

"Do You Know Jesus?"

Many have heard of Jesus and even imagine that they know Him well. Hello, I'm Phil Sanders, and this is a Bible study "In Search of the Lord's Way." We're asking if they simply know what they've heard or have they studied for themselves. Stay with us.

Welcome to In SEARCH of the Lord's Way! We're here to search the Scriptures for God's everlasting truth. Thanks for taking time with us today. We want to be a part of your life each week.

James Allan Francis in a book published in 1963, called "One Solitary Life," wrote:

Here is a man who was born in an obscure village, the child of a peasant woman. He grew up in another village. He worked in a carpenter shop until he was thirty, and then for three years he was an itinerant preacher. He never owned a home. He never wrote a book. He never held office. He never had a family. He never went to college. He never put his foot inside a big city. He never traveled two hundred miles from the place where he was born. He never did one of the things that usually accompany greatness. He had no credentials but himself.

While still a young man, the tide of popular opinion turned against him. His friends ran away. One of them denied Him. He was turned over to His enemies. He went through the mockery of a trial. He was nailed upon a cross between two thieves. While he was dying, his executioners gambled for the only piece of property he had on earth—his coat. And when he was dead, he was taken down and laid in a borrowed grave through the pity of a friend.

Nineteen long centuries have come and gone and today he is the centerpiece of the human race and the leader of the column of progress. I am far within the mark when I say that all the armies that ever marched, all the navies that ever were built; all the parliaments that ever sat and all the kings that ever reigned, put together, have not affected the life of man upon this earth as powerfully as has that one solitary life.

We offer this study free on knowing Jesus. And if you'd like a printed copy and live in the United States, mail your request to In Search of the Lord's Way, P.O. Box 371, Edmond, OK 73083 or send an e-mail to searchtv@searchtv.org. Or you can call our toll-free telephone number. That number is 1-800-321-8633. Now we also have materials free on our website at www.searchtv.org.

The Edmond church will now worship in song, we'll read from John 14:7 to 11, and explore the fact that life in God's will matters.

Our reading today comes from the gospel according to John, chapter 14, verses 6 to 11. "Jesus said to him, 'I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me. If you had known Me, you would have known My Father also; from now on you know Him, and have seen Him.' Philip said to Him, 'Lord, show us the Father, and it is enough for us.' Jesus said to him, 'Have I been so long with you, and yet you have not come to know Me, Philip? He who has seen Me has seen the Father; how can you say, "Show us the Father"? Do you not believe that I am in the Father, and the Father is in Me? The words that I say to you I do not speak on My own initiative, but the Father abiding in Me does His works. Believe in Me that I am in the Father and the Father is in Me; otherwise believe because of the works themselves.'"

Here Jesus helps us to understand who He is, and why we should believe in Him. Let's pray together. "Father we're thankful for the Lord Jesus Christ, and we know that there is no way Father to You but through Him. Father help us to serve Him and to love Him and to be close to You always. In Jesus name, Amen."

Have you ever contemplated what the world would be like if there were no Jesus Christ? Jesus is unique among men. And there's no one like Him who ever lived. He was better, nobler, more holy, more kind, and more generous than any I have ever known. John the Baptist said of Jesus, "but He who is coming after me is mightier than I, and I'm not fit to remove His sandals" (Matthew 3 and verse 11).

Moses said of Jesus in Deuteronomy 18:15, that "The LORD your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among you, from your countrymen, and you shall listen to him." In verses 18 to 19 God said, "I will raise up a prophet from among their countrymen like you, and I will put My words in his mouth, and he shall speak to them all that I command him. And it shall come about that whoever will not listen to My words which he shall speak in My name, I Myself will require it of him."

David prophesied of Jesus in Psalm 110 verse 1, that "The LORD says to my Lord: 'Sit at My right hand, Until I make Thine enemies a footstool for Thy feet.'" Isaiah could say of Jesus in Isaiah 9:6 to 7, "For a child will be born to us, a son will be given to us; And the government will rest on His shoulders; And His name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace. There will be no end to the increase of His government or of peace, On the throne of David and over his kingdom, To establish it and to uphold it with justice and righteousness, From then on and forevermore. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will accomplish this."

