a man
And I've had so many men before.
In many ways
He's just one more*

According to the opera Mary's relationship with Christ causes Judas to object:

*It seems a strange thing to me, mystifying,
That a man like you can waste time on women of her kind;
Yes I can understand that she amuses
But to let her stroke you, kiss your hair, is hardly in your line.*

Rice then has Judas chide Christ for being inconsistent:

*It's not that I object to her profession
But she doesn't fit well with what you teach and say
It doesn't help us if you're inconsistent
They only need a small excuse to put us all away.*

What a travesty of the character against whom neither friend nor foe could find the slightest fault. The Bible says He "knew no sin" (II Corinthians 5:21); He "did no sin" (I Peter 2:22); "In him is no sin" (I John 3:5).

If you wish to keep yourself clean from such open blasphemy, you should steer clear of *Jesus Christ Superstar*.

Before you watch *Jesus Christ Superstar* you should know that it accuses God of terrible sin.

The opera has Judas saying,

*God! I'll never know why you chose me for your crime,
For your foul, bloody crime
You have murdered me! You have murdered me!*

That Judas should say such things is bad enough, but Rice attributes even worse words to Christ. Confessing that he is "not as sure" and "sad and tired," the Christ of *Superstar* rails on God.

*Can you show me now that I would not be killed in vain?
Show me just a little of your omnipresent brain.
Show me there's a reason for your wanting me to die;
You're far too keen on where and how, and not so hot on why.*

The bitterness of this stands in stark contrast to the sinless, sincere, humble, and entirely willing submission of the Son of God to go to the cross to purchase eternal salvation for sinners. He said, "I delight to do thy will, O my God" (Psalm 40:8), and "My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work" (John 4:34). Even in Gethsemane He prayed, "Abba, Father, all things are possible unto thee; take away this cup from me: nevertheless not what I will, but what thou wilt" (Mark 14:36).

If you wish to be free from the guilt of such a vicious attack on God and His Son, you should not watch *Jesus Christ Superstar*.

Instead of filling your mind with the lies and blasphemies of *Jesus Christ Superstar* you should know that the real Christ is the Son of God and the almighty Saviour of sinners.

God said of the Lord Jesus Christ, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him" (Matthew 17:5). We need to hear Him, for He alone has the words of eternal life (John 6:68). And eternal life is just what we need. We are by nature dead in sin (Ephesians 2:1). We are under the wrath and condemnation of God (Romans 1:18).

We can do nothing to save ourselves. Only Christ can save us: "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved" (Acts 4:12).

The apostle Paul summed up what we need to hear and know of Christ in order to be saved: "I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; by which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain. For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures" (1 Corinthians 15:1-4).

Jesus Christ Superstar presents a Christ who died in defeat and mental turmoil. It leaves him on the cross, a failure. That is the devil's version of the story of Christ. It is a lie through and through. The truth is that Christ died with a great purpose: "When we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly" (Romans 5:6). Having died, He rose again from the dead. He said to John the apostle, "I am he that liveth, and was dead, and behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death" (Revelation 1:18).

Very soon every one of us will have to face the true Lord Jesus Christ, not the figment of Tim Rice's imagination. He has the keys of hell and of death. Our eternal destiny depends on our relationship with Him: "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him" (John 3:36).

The only way to have eternal life is to receive Christ by faith: "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved" (Acts 16:31). "As many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name" (John 1:12).

Repudiate *Jesus Christ Superstar* with all its blasphemy. Receive Jesus Christ the Son of God and the only Saviour of sinners.