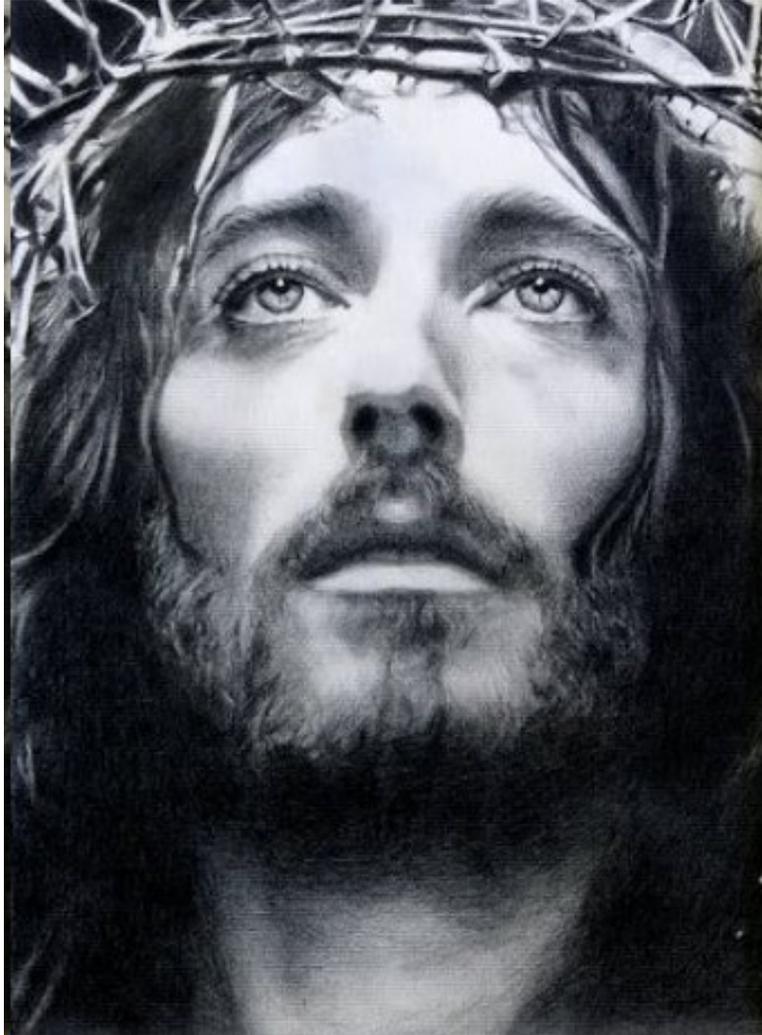

Preaching Jesus



Sermons Which Focus on the Son of God

Compiled by David Padfield and Gene Taylor

Forward

David Padfield recently preached a sermon online on the conversion of the man from Ethiopia. His text in Acts 8 says that beginning from Isaiah 53, where the Ethiopian had been reading, Philip “preached Jesus to him.” (v.35)

That started me thinking. As a gospel preacher on a full time basis for some 45 years, did I “preach Jesus” enough or did I just teach topics related to Him?

So I looked at the sermons I had preached over the last twenty years which added up to approximately 1,600 sermons. I found that only 56 of those lessons were directly about Jesus. So I decided to compile some of those lessons in a book to share with others to encourage them to spend more time and effort “preaching Jesus.”

While collecting these 25 lessons, I realized a good many of them had been given to me by David Padfield. David and I have been friends for forty years. During that time we have traveled to the Bible lands together several times, held meetings at each others congregations and shared sermon outlines.

So I asked David if he would allow me to include those lessons we had shared and to share authorship of this collection with me. He graciously agreed.

Neither David nor I claim complete originality for these sermons. I do not think any preacher can truly claim it. But if these lessons can encourage preachers to allow their sermons to focus more on the Lord, we are happy to share them without cost.

May everything we preach, may everything we do, bring lost sinners to Jesus and edify His saints.

— Gene Taylor
June 2020

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Preaching Jesus

Introduction

1. The cases of conversion in the book of Acts are recorded to demonstrate how one attains the forgiveness of sins and the salvation of the soul.
 - a. In each case, God used preaching to reach the sinner. (1 Cor. 1:21)
 - b. Proper responses to that preaching granted forgiveness of sins and entrance into the body of the saved.
2. The conversion of the man from Ethiopia provides a divine example of conversion and, in turn, teaches several valuable lessons associated with conversion.
 - a. He was a devoutly religious individual who had a religious fervor far beyond what most have ever seen or imagined.
 - b. While journeying home, he was reading a scroll of Isaiah chapter 53.
 - c. When Philip, having been directed by the Holy Spirit, joined himself to the chariot of the Ethiopian, beginning at the Scripture the Ethiopian was reading, “preached Jesus to him.”
3. This lesson will examine what Philip preached when he “preached Jesus” so that we might know how to “preach Jesus” to others.

I. Philip’s Text (Acts 8:32-33)

- A. The text is that of Isaiah 53:7-8 as set forth in the Septuagint version of the Old Testament.
- B. Isaiah 53 is a Messianic prophecy that foretold that the Messiah would:
 1. Be led as a sheep to the slaughter—be unresisting.
 2. Not open His mouth—make no defense.
 3. Have justice taken away—be trampled underfoot.
 4. Have none to declare His generation.
 5. Have His life taken from the earth—He would come to die for the sins of mankind.

II. The Message

- A. What Jesus looked like. (Isa. 53:1-2)
 - The physical comeliness of Jesus would not draw people to Him but, rather, what He would do. (John 12:32-33)
- B. Man’s need for Jesus.
 1. Our sinfulness. (Isa. 53:6; Rom. 3:10, 23)
 2. The sacrifices of the Old Law were no solution to the sin problem. (Heb. 10:1-4)
 3. One’s own goodness is futile by itself. (Isa. 64:6)
 4. Jesus Christ is the only solution for sin. (Isa. 53:10-11; 2 Cor. 5:21)

- C. What Jesus did to bear our iniquities. (Isa. 53:3-5, 7)
 - 1. He lived a perfect, sinless life. (Heb. 4:15)
 - 2. He suffered and died for sins not His own. (Heb. 9:28)
 - 3. By His sacrifice, He gave the hope of eternal life. (Rom. 5:6-8)
 - 4. There could be no remission of sins without the shedding of His blood. (Heb. 9:22)
- D. What Jesus requires.
 - 1. Philip's preaching would not have been of much value if he had not told the Ethiopian what Jesus required him to do in order to benefit from the great sacrifice made for sin.
 - a. Those in the religious realm who say there is nothing one needs to do to obtain salvation are not preaching Jesus.
 - b. Preaching Jesus involves preaching His commands.
 - 2. The Ethiopian after hearing the Truth preached:
 - a. Saw water and wanted to be baptized.
 - b. Learned of his need to be baptized from Philip's preaching.
 - c. Was told he could be baptized if he believed so he confessed his faith and was baptized. (Acts 8:37-38)
 - 3. What Jesus required of the Ethiopian, He requires of us today.
 - a. Hear Jesus preached. (Rom. 10:17)
 - b. Believe in Jesus as the Son of God. (Mark. 16:16)
 - c. Confess Jesus to be the Son of God. (Matt. 10:32; Rom. 10:10)
 - d. Be baptized in water for the remission of sins. (Acts 2:38)

III. The Results

- A. Philip baptized the Ethiopian.
 - 1. Baptism is a burial in water. (Rom. 6:1-4; Col. 2:12)
 - 2. Baptism is for the remission of sins. (Acts 2:38)
- B. The Ethiopian went on his way rejoicing.
 - 1. He had good reason to rejoice.
 - 2. He now had salvation (2 Tim. 2:10), redemption (Rom. 3:24); forgiveness of sins (Col. 1:14); reconciliation (2 Cor. 5:19), an inheritance (Eph. 1:11), and eternal life (1 John 5:11).

Conclusion

- 1. You need Jesus if you are yet in your sins.
- 2. You need to know Jesus:
 - a. Suffered, bled and died so that you might have remission of your sins.
 - b. Arose the third day triumphant over death and Satan and now reigns sitting at the right hand of God on high.
- 3. You need to have the blood of Jesus applied to your heart and obey Him as the Ethiopian did by believing, repenting, confessing and being baptized.

The Birth of Jesus

Introduction

1. The birth of Jesus was an act of love. (John 3:16)
 - As part of the natural order, God intends the birth of every child to be an expression of love but, as it has in many other areas of life, the world has thwarted God's purpose.
2. We seem to shy away from an in-depth study and discussion of the birth of Jesus because of the way His birth has been treated by the world in general and religion in particular.
3. This lesson will:
 - a. Examine the texts where the birth of Jesus and the events surrounding it are recorded.
 - b. Show the necessity of the virgin birth.
 - c. Closely examine some conclusions, both true and false, about the birth of Jesus.

I. The Birth of Jesus: A Synoptic View

- A. An angel appears to Zacharias to inform him that John the Baptist would be born to him and his wife, Elizabeth. (Luke 1:5-25)
- B. The angel Gabriel appears to Mary to tell her that she will give birth to Jesus. (Luke 1:26-38)
- C. Mary visits Elizabeth to tell her of the angel's message. (Luke 1:39-56)
- D. Elizabeth gives birth to John. (Luke 1:57-80)
- E. An angel visits Joseph, the man betrothed to Mary, to tell him of the nature of Mary's being with child. (Matt. 1:18-25)
- F. Jesus is born in a stable in Bethlehem of Judea. (Luke 2:1-7)
- G. An angel appears to shepherds in the vicinity of Bethlehem to tell them of the birth of Jesus which causes them to go to Jesus and then to widely announce His birth. (Luke 2:8-20)
- H. Jesus is circumcised and then presented in the temple. (Luke 2:21-38)
- I. The wise men visit from the east. (Matt. 2:1-12)
- J. Joseph, Mary and Jesus take flight into Egypt to flee the persecution of Herod the Great. (Matt. 2:13-23; Luke 2:39-40)
- K. At age twelve, Jesus goes to the Passover in the city of Jerusalem. (Luke 2:41-52)

II. The Birth of Jesus: The Necessity of the Virgin Birth

- A. The birth of Jesus was prophesied in the Old Testament.
 1. The time of His coming.
 - a. It would be in the last days. (Isa. 2:2; Joel 2:28; Acts 2:16-17)
 - b. It would be during the fourth world empire. (Dan. 2:44; Luke 2:1)
 - c. It would be before Judah lost its distinctness as a tribe. (Gen. 49:10)
 - 1) The ten tribes of the northern kingdom were no longer really distinct at the time of the coming of Jesus.
 - 2) Judah lost its distinction within just forty years of Jesus' death.

2. His place of birth.
 - a. The place of His birth would be Bethlehem Ephrathah, the ancient name of Bethlehem of Judea. (Micah 5:2)
 - b. Micah was specific in his prophecy because another Bethlehem existed in northern Palestine in the land inherited by the tribe of Zebulun. (Josh. 19:15)
 3. His lineage.
 - a. He would be a descendant of Abraham. (Gen. 12:3; Gal. 3:16)
 - b. He would be of the tribe of Judah. (Gen. 49:10; Micah 5:2; Heb. 7:14; Rev. 5:5)
 - c. He would be of the house of David. (Isa. 11:1-2, 10; Psa. 132:11)
 4. Born of a virgin. (Isa. 7:14)
 - a. "Virgin" as used in Isaiah 7:14 is the Hebrew word "*almah*" which could mean "young girl."
 - b. The Septuagint, the Greek translation of the Old Testament which was translated some two centuries before the birth of Jesus, translates "*almah*" with "*parthenos*" which always means "virgin."
 - c. Mary emphatically stated, as recorded in Luke 1:34; that she had not known a man.
 - "Know" is used in both sacred and profane literature as a euphemism for sexual relations.
- B. Some observations about the virgin birth.
1. It was not just a supernatural birth.
 - a. Supernatural birth is a generic term which includes virgin birth.
 - b. The births of Isaac, Samuel and John the Baptist all qualify as supernatural births but not virgin births.
 2. As Jesus, after His death, was raised by the power of God (Rom. 1:4), He was born by the power of God. (Luke 1:35)
 - a. If there were no resurrection there would be no fitting end to His existence as a man.
 - b. Without the virgin birth, there would be no suitable beginning to His life.
 3. The only way God could use a birth of the flesh but still assure of Jesus' deity was through a virgin birth.
 - a. Natural birth assures us that Jesus partook of the fullness of the flesh.
 - b. The virginity of His mother assures us of the paternity of God and His divinity, God in flesh. (Matt. 1:23)

III. Conclusions About the Birth of Jesus

- A. A false conclusion: the birth of Jesus took place on December 25th.
 1. This practice began in 221 A.D. when Julius Sextus Africanus, a historian from Alexandria, Egypt, composed a chronicle of world events which listed Jesus' birth as December 25.

2. December 25:
 - a. Coincided with Saturnalia, the Roman feast of the sun.
 - b. Was made an official Roman holiday by the Council of Nicea in 325 A.D.
 - c. Is widely recognized by most churches today as the birth of Jesus.
3. Some reasons why December 25 is not a valid date for the birth of Jesus.
 - a. Scripture does not reveal and there is no way to accurately determine the exact day Jesus was born.
 - b. The birth of Jesus did not take place in winter but in early spring or summer.
 - 1) Zacharias, father of John the Baptist, would have been serving as priest in the temple eight weeks after the spring sacred season since he belonged to the course of Abijah, the 8th priestly course to serve in the temple during the Jewish year (1 Chron. 24:10; Luke 1:8-9)
 - 2) The conception of John the Baptist took place two months after the Feast of Unleavened Bread which took place in the spring of the year (Luke 1:10-11, 23-24)
 - c. The shepherds were tending their flocks out in the fields at the time of the birth of Jesus. (Luke 2:8)
 - 1) Sheep were not kept out in the open at night any later than September.
 - 2) During the winter months sheep were kept in sheep folds.
 - 3) Thus, Jesus had to have been born during the warmer months.
 - d. There was no celebration of Jesus' birth for about 220 years
 - 1) The church, under the guidance of the apostles, did not celebrate His birth at all.
 - 2) December 25th was chosen by men not appointed by God.
- B. A false conclusion: the three wise men visited Jesus in the stable shortly after His birth.
 1. No one knows the number of wise men except that there were more than one.
 - a. The number three is conjectured from the fact that they brought three gifts.
 - b. Any number of individuals could have been represented by the gifts.
 2. Their journey was made long after Jesus was born.
 - a. Months had likely passed before they followed the star to Bethlehem.
 - b. Mary and Joseph had probably moved to more comfortable quarters than the stable.
- C. A true conclusion: without the virgin birth the purpose of God would have been thwarted.
 1. Jesus was pre-existent in the form of God but He chose to empty Himself and come to earth in the flesh to accomplish the will of the Father (Phil. 2:5-8)

2. Jesus became God in flesh.
 - a. Born of woman He experienced all aspects of humanity.
 - b. Born of the Spirit He retained His deity.
 - Neither the humanity nor deity of Jesus should be called into question by anyone.

