

A Survey of the Bible

"Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path" Psalm 119:105

Lesson 8

Jesus, the Christ

Matthew, Mark, Luke, John

John the baptist preached that Jesus is the Christ. The fulfilled prophecy of the Old Testament, such as the virgin birth, proved that Jesus is the Christ. All the miracles of Jesus demonstrated the identity of Jesus. With these evidences Peter was able to confidently affirm *"You are the Christ, the Son of the living God"* (Mt 16:16).

The evidences already considered were enough to prove the identity of Jesus, but there is more, much more. Read the four gospels carefully and reflect upon the message given. Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, who gave his life that you might live. Consider carefully these additional facts about Jesus.

The Master Teacher.

No less awesome than his miracles were the teachings of Jesus Christ. He taught with authority and revealed divine truths for humanity's blessing.

On one occasion a man was brought to Jesus to be healed. Those carrying the man were not able to get close to Jesus because of the crowds both in and around the house where he was teaching. They climbed the stairs to the top of the house, removed the roof, and let the man down in front of Jesus. Jesus told the man his sins were forgiven. The Jews thought in their hearts that Jesus was blaspheming, for only God can forgive sins. Jesus knew their thoughts and answered them. He asked which is easier, to heal or to forgive [forgiving sins against God]. Jesus then demonstrated his authority in a pointed manner. *"But that you may know that the Son of Man has power on earth to forgive sins"-- He said to the paralytic, "I say to you, arise, take up your bed, and go your way to your house"* (Mk 2:10-11).

Jesus also claimed authority in judgment. *"For the Father judges no one, but has committed all judgment to the Son"* (Jn 5:22). Judges have authority and Jesus has 'all judgment'.

After he was raised from the dead and just before he ascended to heaven Jesus said *"All authority has*

been given to Me in heaven and on earth" (Mt 28:18).

Jesus was given this authority by the Father, God. He uses this authority in all things. Every word Jesus uttered was given with his authority as the Son of God - God in the flesh (Jn 1:14). Each person needs to carefully consider everything Jesus said, for, *"He who rejects Me, and does not receive My words, has that which judges him-- the word that I have spoken will judge him in the last day"* (Jn 12:48). This same word which will condemn many will also be the salvation of those obedient and faithful to the Lord (Acts 20:32). Do you listen to Jesus?

Selected Teachings of Jesus.

The words of Jesus provide a path for every aspect of living. Jesus gives us the pattern of godly living from our relationship to the world [even our resisting Satan] to our relationship with God as our Father. He said, *"It is written, 'Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God'"* (Mt 4:4). Remember, the words of Jesus are the words of God [see Lesson one].

The sermon on the mount is an excellent example of the teachings of Jesus. In the sermon on the mount Jesus emphasized our need to 'hunger and thirst' after righteousness and promised that we will be filled (Mt. 5:6). Just as Jesus fed their hunger as he taught, so ours is also met by the word of God. It is that word which saves (1 Pt. 1:23; Jms 1:21; Acts 20:32).

In that same sermon Jesus emphasized the need for humility and a pure heart (Mt. 5:3,8), the necessity of being right with man (Mt. 5:21-26), and the requirement of hearing the word of God and doing it (Mt. 7:24-27; cf. Jms 1:21ff). The sermon on the mount will make a difference to every man, woman, or child who reads it and applies it to themselves.

In a discussion with a certain woman of Samaria Jesus instructed her concerning worship of God. He said, *"God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth"* (Jn 4:24). Jesus taught

that approaching God in form without spirit is unacceptable. We must be sincere in our worship. Our prayer, song, and thoughts toward God must be from the heart. So, too, he taught that there is more than simple sincerity involved in true worship. Form, truth, is also necessary as we approach God. Jesus taught his disciples to pray (Mt. 6:9). Why? Because not just any form of petition is acceptable. We must approach God in spirit and truth, always. As we worship in spirit and truth we bring honor and praise to our Creator. We are then pleasing to him.

Jesus taught the multitudes who he was. John had given his testimony (Jn 1:29ff). The Father had spoken from heaven (Mt. 3:17; 17:5). And, the miracles testified to his power and authority. Jesus made certain it was possible for men to understand who he was and why he came. Note these samples of the teachings of Jesus concerning himself.

"for the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost." (Lk 19:10)

"just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many." (Mt 20:28)

"Therefore My Father loves Me, because I lay down My life that I may take it again. No one takes it from Me, but I lay it down of Myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This command I have received from My Father." (Jn 10:17-18)

Then He took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you. For this is My blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many for the remission of sins." (Mt 26:27-28)

Note also Peter's confession and Jesus positive response. Jesus claimed to be the Son of God.

