



The Way, The Truth, And the Life

By Pastor Mike Taylor

John 1:1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

1:2 The same was in the beginning with God.

1:3 All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.

1:4 In him was life; and the life was the light of men.

1:5 And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not.

The world at large has trouble with explaining who Jesus of Nazareth was and is, Christian and unbelievers, as well. Who was this Man, called Jesus of Nazareth, called the Christ (Messiah) and how is He different than all the other so called holy men of other religions? When asked by non-believers why they believe in this historical Man, many have trouble explaining why they believe except to say “Jesus was the Son of God.”

That statement is so very true, but to an agnostic or atheist, it doesn't explain why we put so much trust in a person who lived 2000 years ago. Many of these doubters believe that Jesus was a myth, or that He was something other than what we know and believe that He was who He said He was. As John opened his book in the Gospels, John in five verses encapsulated who Jesus Christ was. John called Him, the Word. Before time began for human beings, The Word was with God, and WAS God. Before Jesus who was God becoming a man and lowered Himself to becoming flesh and emptying Himself of His glorious Nature and becoming a servant in the form of sinful flesh, the incarnate Christ was God, from everlasting to everlasting. Without time, without the constraints that you and I experience, and was called the Great I AM, that I AM when He appeared to Moses in the burning bush.

There is much written about this Man who lived 2000 years ago. Most of it is found in the many witnesses who wrote about Him in your bible. Historically, Josephus wrote of Him, but only to witness that Jesus was indeed, a very real person in his time. First we have to decide, do we believe their witness from different men who saw, touched, and lived with Jesus for 3.5 years during His ministry on earth? Each of these men tell the same story, but from a different perspective. The Bible is a record of the prophecies that concerned a coming Messiah that began in Genesis and runs through the whole of the Bible until the end of man's rule recorded in the last book of the Bible, Revelation.

The Bible was written for one reason and one reason only. It was written as a prophecy and a witness to the coming of the Messiah to redeem man from his fallen state. It's all about Jesus the Messiah. It's was God's plan for redeeming mankind from the fall of our first parents Adam and Eve who chose to believe the lies of Satan and choose their own will, instead of being obedient to the will of God. In Genesis, you will find the first prophecy concerning the coming of a Savior.

Genesis 3:15 And I will put enmity Between you and the woman, And between your seed and her seed; He shall bruise you on the head, And you shall bruise him on the heel."

A major theme of the Old Testament is the coming of the Messiah. From Genesis 3:15 through Malachi 4:2, prophecies of the coming of the Savior fill God's Word, the gospel writers show time and again how Jesus

fulfilled the prophets' predictions in His actions or in the actions of those around Him. Matthew, especially, makes a conscious point to highlight many Old Testament prophecies that were fulfilled in Jesus' life. Of all the prophecies in the Old Testament account, and there was 250+ prophecies of a coming Savior of mankind, Jesus fulfilled every one of them. The probability of one man fulfilling every prediction and every detail about His birth, His life, His death, and His resurrection have a improbability of infinity of being fulfilled by One Man. But Jesus certainly did.

In our Bible, we have 66 books, written by 40 different authors, spanning nearly 2500 years and all with one theme, the coming of the Messiah and the redemption of mankind. To have such a harmony between books, between authors, of whom none of them ever met, gives strong evidence that there is only One author, and that is Almighty God.

HOW IS JESUS DIFFERENT?

When a person makes a comparison of other "holy men" and compare that man in another religion with the Messiah of the Bible, the differences are striking. Men of other religions, no matter whether it's Buddhism, Islam, Hinduism , or Taoism, each try to have the person raise themselves to a higher plane of consciousness to save themselves by works of piety or sacrifice. Only Jesus Christ is different. When the disciple Thomas asked Jesus to show us the way to the Father, Jesus stated plainly:

John 14:6 Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.

14:7 If ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also: and from henceforth ye know him, and have seen him.

Jesus plainly stated that there is no way that a man can come to God the Father, accept through Him. No amount of meditation, no matter amount of good works, and no holy man of other religions can make you acceptable before a Holy God.