Conclusion

1. The birth of Jesus certainly qualifies as “good tidings of great joy” for it brought to earth the only begotten Son of God in the form of man so that He could live a perfect life and qualify to be the Messiah, the one who would save mankind from the ravages of sin.
2. He became one of us to save us. (Luke 19:10)

Isaiah's Portrait of the Messiah

Text: Isaiah 9:6-7

Introduction

1. Isaiah is preeminently the Messianic prophet.
2. Isaiah 9:6-7 is one of the most spectacular of Isaiah's prophecies because it speaks of how the Father met the needs of man who had come under the influence of sin. God saw man needed:
 - a. Wisdom. Jesus Christ is our counselor.
 - b. Reconciliation. Jesus Christ is our peace.
 - c. Help for life's calamities. Jesus Christ is our mighty God.
 - d. Provision and comfort. Jesus Christ is the Father of eternity.
3. This lesson will analyze verses six and seven of the ninth chapter of Isaiah as they pertain to Jesus in order to demonstrate His nature, abilities and authority.

I. "A Child Is Born"

- A. This tells of Jesus Christ's mode of coming into the world.
 1. He would not come as a descending angel or a conquering king.
 2. He came as a babe wrapped in swaddling clothes. (Luke 2:11-12)
- B. In this His humiliation is seen—The mighty Word of God emptied Himself and took the form of a servant and the limitations of a man. (Phil. 2:5-8)
- C. His incarnation was essential in order to "destroy him who had the power of death, that is, the devil." (Heb. 2:14)

II. "A Son Is Given"

- A. Not just a child but a man child is specified.
- B. A son, not of an earthly father but a heavenly one. (Isa. 7:14)
- C. The unique circumstances of His birth proved that Jesus was Immanuel, "God with us." (Matt. 1:23)

III. "The Government Will Be Upon His Shoulder"

- A. The burden of authority would rest upon His shoulders. (Matt. 28:18-20; Eph. 1:22-23)
- B. The Messiah, the Christ, would reign as King over God's kingdom. (Luke 1 31-33)
- C. Thus today, all those who are saved are translated or conveyed into the kingdom "of the Son of His love." (Col. 1:13)

IV. "His Name Will Be Called Wonderful"

- A. "Wonderful" could also be translated "wondrous."
- B. The Messiah is:
 - 1. Wondrous in His nature for He is Divine. (John 1:1-3, 14)
 - 2. Perfect in His manhood. (1 Pet. 2:21-22)
 - 3. Wondrous in His offices.
 - He alone combined in Himself the three offices of Prophet (Deut. 18:15); Priest (Heb. 7:25-26); and King (1 Tim. 6:15).
 - 4. Wondrous in His relationships with us.
 - a. He shares in our flesh and blood. (Heb. 2:14)
 - b. He is Savior of all who believe and obey Him. (Matt. 1:21; Heb. 5:8-9)
 - c. He is a friend unlike all others. (John 15:13-14)
 - d. He invites us to jointly share His eternal inheritance. (Rom. 8:16-17)

V. "Counselor"

- A. Man, blinded by sin, desperately needed a wise counselor. (Jer. 10:23; Prov. 14:12)
- B. No man ever spoke as wisely as Jesus. (Isa. 11:2; John 7:45-46)

VI. "Mighty God"

- A. Jesus reflects the same divine nature as His Father. (Col. 2:9; John 14:7-9)
- B. To accomplish His mission, the Son could be no less than Deity.
 - 1. As God and Savior He redeemed lost mankind. (Titus 2:14)
 - 2. He put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself—this no creature could do.
 - 3. He vanquished sin and death. (1 Cor. 15:25-26)

VII. "Everlasting Father"

- A. This name has troubled many.
 - 1. ASV footnote: "Father of eternity."
 - 2. Some have translated it "Father of perpetuity" or "Father of forever."
- B. Jesus is the Creator of all existing things. (Col. 1:16)
 - 1. He is Master and Ruler of all.
 - 2. He sustains the universe and all living things. (Col. 1:17)
- C. Jesus is the author of eternal salvation. (Heb. 5:8-9)
 - 1. He came to give eternal life. (John 10:10)
 - 2. Those who follow Him will "inherit eternal life." (Matt. 19:29)
 - 3. He gives eternal life to those who are His "sheep." (John 10:27-28)
 - 4. The gift of God is eternal life in Jesus Christ. (Rom. 6:23)

VIII. "Prince of Peace"

- A. Worldly kings establish themselves by the sword but Jesus' kingdom is founded upon peace.
- B. Jesus reconciled man with:
 - 1. God. (Rom. 5:1)
 - 2. Himself. (Phil. 4:7)
 - 3. His fellow man. (Eph. 2:17)
- C. Jesus imparts peace, maintains it and perfects it. (John 14:27; Phil. 4:6-7)

IX. "Of the Increase of His Government...There Will Be No End"

- A. His is an eternal kingdom. (Dan. 2:44)
- B. The extent of His reign grows daily as each new heart is won to Him. (Col. 1:13)
- C. One day His enemies will be destroyed for no power on earth or in hell is sufficient to destroy His kingdom. (1 Cor. 15:51-57)

X. "Upon the Throne of David"

- A. The prophets foretold that the Christ would reign on David's throne. (Acts 2:29-31)
- B. The angel who announced Him to Mary also spoke of Christ on the throne of David. (Luke 1:32-33)
- C. Such had been promised to David some one thousand years before. (2 Sam. 7:12-13)

XI. "With Justice and Judgment"

- A. This is the nature of His reign.
- B. His kingdom is totally unlike the governments of men.
- C. No one need to fear unfair treatment at the hand of the King of Kings.

XII. "The Zeal of the Lord of Hosts Will Perform This"

- A. This constitutes a Divine guarantee of success.
- B. Many human purposes fail because men lack the zeal and devotion to carry through or the power to accomplish their goal.
- C. God can never be deterred.
 - 1. His will will be done.
 - 2. His ends will be accomplished.
 - 3. His promises fulfilled.

Conclusion

- 1. All of this, according to our lesson text, is given "unto us."
 - A promise and a pledge all in one person—Jesus Christ.
- 2. Therefore, we need to love and serve Him with all our heart, mind, soul, strength and being.

John's Portrait of Jesus

Text: Revelation 1:1-7

Introduction

1. When he wrote the book of Revelation, the apostle John was a prisoner for the cause of Christ on the Isle of Patmos.
2. Christians were being persecuted for the faith thus many of them were discouraged and in danger of losing their faith.
 - Revelation was written to assure them of eternal victory if they would remain faithful to Christ.
3. Consistent with his purpose, John introduces the book with statements which show the value of Jesus to Christians. They are facts which:
 - a. Show how one cannot possibly succeed without Him, that one needs Him and can trust Him.
 - b. Should encourage those who are not Christians to see their need for Him considering what He is, what He has done and what He will do.

I. What Jesus Is

- A. The faithful witness. (v. 5)
 1. Faithful: to be trusted, reliable.
 2. Witness: from the word meaning "martyr," thus one who bears witness to his sincerity by his willingness to die for his testimony.
 3. The trustworthiness of Jesus is proven by His willingness to die to fulfill His promises. (John 10:9-15)
- B. The firstborn from the dead. (v. 5)
 1. Not the first to ever be raised from the dead.
 2. Jesus was the first to conquer death Himself, to rise never to die again. (Rom. 6:8-10)
 3. Thus, He is not only sincere in His promises but is also capable of fulfilling all of them. (Phil. 3:20-21; 1 Cor. 15:20-26, 50-57)
- C. Ruler over the kings of the earth. (v. 5)
 1. He is mightier than all the rulers of the world.
 2. He:
 - a. Is "the highest of the kings of the earth." (Psa. 89:27)
 - b. Has "all authority...in heaven and on earth." (Matt. 28:18-20)
 - c. Is "far above all principality and power and might and dominion." (Eph. 1:19-23)
 - d. Is "King of kings and Lord of lords." (1 Tim. 6:15)

II. What Jesus Has Done

- A. He loved us. (v. 5)
- B. He washed us from our sins in His own blood. (v.5)
- C. He made us kings and priests. (v. 6)
 - 1, ASV and NASV: “kingdom, priests.”
 - 2. “A royal priesthood.” (1 Pet. 2:9)
 - 3. Priest: one who offers sacrifice to God.
 - 4. Thus, Jesus made it possible for people to offer worship in the presence of God by cleansing them of their impurities through the washing of His own blood as the Levitical priests under the Old Law were washed pure in order to sacrifice to God.

III. What Jesus Will Do

- A. He will come with clouds. (v. 7)
 - This is speaking of His second coming. (Acts 1:9-11)
- B. Every eye will see Him. (v. 7)
 - 1. It will include those who pierced Him, the Jews, Pilate, Herod, the soldiers who nailed Him to the cross and those who reject Him now.
 - 2. Consider 1 Thessalonians 4:13-17.
- C. All tribes of the earth will mourn. (v. 7)
 - 1. They will mourn because of Him.
 - a. Mourn: “beating of the head or breast in lamentation.”
 - b. This shows the hopelessness of their situation.
 - 2. He came once extending mercy as the Lamb of God (John 1:29) but He will come again in wrath to execute judgment against those who have despised God’s mercy. (2 Thess. 1:7-9)

Conclusion: He Will Come in Judgment

Revelation 6:17. “For the great day of His wrath has come, and who is able to stand?”

The Sacrifice of Jesus

Introduction

1. In the beginning, Jesus was with God and was Himself God. (John 1:1)
 - He thought this equality with God was not something to be retained.
2. In coming to earth, He did not come in the glory and majesty of God but in the form of man. (Phil. 2:5-8)
 - a. While He emptied Himself of glory, He did not divest Himself of Deity. (Col. 2:9)
 - b. Though He was rich, He became poor so that we, being poor, might be rich. (2 Cor. 8:9)
3. The sacrificial death of Jesus is the expression of God's love for man. (John 3:16; Rom. 5:8)
4. As the only redeeming power to save man, He was ordained from the beginning to rescue mankind from sin. (1 Pet. 1:17-20)
5. In the death of Jesus, many things were effected especially those which are related to man's sins.
6. One can appreciate man's great need for Christ's sacrifice and how Jesus more than supplied all those needs by considering the many terms used to describe man's condition and the blessings of Christ's sacrifice.

I. Man's Condition: Sin and Its Consequences

- A. Sin is a violation of law (1 John 3:4) and integrity of law demands a penalty for violation.
 1. The judicial wrath of the Author of the law is provoked. (Rom. 1:18)
 2. The violator is brought under sentence (Rom. 3:23) and to be punished. (Matt. 25:31-33, 41-46)
- B. The relationship is altered for in sin man expresses himself as an enemy of God (Jas. 4:4), is alienated (Col. 1:21; Eph. 2:11-12) and is separated from the favor of God (Isa. 59:1-2; 1 John 1:5-6)
- C. The sinner, in his own conscience, is defiled (Titus 1:5; cf. 1 Tim. 4:2) and burdened with guilt (Ezek. 18:20).
- D. The sinner's status is changed.
 1. He is brought into bondage of sin. (Rom. 6:16)
 2. He becomes a child of the evil one. (John 8:44)
- E. Through Jesus Christ, one can be delivered from sin because in His death the demands of the law are satisfied, propitiated (Rom. 3:25), making it possible for God to be just while justifying man.
 - In overcoming the effects of sin, Jesus is the perfect solution.

II. The Blessings of Jesus' Death

- A. Propitiation. (Rom. 3:25)
- B. Atonement—reconciliation [NKJV]. (Rom. 5:11)
- C. Forgiveness. (Col. 1:14; Eph. 1:7)
- D. Salvation. (Heb. 2:10)
 - Salvation, safety, preservation from danger or destruction, stands in contrast to:
 - a. Death. (2 Cor. 7:10)
 - b. Destruction. (Phil. 1:28)
 - c. Wrath. (1 Thess. 5:9; John 4:22)
- E. Peace. (Col. 1:20)
- F. Brought near [KJV: “made nigh”]. (Eph. 2:13)
- G. Cleanse. (1 John 1:7)
- H. Justify. (Rom. 5:9)
- I. Redemption. (Eph. 1:7; Heb. 9:15)
- J. Sanctify. (Heb. 13:10-12)

Conclusion: The Sacrifice of Jesus

1. As a **propitiation**, Jesus gave Himself in our place to appease the Father in regard to our sins.
2. When once enemies of God because of our sins, by His death Jesus made **reconciliation** possible so that we can be friends of God, have a relationship with Him.
3. We can have our sins remitted or dismissed and be free from the guilt of our sins because of the **forgiveness** He effected.
4. **Salvation**, eternal deliverance and preservation, is ours because He died on the cross.
5. Our hearts and minds can be at **peace** enjoying rest and contentment because of our relationship with God He made possible.
6. We can enjoy a close relationship with God having been **brought near** by His sacrificial death.
7. By His death and the shedding of His blood, He is able to **cleanse** us and make us pure from the defilement of sin.
8. By His death He is able to **justify** us—declare us to be righteous in spite of past sins.
9. Because He died, He can offer us **redemption**, redeeming or purchasing us from bondage to sin and Satan.
10. His death made it possible to **sanctify** the believer, set him apart as belonging to God.
 - a. Through Christ, one can be delivered from sin.
 - b. One, with obedience to His gospel, can enjoy all the blessings made possible by Christ's death on the cross.

“The Common People Heard Him Gladly”

Text: Mark 12:35-37

Introduction

1. On the Monday before His crucifixion, Jesus drove the money changers, those who bought and sold, from the temple. (Mark 11:15-17)
2. When He returned the next day, He had to defend His authority. (Mark 11:27-33)
 - a. He indicted the chief priests, scribes and elders by teaching the parable of the vine dressers.
 - b. Knowing He had spoken against them, they wanted to kill Him but instead left Him alone because they feared the multitude. (Mark 12:1-12)
3. Some of the Pharisees and Herodians were sent to trick Him—to catch Him in His words by asking whether or not it was lawful to pay taxes to Caesar. (Mark 12:13-17)
4. The Sadducees then asked Him about the woman who had married seven brothers. (Mark 12:18-27)
5. One of the scribes asked Him which was the greatest commandment? (Mark 12:28-34)
 - a. He had to acknowledge that Jesus’ answer was correct.
 - b. Jesus’ answer silenced them all.
6. Jesus then exposed the ignorance of all the religious leaders of the day and warned of their sinful attitudes, ambitions and their hypocrisy. (Mark 12:35-41)
7. Though the religious leaders had tried to shake the public’s confidence in Jesus, they were unsuccessful because “the common people heard Him gladly.”
8. This lesson will consider some of the reasons the common people were attracted to Him.

