

Who Do You Say I Am?

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January 4	Who Does this World Say Jesus Is? Who Do People Say Jesus Is?
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Who Do You Say I Am?

This study will allow the Holy Spirit to reveal Christ Jesus to you in a very personal and profound manner – as He is, when coupled with prayer and honest reasoning.

Commit to these Sunday studies to ensure the maximum benefit to you, your own personal growth in Christ Jesus, and in confidence that strengthens and fortifies your faith and empowers you in our Lord.

Why this topic?

According to Arizona Christian University's Cultural Research Center headed by Dr. George Barna, there is tremendous confusion about who God is. This confusion causes a believer in Christ Jesus to live beneath the privilege of God's intention but also brings eternal consequences.

John 14:6 declares, *"I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me."* There are not multiple ways to salvation. Just one.

Even Jesus warned that "Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord!' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only the one who does the will of My Father in heaven" (**Matthew 7:21**).

Take a moment to read the stunning findings published in February 18, 2025, by the Cultural Research Center:

*Glendale, AZ (February 18, 2025) — New findings from the American Worldview Inventory 2025 (AWVI 2025)—the sixth annual study conducted by Dr. George Barna and the Cultural Research Center (CRC) at Arizona Christian University—reveal that **American adults have dramatically redefined the very nature and existence of God**, contributing to widespread worldview confusion and a significant shift away from the God of the Bible.*

Despite two-thirds of Americans identifying as Christians, the majority of adults now reject core biblical teachings about God's nature, embracing instead an eclectic mix of beliefs drawn from competing worldviews. This phenomenon, known as Syncretism, is now the dominant worldview of 92% of American adults, while only 4% hold to a biblical worldview.

Emphasis was added to the key statements above. Read them again. Read them aloud.



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If we do not believe in the Jesus of the Bible, and He is the way, the truth, and the life and the only way to God our Father, then image standing before Him in the promised Tribunal of Christ (**2 Corinthians 5:10**). *For we all must appear before the tribunal of Christ, the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may be repaid or receive the things done in the body, whether good or worthless.*

Will your cries of “Lord, Lord!” be accepted and recognized by the Good Shepherd who knows His sheep, as Jesus said in **John 10:14**? He knows His sheep and His sheep know Him...follow His call, respond to His correction, seek His care, obey Him, receive His goading and leading.

This study is important to settle for once, for all, and for sure that the Jesus Christ of God’s Word is the One Whom you worship, follow, and know, as evidenced by your confession and your trust in action – your faith.

Decide you will be part of this study to ensure your confession is from the Bible and that your life aligns with God’s Word.

The consequences are eternal. The blessings promised are immeasurable and unimaginable. The judgment for believing in a culturally defined faith is eternal separation from God.

Let’s begin.



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Who Do People Say Jesus Is?

Week 1

Matthew 16:13–19 is an account with a great deal of dialogue written in red letters, like much of the content of the Gospels, Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. This account of Jesus questioning His disciples, or His followers, in Matthew also appears in the other Synoptic Gospels, or gospels which include the same events seen through different eyes, in **Mark 8:27-30** and **Luke 9:18-20**.

In **Matthew 16:13**, Jesus had come to the most northern point of Israel, Caesarea Philippi about 25 miles north of the Sea of Galilee and at the base of Mount Hermon, the site of Abraham’s Covenant with God, the symbol of unity and the commanded blessing in Psalm 133, and the site of the Transfiguration of Jesus. This mountain is significant in providing the water that feeds the Sea of Galilee and the headwaters of the Jordan River.

Jesus asked, “*His disciples, “Who do people say that the Son of Man is?”* (HCSB). “*Who do people say the Son of Man is?”* is how the NIV translation reads.

Jesus, a Hebrew version of the name Joshua, which literally means, “Jehovah is salvation,” was aware that culture and politics influence our beliefs and how we live our lives. These events occurred around AD 29-30 and 6-12 months prior to Jesus’ crucifixion.

The culture of that day, especially in this region, previously named, Panion, and was a sanctuary for the pagan god, Pan, was heavily influenced by Greek culture and Roman military rule and politics.

Similarly today, culture and politics influence our beliefs and how we live our lives. Yet, we have the benefit of the crucifixion, resurrection, ascension having occurred and the possession of God’s Holy Word.

So, who do people say Jesus is?

The disciples gave answers based on remarks and suggestions of others as the ministry with Jesus traveled throughout Israel as Jewish religion was opposing Jesus’ message.

“*Some say John the Baptist; others, Elijah; still others Jeremiah or one of the prophets.*” Understandably, these disciples were interacting with individuals who had a religious knowledge of Jewish Law and tradition comprised of the Torah (the first five books of the Old Testament) and the writings of the prophets, and the psalms. These are our Old Testament of today.



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So, just as we see happening as affirmed by the Cultural Research Center, humanity is inclined to make significant definitions based on information beyond truth, even within the church and the Christian faith.

Before examining that dangerous practice, let's answer this question posed by Jesus. *Who do people say Jesus Christ is?*

Who does the entertainment media say Jesus is? _____

Who does the modern body of politics say Jesus is? _____

Who does the cultural, popular opinion say Jesus is? _____

What other opinions are common of Jesus? _____

Just as the disciples witnessed, people then and today form beliefs based on experiences, popular acceptance, and convenience.

Experience is very often the lens that shapes the views that formulate our beliefs. That feeds into the recent trend of pronouncing, "My truth" or "Your truth" rather than "Truth." Experience is too often deceptive and is limited only to our perspective and feelings.

Popular acceptance fashions our beliefs through the profound desire to belong and avoid criticism. Sadly, beliefs are adopted not based on Truth but on prevailing trends or the shifting winds of our fickle culture. Being in the majority may feel safe but does not guarantee being right.

Convenience is a silent persuader as human nature pursues the path of least resistance, greatest acceptance, and requires the least from us individually regarding convictions, challenging our experiences, and giving us comfort in popularity.

Do you see others using experience, popular acceptance, and convenience in how Jesus is defined in your family, peer groups, and community? What about the media?

What about you?

Are *you* among the 4% of Americans who have a Biblical worldview, or filter through which every decision is made, especially in defining who Jesus is and who He is in your own life?



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Or are *you* among the 92% of Americans who have taken a mixture Truth, experience, acceptance, and convenience to define who Jesus is and who He is to you?

Next week, come prepared to discuss and answer Jesus' next question:

“But you, who do you say that I am?”

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Who Do You Say I Am?

Week 2

The importance of this study is the confession of your faith – your trust in action. Who do you say Jesus is? Your answer is your confession of faith.

Mistakenly, many repeat after a pastor or along with a group in reciting a prayer that declares their lives as sinful and in need of forgiveness of sins.

Those are accurate statements that are universally true. **Romans 3:23** is just one citation of fact by Paul to the church in Rome that applies to all who ever live: *“For all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God.”* That’s a fact whether we confess it or not.

Paul also wrote in **Romans 6:23** that *“the wages of sin is death, but the gift of god is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.”* Because every single person falls short of the glory and righteous holiness of God that means we’re sinners. Being sinners means we are in debt. We owe a debt we cannot pay since we cannot live lives without blemish or meet all the requirements of God’s Law. Therefore, we have earned the wages of sin, or death.

We are in debt; we are enslaved to sin and our sin debt. Well, that’s true, unless we accept the gift of eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Paul keeps traveling down this proverbial **“Roman’s Road”** of salvation asserting in **Romans 5:8** that *“God proves His own love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us!”* Our works didn’t give us salvation and cancel our debt. God’s love and Jesus’ life lived blamelessly, without sin and in obedience unto death on the criminal’s cross of execution gave us redemption or ransom for our sin debt.

This truth of salvation provided by God through His Son Jesus in love is only experienced through our *decision to believe*. That is authenticated first by our confession. **Faith is a decision, not a feeling.**

Romans 10:9-10 declare, *“If you confess with your mouth, “Jesus is Lord,” and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. One believes with the heart, resulting in righteousness and one confesses with the mouth, resulting in salvation.”*

In these verses, the Greek word for confess is *homologeō*, which means to speak the same thing” or to assent or agree with another. Used here, Paul is saying that as we say the same thing about our lives as sinners, the need of the Savior, and acknowledging that only Jesus Christ is the Savior who satisfied the requirements once and for all by God the Father who



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is Holy and Righteous to cover and pay for our sins, we are confessing our sins and need of the Savior.

The Roman's Road is complete with **Romans 10:13**, "*For everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.*"

Before you begin to check out and believe this study is too simple, stop.

Answer the question posed to the disciples. Jesus asked in **Matthew 16:15**, "*But you, who do you say that I am?*"

- Do you say the same thing about Jesus that your family has taught you?
- Do you say the same thing about Jesus that you learned in such-and-such church?
- Do you say the same thing about Jesus that your friends on Facebook, X, Instagram, and other acquaintances say?
- Do you say the same thing about Jesus that the Bible teaches?

The Greek word Jesus used to ask this question was *legō*. Jesus asked the group using the plural pronoun "you." But appreciate the fact that the *bēma* or judgment seat of Christ that Paul spoke of in **2 Corinthians 5:10** is meant for all, *each one*.

The confession of faith of each will be examined.

So, who do **you say** that Jesus is? Define Him. Describe Him.

Now, answer this question: Who is Jesus *in your life*?

Need clarification as to how those questions differ? Sure thing!

Humans are able to reason, think, and synthesize thought. Our minds take in information through reading, experiences, communication, and observations. We are able to observe



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and take in information that is used to have an awareness and knowledge of who Jesus was as a man on this earth and His current existence and influence.

But **knowing about Jesus** is a completely different thing than knowing Him.

In **Matthew 16:13-14**, Jesus heard the opinions of those who knew of Him by recognition of His sight or appearance, His reputation, or even His teachings, but remained unchanged. Even demons know Jesus as noted in **Mark 1:24** and **James 2:19**.