Now before his birth, an angel of the Lord told Joseph about Mary in Matthew 1:21 to 23: "And she will bear a Son; and you shall call His name Jesus, for it is He who will save His people from their sins." Now all this took place that what was written by the Lord through the prophet might be fulfilled, saying, "Behold, the virgin shall be with child, and shall bear a son, and they shall call his name Immanuel," which translated means, "God with us." Now at his death, the centurion who crucified Him said in Matthew 27:54, "Surely he was the Son of God!" Jesus was certainly no ordinary man; He deserves a closer inspection. I've found the more that we know about Him, the more we love and we honor Him. The myriads of myriads of angels and living creatures around the throne of God honor Him with a loud voice, saying, "Worthy is the Lamb (speaking of Jesus) that was slain to receive power and riches and wisdom and might and honor and glory and blessing" (Revelation 5 verse 12).

What would life be like without Jesus? Well first, we'd lack a true example of righteousness and morality. Many today believe morality, right and wrong, changes over time and something wrong in other societies could be all right in this age. But nothing could be farther from the truth. What God called sin in the first century is still sin in this twenty-first century. How do we know that? Well the Jesus that was Lord then is still Lord now. The things He taught then, He still teaches now. We must hear the words that Jesus spoke for all time rather than assume that culture can overrule the Lord.

Jesus is the only person who ever lived about whom it could be said, "He never sinned." The apostle Peter pointed to Jesus as our example in 1 Peter 2:21 to 23, he said, "For you have been called for this purpose, since Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example for you to follow in His steps, who committed no sin, nor was any deceit found in his mouth; and while being reviled, He didn't revile in return; and while suffering, He uttered no threats, but He kept entrusting Himself to Him who judges righteously."

Hebrews 4, verses 14 to 15 describes the Lord Jesus, "Since then we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. For we do not have a high priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but One who has been tempted in all things as we are, yet without sin." Jesus was tempted, yes; but He never sinned. Some people believe that Jesus sinned, but where is your proof? Jesus could confront His enemies with the question, "Can any of you prove me guilty of sin?" (John 8 and verse 46). You see, Jesus was entirely holy and without

any moral impurity. And no one could point to a transgression of God's will on His part. Jesus made it clear in John 8:29, "And He who sent Me is with Me; He has not left Me alone, for I always do the things that are pleasing to Him."

Second, we have no example of compassion for those who are in need, greater than in Jesus Christ. I know other men have shown love and compassion, but has anyone shown love like Jesus? Because of the heart and teaching of Jesus, we have a society that believes in compassion. Jesus could see what others couldn't see. He could see those who were spiritually lost and misguided. Matthew 9, verses 36 to 38 says: And seeing the multitudes, He felt compassion for them, because they were distressed and downcast like sheep without a shepherd. And then He said to His disciples, 'The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. Therefore, beseech the Lord of the harvest to send out workers into His harvest.'"

He was loving and compassionate to the sick and healed them, to sinners and forgave them, to the poor and provided for them; and to the burdened and gave them relief. The Lord Jesus called to people in Matthew 11:28 to 30, "Come to Me, all who are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light." Jesus didn't simply talk love and compassion; He practiced it!

Have you considered the contributions of Jesus through the church to society? Many of the hospitals we have today came because of Christian care and concern for the sick. Many of the world's greatest universities were started by Christians for Christian purposes. Nearly all of the first one hundred colleges established in America were started as Christian schools. Reading the Bible was a primary reason for literacy and education for the masses. True Christian love and respect was the cause for the abolition of slavery, both in antiquity and in more modern times.

Because of Jesus and His teaching, women live with greater freedom and respect. Because of Jesus and His teaching, the sanctity of life and the sanctity of biblical marriage is more precious. Because of Jesus and His teaching in passages like the good Samaritan, people have become more benevolent and generous to those in need. Jesus taught people to judge with righteous judgment. Jesus elevated the common man, saying that even his soul is more valuable than the whole world.

More than a few societies through the ages have left barbaric practices to follow the steps of Jesus. He has influenced music, art, and literature more than any other person. He has changed lives for the better wherever His teaching has gone. And many of the languages of the world have been codified and set to writing, so people could learn the Bible. Jesus alone has the words of eternal life; and if we refuse to listen to Him, we lose our hope of heaven.