I. His Ordinary Background

- A. In speaking of Jesus’ ordinary background, in no way are we taking anything away from His divinity. (Matt. 1:23; Phil. 2:5-7)
- B. His birthplace was Bethlehem—a small, insignificant town. (Micah 5:2)
- C. Though His birth was less than ordinary (Luke 2:1-7), the circumstances surrounding it were not.
 1. He was born in a cave and then laid in a feeding trough.
 2. His first visitors were shepherds. (Luke 2:8-16)
- D. His home of Nazareth was also a town of little noteworthiness. (John 1:46)
- E. He looked like a typical Jew of His day. (Isa. 53:2)
- F. He spent the first portion of His life as a carpenter. (Matt. 13:55; Mark 6:3)

II. He Associated with Common People

- A. Though Isaiah, in prophecy, referred to Jesus as “mighty God, everlasting Father, prince of peace” (Isa. 9:6-7), this mighty one condescended to do most of His work among the ordinary people of Palestine.
- B. It was only a week before the cross that He went to the rich people.
 1. Generally the rich who came to Him went away disappointed as did the rich, young ruler. (Matt. 19:16-22)
 2. He sought out Zacchaeus while in Jericho. (Luke 19:1-10)
- C. He associated with the dregs and outcasts of society. (Matt. 11:19)
 1. He was called a friend of tax collectors and sinners.
 2. He allowed a woman who was a “sinner” to wash and anoint His feet. (Luke 7:37-39)
 3. He touched the diseased, the sick and even lepers. (Luke 5:12-16)

III. He Taught in Common Words

- A. What He taught was not common. (Luke 6:27; Matt. 18:22)
 - His teachings were like no other. (Matt. 7:28; John 7:43-46; Mark 11:18)
- B. He used common language to communicate.
 1. His teaching was understandable, a great deal of it in parables. (Mark 4:34)
 2. As he labored in the gospel, Paul imitated Christ in the manner in which he taught. (1 Cor. 11:1; 2:1)

Conclusion

1. Will you be among those common people of the earth who gladly hear and obey the Son of God?
2. Or will you be as those who rejected Him while He was upon the earth? (John 6:66-68)
3. The choice is yours.

Why Jesus Had to Die

Introduction

1. While in the Garden of Gethsemane, as He faced His impending death, Jesus poured out His heart in prayer to the Father. (Matt. 26:39)
 - It was not possible for the “cup” to pass from Jesus—He had to die upon the cross.
2. This lesson will consider several reasons why Jesus had to die.

I. To Pay the Debt of the Law

- A. The law of God had been broken. (Rom. 3:9-18, 23)
- B. All the blood shed on Jewish altars could not ultimately atone for sin for it was the blood of animals. (Heb. 10:1-4)
- C. God is a just God and justice requires that the demands of the law be satisfied.
 1. God’s law cannot be ignored or treated lightly.
 2. Jesus took our penalty upon Himself as a substitute. (Isa. 53:4-6)
 - By His sacrificial death, Jesus satisfied the demand of the law and saved us.

II. To Demonstrate God’s Hatred of Sin

- A. God knows what sin is and what it does to people.
- B. God loves the sinner but hates sin.
- C. The death of Jesus demonstrates how much God hates sin while at the same time reveals His love of sinners. (John 3:17-21)

III. To Reconcile Man to God

- A. Man is separated from God by His sins. (Isa. 59:1-2; Jas. 4:4)
- B. Now man, in spite of his sins, can be reconciled to God. (2 Cor. 5:18-19; Eph. 2:13-16)

IV. To Point Out a New and Living Way

- A. Jesus has opened a “highway to heaven.” (Luke 3:4-6; Isa. 35:8-9; Heb. 10:19-20)
- B. Jesus is that way, the only way to heaven. (John 14:6)
- C. The way of Jesus is the way of faith, repentance, confession and baptism.

V. To Conquer Death and the Grave

- A. As long as people were under the power of sin, then death held sway and had the victory. (1 Cor. 15:56)
- B. But the death of Jesus destroyed the power of death. (Heb. 2:14-18)

C. Reconciliation made it possible to be restored to fellowship with God. (Col. 1:20-21)

1. Having “life” we are given eternal life. (1 John 2:25)
2. Just as Jesus was raised from the dead, we will be raised from the dead never to die again. (1 John 3:1-2)
3. Therefore, death no longer has dominion over us. (Rom. 6:9-10)

VI. To Demonstrate God’s Great Love

- A. The human capacity for love is great.
- B. There is no love like God’s love. (John 3:16)

Conclusion

1. It was not possible for the “cup” to pass from Jesus—He had to go to that Roman cross and die that difficult death.
2. Jesus was willingly lifted up on the cross because He loved you and me enough to save us from our sins.

Jesus: The Good Shepherd

Introduction

1. In the Old Testament, there is the promise of a Shepherd.
 - a. His coming would be glad tidings for the cities of Judah. (Isa. 40:9-11)
 - b. He would gather Israel as a shepherd does his flock. (Jer. 31:10)
 - c. As a type of David, He would feed God's people. (Ezek. 34:23)
2. The New Testament reveals that:
 - a. Jesus is the Great Shepherd who, through His blood, makes us complete. (Heb. 13:20-21)
 - b. Jesus is the Chief Shepherd who has other shepherds watching His flock. (1 Pet. 5:2-4)
 - c. Jesus is the Good Shepherd who laid down His life for us. (John 10:11-16)
3. Jesus' description of the "Good Shepherd is revealing."
 - a. It pictures the blessings enjoyed by those who follow Him.
 - b. It reminds us of the duties we have as His sheep.

I. The Blessings of Our Shepherd

- A. He laid down His life for us. (John 10:11, 15)
 1. It was foretold of the Old Testament that He would. (Zech. 13:7; Matt. 26:31)
 2. Thus He is able to offer eternal life to His sheep. (John 10:28; 1 John 5:11-13)
 3. Thus He offers security to those who continue to believe such that none can snatch them from His hand through neglect. (Heb. 3:12-15; Rev. 2:10)
- B. He now cares for us.
 1. Having called us through the gospel (John 10:3), He has gathered us into one fold. (John 10:16)
 2. As our Good Shepherd, He:
 - a. Knows us. (John 10:14, 27; 2 Tim. 2:19)
 - b. Feeds us. (John 10:9; Psa. 23:1-2)
 - c. Guides us. (John 10:3-4; Psa. 23:3)
 - d. Cherishes us tenderly. (Isa. 40:11; Eph. 5:25-29)
 - e. Protects and preserves. (Jer. 31:10; John 10:28-29; Jude 24)

II. Our Duties to Our Shepherd

- A. Heed His voice. (John 10:2-3)
 1. His sheep follow Him for they know His voice. (John 10:4)
 2. Jesus expects His sheep to heed His voice.

- a. As proclaimed during His earthly ministry. (Luke 6:46)
 - b. As stated in the great commission. (Matt. 28:18-20)
 - 3. We heed His voice today by heeding the words of His apostles.
 - a. To receive them is to receive Him. (Matt. 13:20)
 - b. Thus the early church continued steadfastly in their doctrine. (Acts 2:42)
 - c. For they taught the commandments of the Lord. (1 Cor. 14:37)
- B. Hold to His flock.
 - 1. There is one flock—one body. (John 10:16; Eph. 4:4)
 - 2. We should strive to maintain the unity of that flock.
 - a. Jesus prayed for it. (John 17:20-23)
 - b. Jesus died for it. (Eph. 2:13-16)
- C. Help His shepherds.
 - 1. The Chief Shepherd has shepherds to guide His flock.
 - a. They are the elders in a local congregation. (1 Pet. 5:1-4)
 - b. Their duty is to oversee and pastor the flock. (Acts 20:17, 28; 1 Pet. 5:1-3)
 - 2. Jesus expects His sheep to respect His shepherds.
 - a. To submit to their oversight and make their duty a joyful one. (Heb. 13:17)
 - b. To esteem them highly in love, being at peace. (1 Thess. 5:12-13)

Conclusion

- 1. The promises for those who follow Jesus as their Shepherd are wonderful. (Rev. 7:13-17)
- 2. Yet, Jesus described a day in which the sheep and goats will be parted. (Matt. 25:31-34, 41)
- 3. Which side will you be on? It depends upon whether or not you hear and heed the voice of Jesus and become one of His sheep and have Him as your Shepherd.

Jesus: Son of God and Son of Man

Introduction

1. John 1:1 establishes the deity of Jesus.
2. John 1:14 declares that deity became humanity.
3. Matthew 1:23 sets forth how deity and humanity came together—the virgin birth.
4. Philippians 2:5-8 relates that becoming a human being, the One who would come to earth and accomplish the eternal purpose of God, was a conscious decision made by Jesus.

I. The Dual Nature of Jesus

- A. Many have a difficult time reconciling the dual nature of Jesus while He was upon the earth—that He was both God and man.
 1. The Gnostics of the first century had that problem.
 - a. Since they thought flesh was intrinsically evil, they believed that God could not come in the flesh.
 - b. They had many explanations to solve what they believed to be a dilemma.
 2. Modernists of today who look to Jesus as “just a good man” do not recognize His deity.
 3. “Johannes Weiss tells us that it is unthinkable that Godhood and manhood should be united in a single person walking upon the earth; that, while no doubt man of ancient time could conceive ‘that a man might really be an incarnate deity,’ modern men feel much too strongly the impassable barrier which separates the divine and the human to entertain such a notion.” (Benjamin Warfield, *Person and Work of Christ*, 211)
- B. Both natures, divine and human, can be found in Jesus without a conflict between them.

II. Jesus: The Son of Man

- A. “Son of Man” is a self-designation frequently used by Jesus. (Matt. 8:20; 16:13)
- B. “Son of Man” is used some eighty-five times in the New Testament, eighty-one of them by Jesus.
 - The four exceptions are all used in reference to Jesus.
 - a. John 12:34. The multitude questions Jesus’ use of the term.
 - b. Acts 7:56. It is used by Stephen.
 - c. Revelation 1:13 and 14:14. It is used by John.
- C. The meaning of the term remains an enigma.
 1. Neither Jesus nor His apostles ever explained its significance.
 2. We must determine its meaning from the contexts in which it appears.

D. The use of the term in Scripture.

1. It is sometimes used to simply designate man. (Num. 23:19; Job 35:8; Jer. 49:18)
2. It was used by God in speaking to Ezekiel.
 - a. It is found ninety-three times in the book of Ezekiel.
 - b. It is applied to Ezekiel more times than it was to Jesus. (Ezek. 3:1; 37:3)
3. It is used to designate the Messiah.
 - a. An uninspired Jewish book, *The Book of Enoch*, uses it to designate a Messianic figure.
 - b. Daniel 7:13-14 connects it with the Messiah.
4. It connected Jesus with humanity.
 - a. He had an earthly mother.
 - b. He took on the form of man. (Phil. 2:7)
 - c. He possessed human characteristics. (Heb. 2:14)

III. The Deity of Jesus

- A. He is designated as divine. (John 1:1-2)
 - Matthew 1:23. "...they shall call His name Immanuel, which is translated, 'God with us.'"
- B. He was the "fullness of the Godhead bodily." (Col. 2:9)
 1. To see Him was to see the Father. (John 14:7-11)
 2. "He was and is, absolute and perfect." (R.C. Trench, quoted by W.E. Vine in *The Expository Dictionary of NT Words*, 331)
- C. He could forgive sins—that which only God had the authority to do. (Mark 2:5-7)
- D. Thomas called Him "God" and Jesus did not correct him. (John 20:28)
- E. He existed "in the form of God." (Phil. 2:6)
 1. In the Greek, the word translated "form" is *morphe*.
 2. *Morphe*—Form.
 - a. "It "means the essential attributes as shown in the form. In his preincarnate state Christ possessed the attributes of God and so appeared to those in heaven who saw him. Here is a clear statement by Paul of the deity of Christ." (A.T. Robertson, *Word Pictures in the NT*, 444)
 - b. "*Morphe* is therefore properly the nature or essence, not in the abstract but as actually subsisting in the individual, and retained as long as the individual itself exists." (Gifford, quoted by Vine, *Expository Dictionary of NT Words*, 463)

IV. The Humanity of Jesus (Phil. 2:5-8)

- A. Jesus "made Himself of no reputation." (Phil. 2:7)
 1. ASV and NASV: "emptied Himself."
 2. He gave up the environment of glory.
 3. "Christ did not empty Himself of Godhood. He did not cease to be what He essentially and eternally was." (Vine, 365)

- B. Jesus left the riches of heaven. (2 Cor. 8:9)
1. Footnote in NASV on Philippians 2:7: "i.e., laid aside His privileges."
 2. He had no regard for self—His regard was only for others.
- C. He took upon Himself the "form of a bondservant" and the "likeness of men" in "appearance as a man." (Phil. 2:7-8)
- *Morphe*. Denotes the special or characteristic form or feature of a person or thing; it is used with particular significance in the N.T., only of Christ, in Phil. 2:6-7, in the phrases "being in the form of God," and "taking the form of a servant." (Vine, *ibid*)
- D. "The Word became flesh." (John 1:14; 2 John 7; 1 John 4:2)
1. He was born of the flesh. (Rom. 1:3)
 2. He had a body prepared for Him. (Heb. 10:5)
 3. He had a body of flesh and blood. (Heb. 2:14; Luke 24:39)
 4. "God was manifested in the flesh." (1 Tim. 3:16)
 5. He had characteristics of humanity.
 - a. He was subject to certain laws of human development.
 - b. He grew. (Luke 2:40, 52)
 - c. He was subject to His parents. (Luke 2:51)
 6. He possessed human attributes.
 - a. Hunger. (Matt. 4:2)
 - b. Weariness. (John 4:5-6)
 - c. Sleep. (Luke 8:23)
 - d. Agony. (Luke 22:44)
 - e. Compassion. (Matt. 9:36)
 - f. Sorrow and trouble. (Matt. 26:37-38)
 - g. Weeping. (John 11:35; Luke 19:41)
- E. Though He was human, He was sinless. (John 8:46; 1 Pet. 2:22; 2 Cor. 5:21)
1. He was tempted in all points. (Heb. 4:15)
 2. What kept Him sinless?
 - a. Not His deity.
 - b. If it had been His deity, what kind of example would He be to us? (cf. 1 Pet. 2:21-22)
 3. He resisted the devil. (Matt. 4:1-10;; Jas. 4:7)
 4. He was made perfect through His suffering. (Heb. 2:9-10; 5:8-9)

Conclusion

1. He is deity, yet, He left the glories of heaven with all its beauty, peace and happiness in the presence of God and took the likeness of man to suffer, be hated and rejected, and put to death.
2. His dual nature enables Him to be the perfect Mediator between God and man. (1 Tim. 2:5)
3. He gave His life. (2 Cor. 5:21; John 10:17-18)
4. He will be a righteous judge. (Acts 17:31)
5. May all of us come to a better knowledge and understanding of the Son of Man so that we might have a deeper love for Him.

Jesus as a Stone

Text: 1 Peter 2:4-8

Introduction

1. In 1 Peter 2:4-8, the apostle Peter ties together several passages in which Jesus is referred to as a stone.
2. The Old Testament figures of speech in the above passage, when applied to Jesus, tell us several different things about Him.