Why is there no other way to come to be in the same existence as Almighty God and come into His presence? Paul proclaims it and it agrees with what Jesus declared in Romans:

3:22 Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference:

3:23 **For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;**

3:24 Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus:

3:25 Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation (substitution) through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God;

3:26 To declare, I say, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.

The bible is full of declaration such as those mentioned above. All profess and proclaim that there is no other way to salvation and enter into the presence of the Ancient of Days, God the Father.

I call these declarations found in your bible, nuggets of the saving grace of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Each should be used to introduce the only chance a person has to be forgiven of their sins, and should be shared with all who will listen given by the believer in Jesus Christ, the Christian. Let's examine just a few

of the many, many scriptures that could be shared with that loved one, that co-worker, or that friend who asked you, "Why do you believe in Jesus Christ?"

God's Saving Plan of Grace

Ephesians 2:8 For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God:

2:9 Not of works, lest any man should boast.

2:10 For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.

Faith's importance to salvation is accentuated by this verse. Faith plays a role in the entire process until we enter God's Kingdom. It is the sum of what God is doing in our lives: "Jesus answered and said to them, 'This is the work of God that you believe in Him whom He sent'" (John 6:29). In the fourth and fifth chapters of Romans, we read Paul mentioning faith a dozen times, almost all concerning justification, being made righteous or having access to grace, and thus, having the hope of the glory of God.

Jesus, when He was speaking to Nicodemus, the Pharisee that came to Him by night, He proclaimed His mission:

John 3:11 Verily, verily, I say unto thee, We speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen; and ye receive not our witness.

3:12 If I have told you earthly things, and ye believe not, how shall ye believe, if I tell you of heavenly things?

3:13 And no man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man which is in heaven.

3:14 And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up: (the cross).

3:15 That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life.

3:16 For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

3:17 For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved.

3:18 He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.

The root and the trunk of the born again doctrine found in the bible is found in John chapter 3. The other gospel writers do not expressly say it, but provide supporting evidence of this essential truth. In this gospel, John starts by proclaiming the divinity of Jesus Christ, as Jesus talks of light, darkness, baptism, and the Temple of God in the first three chapters of the Gospel of John. Symbolism is used to illustrate the spiritual with the physical. Many of the symbols Jesus uses are understood by the people Jesus spoke to. Nicodemus, was one who could not understand the concept of being "born again." Notice what Nicodemus says when Jesus tells him, ye, must be born again:

3:3 Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.

3:4 Nicodemus saith unto him, How can a man be born when he is old? can he enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born?

3:5 Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.

3:6 That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.

3:7 Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again.

3:8 The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit.

Nicodemus was thinking in the physical, not the spiritual application of what Jesus was saying. He did not understand that this physical body must be changed from mortal into an immortal when raised from the dead, or changed at His coming in the twinkling of an eye. Notice how Jesus says we will be when He changes us in verse 8? We will be like the wind that blows through the trees. Jesus, when He was raised from the dead was able to walk through walls, but could eat and drink. So it will be with us. Till we become immortal, we have the promise of the redemption of our bodies into immortality by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit.

Nicodemus did not understand the concept of being born of Spirit and water. Water, being the symbolism of being baptized by immersion into a symbolic grave. We are lowered into the water, as symbol of the grave, buried with Jesus Christ and raised to newness of life, a new creature that we should walk in obedience to the commands of God as spoken by Jesus.

When Jesus proclaimed the spiritual truth in a physical way to the masses in the synagogue at Capernaum:

John 6:54-58 Whoever eats My flesh and drinks My blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day. For My flesh is food indeed, and My blood is drink indeed. He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood abides [or "lives," or "dwells," or "continues"] in Me [That is, He is saying that it is a life-giving substance.], and I in him. As the living Father sent Me, and I live because of the Father, so he who feeds on Me will live because of Me. This is the bread which came down from heaven—not as your fathers ate the manna, and are dead. He who eats this bread will live forever.

Thinking in physical terms, this idea repulsed most of the disciples and those who heard and many left Him, as they didn't understand the spiritual application of the New Covenant of His death and resurrection and symbolized when we take the bread and the wine at the Lord's Supper and commemorating this act of total surrender for our redemption.