Having an awareness of Jesus is unlike knowing Jesus through a personal relationship indicated by the Greek word *ginōskō*. This word used for knowing means to have relational knowledge, an intimate, experiential knowledge that is beautifully demonstrated by Jesus' words as the good Shepherd in **John 10:14**, "*I know My own sheep, and they know Me.*"

How? Just as He recognizes each of us as distinct, He sees our differences and uniqueness. Jesus has care, concern, and an ongoing relationship with us, we recognize His voice, see His presence as a comfort, for provision, for protection, and has a relationship with Him in trust and confidence.

Just like the disciples reported that many had *an awareness and opinions* of Jesus, His identity, and influence but were **not changed**, today, many have opinions and even an awareness of Jesus Christ the Son of God. Yet their lives are unchanged by that superficial and intellectual, not relational, relationship.

Now, head back up to the space provided and write down who Jesus is in your own life. Be honest. This is between you and Jesus, who already knows. Remember, the Shepherd knows His sheep.

We can say things that make us sound really smart by repeating what we hear in sermons, even what we read in God' Word. We can even be in church and have a great relationship with church and the family of faith at Abba's House.

But do you know Jesus Christ as He is in the Bible? Are you changed because of that **knowing relationship**?

Oh, and don't mistake church attendance, even Bible reading that is not living the values and virtues taught and lived by Jesus as the same as being like Jesus.

You could stand inside your garage, even pretend to be a car in motion, making childish zooming noises. But you wouldn't be a car. Make sure you have the relationship with Jesus to know Him and not the activities around religion and even terrifically good people

So, how can you know if you're changed and have Jesus as both the One who saves you from your sin and Lord who rewards you for the life you live?



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Do you love? Do you first love Jesus and His Word? Do you love His Presence whether it's in your own fellowship at home, in prayer, in worship or at church with fellow believers? Do you love others?

Jesus told His disciples and informs us today that the world will know His followers by our love, one for another. **John 13:35** records Jesus saying, *“By this all people will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.”* Loving like Jesus defines us. Loving like Jesus authenticates us. That love must be just as Jesus loved, not as this world or even religion defines.

Who you say Jesus is, or your confession, will be authenticated or proven valid, in Jesus' own words, by your obedience. **John 14:15** records Jesus as saying, **“If you love Me, you will keep My commands.”** That's repeated by Jesus in **verses 21 and 23.** *“The one who has My commands and keeps them is the one who loves Me...If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word.”*

Before we begin looking at a few of the more than 200 names and identities given to Jesus in the Bible, it's critical to establish who you say He is and who He is in your life.

Call to action: Right now stop. Just stop. Do you know of the specific instance when you experienced the drawing of God to Him in love and recognized your need of Jesus' love and complete sacrifice for your sins? Do you know of a specific time when you walked that proverbial Roman's Road and confessed your sins and confessed Jesus as the only One who can save you? Did you ask Jesus to both save you and become the Agent of change in your life that impacts how you think, how you talk, how you love, how you want to love others?

Make today that day; make this moment yours. Pray. Just talk to God.

Make this study more than just another exercise in expanding your knowledge about Jesus. Experience Jesus personally in this study of His Word and let Him influence and change your life beginning with the forgiveness of your sins, forgiveness of the guilt of your sins, and the contentment in fellowship with Him. **Decide to follow Jesus.**

You have the opportunity to grow deeper. Redeem this time, make the most of it.

Next week: Come prepared to journey through four prominent names and roles of Jesus Christ in the Gospels and throughout the New Testament.

Relax. You'll get to know the more than 200 names of Jesus as you grow deeper!



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Who Is Jesus?
Fully God
Week 3

Of the more than 200 names of Jesus throughout all of Scripture, the Gospels and the New Testament letters provide Jesus speaking of Himself, firsthand witness accounts, and letters written about 50 years or less after His ministry, crucifixion, resurrection, and ascension.

Let's look at four prominent names that confer more than just salutary titles of Jesus. Instead, these are names that reflect almost indescribable roles and authority found in the One who is fully God, who showed us how to be like Jesus who lived a life emptied of His deity but as the Word made flesh.

Turn to **John 1:1-16**.

Recall as we listed names of Jesus' reputation and renown in our culture and among those whose definition of Him comes from other sources other than the Bible that He's known as a good man.

Yes! He was and is as the Living Christ. But Jesus was flesh...for a window of time, for a season... but never ceased being God. Prior to being conceived of Mary by the miracle performed by the Holy Spirit to implant within a virgin teenager the life of Jesus in her womb, Jesus was fully God even before creation and will forevermore be.

Jesus was and is fully God.

Let's pray that the same Holy Spirit opens the womb of our souls and implants the revelation of truth today and for the remaining 10 weeks of this study the Holy Names and Authority of Jesus so that we may better understand Him, understand our identity in Christ, and how to live our lives as Christians or those who are Christ-like.

The Gospel according to John was written by a fisherman raised in the faith of Judaism who was called by Jesus Himself to join Him as a disciple, or learning follower. John was no religiously trained expert. But his devotion and zeal for Jesus should inform us all that Jesus is available and shows Himself to any and all who receive Him.

John happened to be the only one of the original disciples who died of old age and endured great persecution for his belief in Jesus Christ, even to the point of being immersed in boiling oil, only to live to die of old age.



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Take John's words and revelations provided as both firsthand accounts as well as divine inspirations made possible by the Holy Spirit.

John 1:1 declares, "*In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.*" This is one of four times in the Bible that Jesus is called the Word, or *logos*, all used by John as the author – here, **John 1:14, 1 John 1:1, Revelation 19:13**.

From the origins of our concept of time, Jesus, the Word, was there. He was. He is. He forevermore will be.

How is it that One Person of the Trinity is the Word, or a word, a saying uttered by a living voice, and the embodiment of a conception or idea?

Well, **what are words?** They are the unique formations of those who bear the Image of God to reveal the thoughts of the speaker for the purpose of communication. Christ is the Eternal Word which revealed and reveals God to humanity. As the Word made flesh, Jesus lived the very utterances of Yahweh, the great I Am, and Jehovah.

The context of this powerful image of Jesus as part of the Triune God, or Father, Son and Holy Spirit, was accepted by Jews who heard this to mean "Jesus is God." Hebrews accepted the Word as an agent of creation and change, the message of God sent through His Law, His prophets, and set the framework for holiness.

Jews, too, accepted this as blasphemous to equate a fleshly man with being God not understanding that the God they had worshipped in the Old Testament in the tent of the meeting, or tabernacle, and the Temple, had sent His Son. Contrast this to the Greeks who heard John and read this in the original of authorship, Greek, to be the principal method of reasoning that was highly prized in the Greco culture of thought.

Keep reading. **John 1:2-3** declares that the Word was with the Father, the First Person of the Trinity, at the first of all creation. But not just present but operating as the authority that literally created from nothing that which was and is.

In the original Greek language, John wrote and revealed that Jesus was not just present. The spoken Word of God the Father went forth in authority to accomplish God the Father's will. All things were made and established to be through Jesus, the Word, the Second Person of the Trinity.

At creation's first instant, the Word, spoken by God the Father and Creator, was the Authoritative Truth: "*...apart from Him not one thing was created that has been created.*"

A life application immediately that we must see is Jesus was and is the expression of God's thoughts that demonstrates power and authority. Likewise, our words convey our



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expressions and can carry the power of life and death when spoken (**Proverbs 18:21**). Understand **how profound and powerful** our words are! **Do your words reflect your will or God's?**

Our own words are a part of us. They reveal the very depths of our hearts. Jesus said so in **Matthew 12:34**, echoing **Proverbs 4:23**. When we speak, we reveal our hearts but also establish the atmosphere around us that we operate in and create.

God spoke and there was life. **John 1:4** declares “*Life was in Him.*” Where Jesus is, there is life. There is *zōē* in the Greek, or the vitality, power, and capacity to exist, animate, grow, and reproduce.

Do your words, the expression of who your heart is and who you really are, **bring life and establish a living, thriving atmosphere?**

Verse 4 continues the truth that's completed in **verse 5**. The life of Jesus, spoken as the Word of God, is the Light, the light of men. Where Jesus is, darkness is forced into nonexistence.

Consider the definition of darkness. Look it up and write it down: _____

Darkness is the *absence of light*. Spiritual darkness is the absence of Jesus Christ, the Word of God and “*Light of the world,*” and the Second Person of the Godhead.

Do you have the Light of Jesus in your life? Do you radiate that Light?

Remember, darkness cannot exist with Light. Read that again, in contrast to popular bumper stickers and demands of the secular, sin-filled world to “CoExist!” Light and darkness *do not* and *cannot* coexist.

John continues in **verses 10-13** to reveal that Jesus came to the Jews, or His people first, as the descendent from Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and David but was rejected. He gave, in **verses 12-13**, the right to become children of God who “*were born, not of blood, or of the flesh, or the will of man, but of God.*”

Again, these were blasphemous or sacrilegious ideas and words to the Jews of the day. This, however, is critical to establish that **our salvation experience of being reborn spiritually is a miracle** and no simple gesture of joining an organize group or ideology.

Jesus, the Word of God, spoken in our lives creates in you and all who believe and receive this incredible gift, **a new creation** and child of God.



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Jesus was much more than a good man, a prophet of the day, or one of a few ways accepted that permits universal access to God the Father.

Keep reading. **John 1:14** declares, “*The Word became flesh and took up residence or dwelt among us.*”

This *logos* became flesh and lived among the very created beings He created into being and gave life and light.

Take a look at **John 1:14-16**. In The Passion Translation, the words paint a beautiful picture: “*And so the Living Expression became a man and lived among us! We gazed upon his glory, the glory of the One and Only who came from the Father overflowing with tender mercy and truth...And from the overflow of his fullness we received grace heaped upon more grace!*”

A religion, politics, or ideology is not alive, unlike the fullness of God who dwelt upon this earth. Religion, politics, and ideology feature no glory or emanating brilliance as Jesus did in His life and loving ways. Religion, politics, and ideology are not so abundantly full and overflowing with grace, or joy, good will and loving kindness, that others receive from that super abundance.

God the Father sent His Son as the fullness of Him.

Call to action: To prepare for next week’s expanded study of Jesus as fully God beyond the Gospels, reflect on your life and relationship with Jesus as described in the verses studied today – The Word of God, the *logos*. Reread **John 1:1-16** and ask the Holy Spirit to reveal to you this fullness to experience grace heaped upon more grace.