I. The Rejected Stone

- A. Jesus is described as “the stone which the builders rejected.” (1 Pet. 2:4; Psa. 118:22)
- B. This is a figure of speech which describes the erection of a building in which builders reject one stone as being unfit to be used in construction.
 1. However, the chief architect came and selected that rejected stone to be the chief corner stone.
 2. That stone is Jesus.
- C. This figure denotes the manner in which Jesus was rejected by the Jews. (Matt. 21:33-42)
 1. The Jews found Jesus unacceptable.
 - a. They were expecting an earthly kingdom with a reigning monarch.
 - b. When He refused to accept the position of king in an earthly kingdom, they rejected Him. (John 6:15)
 2. When Jesus cleansed the Temple and pronounced woes against the religious leaders, they despised Him.
 3. When they witnessed His popularity as a result of the resurrection of Lazarus, they determined He had to die. (John 11:47-53)
- D. His rejection was a matter of prophecy. (Isa. 53:3)

II. The Chief Corner Stone

- A. That stone which the builders rejected was used as the chief cornerstone. (1 Pet. 2:4; Psa. 118:22; Isa. 28:16)
- B. Through this comparison of these two figures, we can see the different valuations placed upon Jesus by the Jews and by God.
 - The Jews rejected Jesus but God chose Him as the cornerstone—the most important stone in all of the spiritual building He was constructing.

- C. The cornerstone is chosen first because:
 - 1. It is the best, most precious stone.
 - 2. All the rest of the stones in the building are placed in alignment with it.
- D. Jesus is the chief cornerstone in the church. (Eph. 2:19-22)
 - 1. Without Him, there could be no forgiveness of sins, no hope of salvation, no hope of a resurrected body, or no hope of heaven. (Acts 4:11-12)
 - 2. He is the way to the Father. (John 14:6)
 - 3. Without Him, no other stones could be added to the house of God. (1 Pet. 2:5)

III. A Reliable Stone

- A. 1 Peter 2:6 is a quotation from Isaiah 28:16.
 - 1. Isaiah had used the promise of a Messiah as that which God's people could rely upon for assurance as they faced the Assyrian crisis.
 - 2. The emphasis of the passage in Isaiah is that this foundation stone which God laid is adequate to sustain those who put their hopes in Him.
- B. He was "a tried stone."
 - 1. He was tested and found to be adequate.
 - 2. He was a sure and reliable foundation upon which to build.
- C. That He is reliable is emphasized over and over in Scripture. (1 Tim. 1:12; Heb. 7:25; 2 Tim. 4:6-8)
- D. He is a reliable stone—not a foundation which breaks and crumbles under stress.

IV. Stone of Stumbling—Rock of Offense

- A. 1 Peter 2:8 alludes to Isaiah 8:14.
 - 1. The passage in Isaiah emphasized that Judah should fix her hope upon God, specifically the promise of the Messiah which God had repeatedly given but not all Judah was willing to listen.
 - 2. Those who refused to trust in God would find their rejection of His promises of the Messiah to be the source of their own destruction.
 - 3. In the New Testament, the Isaiah passage is applied to Jesus. (Rom. 9:30-33)
- B. Whoever chooses not to believe in Jesus will be destroyed. (Matt. 21:44)
 - 1. Those who reject Jesus will be condemned to everlasting damnation. (Mark 16:16)
 - 2. It will be as if they have stumbled over a rock which was laying in their path.
 - That rock will then fall on them and crush them to pieces.

Conclusion

- 1. Both the acceptance and rejection of Jesus are pictured in reference to Jesus as a stone.
- 2. All people will either accept or reject Jesus.
- 3. What will be your choice? Will He be your chief cornerstone or your rock of offense?

Jesus: Lamb of God

Introduction

1. One of the most thrilling and magnificent scenes pictured anywhere in Scripture is the throne scene in Revelation chapters four and five.
 - a. Chapter four describes the one sitting on the throne as majestic and awesome.
 - 1) Out of His throne came flashes of lightning and rumblings of thunder.
 - 2) Those gathered at the throne gave praise and adulation to the one who sat on it.
 - b. The one on the throne held a scroll in His right hand that contained the message that is unveiled in the rest of the book of Revelation but it was sealed.
 - 1) The scroll contained the fate of God's people for they were in the midst of a terrible war with the forces of Satan.
 - 2) What would happen to them? How would this great conflict turn out?
2. But a terrible predicament is pictured in this spectacular scene—no one was found worthy to open the scroll.
 - a. The apostle John was deeply disturbed over this dilemma.
 - b. How was it resolved?
3. In Revelation 5:1-10, one is pictured as both a Lion and a Lamb.
 - He alone is found worthy to open the scroll.
4. Who is this one called “the Lamb?” Why is He considered worthy?
5. This lesson will consider:
 - a. Lambs in the Old Testament.
 - b. The Lamb of God.
 - c. Why this Lamb is worthy.

I. Lambs in the Old Testament

- A. A lamb is mentioned as early as Genesis 22:7-8 where Abraham was told to take Isaac to the land of Moriah and offer him as a burnt offering
 1. When they arrived at the place of sacrifice, Isaac, not knowing what was to take place, wondered where the sacrificial lamb was.
 - God did provide a sacrifice and Isaac was spared.
 2. Though this is the first time a lamb is specifically mentioned as a sacrifice, such offering predated this time for Isaac was aware that lambs were sacrificed as burnt offerings.
- B. The lamb had an important role in the Passover.
 1. Each Israelite family was to prepare a special lamb for the Passover. (Ex. 12:1-13)
 2. In generations to come, the Israelite families were to reenact this event to remember God's act of delivering His people. (Ex. 12:24-27)

- C. The lamb had an integral part in the tabernacle and temple worship.
 - 1. The priests offered lambs on a daily basis in the ongoing worship of Israel.
 - There were morning and evening sacrifices. (Ex. 29:38-39)
 - 2. In addition to the daily sacrifices, there were many special occasions of sacrifice in the Jewish system.
- D. A common element found in most references to lambs in the Old Testament is that of sacrifice.
 - 1. Lambs were offered to God as a sacrifice for the people's sins.
 - 2. Such sacrifices were necessary in order that the people of Israel might be the people of God.
- E. This vivid, powerful imagery of a lamb being slain as a sacrifice for sin even became part of prophecy in the Old Testament.
 - 1. In describing the suffering of the coming Messiah, Isaiah used the figure of a lamb.
 - 2. Isaiah pictures mankind as straying sheep who have turned away from God then he portrays the Messiah as a sacrificial lamb who bears man's sin. (Isa. 53:6-7)
 - This simile of Isaiah introduces Jesus as the Lamb of God.

II. The Lamb of God

- A. According to the Biblical record, John the Baptist was the first to call Jesus "the Lamb of God." (John 1:29)
 - 1. John was the forerunner of Jesus.
 - It was his job to introduce Jesus to the world.
 - 2. By the time of his statement in John 1:29, John had already told his disciples about the one who was coming.
 - a. He had prepared them and now they were just waiting for the introduction of the Savior but the time for waiting was now over.
 - b. On a certain day, John was with some of his disciples as he saw Jesus approaching. (John 1:29-36)
 - 3. John had essentially one mission—to point the way to Jesus.
 - Some of his disciples were disturbed that, with the passing of time, people were turning from John to Jesus (John 3:25-30) but that was what was supposed to happen—Jesus is the Christ, the anointed one, the Lamb of God who would save the world not John.
- B. When the Jews heard of Jesus as "the Lamb of God," they understood that it meant sacrifice because they knew the function of the lamb in the Old Testament system.
 - 1. John the Baptist made it clear that Jesus was to be a sacrifice, a sin sacrifice, when he said the Lamb "takes away the sin of the world."
 - 2. Peter used the simile of a lamb to describe the sacrificial death of Jesus. (1 Pet. 1:18-19)

- C. Like the lamb of the Passover, Jesus was without spot or blemish. (cf. Ex. 12:5)
 - 1. It is also worthy to note that the bones of the Passover lamb were not to be broken. (Ex. 12:46)
 - 2. In keeping with the image of the Passover lamb, Jesus' bones were not broken on the cross even though the men who died with Him did suffer broken bones. (John 19:31-36)
- D. The writer of Hebrews did not use the phrase "Lamb of God" to describe Jesus but he did describe Him as a sacrifice for sin. (Heb. 9:26)
 - 1. The apostle John did the same thing. (1 John 3:5)
 - 2. The apostle Paul did similarly. (2 Cor. 5:21)
- E. All the writers of the New Testament understood that Jesus was our sacrifice for sin—the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world.
 - 1. The power of the gospel is found in the fact that Jesus sacrificed Himself to take away our sin.
 - 2. Because we have such a Savior, we may say with those of Revelation 5:12, "Worthy is the Lamb who was slain."

III. Worthy Is the Lamb

- A. We return to the throne scene in heaven.
 - 1. The Lamb, slain yet standing, emerges as having authority and knowledge, worthy to open the book that was sealed. (Rev. 5:9-10)
 - 2. He is worthy to be honored in every way by everyone.
- B. "Worthy is the Lamb who was slain."
 - 1. He died in a place that was consumed in the smell of death—Golgotha, the place of the skull.
 - 2. He died among thieves and murderers yet today He reigns in the glory and beauty of heaven.
 - a. There is no death, only life there.
 - b. There is no execution of criminals, only the song of the redeemed.
 - c. There are no cursing Roman soldiers or anyone hurling insults at Him, only the singers of the "new song" as they praise Him.
 - They praise Him because He is worthy.
- C. No less than twenty-seven times in the book of Revelation is Jesus pictured as "the Lamb."
 - In Revelation 13:8 He is called "the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world" speaking of His role, His destiny and our Salvation.
- D. In the book of Revelation He is depicted as reigning on His throne.
 - 1. He is described as one who has unlimited power and might.
 - 2. He is portrayed as victorious over His enemies yet He is portrayed as one who is unceasingly merciful to those who turn to Him.

Conclusion

1. Have you turned to Him for mercy and forgiveness?
2. You need Him because victory over the world, sin and death are only found in Him—Jesus, the Lamb of God.

Jesus: Lion of Judah

Text: Revelation 5:5-6

Introduction

1. Jesus is pictured in Revelation 5:5-6 as both a lion and a lamb.
 - Revelation is filled with dramatic symbols, its message was “signified,” meaning that the message is expressed through signs and symbols.
2. The message of Revelation can be summed up in one verse: “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.” (Rev. 17:14)
3. Revelation depicts a great conflict between the forces of Satan and the people of Jesus.
 - a. Though Jesus wins the battle, many of His people would suffer and others would die in this conflict.
 - b. The message of Revelation is one of comfort to the people of God. (Rev. 2:10; 6:9)
4. The Roman Empire was drenched in the blood of the saints.
 - a. Revelation did not point to far-distant, future events but, rather, to things that would happen very soon. (Rev. 1:1-3; 22:6-7, 10)
 - b. God’s people needed help and they needed right away.
5. Revelation’s message: Victory is assured—the enemies of God’s people will be defeated. (Rev. 17:14)
6. Why in the context of the book is Jesus depicted as both a lion and a lamb?
 - a. It is easy to conclude that Jesus is portrayed as a Lamb because He is the Redeemer, the one who offered Himself as a sacrifice for sin. (Rev. 5:6, 9, 12; 13:8)
 - b. It is not so easy to understand why He is called “the Lion of the tribe of Judah.”
 - 1) While He is called “the Lamb” no less than twenty-seven times in the book, He is called “the Lion” but once.
 - 2) In order to learn what is meant by this figure of speech, we must go elsewhere in Scripture.

I. The Old Testament Background

- A. To learn of the origin of this peculiar language, we need to go to Genesis 49:8-12.
 1. In this text, Jacob, the aged father of twelve sons, prophesied concerning each one.
 - He spoke of the first four sons in order of their birth from the eldest, Reuben, down to Judah.

2. Even though Judah was not the eldest son, Jacob spoke of him as having a place of honor.
 - What was spoken of Judah applied to the tribe of Judah: “Judah, you are he whom your brothers shall praise; your hand shall be on the neck of your enemies; your father’s children shall bow down before you.”
3. It is worthy to note that the name Judah means “celebrated” or “praised.”
 - a. True to his name, Judah would be praised by the other tribes.
 - b. This tribe would be superior and distinguished from all others.
4. “Your hand shall be on the neck of your enemies” reveals that part of Judah’s superiority would be seen in its victorious character.
 - a. Caleb exemplifies the warrior of Judah. (Josh. 14:11)
 - b. Victory in war is further exemplified by David, a descendant of Judah. (Psa. 18:40)
5. Not only would Judah be a superior tribe, it would have dominion over the other tribes.
 - a. “Your father’s children will bow down before you”
 - b. This would be a kingly tribe—it was fulfilled in David. (2 Sam. 5:1-3)
- B. The tribe of Judah is compared to a lion because it would be strong. (Gen. 49:9)
 1. Judah is first represented as a cub (whelp) then as a full grown lion indicating that its strength would grow as it came to maturity.
 2. The lion is the “king of the jungle,” the terror of his domain.
 - Jacob’s prophecy came to pass as David led Judah in battle, for no one was able to stand against his army.
- C. Judah was to be the royal tribe from whom the Messiah would come. (Gen. 49:10)
 1. The scepter was an emblem of royalty, power and authority. (Esth. 5:2; Psa. 45:6)
 2. Judah would be a kingly tribe, a tribe from which a king would come.
- D. “The Lawgiver,” a teacher or governor, one who gives decrees, would come out of Judah. (Gen. 49:10)
 1. Again this idea is that this tribe would bear the rule over the people of God.
 2. “From between his feet,” means offspring, the offspring of the tribe of Judah.
- E. “Until Shiloh comes”
 1. Shiloh is an obscure word that is variously interpreted to mean “he who is sent,” “the seed,” and “the peaceful one.”
 2. This can only be a reference to the Messiah.
 3. Judah would continue as a distinct tribe with prominence over the other tribes until Shiloh should come—and it did so.
 - a. After Christ’s coming, Judah’s distinction and preeminence were lost.
 - b. God has no special future plan for the Jews or Judah.

4. The final portion of Genesis 49:10 makes it clear that “Shiloh” is the Messiah.
 - “The gathering” (KJV) or “obedience” (NKJV, NAS) of the people is to him.
- F. The final verses of Jacob’s prophecy to Judah (Gen. 49:11-12), indicate prosperity for Judah.
 - The donkey, the choice vine, the garments are all symbols of fruitful prosperity.
- G. With this background in mind, it is easy to see why Jesus is called “the Lion of the tribe of Judah.”

II. The Lion of the Tribe of Judah

- A. Jesus is of the tribe of Judah and is praised. (Heb. 7:14; Rev. 5:9-10)
- B. Jesus is victorious over His enemies. (Acts 2:34-35; Rev. 17:14)
- C. All creation bows before King Jesus. (Rev. 5:14; 17:14)
- D. As the lion is the king of the beasts, when this figure is applied to Jesus, it is emblematic of authority and power. (Matt. 28:18)
 - Jesus is the ultimate expression of power from the tribe of Judah.
- E. Jesus is the Lawgiver through whom God speaks. (Heb. 1:1-2)
- F. Jesus has the royal scepter of kingship. (Heb. 1:8)
- G. As Shiloh, Jesus is the one who was sent, the one who was to come. (John 5:36; 6:14)
- H. The people would be gathered to Him. (John 11:52; 2 Thess. 2:1; Heb. 5:9)
- I. As Judah was to be fruitful, it is interesting to note that Jesus likened Himself to a fruitful vine. (John 15:1ff)
- J. The kingdom of Christ prospers—it cannot be defeated. (Heb. 12:28)
- K. Jesus is the ultimate expression of all these things related to the tribe of Judah.