If you want to know the man, Jesus Christ, you need to start at the Gospel in the New Testament that proclaimed His divinity, His earthly ministry, and His death leading to His resurrection, as the first born of the dead. That Gospel is John. John uses the last days of Jesus' ministry leading to the cross to illustrate who Jesus was, and what He did for all mankind. If you wish to understand how God the Son came down from glory and became a man with only one mission, to save mankind, then you must start at John and study the witnessed account of the life and ministry of Jesus the Christ up close and personal. Then read the surrounding gospels that support it, and read into the Pauline epistles of the man who met Jesus in His glorified state and how it changed his life.

Paul continues the story in his epistles when he spoke of Jesus in Romans:

5:6 For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly.

5:7 For scarcely for a righteous man will one die: yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die.

5:8 But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

5:9 Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him.

Paul mentions in v. 6, that we were yet without strength. *Without strength* means "powerless." Before our justification by Christ's sacrifice, we had no way to appeal to God for vindication. In our guilt, we could not stand before Him. The death sentence was upon us, till we were justified by His blood by believing on God's only Begotten Son.

God made a way, through Jesus that we could be justified. John:

6:44 No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day.

6:45 It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me.

6:46 Not that any man hath seen the Father, save he which is of God, he hath seen the Father.

6:47 Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me hath everlasting life.

God in His sovereignty draws who He wills to Him via His Holy Spirit. To reject that call is to endanger your spiritual condition. Will the call come again? Will you have a chance to believe on Jesus a second time around? God knows, but we do not. What does it say?

Hebrews 9:26 For then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world: but now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself.

9:27 And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment:

9:28 So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation.

The time of the open window for accepting Jesus Christ is coming to a close in this dispensational age, the Age of Grace. To enter into the next dispensation of God's wrath has untold amount of suffering and tribulation. Jesus made a statement in John that God has given Him full authority to enact judgment because of His willing sacrifice as announced in John 3:16:

John 5:26 For as the Father hath life in himself; so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself;

5:27 And hath given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of man.

5:28 Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice,

5:29 And shall come forth; they that have done good (accepted Jesus Christ), unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation. (denied His invitation of salvation)

The Holy Spirit convicts each person that He will and knocks upon the door of the individual's heart, as noted in Revelation chapter 3 when addressing the Laodecian church of the last days:

3:20 Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me.

3:21 To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne.

Not just a Holy Man, but a Holy God that is different from any "holy man" from any other religion who proclaim as their leader. All others will land you short of heavens door, but unlike as it is with the spokes of a wheel, each spoke leading to the axle. Other religions, other spokes of an axle do not lead to that One source (God), there is only one way to spend eternity with God, and that is believing on Jesus Christ, as the Son of God, who lived, died and rose again to ascend to the right hand of God the Father and has all authority in heaven and on earth to bring men out of their graves, some to eternal life, some to everlasting torment. Which side will you choose?

I call upon all who read this sermon, who is Jesus Christ in your life? Is He just some enigma that you find unable to understand with your mind. Do you use His name rarely accept in an expletive? If He is so unimportant to you and the world, why is the world so consumed by Him, unlike other "holy men."? Could it be that He was right, and the Bible is true? If it's not true, why do you not just dismiss it, but see you can't, because He is a part of us all....How you say? He created you and I. He longs for His creation and He longs to spend eternity with you. God has this in mind for all who will believe and who will not believe: II Peter,

3:9 The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some count slackness; but is longsuffering to you-ward, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.

3:10 But the day of the Lord will come as a thief; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall be dissolved with fervent heat, and the earth and the works that are therein shall be burned up.

He wants you in His family. Won't you hear His voice and make that decision to believe on the "One whom God has sent?" Because Jesus IS the Savior of the world, even you if you let Him.

This is Pastor Mike Taylor, praying God's Salvation in your life. If there is anything I can help you with, pray with you about, counsel you with, or just a listening ear, drop me a line at realteam1999@sbcglobal.net, God bless you, till we meet at Jesus feet.