What relationship do you have with the Word of God? No, Jesus is not “The Bible.” But “The Bible” does contain divinely inspired and spoken truth about the Trinity in all of Its Fullness – Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Read **John 8:31-32** (NKJV) which records Jesus’ words, “*If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed. And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall set you free.*” Jesus was saying to abide in the sum total of all He said. He was inviting His disciples and us to abide in Him. All His Word points to Him.

Do you abide in God’s Word, do you tarry in His Word to read and understand, or do you read a meme here and there on social media with a verse and thought for the day?

Consider one final fact. God chose to express Himself in the Word who became flesh. **He wants to communicate with you. He wants fellowship, relationship, and companionship with you.**



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How do **you** make this part of your day and life? _____

Next week, we'll look at God's Word speaking of the Word made flesh and fullness of God beyond the Gospels. Understand that this fact was embraced by the blue collared fisherman and the highly educated Jewish former Pharisee.

Be ready to answer the question, "*Is Jesus honored and known as God in and through your life?*"

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**Who Is Jesus?
Fully God
Week 4**

In direct contrast to last week's study, citing primarily the Gospel according to John's eyewitness account, today's study includes on one reference from the former fisherman. Instead, this week, the letters to churches throughout the New Testament form the basis of the text, which were penned by Paul.

Instead of being a hands-on worker, Paul was first named Saul, his Hebrew name. Commentaries suggest that Paul was an extremely learned man, educated and mentored as child by Gamaliel, the grandson of the renowned Rabbi Hillel, but with less strict views as both a rabbi, Pharisee, and expert in the Jewish Law (**Philippians 3:4-6**).

Paul was believed to have been fluent in four languages – Hebrew, Aramaic, Greek, and Latin.

God equipped such an orator and writer to spread the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

While John died of old age, but was intended by the enemies of Jesus to have been killed for his faith, Paul was martyred. Paul lost his life through beheading because of his faith in Jesus Christ.

Why are these facts important? **It is not human nature to be willing to die for something that is not true.** Both these men were willing to die for their faith in Jesus Christ.

Paul's was well-versed in the Nature of God Almighty, Jehovah. He was expert in the Jewish faith as a Pharisee, or leader of Judaism. For his writings to be as detailed and so expansive on Jesus as the fullness of God, we should see that he, too, knew and experienced Jesus not just as a good man, a prophet of old, or an anointed speaker or messenger.

Let's understand Paul's writings to the various churches established after Jesus' crucifixion.

Colossians 1:15-20 were verses written by Paul to the church at Colosse. These words are noted by commentaries as among "the strongest statements about the divine nature of Christ found anywhere in the Bible" not only equating Jesus to God but that He also reveals God to humanity, which was the original intent of creation before the fall of the first Adam.



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See in these words that Jesus was

- the visible image of the invisible God,
- the Creator,
- the Sustainer,
- the Head of the body, His church,
- the flesh that contained the fullness of God,
- the Atonement that reconciles all who receive Him.

Despite Jesus being the Second Person of the Trinity, **Philippians 2:5-11** both reveals and instructs us to **be as Jesus in our attitudes, or our mindset that governs our actions.**

Paul wrote to the believers in Philippi, to “*make your own attitude that of Christ Jesus.*” How’s that?

Verse 6 explains that Jesus did *not* consider His deity and equality with God as something that eclipsed the will of God the Father.

As a Christ follower, or Christian, who is to be Christ-like, do you prioritize the will of God the Father? **Jesus knew the will of God the Father because He was the Word made flesh.**

Do you make the Word of God flesh by reading, reflecting upon it, and taking the revelation beyond an awareness to become your practices, your life, and make His ways your ways?

Phil. 2:7-8 show us how to be like Jesus. Jesus emptied Himself, or set aside His own deity, and humbled Himself in obedience to the will of God the Father to the point of death on the cross.

As believers in Christ Jesus, this is **how we authenticate our faith** as bona fide. We live it because we have emptied ourselves of our own thoughts, our own ways, our own priorities, and are yielded through prayer, God’s Word, and service to be like Jesus.

Empty. Empty ourselves. Imagine a vessel filled to the top with water. As a vessel completely full of water, there’s no room for new wine that’s available through the Holy Spirit and His Presence. We have to make room.

If one pours out just a little of the water, the new wine is not robust and has lost its flavor due to the dilution. It does not meet the definition of new wine.

If one empties the vessel of the water and allows the new wine to be filled to capacity, there is no dilution. The new wine has been transferred in its complete quality and value.

Simply, **we have the amount of Jesus we want.**



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Read that again and say it out loud: **/ have the amount of Jesus I want.** If / want more, / have to make room for more. If / want to be an authentic Christian, or Christ-like, / must empty myself, be filled by Jesus's Spirit, and live as He lived – in love, grace, mercy, and joy in serving God and others in word and deed.

It's a decision. **Decide.**

Exactly how much are you willing to empty yourself to make room for Jesus? Don't say "all" unless you really mean it. God already knows. Decide.

Reading further, **Philippians 2:9-11** records that Jesus not only existed as the Second Person of God and emptied Himself to serve but was honored and exalted for His obedience as the example for us all.

What makes any single human believe that God would expect any less of us than He did His only Son, Jesus? Jesus came for the purpose of salvation. But make no mistake, **His life in the flesh was to show us how to live as flesh in this world, but not of it.** That can only be done when we empty ourselves and are filled with the same Spirit, the Holy Spirit – the Third Person of the Trinity, Who will give us the same mindset, heart, and power to live like Jesus...and be obedient and positioned for reward and blessings.

Knowing Jesus as God in His fullness is critically important to the confession of our faith. As we recognize Jesus, know Him for all that He is, and live in love and service to Him, our obedience is to the One Living God – the Father, the Son, and Holy Spirit.

Worshipping Jesus as the only Way, the only Truth, and the only Life that gives access to God the Father and the Holy Spirit is more than an emotional experience, a feeling, an association with a denomination, or even attendance at church.

Call to Action: Use this week to know Jesus as God. Worship Him in His fullness. Love Him completely. Be changed by His Power as He blesses your decision, obedience, and life. Reread these verses and enter into prayer daily honoring Jesus as God.



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Who Is Jesus?
Servant
Week 5

“...whoever wants to be great among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first among you must be a servant to all. For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life-a ransom for many.”

Mark in his gospel writings transcribed this event as experienced by his friend, Peter. Those walking in service with Jesus asked if they could sit in honor with Him as He reigned in the kingdom of which He spoke and taught.

Matthew, the tax collector-turned-disciple recorded the exact same event from his own eyes. He attributed some of the requests of this highest honor to the mother of James and John, the inquiring brothers from **Mark 10:43-45**. In **Matthew 20:26-28**, the former accountant and hated tool of the government that took wealth from the Jews transcribed the identical quote from Jesus, *“...whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever want to be first among you must be servant to all, just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to ser, and to give His life-a ransom for many.”*

Dr. Luke recorded Jesus making similar comments during the Last Supper as He spoke of the New Covenant of His Body being broken for sacrifice and His blood being shed for forgiveness and sin debt.

During this literal turning point in all of human history, a disagreement arose among disciples as to which of them would be greatest. Their misguided definitions of who Jesus had caused them to focus on their own remarkability, their own prominence and renown, while hearing Truth from God’s own Son who was the promised Messiah fulfilling the prophecies of centuries and millennia (**Luke 22:24-27**).

Then in John, the one who dared to ask Jesus Christ to be honored to sit at His side, the Son of God did what He said for us to do-serving.

Turn to **John 13:1-15**. Let’s look at this entire event to understand the **indisputable fact that to be like Jesus, one must serve**. Period. If that is not a characteristic of your life, read the words of John.

May the Power of the Living God, His Holy Spirit cover these words, His Truth, to bring these forth to cut both ways for growth and for correction, as we read them for application. After you read these words, don’t dare remain unchanged.



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Verses 1-3 set the frame around the picture relative to context and time. This was mere hours before Jesus' betrayal, arrest, and phony trial that would lead to His criminal prosecution and execution by both the religious establishment and the military-political powers.

The Passover approached. Faithful, devout Jews were in Jerusalem for this holy time tied back to the miracles of the Exodus when the blood of an innocent lamb was shed, painted on the doorposts and lintel of the homes of the Jews as the Death Angel passed over claiming the lives of all first-born sons in the families sleeping in homes uncovered, exposed without the blood. This final plague of Yahweh, God Almighty, had been released to free the Hebrews from captivity and slavery (**Exodus 11-12**) and also to establish the permanent statute of the consuming of the unleavened bread, the application of the blood, and great praise for the deliverance of those called out to be God's people.

In these three verses, it's established by an eyewitness, John, that the time had arrived as Jesus "*was going back to God*" (**v. 3**) with the sequence of events for betrayal in motion, as ordained by God in His plan for redemption.

In **verse 4**, Jesus "*laid aside His robe and took a towel, and tied it around Himself.*"

Answer the questions below. God already knows. Just be honest, now, with yourself.

- What robe of renown and reputation do I wear that keeps me from serving, praising, being what I was intended to be and am to be in the blessing of God's kingdom?

- Am I more interested in the outward appearance before the eyes of others to serve in my calling and service to Jesus? _____
- Am I willing to lay down that which has earthly value and take up the lowly, humble towel of service in love like Jesus? _____

Read **verse 5**. The actions Jesus was performing were that of a slave. Washing the filthy feet of men who had walked the dusty, dry roads of the day was no act a man would do if his social status was above that of a slave. Jesus humbled Himself, again.

- Are you **willing to empty yourself** of status, pride, station, and self to be humbled for service like Jesus? Why or why not?

- Regardless of your gifting, are you **willing to answer the call of Jesus** to meet the needs of others, of His kingdom, and follow His own example? Why or why not?



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Read **verses 6-11**. The exchange seen by others between Jesus and Peter is often how we are in our lives.