III. Behold the Lion of the Tribe of Judah

- A. As the Lamb, Jesus is the Savior and Redeemer in the book of Revelation but, as the Lion, He is bold and powerful with kingly authority.
 1. He is the Conquering King!
 2. It is fitting that one with such supremacy and regal dignity should be entrusted with opening the seals. (Rev. 5:5)
 - a. The Greek word for “prevailed” means to acquire power as a victor as the result of conflict.
 - b. The Lord’s power is the result of a battle in which He was a victor.
- B. As the events in Revelation are about to be disclosed, they will result in the final triumph of Jesus.
 1. The outcome is so certain that He is pictured as already having gained the victory.
 2. Because He has such power, Jesus alone can open the scroll and loose its seals.
- C. Any Jew who understood what was said of the tribe of Judah in Genesis 49 would immediately understand what was meant when Jesus was called “the Lion of the tribe of Judah.”

D. Jesus is also called “the root of David” in Revelation 5:5.

1. This expression would connect Him directly with David, as an offshoot of the great king confirming that He is the rightful heir to David’s throne.
2. As such, He has the right to rule over God’s kingdom.

Conclusion

1. What did all this mean to the people of God who were going through this terrible struggle?
 - Remember, some were being cast into prison, others were murdered by their persecutors.
2. It meant that God’s people could trust their Commander.
 - a. He alone has the power to overcome the persecutors.
 - b. No matter how intense the persecution became, the Christians had to stay with Jesus and be faithful to Him.
3. The message of Revelation is one of:
 - a. Consolation and assurance to God’s people.
 - b. Doom and destruction to the persecutors.
4. What does all of this about the Lion and the Lamb mean to us today?
 - a. No matter what we face, no matter who the enemies are, no matter what they do to us, we must stay on the Lord’s side.
 - b. No matter how things appear, God is always with us and God always wins.
 - The outcome is so certain that we may say that the Lion of the tribe of Judah has prevailed.

The Loneliness of Jesus

Introduction

1. Solitude: “the quality or state of being alone.” (*Merriam-Webster.com*)
2. There are two kinds of solitude— isolation in space and isolation of the spirit.
 - a. Isolation in space: the fisherman alone in his boat at night, the mountain climber sitting by himself at camp, the man in solitary confinement in prison, etc.
 - b. Isolation of the spirit, aka loneliness of the soul.
 - 1) Have you ever been in a crowd but still felt alone?
 - 2) Have you ever felt that no one cared about you, understood you or appreciated you?
 - 3) Hands can touch ours but they send an icy chill of indifference deep within our heart.
 - 4) Eyes gaze into ours but with a look that cannot read to the bottom of the soul.
 - 5) Words pass from our lips but come back like an echo of solitude without reply.
3. While on earth, Jesus experienced both kinds of solitude but that which touched Him most was isolation of the spirit where no one seemed to care about Him, understand Him or appreciate Him.

I. The Loneliness of Jesus: Its Reality

- A. The parents of Jesus did not understand His mission. (Luke 2:41-50)
- B. His brothers would have no part of Him. (John 7:1-5)
- C. Those in his hometown were offended by Him. (Mark 6:3-4)
- D. During His ministry, though popular for a time, on the whole, the people rejected Him. (John 1:11; Matt. 23:37)

II. The Loneliness of Jesus: His Lack of Acceptance

- A. Have you ever wondered, “Why was John the Baptist accepted while Jesus was rejected?”
 1. John the Baptist fit the mold of the religious people of his day.
 - a. He was a Nazarite.
 - b. He shunned wine and strong drink.
 - c. He stayed out in the wilderness, thus, he was no threat to their positions of power and influence.
 2. The so-called “respectable, religious people” shunned Jesus.
 - a. To them He was a “glutton and a winebibber.” (Luke 7:34)
 - b. Though from humble means, He claimed to be a king.

- B. The Pharisees could not comprehend how Jesus could condemn sin and then eat with tax collectors and sinners. (Luke 15:2)
 - To them, His life was inconsistent.

III. The Loneliness of Jesus: Alone in the Garden

- A. In Gethsemane we see the “man of sorrows and acquainted with grief.” (Isa. 53:3)
- B. In Gethsemane Jesus prayed three times.
 - 1. Each time He went to His disciples for human sympathy and encouragement but He found them sleeping.
 - 2. He kindly rebuked them even though they were “sleeping from sorrow.” (Luke 22:39-46)
- C. The last time He came to His disciples and found them sleeping, He told them to sleep on. (Matt. 26:45)
 - 1. It was no longer possible for them to be of any help to Him.
 - 2. The hour of watching and praying had passed and the enemy was at hand.

IV. The Loneliness of Jesus: Forsaken by the Apostles (John 16:32)

- The apostles forsook Him though they:
 - 1. Had forsaken all to follow Him. (Matt. 19:27)
 - 2. Had been ready and willing to die with Him. (John 11:1-16)
 - 3. Had stated they never would. (Matt. 26:33)
 - 4. Struck out at those who had arrested Him. (John 18:10)

V. The Loneliness of Jesus: Alone in Judgment

- A. The Jewish council, in illegal trials, condemned Him.
 - 1. During these trials was when Peter, who had followed afar off, denied he knew Jesus. (Luke 22:54-62)
 - 2. Jesus was alone as He was being judged.
- B. Since Rome did not allow the Jews to execute criminals, the council sent Him to Pilate.
 - 1. Jesus stood alone as Pilate determined whether or not He should live as the crowd shouted, “Away with Him, away with Him! Crucify Him!” (John 19:15)
 - 2. Though Pilate washed his hands of the matter, He delivered Jesus to be crucified.

VI. The Loneliness of Jesus: Alone at the Cross

- Forsaken by man, Jesus faced the cross alone.
 - 1. It is sad to die but the one who dies alone is to be truly pitied.
 - 2. While on the cross, Jesus even cried, “My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?” (Matt. 27:46)

VII. The Loneliness of Jesus: His Motivation

- A. How could Jesus go on in the face of such rejection and loneliness?
 - He knew He was never really alone. (John 16:32)
- B. Acceptance was not His focus.
 - 1. He came to do the Father's will. (John 6:38)
 - 2. He did not seek acceptance or popularity on other's terms.
 - 3. He realized the worth or merit of His life depended on His relationship with the Father not on the opinions of others.
- C. He understood that being alone, when caused by standing for truth, was not a bad thing.

VIII. The Loneliness of Jesus: Lonely? Your Assurance

- A. The Christian is never alone.
 - 1. The Lord is with him. (Heb. 13:5)
 - 2. One of the reasons God has given us the local church is that no matter how isolated we feel in the world, we have those who are concerned about us, understand us, appreciate us and who freely share themselves and their lives with us.
- B. Realize your self-worth does not depend upon the opinions of others but on your relationship with the Father.
- C. Standing for the truth and right will place you in the company of the finest people who have ever lived—including Jesus.

Conclusion: The Loneliness of Jesus

- 1. Did you ever stop and think as to what you would have done in relation to the loneliness of Jesus especially as He faced the cross.
 - a. Would you have forsaken Him and fled?
 - b. You can know what you would have done then by what you are doing now.
- 2. Will you be His friend and stand beside Him?

Honoring Jesus

Text: John 5:22-23

Introduction

1. There are two evident ideas from the text.
 - a. All people should honor the Son just as they honor the Father.
 - b. The one who does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent Him.
 - 1) The only way to the Father is through the Son.
 - 2) The one who is pleasing to the Son is also pleasing to the Father. (2 John 9)
2. This lesson will present some distinct ways to honor Jesus so that we might thereby honor the Father.

I. We Honor Jesus by Imitating Him

- A. We are to be like Jesus. (Phil. 2:5; 1 Pet. 2:21)
- B. We must be conformed to His image.
 1. Colossians 3:10. "...renewed in knowledge according to the image of Him who created Him.
 2. 2 Corinthians 3:18. "...beholding...the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image..."
 3. Romans 8:29. "...predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son..."
- C. Imitating Him, we must:
 1. Do the Father's will as He did. (John 6:38)
 2. Serve as He served. (Matt. 20:28)
 3. Be compassionate as He was. (Luke 7:11-17)
 4. Be obedient like Him. (Heb. 5:8-9)
 5. Be as humble as He was. (John 13:4, 13-17)
 6. Pray as He did. (Mark 1:35)
 7. Forgive as He forgave. (Luke 23:34)
 8. Freely give as He gave. (2 Cor. 8:9)
- D. Christ, the Ideal.
 1. He was the epitome of goodness.
 - a. No one can match His character and life.
 - b. "Which of you convicts Me of sin?" (John 8:46)
 2. His teaching is far superior to that of any other human being.
 - a. "The people were astonished at His teaching..." (Matt. 7:28-29)
 - b. "No man ever spoke like this Man!" (John 7:31-32, 43-46)

II. We Honor Jesus by Confessing Him

- A. Confessing Jesus.
 - 1. We are to verbally confess “the Lord Jesus.” (Rom. 10:9-10)
 - 2. We must confess Jesus as Lord because He is God. (John 1:1-2)
 - 3. We dishonor Jesus when we fail to confess Him before men. (Matt. 10:32-33)
 - 4. In the last day all will confess Him. (Phil. 2:11)
 - 5. We must continue to confess Him on a daily basis.
- B. Daily confession.
 - 1. Confessing our belief in Christ is not just a one-time action.
 - a. It continues our whole lifetime.
 - b. It is manifested in the way we live.
 - 2. We confess Him when we make a stand for Him and His word. (Luke 9:26)

III. We Honor Jesus by Partaking of His Memorial Supper

- A. Jesus ordained the Lord’s Supper so that we would remember His death. (Luke 2:19-20; 1 Cor. 11:23-26)
- B. The early disciples met on the first day of the week to observe the Lord’s Supper. (Acts 20:7)
- C. When we partake of the Supper, we are to properly discern the Lord’s body. (1 Cor. 11:27-29)
- D. For Christians to fail to meet with other disciples and partake of the Supper is to dishonor Christ. (Jas. 4:17)

IV. We Honor Jesus with Our Possessions

- A. “Honor the Lord with your possessions...” (Prov. 3:9)
- B. To honor the Lord with our possessions is to give Him of our living. (1 Cor. 16:2; 2 Cor. 9:7)
- C. We are stewards of the blessings of God. (1 Cor. 4:1-2; 10:26; 1 Pet. 4:10-12)
- D. Our reward in eternity depends on our faithful stewardship on earth. (Luke 16:9-12)

Conclusion

- 1. If you are not a Christian, will you not honor Jesus today by confessing His name before this audience and being baptized into Him.
- 2. If you claim to be a Christian but you have not been properly honoring Jesus by your life, why not determine to change things now?

Tears of Jesus

Introduction

1. There are three occasions in the New Testament where Jesus shed tears.
 - a. All three have deep significance.
 - b. They prove that He as a “man of sorrows and acquainted with grief.” (Isa. 53:3)
 - c. They prove His humanity—He shed tears as all humans do from time to time.
2. This lesson will consider those three occasions when Jesus wept in order to learn the lessons they provide.

I. At the Grave of Lazarus (John 11:32-44)

- A. They were tears of sympathy.
- B. They prove the humanity of Jesus.
 - The book of John whose main theme is the Deity of Jesus also shows Jesus was very much a human being. (John 4:6-7; 11:33-35; 19:28; 1:14)
- C. Not only does the expression, “Jesus wept,” show that He was a human being but it also shows that He was a person of tenderness and compassion.
 1. His love for Lazarus, Mary and Martha.
 2. Compassion on all who experience death.
 3. Sympathy on us. (Heb. 4:15-16)
 4. He invites all to come to Him for consolation and rest. (Matt. 11:28-30)

II. In Gethsemane at the Prospect of His Own Death (Heb. 5:5-9)

- A. Without doubt, the passage in Hebrews refers to the events in the Garden of Gethsemane.
- B. Consider Matthew’s account. (Matt. 26:36-45)
- C. Luke more fully describes the agony of the occasion. (Luke 22:41-46)
- D. The Hebrew writer adds the matter of tears. (Heb. 5:7)
- E. Some have trouble understanding this behavior of Jesus.
 1. “Why would He shed tears at all if He were God, a divine Being?”
 2. We must not forget that Jesus was fully human as well as divine.
 3. As a man, facing the cross would give the hardest mental anguish that any human being had ever known.
 4. Jesus’ willingness to redeem fallen man and His unfailing determination to do the will of the Father, led Him to calmly drink the bitter cup of the cross.
- F. Even the tears of His own Son did not cause the Father to change His purpose.

G. Jesus' tears show that:

1. The pathway to obedience is not always easy.
2. Tears cannot substitute for obedience. (Matt. 7:21; 2 Thess. 1:7-9)
3. In spite of those tears, He is an example of strength when facing adversity. (Heb. 12:2)

III. Over Jerusalem (Luke 19:41-44)

- A. As the city of Jerusalem lies before Him, Jesus' prophetic eye beholds a sharp contrast.
1. On the one hand is a beautiful city.
 2. On the other, a smoldering, hideous ruin with thousands upon thousands of the city's inhabitants doomed to death.
- B. The Lord today must be "weeping" about the condition of many people.
1. They are not interested in saving their souls.
 2. They are not interested in coming to the Lord.
 3. There is indifference even among those who claim to follow Him.