Simon Peter answered and said, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God." Jesus answered and said to him, "Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah, for flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but My Father who is in heaven" (Mt 16:16-17).

As you study the four gospels you will find many more passages revealing God's revelation of himself

to man, the identity of Jesus, and his instruction to man concerning salvation. Indeed, the Bible is a wonderful volume. It is the word of God to man!

The Death and Resurrection of Jesus.

When Jesus came to earth he came to bring forgiveness of sins to mankind (Mt. 1:21). He came to establish his kingdom (Lk 1:32,33). He came to bring light to the world (Jn 1:11,12). He came to bring victory over Satan (Hb. 2:14). Jesus came for all these reasons and more. Jesus came to provide a way for man to return to God!

Jesus walked with his disciples for about three years. Early in his ministry he spoke of his resurrection but they did not understand this statement till after he was raised (Jn 2:22). As the time drew closer Jesus spoke more openly. He was preparing his disciples to handle the events for which he came to the world - his death and resurrection. *"From that time Jesus began to show to His disciples that He must go to Jerusalem, and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised the third day" (Mt 16:21).*

His disciples did not understand. They should have, because his death was spoken of in the Old Testament. The 16th Psalm spoke of him. Jesus would not be left in hades and his flesh would not see corruption. Can one be left in a place they have never been? No. Hades is the realm of the dead. For Jesus to not be left in hades he had to die to go to hades. The 16th psalm speaks of the death of Jesus and his resurrection. Peter said this Psalm was fulfilled in Jesus' death and resurrection (Acts 2:24-29).

Isaiah spoke of the coming Messiah in the 8th century B.C. In the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah he spoke of the suffering servant, Jesus to come. Isaiah said he would be *"cut off from the land of the living"* (Is 53:8). This is a description of his death. Isaiah used other phrases to point to his death also (Is 53:8-12):

*they made His grave with the wicked
with the rich at His death
When You make His soul an offering for sin
He shall bear their iniquities
He poured out His soul unto death*

When Jesus went to the cross he fulfilled these and other prophecies. The fulfillment of these

prophecies were additional proofs that he was the Christ promised by God. These prophecies show that Jesus' death and resurrection were planned just as his coronation. They were all part of God's plan to save man.

Evidences of Jesus' Resurrection.

The Old Testament prophets prophesied of the resurrection. Jesus told beforehand of his sufferings, his death, and his resurrection. The resurrection proved once again that the Old Testament is inspired of God and that Jesus is the Son of God. These facts are true and are emphasized with every evidence of the resurrection.

The first evidence of the resurrection is the empty tomb. The tomb was found empty on the first day of the week by the disciples of Jesus. It is important to note that the women went early on that day to Jesus tomb to anoint his body. Think about it. They did not expect to find an empty tomb! They carried spices for proper anointing for the permanent burial of Jesus' body. They were wondering who would roll the stone away so they could enter. The resurrection of Jesus surprised them! In their surprise we find evidence - the tomb was empty [Jn 20; Mt 27].

The women told the disciples and Peter and John hurried to the tomb. They found the tomb empty and the grave clothes lying where the body of Jesus had been. Living people do not need grave clothes! They were amazed. They had been told it would happen but did not understand, not until they saw the empty tomb and the resurrected Christ! The empty tomb is a powerful witness to the resurrection of Christ.

Another evidence is the story the soldiers told to explain the empty tomb. Matthew records the great things they saw at the resurrection, and also records the paying of hush money by the Jewish leaders. Rather than telling the truth the soldiers were paid to tell a lie. They were to say the disciples of Jesus came and took him away while they slept. How did this work? First the Jews had Pilate seal the tomb and put soldiers there to insure there would be no resurrection. It appears they understood Jesus' prophecy. Pilate told them to make it as sure as they could. Man's security cannot hold God! Now they had a problem. Even with their preparations Jesus was raised! Their only solution? Tell a lie! By Roman law a soldier who lost a prisoner was to take the prisoners life. In this case the soldiers' lives were in danger. But, the

Jews took care of them. The Jews used their influence to protect the soldiers and to insure this lie was told. The soldiers got away with lying, dereliction of duty, accepting a bribe, and losing a prisoner without the usual punishment. The preparations of the Jews, their payment for the lie, and the empty tomb combine to make quite a strong argument for the resurrection. If Jesus was not raised none of this was necessary!