Do you see that Peter wanted to take control of this situation, again, while in what he likely believed to be in respect and honor, and demand that Jesus be in *his* life on *his* terms, not those of Jesus? **How do you allow Jesus to live in and through you-on your terms or His?**

Read **verse 12**. After His work was complete, Jesus put His robe back on, reclined at rest, then inquired, *“Do you know what I have done for you?”*

Jesus was doing what He has done. He washed us **who have allowed Him** to cleanse us of our all our sins, our filth that separates us from God the Father which saves us, ransoms us from eternal separation in hell...on His terms.

Jesus is now robed in glory as our High Priest of heaven making intercession for us at all times before God our Father in His complete work-nothing else has to be done. His sacrifice was much more than sufficient. **His blood still saves!**

Jesus will absolutely ask of each human ever to live, *“Do you know what I have done for you?”* as He examines our lives as proof or evidence that our faith in Him was authenticate and bore fruit of His Presence in our lives. What will He see looking into your life?

In the immediate and present day, however, there is a critical lesson of application that guarantees the evidence of our lives as we stand before Him proves the validity of His Presence and Power in our lives. Keep reading in **verses 13-15**.

“You call me Teacher and Lord. This is well said, for I am,” Jesus declared in **verse 13**.

It matters what we call Him. As Teacher, Jesus instructed His disciples or followers then and today, with verbal stories, parables, and sermons as words from God. Jesus demonstrated life governed by His Holy Spirit that all flesh is able to live on this earth if we permit our minds, our hearts, and our actions to be emptied of our will and empowered to do the Father’s will.

That’s “if.”

As Lord, Jesus acknowledged His authority in the lives of His disciples then and now. Jesus is Lord **if** He is given authority and the rightful position of reigning ruler of our lives. **His authority included redefining leadership** and establishing that **humble service is expected** in His Kingdom.

Jesus undeniably spells it out in **verses 14-15** that the expectation is for each of His followers to serve each other in a manner of humble gratitude for what He’s done for us.



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Jesus leaves nothing to our imagination or misinterpretation. “*For I have given you an example that you also should do just as I have done for you.*”

Call to Action: Answer the questions below and use the week for introspection and confession. Change your mind, or repent before Jesus. Choose to serve rather than be served. Be determined to have the answer that honors the Savior and King as He asks you, “Do you know what I have done for you?” But let your life answer that question in this lifetime.

St. Francis of Assisi, the Italian who founded the Franciscan Order who lived an extremely simple life without material wealth in humility and service while preaching, has been credited with the statement, “Preach the Gospel at all times, if necessary use words.”

The lives we live are an aggregate composition of all that we think, believe, and do. Aggregate. Simple good works without a pure mind and heart before God are seen as they are - acts.

But a mind that has decided to accept Christ, believe Christ, and live Christ permits the heart to have love, joy, and grace. Knowing the love of God made full in His Son Jesus. Bears fruit that involves serving others.

- Am I willing to be like Jesus to the point of obedience in His example of dying to self, laying aside that which is material and important to this world, and serve? _____
- Do I use excuses like time, lack of money, or even substitute financial giving for the giving of my time? Do I use excuses like a lack of gifting or calling to avoid serving as Jesus instructed us to serve? _____

Next week: See the model of Servant that Jesus established beginning with the term *Christianos* and making application in our day.



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Who Is Jesus?

Servant

Week 6

Jesus revealed Himself to be Servant in the Gospel accounts that captured His life by eyewitness accounts and firsthand information.

As the church, or the *ekklesia*-the called out gathering or assembly-formed in the book appropriately titled, “The Acts of the Apostles,” the first use of the term “Christians” was used.

Just as we are studying by reading God’s Word, examining the Truth compared to our lives, and application as to our confession of Who Jesus is, there’s a term that defines who were are as His believers.

Three times in the New Testament the term “Christian” is used. We use it as our way of saying we believe in Him and aspire to be like Jesus. But do we understand *how* it came to be and meaning?

Turn to **Acts 11:26**. The called out who were followers of Jesus, His people, began as 12 who accepted His personal invitation to follow Him (**Matthew 10:2-4**). The body of followers grew to 70-72 as they were sent out for ministry (**Luke 10:1, 17**). By the time the Day of Pentecost came, or the Jewish festival held annually 50 days after the Passover, there was 120 gathered in obedience in the upper room “*in one accord*,” or in unity, praying for revelation of the Promise Jesus had made (**Acts 1:15**). Then, suddenly, their faithfulness demonstrated through obedience and unity were blessed by God’s faithfulness to send His Spirit adding 3,000 believers to His miraculous Power and the message of Peter (**Acts 2:41**) with believers added daily until 5,000 more men (women and children didn’t make the headcount in that day!) in **Acts 4:4**.

This heavenly math of multiplication fulfilled so much Scripture, even **Genesis 8:22**, promising seedtime and harvest. From the single Seed of Jesus’ life falling to the ground in obedience to His Father’s will, the harvest was bearing “*much fruit!*”

As we read **Acts 11:26** and see the **term Christian**, Dr. Luke, the author of the Gospel in his name and these words in Acts, was writing from a window of growth of the Gospel of Jesus Christ in Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and now the ends of the earth. Luke was now writing of the Church in Antioch, the first established church for Gentiles, in the largest city of the



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Roman Empire located north of Phoenicia in Syria and just a few hundred miles away from Tarsus, Paul's hometown.

Luke wrote that Barnabas had been busy serving at the Church of Antioch until he went to Tarsus to find Paul, who had been sent there as the recently converted Saul for his own protection and time to grow and mature in the faith. Paul returned to Antioch with Barnabas to minister to this unique body of believers.

The blend of Jews and Gentiles was also different in the languages they spoke and the cultures from which they came. The only thing these people shared in common was Jesus. The Greek term **Christianos** was borne but not as you might think.

The Greek term literally means "*Christ-ones*." It wasn't what the followers, believers, or Apostles (messengers) called themselves. **It was what the culture called them.** This was intended and first used as a term to marginalize or a label of scorn. Why?

Christ-ones didn't fit the culture in the First Century. **Christ-ones are not to fit the culture in any century.** We are to be in this world and not of it (**John 17:14-16**).

So, **how are you like Christ** in putting action to your faith in service?

Last week's study and the week of reflection and examination issued a call to action to serve rather than be served. **We were and are to demonstrate with our lives, our actions that we understand what Jesus has done for us.**

Turn to **James 2:14-20**. There should be no doubt of the confession of faith recognizing Jesus as **Savior and Lord** that proves a life abiding in the Vine of Jesus Christ (**John 15:1-8**) in contrast to those who only say they have faith but have no accompanying **works, or ergon**.

If the word **ergon** resembles something, it should. Today, the term ergonomic is often used as a state of productivity is pursued. It means to be of or designed for efficiency and optimal function and performance. The key terms here are efficiency, function, and performance. Our faith is meant to involve effort, works, and doing, *not just being* sedentary.



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James, the half blood brother of Jesus who was not a believer until after Jesus was resurrected, was plain: **One can say** he has faith but **works must accompany that faith for it to be genuine**. Read **verse 14** again.

One might say they *have* faith but “does not have works.” The Greek for have is the word *echo*. Used in this context it literally means that a person may pronounce in speech that they believe and have faith but do not possess the ability or have the work, function, and performance that comes **as a result of those spoken words if true**.

Ooooffff. Yeah. That might smart. Keep reading.

James continues noting the words we *say* may offer blessings *but do nothing* to accomplish the blessings we pronounce (**James 2:15-16**). He punctuates that with an exclamation that “*In the same way faith, if it doesn’t have works is dead by itself*” in **verse 17**.

Lifeless. Dead. The Greek word *nekros* makes it plain. **For our faith to be alive, living in us, through us and in Christ, we must have works or outward demonstrations of this faith.**

Yes. It’s important to have an awareness and knowledge of God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. But we must have demonstrations of the Life of God living in and through us.

Read **verses 18-19**. “*You believe that there is one God. You do well. Even the demons believe - and tremble!*” **Having an intellection assent and awareness is not believing** in the One Living God to the point of being His called out, obedient, and living representative in this life to bring His “kingdom come, His will be done.”

Jesus was Servant. Jesus is Servant through His obedient believers today operating as His Body-the Church. The Body of Christ empowered by the Holy Spirit is Jesus in the world this moment and until Jesus returns in the rapture.

Answer some questions. Again, God already knows your answers. These are just for you, your personal examination, and an opportunity to renew your faith commitment to Jesus.

- **Do you talk** about believing in Jesus only or does your life through the decisions and choices you make echo that claim in actions?



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- **Do your actions** as a believer in Jesus Christ only **align** in certain aspects of your life, such as Bible reading, attending church and church events, and actions when you're at church or around other believers?

- **Do you serve** in the defined meaning that was uttered by Jesus Christ Himself in the Gospels- *diakoneō*-which means you wait on, you attend to another's interests, you minister through servanthood? _____
- Understanding that **serving as defined by Jesus is a demonstration and authentication of our faith which He modeled**, what is your prayer? Are you willing and have the capacity to empty yourself to be used of Jesus as His representative in some action, in some area of service in attending the needs of others for His glory?

Call to action: Write your own prayer then read it *aloud each day this week*. Ask the Holy Spirit, Jesus' promised Presence who is our Counselor, Comforter, and Guide, to both convict you and reveal to you opportunities to demonstration and activate your beliefs, your faith beyond the intellectual awareness.

Next week: Who exactly do we serve?



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**Who Is Jesus?
The Savior
Week 7**

If you're old enough to remember the *annual Charlie Brown Christmas Special* that aired during primetime for 35 years until the ABC Network purchased the franchise rights to the Peanuts Gang, you might be able to recite the famous words of the Bible as depicted by the character Linus.

Charlie Brown's best friend explained "what Christmas is all about" in his recitation of **Luke 2:8-14**. That animated, 80-second clip is easily found on YouTube which shows the insecure Linus, whose blanket was always with him, boldly proclaim standing in the limelight of a stage,

"And behold, an angel of the Lord stood before them and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and there were greatly afraid. Then, the angel said to them, 'Do not be afraid, for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy which will be to all people. For there is born to you this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. And this will be the sign to you: You will find a Babe wrapped in swaddling cloths, lying in a manger.' And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying:

'Glory to God in the highest And on earth peace, goodwill toward men!'