Conclusion

1. As Jesus wept **tears of sympathy** at the tomb of Lazarus, He likewise sympathizes with us. (Heb. 4:15-16)
2. As Jesus wept **tears of anguish** when facing the cross, He willingly went to the cross to give us hope. (Heb. 5:8-9)
3. As Jesus wept **tears of sorrow** over Jerusalem, surely He is weeping today over those who needlessly remain in their sins.
4. But you can make Jesus rejoice today. (Luke 15:7)

The Prayer Life of Jesus

Introduction

“There are two ways of receiving instruction; one, by being told; the other, by watching someone else. The latter is the simpler and surer way. How better can we learn how to pray than by watching how Jesus prayed, and then try to imitate Him...He Himself prayed when down here surrounded by our same circumstances and temptations.” (S.D. Gordon, *Quiet Talks on Prayer*)

I. The Active Prayer Life of Jesus

- A. While Jesus was upon the earth, He had an active prayer life.
 - 1. The four gospels record seventeen different references to Jesus at prayer.
 - 2. He was often alone when He prayed. (Luke 5:16; 9:18)
 - 3. He also prayed with others around. (Luke 9:28-29)
- B. Jesus prayed at every major crisis point in His life.
 - 1. At the time of His baptism. (Luke 3:21)
 - 2. At the time of choosing His disciples. (Luke 6:12)
 - 3. For Simon. (Luke 22:32)
 - 4. In the garden before His betrayal. (Luke 22:40-44)
 - 5. While on the cross. (Luke 23:46)

II. The Teaching of Jesus on Prayer

- A. On one occasion one of His disciples, impressed with Jesus’ prayer life, asked Him to them how to pray. (Luke 11:1)
- B. Seeing Him at prayer made the disciples want to imitate Jesus.
 - 1. These men knew all about prayer for they were all raised in Jewish home and attended synagogues.
 - 2. They knew John’s disciples had learned to pray from John
 - 3. They wanted to learn to pray from Jesus.
 - a. They saw that His actions each day came out of His prayer life with God.
 - b. They desired that same dedicated prayer life so Jesus taught them the model prayer.
 - This was not a prayer that Jesus wanted them to repeat from rote memory but an example of what genuine prayer life is.
- C. The model prayer.
 - 1. ““It should be called ‘The Model Prayer’ rather than ‘The Lord’s Prayer.’ ‘Thus’ pray as he gives them a model. He himself did not use it as a liturgy (cf. John 17). There is no evidence that Jesus meant it for liturgical use by others ...there is no evidence whatever that Jesus designed it as a set formula.” (*Word Pictures in the NT*, Vol. I, 52)

2. This prayer contains the essence of all prayer.
 - a. "The prayer begins with the direct address. It is aimed at the Father. This means prayer is an intimate talk between people who love and trust one another. Interestingly, Jesus did not surround the Father with all sorts of intimidating descriptive adjectives. The address does not try to flatter God, pass a theology exam, or gain God's favor. The address simply establishes contact between two persons who are committed to each other in close family ties." (Trent C. Butler, *Luke, Holman NT Commentary* 3.184)
 - b. Since prayer is to be a part of the life of the Christian, he must be taught how to pray effectively and acceptably before God.
 - c. The lessons of this model prayer must be learned by us today if our prayers are to meet with God's approval.
3. The elements of the model prayer.
 - a. An outburst of praise and reverence: "Our Father in heaven, Hallowed be Your name."
 - 1) Prayer is an exclusive blessing of the child of God. (Eph. 1:3)
 - 2) The child of God is His spiritual, not physical child. (John 3:3-6; Gal. 3:26-27)
 - b. A petition on behalf of the kingdom: "Your kingdom come."
 - 1) One can no longer pray for the kingdom to come since it is now in existence. (Col. 1:13; Rev. 1:9)
 - 2) With the establishment of His kingdom, all power and authority have been given to Jesus (Matt. 28:18) and prayer is to be offered in His name. (Col. 3:17; John 16:24)
 - c. A petition for obedience: "Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven."
 - d. A petition for forgiveness: "And forgive us our sins, for we also forgive everyone who is indebted to us."
 - f. A petition for deliverance from temptation: "And do not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one."
 - The Christian is to pray with a firm conviction that God does help in time of temptation. (1 Cor. 10:13; 2 Pet. 2:9)

III. The Models the Prayer Establishes

- A. A model of brevity and scope.
 1. The entire prayer contains only 65 words (NKJV) but they embrace a condensed statement of the Lord's chief ideas about God and men.
 2. It addresses in a few short words a wide range of human needs as well as the relationship between God and man.
- B. A model of simplicity and directness.
 1. Instead of being a prayer which would appeal to only the cultured and sophisticated, those highly educated, it is one that everyone can easily understand.

2. Such simplicity does not indicate shallowness but, rather, it gives great insight into the relationship of man to His God.
 3. Its directness is seen in its requests—each petition is a distinct and definite request.
- C. A model of order.
1. It teaches that honoring God should be the first priority of every child of God who prays.
 - Before a word is said about personal needs, Jesus taught that God’s name should be hallowed, His kingdom acknowledged and His will done.
 2. One of our hardest tasks as children of God is to learn to prefer God’s will to our own and to seek after the things He demands of us. (Matt. 6:33; 16:24)
- D. A model of spirit.
1. The power of this prayer does not depend solely or in great proportion upon the words used but also upon the spirit in which it is offered. (John 4:24)
 2. The spirit which makes prayer effective is that of childlike confidence and trust. (Heb. 11:6; Mark 10:15)
 3. It was because of our Lord’s trust and confidence that His prayers constitute such complete and sufficient guides as to the proper principles of acceptable prayer.

IV. Practical Lessons from the Prayer Life of Jesus

- A. Persistence in prayer. (Luke 11:5-10)
- B. Humility in prayer. (Luke 18:9-14)
- C. To make time for prayer. (Mark 14:22-23; Luke 5:16)
- D. The need for solitude while praying. (Mark 1:35; Luke 9:18; Matt. 6:5-6)
- E. The need to glorify God. (John 11:41-44; 12:27-30; 17:1-5)
- F. The need to commune with others. (Luke 9:28)
- G. To pray for others. (Luke 22:31-32; John 17:9-24)
- H. To pray at critical times. (Luke 3:21-22; 6:12-16; 22:39-46)

Conclusion

1. “Jesus loved to pray. Prayer was a part of His life and was as involuntary as His breathing. Prayer was His regular habit and His resort in every emergency.” (Herbert Lockyer, *All the Prayers of the Bible*)
2. Shouldn’t prayer be the same to those who claim to follow Him?

The Invitation of Jesus

Text: Matthew 11:28-30

Introduction

1. During our lives we receive many invitations for graduations, weddings, formal dinners, parties, etc.
2. All of us have received one invitation which is far superior to all others we will ever receive.
 - a. It is the invitation extended by Jesus Christ.
 - b. It is a great invitation.
3. The invitation of Jesus is great because:
 - a. Of the one who extended it.
 - b. It pertains to the spiritual while the others relate to the physical.
 - c. It is universal in its scope.
 - d. It offers the greatest blessings and rewards.
4. This lesson will examine this great invitation because many important principles and applications are bound up in it.

I. "Come to Me"

- A. "Come" implies an invitation. (Psa. 110:3; Rev. 22:17; 3:20)
- B. "Come" implies we have the ability to accept the call.
 1. We are not to be waiting on some "ecstatic experience" to see, hear or feel something
 2. "The direct operation of the Holy Spirit theory is like chaining someone to a tree and saying, "Come.' Many wait for years and never receive anything." (Anon.)
- C. God calls and invites by means of the gospel. (2 Thess. 2:14)
 - We come by hearing, believing and obeying the gospel. (Acts 18:8; 1 Pet. 1:22; Rom. 6:17-18)
- D. "To Me" tells us we must go to Jesus and Him alone.
 1. John 6:68. He has the words of eternal life.
 2. John 14:6. He is the only way to the Father.
 3. Acts 4:12. There is salvation in no other.
 4. Hebrews 5:8-9. He is the author of eternal salvation to all who obey Him.

II. "All You Who Labor and Are Heavy Laden"

- A. This lets us know this invitation is universal in nature for all labor under the heavy burden of the guilt of their sin. (Rom. 3:23; 1 John 1:8-10)

- B. This shows that sinners are apart from Christ. (Isa. 59:1-2)
- C. This shows that we must realize that we are in sin.
 - 1. Such a realization comes through knowledge of the word of God. (Psa. 119:104; Rom. 3:20)
 - 2. We must feel the burden and guilt of our sin and want deliverance. (Rom. 7:24-25)
 - 3. Some get this in reverse.
 - a. They think they are too wicked to come.
 - b. They need to know that all who are laboring under sin, no matter what it may be, can come to Jesus. (Mark 2:17; 1 Tim. 1:15; Heb. 7:25)
- D. This shows that the sinner is the one who is to come.
 - Man needs to be reconciled to God and not God to man. (2 Cor. 5:20; Eph. 2:16)

III. "I Will Give You Rest"

- A. Rest from the guilt and burden of sin. (Matt. 1:21; John 1:29)
- B. Rest from the pain of an evil conscience. (Heb. 9:14; 10:22)
- C. Rest from the traditions and doctrines of men. (Col. 2:20-23)
- D. Rest from the fear of death. (Heb. 2:14-15)
- E. Rest in the eternal home. (Heb. 4:9-11; Rev. 14:13)

IV. "Take My Yoke Upon You"

- A. "Take" implies effort, requires action on our part. (Acts 2:40; Jas. 1:22, 25)
- B. "My" tells us we must follow the will of Christ only. (Matt. 7:24; John 14:15) We are not to follow the will of:
 - 1. Parents. (Matt. 10:37)
 - 2. Preachers. (Matt. 7:15; 15:9)
 - 3. A church. (Matt. 15:13)
 - 4. Any person. (Col. 2:8)
 - 5. Oneself. (Luke 9:23)
- C. "Yoke" implies there is a definite burden to be borne. (Matt. 16:24)
- D. "Upon you" implies personal responsibility.
 - 1. One must prove his own work. (Gal. 6:4-5)
 - 2. One is called to work out his own salvation. (Phil. 2:12)

V. "Learn from Me"

- A. Jesus is the source of Truth for He alone is God's spokesman today. (Heb. 1:1-2)
- B. We must be transformed by the will of God given through Jesus. (Eph. 5:17; Rom. 12:2; Phil. 2:5)
- C. We ought to learn from Jesus when:
 - 1. We tire of adversities and persecutions. (Heb. 12:3-4)
 - 2. We become self-centered. (Rom. 15:3)
 - 3. When we grow weary in well-doing. (John 9:4)

VI. "I Am Gentle and Lowly in Heart"

- A. Consider Hebrews 4:15-16.
- B. Jesus is a great and wonderful Savior.
 - 1. He bore our sins upon the cross. (1 Pet. 2:24-25; 2 Cor. 5:21)
 - 2. His goodness should lead us to repentance. (Rom. 2:5)
 - 3. He is fully able to save all those who come to Him. (Heb. 7:25)

VII. "My Yoke Is Easy and My Burden Is Light"

- A. The demands of Jesus are not unreasonable. (1 John 5:3)
- B. Jesus' burden is easy and light when it is compared to its reward. (Rom. 8:18; 2 Cor. 4:17)
- C. The yoke and burden of Jesus are made easy because He helps us bear them. (Phil. 4:13; Psa. 55:22)

Conclusion

- 1. What a beautiful, poetic invitation!
- 2. Let us determine to accept it—to take the yoke of Jesus upon us and continue to faithfully follow Him.
- 3. Accepting His invitation brings rest to our souls now and, in the end, eternal rest in the home He has prepared for us.

Jesus: Our Example

Introduction

1. In Scripture, the admonitions to follow after and imitate Jesus are many. (1 Pet. 2:21; 1 Cor. 11:1; John 13:12-15; 1 John 3:16)
 - The reason is obvious—He was perfect.
2. There never was a:
 - a. Situation for which He did not have the right answer.
 - b. Problem for which He did not have the right solution.
 - c. Circumstance for which He could not recommend the best advice.
3. Jesus is the standard or model by which we are to mold our lives. (John 13:15)
 - His life, as well as His will for us, forms the basis of all that we are to think or do in life.

I. The Basis of His Example: His Humanity

- A. Jesus “made Himself of no reputation” (NASV: “emptied Himself”) (Phil. 2:7)
 1. He gave up the environment of glory.
 2. He left the riches of heaven. (2 Cor. 8:9)
 3. “Christ did not empty Himself of Godhood. He did not cease to be what He essentially and eternally was.” (W.E. Vine, *Expository Dictionary of NT Words*)
- B. Jesus took upon Himself the “form of a bondservant” and the “likeness of men” in “appearance as a man.” (Phil. 2:5-8)
 - “Denotes the special or characteristic form or feature of a person or thing; it is used with particular significance in the NT, only of Christ...” (Vine)
- C. The Word became flesh. (John 1:14; 2 John 7; 1 John 4:2)
 - Humanity and deity came together by the virgin birth. (Luke 1:26-35; Matt. 1:18; Gal. 4:4)
- D. Though Jesus was human, He was sinless. (John 8:46; 1 Pet. 2:22; 2 Cor. 5:21)
 1. He was tempted in all points. (Heb. 4:15)
 2. He remained sinless by resisting the devil. (Matt. 4:1-10; Jas. 4:7)

II. Areas in Which Jesus Is Our Example

- A. Being subject unto parents. (Luke 2:51; Eph. 6:1; Col. 3:20)
- B. Being “about His Father’s business” at an early age. (Luke 2:49; Eccl. 12:1)
- C. Living for others (Mark 10:45; Phil. 2:4)
- D. Accomplishing the will of God in one’s life. (John 6:38; Matt. 26:39)
- E. Attitude.
 1. Attitude is a person’s disposition, one’s frame of mind.
 2. The attitude of Jesus was perfect—His point of view was always of the very highest sort.
 3. His attitude is enjoined upon us. (Phil. 2:5)

4. What are some attitudes He manifested?
 - a. Toward fallen man. (John 10:17-18; Gal. 1:4)
 - b. Meekness.
 - 1) There was never a time when He was not completely under the control of the Father.
 - 2) He demonstrated what true meekness really is for in every situation He did as the Father would have Him do even in the face of extreme difficulty.
 - Such meekness is necessary for obedience.
 - c. Willingness to forgive.
 - 1) His willingness to forgive is remarkable.
 - 2) His willingness to forgive is demonstrated after He had suffered immense physical pain and immeasurable spiritual suffering. (Luke 23:34)
 - 3) As seen in His heaviness of heart over the Jews, His was a sincere compassion. (Matt. 23:37)
 - d. Love.
 - 1) No one had greater love than He did. (John 15:13)
 - 2) He both taught and practiced the principle of love. (Acts 20:35)
 - 3) He not only taught His followers to love all men, even their enemies, He also set the proper example by bidding all men to come to Him.
 - e. Well-doing.
 - 1) Even as a child, Jesus went about doing good. (Luke 2:49)
 - 2) He was a man of immense energy, totally committed to the task He was to accomplish.
 - 3) He did not just admit the need, not just plan to do good, nor just resolve to do so, but He went about **doing** good. (Acts 10:38)
 - f. Emulating an example.
 - 1) He was the perfect photograph of God. (Heb. 1:3; Col. 1:15; John 1:18; 14:8-9)
 - 2) He perfectly manifested:
 - aa. The essential nature and the true characteristics of the Father by declaring in His life and attitude the righteousness of God.
 - bb. The light of God and the love of God.
 - cc. The eternal life which is of God.

Conclusion

1. In every learning situation, there is an example given to illustrate fact—Jesus is our example.
2. Since we have such a great leader, let us follow His every step, emulate His every mood and mimic His every action.

Why Jesus Had Enemies

Introduction

1. The Bible speaks of the great love of both the Father and the Son. (John 3:16; Eph. 3:19)
2. Jesus demonstrated His love for mankind by:
 - a. Coming into the world. (Phil. 2:5-8)
 - b. Going about doing good. (Acts 10:38)
 - c. Being willing to give His life so that through Him man might have life. (John 15:13)
3. If there were ever a person to love, Jesus was the one, yet, before He ever came to this earth it was prophesied that He would have enemies. (Psa. 110:1; Isa. 53:3)
4. The New Testament confirmed that Jesus did have enemies.
 - a. John 5:18. The Jews sought to kill Him.
 - b. John 11:53. The Jews plotted to put Him to death.
 - c. John 15:18-20. Jesus knew He was hated and that He would be persecuted.
5. In this lesson we are going to answer the question, "Why did Jesus have enemies?"