Yet another evidence of the resurrection of Jesus is the testimony of the apostles. Peter said "We are witnesses of these things" (Acts 2:33). What things? The death, burial, resurrection and ascension of Jesus into the heavens. Peter and the apostles were not the only witnesses of his resurrection. Mary saw Jesus. Thomas insisted he see and touch to believe, and he believed when he saw. In fact, Paul told the Corinthians that Jesus appeared to more than 500 brethren at one time, the greater part of whom were still alive when he wrote (1 Cor. 15:6). What would you conclude if you saw someone die, knew where they were buried, and then saw and conversed with them again later [some saw him more than once]? The only conclusion was that Jesus was raised to life!

Jesus told of his suffering and resurrection and his disciples bear witness to the fulfillment of these events. Paul's conclusion was that Jesus was "*declared to be the Son of God with power according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead*" (Rom 1:4 emphasis added). The resurrection was a final proof that Jesus is the Son of God.

Why did Jesus have to die?

In the third chapter of Genesis the record of Adam and Eve's sin is given. God will not have fellowship with sin (Is. 59:1,2). In order for man to be in fellowship with God man's sin must be forgiven. To be both just and the justifier of the saints God had to send Jesus to die in our place (Remember Isaiah 53 - bruised for our iniquities, the chastisement of our peace was upon him?). Death was required because the wages of sin is death (Rom. 6:23). Jesus died on the cross to redeem man from sin. He brings man back to God.

Peter said we were purchased with the blood of Christ (1 Pt. 1:18). Paul said that Jesus blood purchased the church, the saved ones (Acts 20:28; Eph. 5:23). Jesus had to die so you can live. He suffered for you!

When do we receive the blessings of the shed blood of Jesus? Remember, Jesus blood is that which forgives. So, when we find when and how God says man is forgiven we find when and how we receive the blessings of Jesus' blood. Read carefully Acts 2:22-42 to find the answer. All other passages agree with Acts 2, and Acts 2 agrees with them. After preaching the Christ there were many who believed their report. Their faith is seen in their question, "What shall we do?" Peter told them to do two things. What are those two things? _____

and _____. Which of them does Peter say brings remission [forgiveness] of sins? _____. Now we know according to Acts 2 the one is required before the other, and faith before it. At what point does God forgive? _____ [See also Mk 16:16; Acts 22:16; 1 Pt. 3:21]

On the day of Pentecost [Acts 2] three thousand souls gladly received the word of Peter. What did they do? _____ Why did they do it? What was its purpose? _____ At that point those three thousand souls were added to them, the disciples of the Lord. Have you become a disciple of Jesus? Do you want to be forgiven? Become a child of God today, do not delay. Seek assistance so that you can obey Jesus just as these 3,000 obeyed him.

The death of Jesus was necessary for our forgiveness. The resurrection of Jesus is a final proof of his identity and is the hope of every Christian, to be raised to life in the last day.

Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God. He is now sitting at the right hand of God. He is the head of the church, his body. In him are all spiritual blessings - including a promised home in heaven. Jesus pleads with all to obey him, accepting his gift of eternal life.

As we continue our survey of the Bible remember these truths. Jesus did this for you and wants you to become his disciple. Will you serve Jesus?

For Further Study

Homer Hailey, From Creation to the Day of Eternity: God's Great Plan for Man's Redemption (Las Vegas, NV: Nevada Publications, 1982).

Homer Hailey, The Messiah of Prophecy to the Messiah on the Throne (Louisville, KY: Religious Supply, Inc., nd).

Thomas B. Warren, Jesus - the Lamb Who is a Lion (Jonesboro, AR: National Christian Press, 1988).

"A Survey of the Bible" is written by Greg Weston
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Review Exercises

1. Why did Jesus have to die?
2. Read John 19. Briefly describe the crucifixion of Jesus.
3. Why did the women go to Jesus' tomb on the morning of the first day of the week?
4. List the names of four people who saw Jesus after he was raised. Give the scripture reference.
5. List three other evidences of Jesus' resurrection.
6. According to Paul, what did the resurrection prove? (Rom. 1:4)

What Shall We Do?

When Peter preached Jesus to those in Jerusalem many of them responded with the question, "What shall we do?" The question demonstrates that they believed what Peter said. Now they wanted to know what God required of them.

Peter's response is simple. Repent, and be baptized. Repentance is change. They had changed their minds, now they had to change their lives. Repentance was to be acknowledge. After repentance they needed to be baptized. What was baptism for? Baptism was for the remission, forgiveness of sins. According to Peter, when is a person forgiven by God?

Read Acts 2:41,42. Have you obeyed the Lord?