...That's what Christmas is all about, Charlie Brown."

Savior. Jesus Christ is the Savior had been foretold for generations by the Old Testament prophets. The Savior was referenced in the Garden of Eden after the First Adam and his bride had sinned in rebellion. God Himself told the deceiving serpent satan, "And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her Seed; He shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise His heel."

The spiritual battle has never stopped. All of humanity has the curse of fallen or sinful flesh. God also established in Genesis the requirement of blood to be shed for the covering of sins.

Next week, we'll spend time understanding **why we need the Savior**. This week let's go deeper seeing **why God sent Jesus** for us that made Him the Ultimate Sacrifice for humanity's sake in Luke that began with the babe in swaddling clothes.

John 3:16: *"For God so love the world that He gave His only begotten Son – His one and only Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life."*

Many of us learned this verse first in our homes, at a Vacation Bible School, or from hearing it spoken in sermons and invitations to know Jesus as Savior. Let's understand the



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staggering importance of Jesus' own words spoken to the Pharisee, Nicodemus, that were a literal turning point in all of human history.

God loved. God loves. God *IS* love.

1 John 4:7-8 is not just instructive, John's words reveal God's very Nature. "*Beloved, let us love on another, for love is of God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. He who does not love doesn't not know God, **for God is love.***"

"God is love." In Greek, the original language of the New Testament authors, *agápē* is the word used which means the demonstration of affection, good will, benevolence in charity (expecting nothing in return). God's very Nature is the demonstration of love. All He is and does in His perfect will is in love because that's Who He is.

In both **John 3:16** and **1 John 4:9-10**, John records the Truth that God's demonstration of Himself (*agápē* love) was in action by sending His Son as the sacrifice for our sins. **Jesus was born to die**...after He revealed to all of humanity the fullness of God in flesh.

The study of Jesus as Servant for two weeks revealed and established *how* we are to live our lives with the two greatest commands telling us that our love is to be outwardly demonstrated in obedience as evidence of Whose we are in this spiritual battle called life.

Yet, we have a difficult time understanding the magnitude of God's love since it is immeasurable. But also because **our culture has redefined love.**

The selfless, sacrificial and unconditional love shown to humanity by God in both the Old and New Testaments that is to be replicated and modeled in our own lives, is not common in culture.

How is love defined in modern culture? What are some characteristics of love you see in your life today and what are demonstrations of that love as culture defines it?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

The word "love" in modern culture is so commonly used. Whether it's one's favorable preference to a flavor of ice cream, being a fan of a musical talent or song, enjoying an acquaintance, or even having a great time during an event or activity, the phrase is often heard, "I love this!"

In Greek, yes, there were various **words for love in God's Word.**

- Erotic or romantic love is **érōs**;
- Brotherly love is **philia**;



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- Motherly or parental love is **storgē**.

There are a few more Greek words for love that are *not* used within the Bible that may reveal spiritual truths.

- **Xenía** is the Greek word for the demonstration of love via hospitality and reciprocation.
- **Philautía** is the Greek for self-love or having regard for one's own advantage or interests, one's own happiness.

There are clear differences between the **agápē love that is God**, demonstrated by God, and instructed of God to be lived out by those who take His Name and the various types of love, especially *philautía*, or self-love, literally the exact opposite.

God's immeasurable **agápē sent Jesus to die in our place** for the covering of our sins which makes us children of God and gives us everlasting life that permits access to the Most High Supreme Holy God in His complete Trinity – God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit.

But **what made Him Savior?**

Jesus was the Word made flesh, present at the formation and foundation of the earth – **John 1:1-14**. God promised salvation to His people – the rescue and deliverance from sin and the due penalty in order to restore fellowship with the Father - throughout the Old Testament.

Jesus Christ, whose name is literally Jehovah is Salvation, was and is the promised Salvation sent in love.

Jesus was sent in love, to love, and to reproduce love through His people – us, His followers – and not to condemn. Jesus came to save. **But how is it that the death of Jesus saves us?**

It's literally a miracle. **Salvation is a miracle we each experience.**

A quick walk through the Old Testament reveals that **God's original intent** was a personal relationship with His created humans, made in His Image. When the First Adam sinned, that sin separated the beings God loved and cherished from His Presence.

If you'll remember, God took hides of animals He sacrificed to cover the nakedness of the First Couple. **Blood was shed, which means the essence of life was given to cover sin.**

We focus on the fact that Adam and Eve were aware of their nakedness in God's Presence as He walked through the Garden and hid until God clothed them. But we often miss the fact that those animal skins were a result of God requiring a blood sacrifice (**Genesis 3:8-13, 21**).



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This began the **eternal pattern that revealed the Holiness of God. God still requires a blood sacrifice to cover sin.** The animals sacrificed in the Garden were innocent and blameless. They died for sins not of their own.

Similarly, **God established the requirement of blood** to be shed and applied in Exodus called **the Passover**, a permanent observance, which began as the final plague that resulted in the release of the Hebrews from centuries of captivity as slaves in Egypt. Don't miss the fact that the Bible tells us that Yahweh Himself passed over the homes marked by the innocent blood of a sacrificed lamb painted on the lintel and doorposts of the Hebrew homes. Likewise, Yahweh Himself took the firstborn males of families, of herds, all firstborn males as the sacrifice to Himself to cover sin (**Exodus 12:29-32**).

From that point forward, the Passover was permanently established to be an annual sacrifice to cover God's people whom He loved and wanted to bless and dwell among.

Later in Exodus, after the literal exodus to liberty from slavery, God wanted to dwell among His people again. So, He instructed Moses on the details to build a tabernacle, or tent of the meeting. Within that tent were holy and consecrated, or set apart items with eternal meaning.

One of those items was the Ark of the Covenant which contained the Ten Commandments and a few other artifacts of spiritual importance. That Ark, or a sacred box, had a lid or cover. That cover was called the Mercy Seat and was made of pure gold. Annually, it was covered by the blood of innocent lambs to cover the sins of God's people and giving access to God Who dwelled among the Hebrews (**Exodus 25:10-22**).

Again, God made a way for His beloved people to access to Him. The Most High God Who is Supreme above all powers, principalities, or fallen angels loved His people so much that He wanted to dwell among them.

The Most Holy and High God still requires a blood sacrifice that is innocent and blameless. Jesus, as we have learned already, literally emptied Himself of any deity, and obeyed the Father's will. Jesus was the blameless, innocent sacrifice.

Call to action: Spend the week in your Bible. Look up these verses and ask the Holy Spirit to speak to you about the incalculable love of God that has always existed and always will through His desire to dwell with us.

Next week: God's Word and His Spirit will reveal our need for the Savior and the urgency to understand and live in that eternal love.



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**Who Is Jesus?
The Savior
Week 8**

Last week, we looked at **why God sent Jesus** to die for our sins to be our Savior. Simply, because He loves you, us, and all who will receive Him.

Peter summed it up when He wrote that the Lord “is patient with you, not wanting any to perish but all to come to repentance” (**2 Peter 3:9**).

The Lord doesn’t want any to perish, or experience the spiritual death of being permanently separated from His Presence in this life or throughout eternity, by sin **because He loves us** – unconditionally with great charity, at all times, and despite our faults, failures, and flesh.

Even though God loves His creation in His Image, **He is holy**. He is not common. He is set apart. God in His Trinity – the Father, the Son, the Holy Spirit – is hallowed, or without blemish, undefiled, beyond perfection in purity (**Leviticus 11:44**).

Light and darkness cannot coexist. We’ve discussed that the definition of darkness is literally the absence of light. Sin of any sort – whether religion or our consciences attempt to justify a sin a big, little, or anywhere in between, separates us from God.

Isaiah 59:1-2 teach us that sin separates each person from God. *“But your iniquities have separated you from your God; And your sins have hidden His face from you, so that He will not hear.”*

It’s simply impossible to enjoy the complete blessings of God’s Presence and love in this life and in eternity with any sin in our lives – regardless of how long we’ve attended church, taught Bible Study, or even if your mom or dad were lifelong members or in ministry. But that is not all.

A blood sacrifice is required for access to God for the relationship that makes us live life at our best, but we cannot possibly fulfill the payment to remove the debt of sin that gives us eternal life, or unending fellowship with God in this life and for eternity.

Think back to the Romans Road. What does the Bible tell us is the required payment for our sins? “The wages of sin is death.” And who has sinned? “All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.”

Jesus was sent to pay the debt of the sins committed by humanity – those God loves so much that He created the One and Only Way to satisfy His wrath toward sin that causes eternal separation in this life and in eternity from His Presence and love.



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Remember, Jesus' name means, Jehovah is Salvation. So as we speak the name of Jesus, we are declaring that God saves!

Jesus saves as the One Who lived a blameless life, empowered by the Holy Spirit to do the will of the Father, and literally sacrificed like the innocent lamb annually to cover the sins of each of God's beloved people.

The term **Savior in the Greek is Sōtēr**, which means deliverer, preserver. Jesus as our Savior delivers us from the consequence of sins and liberates us from the debt of that sin.

Have you seen it yet? Have you heard the very consistent use of accounting terms just in the few verses we've studied?

- Debt of sin
- Wages of sin
- Payment for the debt of sins
- Forgiveness, as in satisfying the debt

In Romans, Paul describes the forgiveness of sins, or the settling of the debt of sin, as possible through the *“redemption that is in Christ Jesus.”*

Redemption is another accounting term to add to the list. We often call Jesus the Redeemer. **Hebrews 9:12** pulls forward the Old Testament's demand for sacrifices and contrasts those to Jesus' permanent, all sufficient, and never-ending sacrifice of blood: *“Not with the blood of goats and calves, but with His own blood He entered the Most Holy Place once for all, having obtained eternal redemption.”*

Think about redeeming a voucher to reclaim something that belongs to you, let's say, at a coat check at an event or even to reclaim lost baggage in travel.