I. Because of His Claims

- A. He claimed to be deity—equal with God. (John 5:18; 14:6-11; Luke 22:70-71)
- B. He claimed to be preexistent.
 1. John 8:58. "Before Abraham was, I AM."
 2. John 1:1-3, 14. Present in the beginning.
 3. Colossians 1:15-16. "The firstborn over all creation."
- C. He claimed to have the power to forgive sins. (Matt. 9:2-6)
- D. He provided ample evidence to prove His claims. (John 5:31-47)
 1. Himself. (v. 31)
 2. John the Baptist. (vv. 32-33)
 3. His works. (v. 36)
 4. The Father. (v. 37)
 5. The Scriptures. (v. 39)
 6. Moses. (vv. 46-47)
- E. He had the affirmation of the Father.
 1. Matthew 3:17. At His baptism.
 2. Matthew 17:5. On the mount of transfiguration.
 3. John 12:28. "'Father, glorify Your name.' Then a voice came from heaven, saying, 'I have both glorified it and will glorify it again.'"

II. Because of His Influence

- A. Jesus had a great effect on the lives of His followers.
 1. Zacchaeus. (Luke 19:1-10)
 2. The man born blind. (John 9:24-38)

- B. The Pharisees saw His influence.
 - 1. “The Pharisees therefore said among themselves...’Look, the world has gone after Him.” (John 12:19)
 - 2. They were afraid of losing the hold they had over the people. (John 11:48)

III. Because of His Opposition to Certain Things

- A. Traditions.
 - 1. The Jews placed traditions above the commands of God. (Mark 7:5-9)
 - 2. Traditions as doctrine make worship and religion vain. (cf. Matt. 15:9)
- B. Hypocrisy.
 - 1. Hypocrisy abounded among the Jews. (Matt. 23:1-7)
 - 2. Jesus opposed, rebuked and openly condemned the hypocrisy of the Jews.
 - a. Matthew 5:20. He openly said ones righteousness must exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees to enter the kingdom of heaven.
 - b. Matthew 23:13-39. He pronounced “woes” upon them condemning their hypocrisy.
- C. Sin.
 - 1. He condemned every form of sin saying that whoever commits it becomes a slave of sin. (John 8:34)
 - 2. He said that sin brought condemnation. (Matt. 7:21-23)

IV. Because of That For Which He Stood

- A. Truth. (John 8:32-34; 17:17)
- B. Consistency and fidelity.
 - 1. He was perfect—living consistently with what He was teaching. (Acts 10:38)
 - 2. He commanded all to hear and do. (Matt. 7:24-27)
- C. Obedience.
 - 1. He was always obedient to the will of the Father. (John 6:38; 9:4; Heb. 5:8-9)
 - 2. He stressed the importance of obedience to His followers. (Luke 6:46; John 8:31)

Conclusion

- 1. It is because of all these things that Jesus had enemies.
- 2. We must count the cost and understand that if we stand for what He stood for and are against what He opposed, we too will have enemies. (John 15:18-20; 2 Tim. 3:12; 1 Pet. 4:4)
- 3. His promised reward to the faithful makes having enemies all worthwhile. (1 Pet. 4:15-16; 1 Cor. 15:58)
- 4. Friendship with the world, and those in it, makes one an enemy of God (Jas. 4:4) but friendship with God makes one an enemy of the world. (John 15:18)

The Lifting Up of Jesus

Text; John 3:14-17

I. The Lifting Up of the Serpent (Num. 21:4-9)

- A. In the above text, Jesus refers to an incident that took place in the wilderness as Israel journeyed from Egypt to Canaan—the lifting up of the serpent.
- B. A synopsis.
 - 1. The Israelites were again murmuring and speaking against God and Moses. (v. 5)
 - 2. God sent fiery serpents among the people and many of them died. (v. 6)
 - 3. The people confessed their sin and begged Moses to pray to the Lord to take away the serpents among them. (v. 7)
 - 4. God instructed Moses to make a bronze serpent and place it on a pole. (v. 8)
 - 5. A bitten Israelite was required to have enough faith to look upon the bronze serpent that had been lifted up in order to be healed.
 - a. His saving was by faith—God having been gracious in providing his salvation.
 - b. The fact that salvation was by faith did not preclude the fact that the Israelite had to do something—look upon the bronze serpent.

II. The Lifting Up of Jesus on the Cross (John 3:14-17)

- A. Jesus established a link between the serpent in the wilderness and His death on the cross.
 - 1. The world has been bitten by sin as the Israelites had been bitten by the fiery serpents.
 - 2. Whoever looks upon the lifted Christ shall not perish but have eternal life.
- B. Salvation is by grace through faith. (Eph. 2:8-9)
 - 1. As the Israelites had to have more than faith (they had to do something—look upon the serpent), people today must have more than faith to be healed by Jesus.
 - 2. People today must have a faith that manifests itself in obedience to Jesus Christ. (Heb. 5:8-9)
- C. This analogy is one of the best commentaries available to show that John 3:16 does not refer to salvation by faith only but to a faith that is manifested in obedience to the commands of Jesus Christ, looking to Him as Savior. (John 3:36)
 - 1. ASV: “He that **obeyeth not** the Son shall not see life.”
 - 2. RSV: “He that **obeyeth not** the Son shall not see life.”
 - 3. NAS: “He who **does not obey** the Son shall not see life.”
 - 4. NIV: “Whoever **rejects** the Son shall not see life.”
 - 5. KJV II: “He that **refuses to obey** the Son shall not see life.”

6. Moffat: "He who **disobeys** the Son shall not see life."
 7. TEV: "Whoever **disobeys** the Son will never have life."
 8. Berry's: "He that is **not subject** to the Son shall not see life."
- D. Since it was our sins that caused Jesus to have to be lifted up on the cross, we should be ever grateful for His sacrifice.
- As those who have been forgiven of our sins by His gracious act, in turn, we need to spend our lives "lifting Him up."

III. The Lifting Up of Jesus by the Christian

- A. The Scriptures reveal a number of ways that Christians can "lift up" Jesus today.
- B. Christians can lift up Jesus by:
 1. Preaching Christ crucified. (Gal. 3:1; 1 Cor. 1:18-23; 2:1-5; 2 Tim. 4:2)
 2. Faithfully observing the Lord's Supper. (1 Cor. 11:23-26)
 3. Living Christlike every day. (Gal. 6:14; Col. 3:1-4, 17; Rom. 12:1-2)
 4. Possessing the mind of Christ. (Phil. 2:3-5; 1 Pet. 4:1)
 5. Suffering as a Christian. (1 Pet. 4:14-16; 2:21-24)
 6. Looking for His glorious appearing. (Titus 2:11-14)

Conclusion

As Jesus had to be lifted up on the cross and shed His blood for our sins, we need to lift Him up every day of our lives.

The Last Words of Jesus

Introduction

1. The last words of a person are usually regarded as important and dear.
2. Herbert Lockyer wrote a book which chronicles the final words of famous people throughout history.
3. The Bible also records the final words of famous people throughout history: Joshua (Josh. 24:15); David (1 Kings 2:1-3); and the apostle Paul (2 Tim. 4:6-8).
4. Many look to the sayings on the cross as the last words of Jesus, others look to that which He spoke just prior to His ascension but, in reality, the last recorded words of our Lord are found in Revelation 22:12-20.
 - These last words impress us with four great truths.

I. The Divinity of Jesus (Rev. 22:13, 16)

- A. The deity of Christ is the theme of God's word.
 - The Scriptures emphasized His deity. (John 1:1-5; Phil. 2:5-11)
- B. Jesus claimed divinity and proved it by:
 1. His teaching. (Matt. 7:28-29; John 7:44-46)
 2. His perfect life. (John 8:46)
 3. His works. (John 5:36)
- C. A description of Christ is given on the final page of Scripture.
 1. "Alpha and Omega." (Rev. 22:13)
 2. "Root and Offspring of David." (Rev. 22:16)
 3. "The Bright and Morning Star." (Rev. 22:16)

II. The Authority of Jesus (Rev. 22:19-19)

- A. The authority of the Scriptures is the authority of the Lord expressed. (Heb. 1:1-2)
 1. They are inspired of God. (2 Tim. 3:16-17; 2 Pet. 1:20-21)
 2. They are an infallible rule of faith. (Psa. 119:105)
 3. We will be judged by them. (John 12:48)
- B. Two admonitions regarding the Scriptures are given in this passage.
 1. Do not add to the words of the Book and do not take away from the words of the Book.
 2. These admonitions primarily applied to the book of Revelation but the principle is true of everything God has ever said unto man. (Deut. 4:1-2; 12:32)

III. The Return of Jesus (Rev. 22:20)

- A. The return of Christ is spoken of throughout the New Testament.
 - 1. Promised by Jesus Himself. (John 14:3)
 - 2. Promised by the angels. (Acts 1:11)
 - 3. Promised by Peter. (2 Pet. 3:10)
 - 4. Anticipated by Paul. (1 Cor. 16:22)
- B. Our attitude should be that of John, "Even so, come, Lord Jesus."

IV. The Invitation of Jesus (Rev. 22:17)

- A. God has always invited sinners to come to Him.
 - 1. The burdened and oppressed are invited. (Matt. 11:28-30)
 - 2. The thirsty and weary are invited. (Rev. 22:17; Matt. 5:6)
- B. It is fitting that the last words of Jesus offer salvation.
 - 1. Man is separated from God by sin. (Isa. 59:1-2)
 - 2. God took the initiative (John 3:16), man must respond.
 - 3. Salvation involves coming to Jesus, staying with Him and, in the end, dying with Him.

Conclusion

- 1. The last words of Jesus are beautiful and important for they show His concern for our eternal salvation.
- 2. Will you hear these words of the Lord and heed them?

The Wonders of the Cross

Introduction

1. "When I survey **the wondrous cross** On which the Prince of glory died, My richest gain I count but loss, and pour contempt on all my pride."
2. The cross is "wondrous" in many ways.
 - It is the central fact of chronology, history, prophecy, humanity and eternity.
3. The cross was not accidental—it was according to the plan of God (Rev. 13:8)
 - Jesus Himself knew He would have to face the cross. (John 18:4)
4. The cross was, and must continue to be, the central theme of our preaching. (1 Cor. 2:4; 1:17-18)
 - We need to glory in the wondrous cross. (Gal. 6:14)
5. In this lesson, we will observe several things that make the cross so wondrous.

I. The Wonder of Its Paradoxes

- A. The cross was the most tragic event in history yet the most wonderful thing in history.
- B. The cross was the saddest spectacle ever beheld yet out of it came the greatest joy.
- C. The cross was God's greatest manifestation of hatred for sin but His supreme proof of His love for the sinner.
- D. The cross was the darkest hour of history yet the time of the greatest light.
- E. In the cross we see human vengeance as the mob cried for blood and divine forgiveness as Jesus says, "Father, forgive them."
- F. The cross portrays man's sinfulness and God's holiness, human weakness and divine strength.

II. The Wonder of Its Victim

- A. Jesus was and is man's best friend.
 1. He is sympathetic and understanding today even as He was to those who crucified Him. (Luke 23:34)
 2. He gave His life voluntarily and vicariously for us. (1 Pet. 2:21)
- B. In life and death, Jesus was the perfect demonstration of unselfishness.
 1. While living, His time was spent with others—healing the sick, teaching sinners and doing good. (Acts 10:38)
 2. Even on the cross He thought of others—the thief, His mother and His executioners.
- C. Jesus, the innocent, willingly suffered and died for the guilty. (1 Pet. 2:22)
- D. What kept Him on the cross?
 1. He could have called twelve legions of angels. (Matt. 26:53)
 2. He came to do the Father's will. (John 6:38)
 3. He knew there was no other way to save mankind.

III. The Wonder of Its Necessity

- A. It is somewhat difficult to comprehend Deity under necessity but the cross was a divine “must.” (John 3:14)
- B. Why the cross was necessary.
 - 1. Sin necessitated it. (Gen. 3:15; 1 Pet. 2:24)
 - 2. The righteousness of God demanded it. (Rom. 3:26)
 - 3. The Old Testament needed it.
 - a. The types of the Old Testament are meaningless without the cross.
 - b. Prophecy, such as Isaiah 53, would be fictitious without the cross.
 - c. The cross was necessary to fulfill the Old Law. (Matt. 5:17-18; Col. 2:13-14)
 - 4. Our salvation compelled it. (Matt. 1:21; Luke 19:10; Eph. 5:25; Mark 10:45)

IV. The Wonder of Its Divine Demonstration

- A. This is the challenge of the cross. (John 8:28)
 - 1. Jesus had claimed divinity for which He was accused of blasphemy.
 - 2. The cross substantiated every claim. (Rom. 1:4)
- B. The cross demonstrated that what He had spoken in life He would exemplify in death.

V. The Wonder of Its Attraction

- A. Here is the magnetism of the cross. (John 12:32-33)
 - “The old rugged cross has a wondrous attraction for me.”
- B. The attraction of the cross is not in the manner in which Jesus died because death by crucifixion was the most horrible death imaginable but its attraction is due to the Person and purpose of it.

VI. The Wonder of Its Hope

- A. The cross provides peace in this life and peace with God and of God. (Col. 1:20; Phil. 4:6-9)
- B. The cross provides assurance in death and a glorious eternity for the soul. (Phil. 1:23; 1 Cor. 15:51-58)

Conclusion

- 1. If the message of the cross will not melt your heart, nothing will.
- 2. Understanding the wondrous nature of the cross and the One who died on it, will you not come to Him and live for Him?

Jesus' Sayings from the Cross

Introduction

1. While on the cross, Jesus spoke seven times and each of those utterances has great significance.
2. This lesson will examine each of the sayings of Jesus while He hung upon the cross.

I. Words of Forgiveness: "Father Forgive Them, For They Do Not Know What They Do"

(Luke 23:32-38)

- A. Jesus asked forgiveness for those evil men even as they were killing Him.
- B. Forgiveness is at the very heart and soul of Jesus' ministry.
 1. He did not come to destroy but to save. (Luke 9:51-56)
 2. But He neither taught nor offered unconditional forgiveness. (John 8:24; Luke 13:3)
- C. His plea for forgiveness began to be answered on the day of Pentecost in Acts two.
 - They were guilty of murdering the Son of God and when they repented they would be forgiven. (Acts 2:22-23, 36-38)
- D. Jesus is ready, willing and able to forgive your sins if you will repent. (Acts 17:30-31)

II. Words of Salvation: "Assuredly, I Say to You, Today You Will Be with Me in Paradise"

(Luke 23:39-43)

- A. Think of the wisdom of this thief in the face of death—he repented and then acknowledged his belief in Jesus.
- B. Confession of belief in Jesus is an integral part of salvation. (Rom. 10:10)
 - If we will confess Jesus, He will confess us. (Matt. 10:32-33)

III. Words of Affection: "Woman Behold Your Son" • "Behold Your Mother" (John 19:26-27)

- A. This is a very touching scene: in His final moments, Jesus expresses His love and concern for His mother and her well-being.
- B. The love and compassion of Jesus is often expressed in the gospels.
 1. His miracles were often the result of His compassion. (Mark 1:40-42)
 2. He had compassion on the multitudes. (Matt. 9:36-37)
 3. He was moved by the tears of others. (John 11:33-35)
- C. Though while in His dying moments He showed love for His mother, remember, He loves you and me as He did His mother. (Mark 3:31-35)
 - He cares about us and is concerned for our spiritual well-being.

