
The Identities of Jesus

Hannah Redekop

When I was a kid,
I confused Jesus with the doctor.
Both, I was told,
were healers.
I didn't know which one to call
to get better.

When I was in high school,
my Jesus was a judge.
Weighing my actions,
keeping the score,
both held the gavel,
to keep me from damnation.

Then, Jesus became justice itself.
Not a life—or death—sentence,
but a *lifestyle*,
a companion,
and advocate.

But as Dr. Cornel West says,
“Justice is what love looks like in public.”¹

It wasn't until Jesus became love to me
that I began to understand the meaning
of Jesus.

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1 Cornel West, “Justice Is What Love Looks Like in Public,” April 17, 2011, YouTube video, 1:00:00, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nGqP7S_WO6o.

Historical Jesus was a Palestinian Jewish man,
who today hangs precariously
between two identities
that were never meant to be divided.

But you see, love opens doors,
it doesn't close them.
Love is not exclusionist,
it only knows how to grow.

When we enact love and justice
for Palestinians,
this does not mean
there is less love for Israelis.

Just like when we enact love and justice
for our queer and trans siblings,
this does not mean
there is less love for straight people.

Just like when we enact love and justice
for Black and racialized folks,
this does not mean
there is less love for white communities.

It means that
love
justice
and freedom
are inclusive.
Our struggles are parallel,
our liberation is interdependent.

The beautiful thing about love
is that
it will free us all.