Jesus' sacrifice reclaimed our lost lives enslaved by sin and indebted with the requirement to pay a price we could never afford or produce on our own. Another way to think of Jesus as Redeemer is that He ransomed us from certain death or eternal separation from God. Jesus literally paid an unpayable debt.

Jesus saves!

Matthew 1:21 explains that *“He will save,”* or Jesus – Jehovah is Salvation – *“will save His people from their sins.”*

The Greek word for save is *sōzō* which means to heal, make whole, deliver from consequence, deliver from danger.

The “why” explaining God's motivation to send Jesus to die in our place for our sins, or to be our Savior, was because of His great love.



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The “why” explaining the need each living human must decide to accept Jesus as Savior is to have His blood cover our sin. This is just as the innocent animals had their lifeblood sacrificed in the Garden of Eden to cover the sins of the First Adam; like the doorposts and lintels covered in the blood of innocent lambs that God saw as He passed over Egypt and took the firstborn males of all life as the necessary sacrifice for sins; like the blood soaked Mercy Seat silenced the testimony of the tablets within the Ark of the Covenant that declared all sinners.

Understand that those covered by Jesus’ shed blood stand atoned, or at one with His Son and with Him, God the Father. Those whose lives are not marked by the blood of Jesus carry the debt of sin and will be paid the wage of sin, which is death, or eternal separation from God, in this life and in eternity.

Return to **John 3:16-18**. Yes! God’s immeasurable *agape* love is why Jesus was sacrificed.

But NO! Jesus did not come into this world to condemn any single person. God is no harsh authoritarian that sits on some gilded throne throwing lightning bolts to earth to satisfy His wrath and waiting to send sinners to eternal damnation.

God is love.

Read **John 3:17**. *“For God did not send His Son into the world that He might condemn the world, but that the world might be saved through Him.”*

With this Truth tethered to John 3:16, what does this mean to you?

Keep reading. **John 3:18**. *“Anyone who believes in Him is not condemned, but anyone who does not believe is already condemned, because he has not believed in the name of the One and Only Son of God.”*

These are red letters that John has quoted Jesus as saying which still carry the power of His voice, authority, and truth.

All are condemned until each believes in Jesus Christ as the Son of God and accept His Spirit by confessing sins, turning from those sins and to Jesus in trust in action, or faith.

Being saved is salvation. This process begins when we die to self and are born again, just as Jesus explained to the extremely religious and personally pious and moral man, Nicodemus, in the beginning of **John 3 in verses 3-7**.

Do you see the need for the Savior, the One Who rescues, heals and makes us whole despite our sinful flesh, and delivers us from the penalties of sin that God the Father would render if our sins are unconfessed and uncovered?



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Salvation is a miracle. We're reborn after death to our flesh. It's also a process that we must die daily to allow Jesus's Spirit to govern us, fill and control our minds, our tongues, our hearts, and our very being.

Why so much emphasis on Jesus as Savior?

Simple, there are sadly, a whole lot of "good people" who are eternally separated from God and bear the full price of their sins.

Being "good" by the terms of this world and culture does not cover our sins and pay that debt. Likewise, having some assembled belief in the "Jesus" made up like a composite character in a book or movie that serves our conveniences, our preferences, and fits our lifestyles is not necessarily the Savior of the Bible.

Have you been reborn?

Do you die daily to be empowered by the same Holy Spirit Who gave strength, guidance, encouragement, and comfort to Jesus as He lived on this earth as a man?

Have you confessed your sin, or said the same thing about your mistakes, your failures, your rebellion, and your fears that replace faith that God says?

"If we confess our sins, God is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." 1 John 1:9 explains the importance of seeing sins as the serious acts, behaviors, or habits they are in our confession or ownership of them before God.

Call to Action: *Confess.* Confess your status as sinner who is loved by God in His Trinity. Confess your sins as those actions that separate you from the love and Presence of God now and for eternity. Confess that Jesus Christ is the Son of God sent to die for you and all who will accept Him, believe or put faith into action, and live as His redeemed or rescued. Confess Jesus as Savior and let His amazing sacrifice move you to love like Him, live like Him, and serve like Him while telling others of this same love available for them.

Let there be more than enough evidence through your confessions and life of change and repentance to convict you of being a Christ follower and trophy of the grace of Jesus Christ.

Next week: The meaning of Jesus as the Messiah and the meaning to you and all of humanity.



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**Who Is Jesus?
The Messiah
Week 9**

Turn to **Matthew 16:13-17**. In **verse 15**, Jesus asked the group using the plural pronoun, “you,” when He asked, “*But you, who do you say that I am?*”

It was Peter who responded first. Let’s look at Peter’s response in various translations of **verse 16** then study the Greek meanings. This is not just for knowledge but for application. Words have meaning in God’s Kingdom. We are to use words with this same meaning.

Peter answered:

- “Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.” (KJV)
- “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.” (NKJV, NASB, ESV)
- “You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God.” (NIV, CEV, NLT, CSB)
- “You are the Christ (the Messiah, the Anointed), the Son of the living God.” (Amplified)
- “You’re the Christ, the Messiah, the Son of the living God (MSG)
- “You are the Anointed One, the Son of the living God.” (TPT)

According to Barclay’s commentary on this verse, “The word Messiah and the word Christ are the same; the one is the Hebrew and the other is the Greek for The Anointed One. Kings were ordained to office by anointing, as they still are. The Messiah, the Christ, the Anointed One is God’s King over men.”

Why is Peter’s confession important that differentiated and acknowledged Jesus as the Messiah? It’s the exact same reason that it’s **important that our confession speaks the Truth as to Jesus’ Identity.**

Keep reading in **verse 17**. Jesus declared that Peter was blessed for his confession that was formed in his mind, heart, then expressed in his words – setting him apart from any other created life form that is able to synthesize thought from information, reason, and express via speech. This confession came from the revelation by the Holy Spirit to remove the veil of God’s will and Truth allowing Peter and all to see the Messiah.

The Expository Outlines of Warren Wiersbe elaborates on this point. “But no man (woman, or child) can confess Christ apart from the revelation of the Father (**Matthew 11:27**) and the witness of the Spirit (**1 Corinth. 12:3**). **A right confession about Christ is important to salvation (1 John 2:22-23; 5:10).**”

Now what? Stop. Full stop.

So, is this saying that there can be a “wrong” confession of Jesus Christ?



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YES! This world has twisted, perverted, and hijacked many aspects of the Lord Jesus Christ for cultural convenience. Exactly as the public opinion in the midst of this recorded event documented in Matthew, Mark, and Luke first spoke of Jesus as a good man, a holy man in the sense of a title like a prophet or rabbi.

Before we study the meaning of the terms “Messiah,” “Christ,” and “Anointed One,” let’s **make this moment about you.**

- Have **you spoken a confession of faith** that declares Jesus to be more than a good man, a holy man that ministers to you beyond a function or title?
- **Do you understand the literal miracle of salvation** to be initiated by the love of God by revealing the Truth of His great love as demonstrated through Jesus and His sacrifice?
- **Do you appreciate that confessing Christ** as God, as Servant, as Messiah, as King, as Savior is a divine act that carries great power and meaning that establishes an incredible relationship between God and *you*?

In **Matthew 11:27**, Jesus speaks of God the Father entrusting all things to Him, as Son, and that “no one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and anyone to whom the Son desires or chooses to reveal Him.”

1 Corinthians 12:3 includes Paul’s teaching that reinforces this Truth that “*no one can say, ‘Jesus is Lord,’ except by the Holy Spirit.*”

And take notice of the piercing and sobering teaching by John, “son of thunder,” the nickname Jesus gave John the disciple in **1 John 2:22-23; 5:10**. John points out that even in his day, there were “antichrists,” or enemies of the anointed One, the Christ, the Messiah.

In this instance, there were those claiming to have a relationship in worship and devotion to God the Father but denied that Jesus was His Son. Pointedly, John called them liars and enemies of Jesus.

Take that in. It matters what we say about God the Father, Jesus Christ the Son of God, and the Holy Spirit. If our confession departs from God’s Word – the Truth – we find ourselves as enemies of God in His Perfect Trinity.

This is just one of the **critical reasons for believers** of Jesus Christ to be in His Word to understand Truth, not live beyond it, but within such close reach. How literally **tragic to have God’s Eternal Truth, yet dismiss it.**

In reading God’s Word, we’ll find that the Name Jesus is used at least 983 times in the KJV of the Bible. The term Christ is used at least 571 times and Messiah twice.

Jesus’ name is a version of the Hebrew name, Joshua, which means *Jehovah is Salvation*. In Greek, the name of God’s Son was written as *Iēsous*.



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Speaking the name, “Jesus” is literally declaring “Jehovah is Salvation!” What an incredible declaration and testimony! It’s why we sing the lyrics to “I speak Jesus” as an anthem:

*Shout Jesus from the mountains
Jesus in the streets
Jesus in the darkness, over every enemy
Jesus for my family
I speak the holy name Jesus!*

The Jews of the Old Testament, or Old Covenant, had been told by prophets of the Messiah. Their prophecies explained that God Himself would send a Savior and King who set His people free (**Isaiah 61:1-2**), rule in justice that would bring peace (**Isaiah 9:6-7**), and come uniquely by being born of a virgin in the city of Bethlehem (**Isaiah 7:14** and **Micah 5:2**), and would suffer and die for our sins (**Isaiah 53**).

Jesus Alone fulfills all of these prophecies and so many more.

The term Messiah comes from the Hebrew word *Mashiach* which means Anointed One. In studying the Old Testament, kings, prophets, and priests were anointed, not just popularly elected, as we vote for our elected officials today.

Anointing in the Bible meant that the person was chosen and to be set apart for a unique purpose or calling.

Jews heard these and other prophecies. **But they constructed the Messiah to fit their culture to be a politician who had great power and would govern and rule. They even conceived Him to be of great military might and reign through strength and power.**

How is that different than what we do today? Seriously! We cannot turn up our noses thinking we haven’t done something similar with God, His Son, and His Spirit.

We want to take the Most High God in His Trinity and make Him fit to our culture and our conveniences. Do you want to know the danger of this?

In **Galatians 6**, Christians very often cite and recite the verses about our due season which promise that if we don’t grow weary doing good, we will reap what we sow, or reap a harvest. We’re familiar with that Truth and hope to live by that principle.