IV. Words of Anguish: "Eli, Eli, Lama, Sabachthani" (Matt. 27:26; Mark 15:34)

- A. The writers give us the actual words which were spoken in Aramaic and their translation.
- B. This was one of the heart-rending statements found in Psalm 22, a Messianic psalm. (v. 1)
 - 1. Written about 1000 years before it occurred, it reads as though the writer was an eye-witness of the crucifixion.
 - 2. It was a prophecy of that dark day when the Messiah died for the sins of the world.
- C. It was a day when:
 - 1. The suffering Savior took the guilt of our sins upon Himself.
 - 2. For a moment, the Father had to forsake His only begotten Son because of the guilt of sin.
 - a. 2 Corinthians 5:21. "For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him."
 - b. Isaiah 53:6. "And the Lord has laid on Him the iniquity of us all."
- D. Jesus' cry of anguish on that day makes possible the shouts of victory today in the forgiveness of sins.

V. Words of Suffering: "I Thirst" (John 19:28)

- A. This statement emphasizes the humanity of Jesus.
- B. Jesus was not only crucified but scourged as well.
 - 1. It was Pilate's feeble attempt to appease the Jews.
 - 2. It was one of the most brutal beatings administered by man.
 - 3. His stripes were a part of the redemptive price. (Isa. 53:5; 1 Pet. 2:24)
- C. The crucifixion involved driving large spikes through the wrists and feet.
 - 1. The loss of blood from both the scourging and the crucifixion would have been substantial which would cause severe dehydration.
 - 2. Add to that difficulty in breathing.
- D. Jesus hung on the cross in agony for six hours—from the third to the ninth hour.
(Mark 15:25, 34)
- E. Jesus willingly suffered so that you and I would not have to suffer eternally.

VI. Words of Victory: "It Is Finished" (John 19:30)

- A. Jesus came to do the will of the Father in bringing about human redemption., (John 6:38; Luke 19:10)
- B. How grateful we ought to be that Jesus was able to say, "It is finished!" because, by His death, He became the author of eternal salvation. (Heb. 5:8-9)
 - The price of redemption was now paid. (1 Pet. 1:18-19)

VII. Words of Contentment: "Father, Into Your Hands I Commit My Spirit" (Luke 23:46)

- A. In the final seconds of His life, Jesus utters the supreme expression of contentment.
 - He loved the Father, obeyed the Father, prayed to the Father, and, as He breathes His last, commits His spirit into the Father's hands.
- B. What a beautiful picture of the relationship between Father and Son.
 - What a tremendous challenge and powerful example for all of us.
- C. Let us be move by the love of Jesus and live every day for the Lord so that with great contentment we can say, "Father, into Your hands I commit my spirit."

Conclusion

1. Jesus spoke seven times from the cross and, as you have seen and heard, each saying was filled with great meaning not only for the people of His day but also for us.
2. As He pled for the forgiveness of those who were crucifying Him, He offers forgiveness today to all who will come to Him.
3. As He offered salvation to the penitent thief, today He is the author of eternal salvation to all who obey Him.
4. As He demonstrated affection and concern for His mother, He loves us and seeks our spiritual well-being.
5. As He cried in anguish as He suffered for our sins on the cross, we can shout and rejoice for the victory His sacrificial death has granted us over sin and death.
6. As He committed His spirit to the Father in death, may we commit ours to Him in life allowing His will to guide us in all things, serving Him and glorifying Him so that we will have the same confidence in facing death that Jesus had.

The Resurrection of Jesus

Text: 1 Corinthians 15:12-19

Introduction

1. The death of Jesus on the cross cannot be denied: the soldiers who crucified Him knew He was dead (John 19:32-33) and Pilate confirmed it (Mark 15:42-45).
2. Remembering His words, the enemies of Jesus took special precaution to keep His body in the tomb. (Matt. 27:62-66)
3. But something happened to the body of Jesus—it was no longer in the tomb. (Luke 24:1-3; John 20:1-10)
4. This is an important study for the resurrection is the crux of the gospel. (1 Cor. 15:12-19)
5. This lesson will examine the three possible dispositions of the body of Jesus, note the reality of the resurrection and consider what the resurrection accomplished.

I. Possible Dispositions of the Body

A. It was removed by the disciples.

1. The Roman guards said they did it but they also said they were asleep. (Matt. 28:11-15)
2. Many proofs show that the disciples did not remove the body of Jesus from its tomb.
 - a. They were surprised, shocked and perplexed to find the tomb empty. (Luke 24:4)
 - b. They did not have sufficient courage to take it. (Matt. 26:56, 69-75)
 - c. It is inconceivable an entire Roman guard would sleep on a watch.
 - d. If the guard had fallen asleep, the disciples would have awakened them while trying to move the stone which sealed the tomb.
 - e. Would the disciples have taken the time to neatly fold the burial garments that had been on the body? (John 20:4-7)
 - f. They had no motive—they could not give it a better burial and they did not expect it to be raised. (John 20:9)
 - g. Their earnest preaching of the resurrection on Pentecost and following showed they believed it with all their heart.

- B. It was removed by the soldiers
 - 1. The body was already in their keeping and for it to be gone would cast embarrassing reflections upon their honor as soldiers.
 - 2. Other considerations to show the soldiers did not remove the body:
 - a. They would be faced with the death penalty.
 - b. They had no right to break the seal that was on the tomb. (Matt. 27:66)
 - c. It would have defeated their very purpose for being there. (Matt. 27:62-66)
 - d. They did not produce the body and deny the apostles' claim.
- C. It was raised from the dead by God.

II. The Reality of the Resurrection

- A. Having been prophesied hundreds of years before it took place (Psa. 16:10), Peter quoted Psalm 16:10 on Pentecost to show it had been fulfilled in the resurrection. (Acts 2:25, 27)
- B. During His ministry, Jesus said He would be raised from the dead. (John 2:18-22; Matt. 20:17-19)
- C. The apostles preached that Jesus had been resurrected. (Acts 2:22-24; 3:11-15)

III. What the Resurrection Accomplished

- A. Jesus was enthroned in heaven. (Acts 2:24-26)
- B. Jesus was perfected as our High Priest. (Heb. 7:23-28)
- C. It gave assurance of our resurrection. (1 Cor. 15:20-23; 2 Cor. 4:14)
- D. It is the power behind baptism. (1 Pet. 3:18, 21-22)
- E. It gives the assurance of the judgment. (Acts 17:30-31)

Conclusion

- 1. God can raise the dead as seen in the raising of Lazarus. (John 11:37-44)
- 2. Jesus Christ has been raised from the dead. (1 Cor. 15:20-24)
- 3. Because Jesus was victorious over death, you can be too. (1 Cor. 15:54-57)

The Second Coming of Jesus

Introduction

1. The Bible could be summed up in three sentences.
 - a. Christ is coming.
 - b. Christ is here.
 - c. Christ is coming again.
2. A great deal of error is taught in reference to Christ's second coming.
3. We need to understand what the Bible teaches in regard to Christ's second coming and its purpose so that we might be prepared for it when it occurs.

I. The Assurance of His Coming

- A. Jesus said He would come again. (John 14:1-3)
- B. The Holy Spirit said Christ would come again. (Heb. 9:27-28)
- C. The angels said Christ would come again. (Acts 1:9-11)
- D. The apostles said Christ would return. (1 John 3:2; Col. 3:3-4; 2 Pet. 3:9-10)

II. The Time of His Coming

- A. People have endeavored to set the time of Christ's second coming: William Miller, Ellen G. White, premillennialists and Jehovah Witnesses.
 1. "William Miller, (born Feb. 15, 1782, Pittsfield, Mass., U.S.—died Dec. 20, 1849, Low Hampton, N.Y.), American religious enthusiast, leader of a movement called Millerism that sought to revive belief that the bodily arrival ("advent") of Christ was imminent. Miller was a farmer, but he also held such offices as deputy sheriff and justice of the peace. In the War of 1812 he served as a captain of the 30th Infantry. After years of Bible study he began to preach in 1831 that the present world would end 'about the year 1843.' He based this belief primarily on a passage in the Book of Daniel (8:13–14). He published a pamphlet in 1833 and a book of lectures in 1836, the first of many publications. Principal organs of the Millerite movement were the Signs of the Times (Boston) and the Midnight Cry (New York). Miller estimated that between 50,000 and 100,000 believed in his views. When 1843 passed, some of his associates set Oct. 22, 1844, as the date of the Second Coming. This date brought the movement to a sharp climax...The last general conference met at Albany, N.Y., April 1845. Belief in the imminence of the advent was restated, but no date was set and no church organization created." (Britannica.com)
 2. "Ellen G. White became a leader of a segment of the Millerites (who called themselves Adventists) in May of 1863. Her many visions and writings

influenced the formation of Seventh-Day Adventism and greatly shaped its doctrine. Today, most Seventh-Day Adventists still consider Ellen White to be a prophetess of God. Ellen G. White was formerly a Methodist but later converted to Adventism through the preaching of William Miller, a false prophet who had predicted Christ would return in 1843 or 1844. When Miller's prediction of Christ's second advent failed to come true, the Millerites disbanded in dismay; however, a couple of Miller's followers claimed to have visions to account for the failed prophecy. One of these seers was 17-year-old Ellen G. Harmon, who had the first of her 2,000 purported visions in a prayer meeting shortly after Miller's disgrace. In her vision, Ellen claimed to have seen the Adventists on a journey to the city of God. Ellen G. Harmon soon became the beacon of hope for disappointed Millerites, the unifier of Adventist factions, and the spiritual guide for a new religious group." (GotQuestions.org)

3. Premillennialists: "The kingdom prophesied in the OT has not yet come because the Jews rejected Jesus, that kingdom was postponed. As a consequence of this, Jesus set aside the divine plan and gave us the church instead. Jesus now has the right to be king but is not a king in fact. He is a 'crown prince' on His Father's throne. The kings of Daniel 2:44 must be restored so that the kingdom might be set up. The Jews will reoccupy Palestine and be converted. The temple is to be rebuilt. Jesus will then leave heaven. The saints will be resurrected and along with those living will meet the Lord in the air. The wicked will not be raised at this time. (C.T. Russell called this period the 'Rapture.' R.H. Boll called it the 'first stage of the second coming.' During this time, on the earth, is a period of great tribulation. After this, the Lord comes on the earth with His saints and the millennial reign begins. All of this is 'imminent.' After 1000 years, Satan will muster his forces for a mighty battle. He and his forces will be defeated in this literal battle. The wicked then go to hell and the righteous to heaven. Eternity begins. " (Gene Taylor, *A Study of Premillennialism*)
 4. Jehovah's Witnesses: "1879: "Christ came in the character of a Bridegroom in 1874....at the beginning of the Gospel harvest." ("Watchtower," Oct. 1879, 4)
- B. Do not appeal to Matthew 24 to show that no one knows the time of Christ's return (vv. 35-36) because it is dealing with the destruction of Jerusalem not the end of the world.
 - C. The figures in Scripture used to describe the second coming of Christ demonstrate that no one knows when it will be.
 1. Thief in the night. (2 Pet. 3:10; 1 Thess. 5:1-2)
 2. Sudden destruction. (1 Thess. 5:3)

III. The Manner of His Coming

- A. He is coming in person. (1 Thess. 4:16-17)
- B. He is coming as He went back to heaven. (Acts 1:9-11)

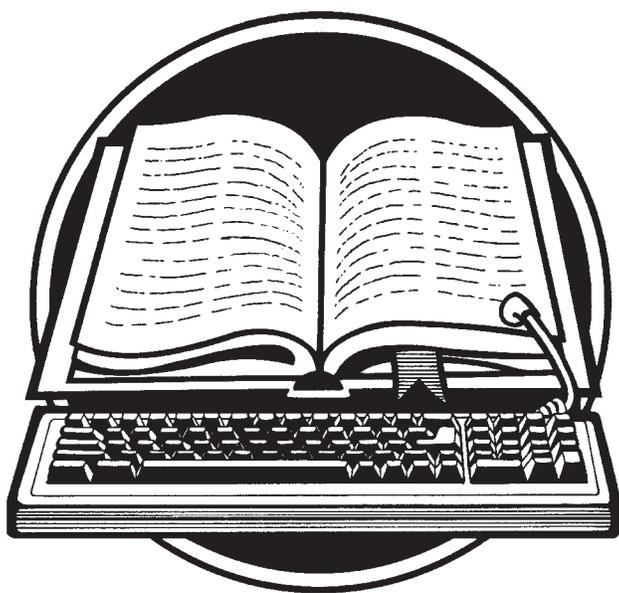
- C. He is coming in visible form. (Rev. 1:7)
- D. He is coming without warning. (1 Thess. 5:2)
- E. Some will be prepared, some unprepared. (1 Thess. 5:1-6)

IV. The Purpose of His Coming

- A. He is not coming to:
 - 1. Establish His kingdom.
 - a. It was established on the Pentecost recorded in Acts 2.
 - b. It was in existence when Paul wrote both Colossians and Hebrews. (Col. 1:13; Heb. 12:28)
 - 2. Sit on David's throne.
 - a. He is now sitting on the throne of David. (Luke 1:32-33; Acts 2:29-32, 36)
 - b. Zechariah 6:13 says Christ would sit on the throne and rule and be a priest on the throne—He is doing that now. (Col. 3:1; Rom. 15:12-13; Heb. 4:14-16)
 - 3. Restore the Jews to Palestine.
 - God has already fulfilled every promise He ever made to the Jews concerning Palestine. (Josh. 21:43-45)
 - 4. Convert the Jews.
 - If the Jews are going to be converted, it will be as everyone else—by the gospel. (Rom. 1:16; Heb. 9:28; Acts 10:34-35; 2 Cor. 6:2)
 - 5. Begin a literal 1000 year reign on earth.
 - He is reigning over all of heaven and earth now in a spiritual kingdom now. (1 Cor. 15:24-26; John 18:36)
- B. He is coming to:
 - 1. Raise the dead both good and evil. (John 5:28-29)
 - 2. For judgment—to reward the righteous and pass formal sentence against the wicked. (2 Cor. 5:10; Rom. 14:10-12)
 - 3. Deliver up the kingdom to the Father. (1 Cor. 15:22-28)

Conclusion

- 1. Seeing that Christ is coming again, we must be prepared.
- 2. Failure to prepare for His return will result in eternal condemnation. (2 Pet. 3:10-13)



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