But look quickly at **Galatians 6:7** that warns, “*Do not be deceived: God is not mocked.*”

The Greek word used for mocked is *myktērizō* which means to turn up one’s snout or nose, to impose upon, to dismiss as foolish.



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We cannot treat God's Holy Ways, Words, and specific commands to us as foolish by dismissing them, thinking that our ways are better, or imposing our will, ways, or wishes. When we do, we turn up our noses and dismiss Him. **We mock God.**

We mock God no differently than the Jews as we reconfigure Him to fit our lives.

The Jews attempted to worship Yahweh while also dabbling in the occult practices of pagans, abandoning the ways and commands of God to His people as the life that would lead to their blessings and favor.

Their **divided hearts adulterated the purity of God's love and promise** despite generation after generation experiencing or being told of the amazing history of the Hebrew people involving incredible miracles. Remember just a few: the Red Sea dividing permitting the deliverance of the Hebrews on dry ground while their enemies pursued them; the Jordan River being heaped up on itself as the priests stood with the Ark of the Covenant, representing the Presence of God, on their shoulders; the walls of a major city fortified crumbled after the obedience of the Jews marching around the city in prayer and praise; the Mount Carmel showdown between Elijah and the 450 prophets of Baal when his water-drenched sacrifice was lapped up and consumed by the Most High God that followed the gyrations, spells, and incantations to their gods failed.

Sadly, still today, we fail to see the miracles of God in His amazing love, grace, and power.

Call to action: Spend time in prayer and praise worshipping singing the name of Jesus as "The Christ" or the Anointed One and Messiah.

Next week: Why the Jews needed the Messiah. We'll see why we need the Messiah.

Also, be prepared to be challenged about your role in this ushering in of the Messiah. That's not just the job of the religious, theological giants.



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**Who Is Jesus?
The Messiah
Week 10**

Jesus Christ fulfilled the prophecies of the Old Covenant or Testament to be the Messiah, or to the Hebrews, *Mashiach.*, the Anointed One.

As we studied, the Jews longed for a powerful leader that fit the culture of oppression of the Jewish people, the ongoing strife of war and military conflict, and the desire for national pride all as they obeyed their God – Yahweh – the great I Am.

How do we differ today?

Answer these questions:

- Do we live in a culture that is hostile to many teachings of Jesus?
- Do we live in a time when culture has defined Christianity, what church is, and what is permitted within that worship of Christ Jesus?
- Do we live in a time that the influence of the Christian faith and the Bible-believing Christian church has waning influence and importance?
- Do we live in times that the safety and security of Bible-believing Christians' jobs, property, and lives seem to be in jeopardy or at least dismissed?

Has the Power, Authority, and Dominion of God the Father, Jesus Christ the Son, and the Holy Spirit diminished or become weaker?

NO! NO! and NO!

The issue is that the Bible-believing Christian is not respecting the relationship with God in His Trinity to be personal and personally accountable. We redefine Jesus and our faith to fit our culture and not vice versa.

We want a faith in a powerful God Who exacts His judgment on those who are “bad” in this world. That often means those who disagree with us.

And, yes, it can refer to those who persecute, mock, and commit great evil.

But the problem with our world right now is that the people of God – set apart and called to serve just as if we were Jesus, are timid not bold, fearful not faithful, and miss that when we die to self, Christ Jesus lives reborn in us.

Why do we need Jesus as Messiah, the Anointed One?



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All of humanity needs the Savior for deliverance. All of humanity needs the Messiah for victory over darkness and to live the lives in this spiritual battle knowing the outcome to be victory (**Acts 4:12**).

Let's look at a few Truths to see how Jesus the Messiah is relevant now, this day, and not just for the day of His return in judgment.

Jesus Messiah has conquered death.

The prophecies of old and the life of Jesus fulfilling them, according to Warren Wiersbe's commentaries, was "the crown glimpsed before the cross." Jesus raised people from the dead – physically.

God's Word in the Gospels records three accounts of Jesus having victory over death in His ministry: the son of the widow of Nain (**Luke 7-17**), Jairus' daughter (**Mark 5:21-43**), and His friend, Lazarus (**John 11:1-44**). We remember these as Jesus spoke and breathed life back into the dead.

We often forget that the moment that Jesus gave up His Spirit on the cross, there was a mass resurrection.

Read **Matthew 27:51-54**. "*Then.*" When? Right then the veil of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom as if God Himself hovered over the Holy of Holies and ripped the heavy curtain of separation between the faithful and His Presence.

Right then, the earth quaked splitting rocks as the earth testified to the shift in all of creation to the New Covenant.

Right then, the tombs of death, flesh, and enslavement to flesh were obedient to bring forth "*many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised.*" Keep reading.

These resurrected saints entered Jerusalem during the Jewish Passover season to reveal that death could not hold them and that the blood of Jesus forever protected against the power of flesh and death, no different than at the original Passover in Exodus.

These events right then, caused "*the centurion and those with him, who were guarding Jesus*" who saw these things to fear greatly and say, "*Truly this was the Son of God!*"

Yes. Our flesh will die and is dying. But in Jesus' ministry, He demonstrated His Power as the Messiah over the power of death, flesh, and the god of this world, satan.

Not only does Jesus the Messiah have power over death, **He holds power over darkness.**



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As earlier discussed, light and darkness are not the opposite of each other. One has the power to dispel and overtake the other. Light's very presence, even as small as a tiny light of candle or match, has the power to push back darkness.

This is important. Be prepared to answer these questions honestly and then put your confession in action, or demonstrate your faith.

- Do you believe Jesus is the opposite of satan?
- Do you fear satan more than you believe in Who Jesus says He is?
- Do you spend more time speaking to the darkness than praising the Light and welcoming His Radiance?
- Are you holding all the Light your vessel or your life possibly has capacity to hold, or do you attempt to hang on to a little darkness that fits your life and thinking?

Jesus is NOT the opposite of satan. Lucifer was the angel of praise who was so beautiful that he worshipped himself and deceived other angels to do the same. He was cast from heaven to this earth along with one-third of the angels of heaven to rule...for a time (**Ezk. 28:12-17**).

Jesus is NOT the opposite or the rival to a fallen angel.

Our faith, or trust in action, in Jesus Christ is first a decision, then a belief system that frames our entire lives. Does your faith in Jesus reflect that you have greater faith in Him or more fear of satan and what he tells you about yourself, about your sin, about this world, about everything?

Jesus is Light. We have to allow light in. As our lives are emptied of self and occupied by Jesus Christ, His Radiance cannot help but illuminate His love, His joy, all of His amazing aspects of the Holy Spirit.

Yet, we spend so much time speaking to the darkness and even entertaining the whispers of lies that satan and his fallen angels spew about our lives and our worth, about our sins, about our hope and future.

We are to speak Jesus and acknowledge Him as Messiah in our lives and decide to believe. Our faith tells on us. Our faith reveals in our lives Who we believe Jesus to be.

Read that again out loud and personalize it: "My faith – or my trust in action – reveals Who I believe Jesus to be."

Does Jesus the Messiah reign in your life now or do you only believe that reign will begin in eternity?

Again, your faith tells on you. But the hard fact is that Jesus is the Messiah, whether you acknowledge Him as such or not.



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Philippians 2:9-11 explains clearly, which quotes Isaiah?, “*that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow and that every tongue should confess.*” Every. Not just believers.

We have a decision to make. We can bow and confess now that Jesus is the promised Messiah Who was Anointed by God to demonstrate that He is worshipped on the throne of our lives or we will do so in judgment.

Jesus the Messiah will reign in eternity. He reigns now...if we enthrone Him on our praises and don't allow ourselves, our culture, our preferences, or anything else to occupy our hearts.

Do you see yourself worthy to have the reigning Messiah in residence?

One final point to consider and pray about. We can mouth the words now that we are afforded the very Bible from which we can read them that Jesus is the Messiah. But is He in your heart? Do you believe that?

Peter made this declaration, but so did two others in the Gospels.

The Samaritan woman at the well in **John 4:25-26** who had so many failures and lived as a social outcast encountered Jesus as He waited for her. In their exchange, the woman said, “*I know that Messiah is coming. When He comes, He will tell us all things.*” Jesus revealed to her, “*I who speak to you am He.*”

Another woman who declared Jesus as Messiah was Martha, Lazarus' sister in **John 11:27**. In the account of Jesus delaying the call to come to aid his dear friends, Lazarus' death presented the moment for Jesus to be glorified in words and deeds.

Martha was asked if she believed that “*everyone who believes in Me shall never die,*” by Jesus. Her response was, “*Yes, Lord. I believe You are the Christ,*” or the Anointed One, the Messiah in the Greek, “*the Son of God, which should come into the world.*”

Call to Action: Review these Scriptures and answer the questions above. Do you live from the victory of the Messiah Whose authority is over all things including darkness, death, and destruction? Trust in action, live in faith.

Next week: Do I acknowledge Jesus as King and serve Him?



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**Who Is Jesus?
The King
Week 11**

When Gabriel appeared to Mary, the teenage virgin betrothed or promised in marriage to Joseph, he had been sent by God to this young woman to inform her of the miraculous conception and birth of Jesus, the Son of God.

In **Luke 1:30-33**, Gabriel's address to Mary is recorded. The angel told of the favor she had found with God and that her son's name would be Jesus, or Jehovah is Salvation.

In **verses 32 and 33**, Gabriel speaks of Jesus as the Son of the Most High who will receive from His Father *"the throne of His father David. He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and His kingdom will have no end."*

Gabriel was announcing to Mary that not only would her womb receive and conceive the Son of God, but that He would be King.

Don't see it?

Who was David? He was the cherished and treasured King of Judah then Israel referenced as the pupil of God's Eye in that love. David was first a shepherd, then musician, an armor-bearer, a warrior, and then the King – the anointed one (**1 Samuel 16:1-13**) of Israel of the Old Testament days.

The throne of David was the promised lineage for the Messiah who would deliver and rescue God's people (**Isaiah 11:1**). The Jews always believed that only they would be that people rescued, delivered, and redeemed.

But God!

Jews' rejection of God began in the Old Testament vividly recorded as Moses was on Mt. Sinai receiving the Ten Commandments directly from Jehovah while the Jews were melting down jewelry and gold implements to make a golden calf (**Exodus 32**). This simply continued in the New Testament when Jesus didn't fit the mold of their established religion and cultural preferences.

The message that Jesus would be King came directly from God as carried faithfully by Gabriel the Angel.

The messenger continued to reveal to Mary that Jesus as King would not only fulfill the Old Covenant coming from the throne of David but also *"reign over a kingdom that would have not end."*



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A kingdom, or the domain of the king, is reigned by a king. In this instance, *the* King was announced by Gabriel and anointed by God the Father (**Luke 1:30-33**).

While the angelic proclamation made by Gabriel was clear, so was the declaration of the wise men or magi from the east who saw a star and journeyed to Jerusalem, the seat of government for the region.

Look at **Luke 2:1-4**. The inquiry of the magi was about the whereabouts of the “King of the Jews.” They informed officials of Herod’s court and administration that they had come to worship this King.

Now turn to **Zechariah 9:9**. To understand the context of these words, appreciate that Israel had been in captivity for 70 years. The first wave of captives returned to find their Holy City, Jerusalem, as well as their nation in ruins. Zechariah was a prophet who was involved in the rebuilding of the temple to re-establish worship and honoring Jehovah.

The visions of Zechariah included one of Zion’s coming King, Whom we know to be Jesus Christ.

But place yourself in the place of captives who are hearing these words by the prophet about a King who is coming. That would be great news considering the generation spent in a foreign, hostile land that God permitted as judgment for Israel’s rejection of Him without repentance.

But Zechariah spoke of a King on a donkey, not a stallion or beast of war and battle. The prophet spoke of a King so gentle He would ride on the back of the foal of a donkey, a new, unriden beast.

This foretold of Jesus as the Prince of Peace but also the King Jesus.

These same words were written within Matthew 21:5 as fulfilled prophecy as Jesus entered Jerusalem on the day that would become our Palm Sunday.

Matthew 21:4-11 reveal that Jesus did just as God the Father revealed to the prophet about 500 years earlier.

As the crowd being assembled for Holy Week in Jerusalem that precede Passover witnessed these events, the devout Jews waved palm branches and declared, “*Hosanna to the Son of David!*” or “*Save us Son of David!*”

When you read in **verse 10** that the entire city was shaken, the awareness of Zechariah along with other prophets’ words were aligned and seen.

Does the King of kings reign in the domain of your heart?



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If you are a **born-again Christian who has put your trust in action**, or your faith in Him, then **your life will be governed by King Jesus**.

What do you think this looks like in our lives? What does a life where King Jesus reigns look like? **What would your life look like as King Jesus reigns?**

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

Do not breeze past this. We quickly apply God's Word about blessings, favor, healing, and all the "good stuff" to our lives. Now it's time to be honest and apply the aspects of God's Word that demonstrate our authentic faith in the Jesus of the Bible.

One of those aspects of God's Word that is the "good stuff" is found in Revelation. First turn to **Revelation 17:14**.

God's Word tells us that nations and enemies of King Jesus arise, *"These will make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb will overcome them, for He is Lord of lords and King of kings; and those who are with Him are called, chosen, and faithful."*

Jesus is not a king. He is King. King of all kings, or rulers. His authority is supreme and His sovereignty or jurisdiction of power is of all things.

To make this personal again, as King, Jesus has authority over all things.

- Do you yield and die to self to allow Him to reign over you and your entire life?
- Does King Jesus rule over your decisions, relationships values, and life direction and service?
-

Turn to **Revelation 19:16**. When Christ Jesus returns riding the white horse, *"His name is the Word of God."* Unlike Zechariah's prophecy or Matthew's account of Jesus in His first triumphal entry, this time, Jesus is riding a horse, a beast of war and the animal of the Victor and King.

"And He has on His robe and on His thigh a name written: KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS."

This ushers in the greatest battle of all of human history. All of God's enemies are gathered in alignment to wage war but will face utter destruction and the complete end to the hijacked powers of this world that have dominated all systems and institutions of man that have ruled over humanity.

King Jesus will ultimately reign. But does He reign now, in your life?



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Call to Action: This week and next are times to focus on you and how your future will go. You will decide. Each of these studies have taken God's Word and demonstrated just a few aspects of the Identity of Jesus Christ. This Identity is Who He was, is, and will forevermore be.

Reviewed these Scriptures but also answer these questions. Answer them now so that your answers when you face Christ will be in alignment with His Word. Decide. Believe. Declare Jesus as your King and give Him your life.

Next week: As we declare Jesus as King, those words have real life meaning to our lives in the form of all that we do and how we live our faith. We'll understand how in next week's study.

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**Who Is Jesus?
The King
Week 12**

As Bible-believing and following Christians, we should be assured and rewarded to think of the events we discussed last week as King Jesus in His Most Sovereign and Supreme moments that will come in Revelation as the King riding the white horse as Most High Ruler of all who takes captive and punishes every enemy and force of hell and satan.

Yet, as we've already studied, eternal life, as one reborn in Jesus, begins from the moment of your salvation confession. Salvation is a lifelong process of growth, maturity, and bearing fruit as we await the moment our flesh succumbs to its natural nature and destiny. Our souls, which never die, are reclaimed for King Jesus and are reunited with Him in heaven.

Understand, eternal life doesn't begin after your death or your funeral.

So, knowing that our salvation is made sure when we confess Christ as our needed Savior and the Only One able to pay our sin debt by His blood, and knowing that King Jesus is reigning now, what does that mean to you?

Ask yourself:

- Am I a servant of the King?
- Do I long to be in His Presence where there is fullness of joy?
- Do I seek to please the King in the work I do and things I pursue?

These are not easy questions to answer because Americans don't have kings. Since the founding of this nation, the government has been a constitutional republic that operates with elected leaders tasked to apply the Law of the Land – the US Constitution – to keep government within its bounds not to infringe upon the God-given Liberty endowed by our Creator to all individuals which man can neither give nor take away.

What does that mean?

Americans, including Christians in America, have a completely different frame of reference to life due to the major role of the government and its framing.

It goes like this: I focus on MY rights

My property

My time

My money

My future

My speech

My truth...



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In a kingdom ruled by a king, or a monarchy – one ruler – the king’s domain is his kingdom. The king is served by his faithful servants and provides for all their needs, protections, security, and even gives them favor to rise in prominence...in his kingdom.

Jesus spoke of the Kingdom of Heaven and the Kingdom of God.

John the Baptist proclaimed in **Matthew 3:3** for all to “repent for the kingdom of heaven has come near!” God Himself had come to earth in fullness in the man of Jesus Christ.

If the kingdom is where the king is, then, the God’s kingdom was absolutely at hand. Jesus repeated these very words in **Matthew 4:17** but throughout the Gospels, beginning at the Sermon on the Mount.

Reading the Beatitudes, or the Blessings, in **Matthew 5:1-11**, it’s vivid that God’s kingdom varies tremendously with this world and the institutions established and run by mankind.

Read **verses 3 -11**. Jesus says in God’s kingdom the poor in spirit are blessed; those who mourn are blessed; the gentle are blessed; those who hunger and thirst after His righteousness are blessed and will be filled; the merciful are blessed and shown mercy; the pure in heart are blessed; the peacemakers are blessed; and those persecuted are blessed.

These character virtues are in perpendicular contrast to American values where the poor in spirit need therapy and disability and are weak. The mourning who weep in repentance are almost like unicorns in the culture where sin is paraded in the streets. Today, more hunger and thirst after wealth, power, and easy, fun living than seek the Presence of the King where His Righteousness is experienced. You get the idea.

Our culture is the counterfeit that has robbed individuals from living the life of serving the King of kings and the King of saved hearts.

Jesus taught of the kingdom of heaven or kingdom of God extensively in the parables recorded throughout **Matthew 13**. Jesus taught that we are to be productive in our labor which is to yield fruit physically in the material world and spiritually for eternity.

Jesus did not bless any aspect of idle behavior. Jesus honored the work that was done by the hands of His servants who sowed seed on various soils – some of which rejected or choked out the life’s potential of the seed, and some that accepted the seed for germination. But **Jesus taught about the rewards of service not lip-service.**

Hear that again. **Jesus taught of the rewards of service but not lip-service.**

Jesus lived, taught through words and modeling, and *expects* service as the King.



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Where did we get the idea that declaring that Jesus was King was enough?

We likely got that belief from the same place

- That life in the womb of a mother to be defined as fetal tissue
- that has defined marriage as any arrangement between two individuals who want to possess shared property rights
- that tells us there are many ways to get to God
- that says a good people are Christian because they love what the world loves and approves
- that defines our friends by the clicks on social media, not relationships

You see this. Hopefully, you'll admit it.

Modern Christians too often make a composite of their faith to be about their preferences, their own behavior being accepted, and a sense of feeling good about oneself after attending a Sunday morning lecture, listening to an inspirational podcast, or reading a neat meme on social media with a Bible verse.

Jesus Christ is God. Jesus Christ showed us how to be servant. Jesus Christ is the Savior. Jesus Christ is the Messiah. Jesus Christ is the King.

Who do you say He is?

Who does your life say He is?

Know for absolute certain that your belief is in the Christ Jesus of the Bible and not of your own or our culture's making.

Decide to die to self and abide in the Vine of Jesus Christ (**John 15:1-8**). Decide you will love like Jesus, have your heart moved like Jesus, serve like Jesus, and do the will of the Father like Jesus.

Put your faith or your trust in action in operation by committing to daily prayer – daily. Commit to daily Bible reading, not just a verse snatched here and there. Make God's Word your flesh.

Will Jesus examine your life and say, "Well done, good and faithful servant?" What is your focus? What is your commitment – you are Jesus?



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We are called to love Him, serve Him, and walk in Him in all things – family, work, play, and our family of faith. Live as King Jesus’ favored servant.

Who do you say Jesus is? He knows because He sees. Let your words and life align and say the same thing.

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