No one has ever loved you or me to the extent that Jesus has loved us. 1 John 4, verses 10 to 11 says, "In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation (the atoning sacrifice) for our sins. Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another." Later, in verse 19, he simply says, "We love, because He first loved us." We may think we know about love, but Jesus shows us real love. He willingly sacrificed Himself to save us, knowing that we couldn't save ourselves. He was willing to take our souls seriously when, as ungodly people, we didn't give Him a second thought. He paid the price to willingly offer righteousness to sinners by demonstrating His love on the cross. He loved us and gave His body and blood for us despite our weaknesses and sins. Yes, Jesus acted on His love!

Third, Jesus showed us the gospel truth and the way of salvation. Jesus said, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me" (John 14, verse 6). He paved the way

for our salvation by offering His body upon the cross for our sins. He paved the way for our resurrection hope at the last day when God raised Him from the dead. Now if you ask, "What is the gospel?", my answer is that it's the good news of His death and resurrection!

1 Corinthians 15, verses 1 to 4 says, "Now I make known to you, brethren, the gospel which I preached to you, which also you received, in which also you stand, by which also you are saved, if you hold fast the word which I preached to you, unless you believed in vain. For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received, that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried, and that He was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures." The apostles who witnessed His death and resurrection preached this gospel (or good news) message of what happened to the Lord Jesus. The Corinthians, just as Christians in the whole known world in the first century, accepted it and took their stand upon it because it was true!

And they are saved by this gospel message, if they hold fast to it and do not wander away from the truth. I often ask people to believe, repent, and be baptized. You see, baptism is the new birth that brings "newness of life" (John 3 and verse 5 and Romans 6 and verse 4, says this). Christianity begins with a new birth, but our faith and commitment to Christ must last as long as we live. We don't want anyone to believe in vain. We don't want anyone to draw close to God and then fall away from the faith.

The gospel story reveals that Christ died for our sins. He shed His blood so that we might be cleansed from sin and can live to righteousness. Now this sacrifice was personal to Jesus; He willingly offered His body to terrible suffering and crucifixion out of love. He personally bore the punishment that was due to us for our sins. And after dying, Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus buried Him. A giant stone was rolled over the entrance to the tomb.

And Jesus predicted that He would rise from the dead on the third day, a resurrection predicted in the Scriptures and witnessed by the apostles after He arose. Acts 1, and verse 3 says, "To these He also presented Himself alive after His suffering, by many convincing proofs, appearing to them over a period of forty days and speaking of the things concerning the kingdom of God." 1 Corinthians 15 lists how he appeared to Cephas (or Peter), to the twelve, to the five hundred brethren at one time, to James, to all the apostles, and last of all to Paul. Now these witnesses were willing to die for their faith, because they knew God had raised Jesus up from the grave. This resurrection gives us hope; our bodies one day will be raised from the dead; and we'll have a home in heaven. You see, that's what the Lord Jesus did for you and for me!

Let's pray together. "Oh Father, we're thankful for the Lord Jesus, for His love, for His concern, His compassion. We're thankful that He was willing to die in our stead, so that we might have the hope of everlasting life. Help us heavenly Father, to devote ourselves to Him in love and in service. In Jesus name, Amen."

The apostle Paul, who left his old life as a Pharisee and persecutor of the church to come to Christ, said in Philippians 3:7 to 8, "But whatever things were gain to me, those things I've counted as loss for the sake of Christ. More than that, I count all things to be loss in view of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them but rubbish so that I may gain Christ." Paul said he would rather know Jesus than possess anything else. It's more important than the Pharisee culture in his upbringing.

What is knowledge of Jesus worth to you? Many think they know Jesus, but the Jesus they think they know is unlike the one presented in Scripture. They've seen a snapshot or two that only show a portion of His character or His life. And like Philip, they missed seeing Him as He truly is. If we don't

know Him, we can't assume that we have a relationship with Him that pleases Him. If we don't know Him, we can't be sure that He approves of us. We may be like the five foolish virgins who ran out of oil and weren't allowed in the master's house. And He may say to us, "I do not know you."

At the end time, nothing else will matter. Does Jesus know you? Have you placed your faith in Him? Have you turned away from sins that offend Him and turned to Him in obedience? Have you confessed the Lord Jesus Christ as the Son of God? Have you been baptized into Christ (that is immersed in water) for the forgiveness of your sins, as Acts 2:38 teaches? When you're baptized into Christ, you become a child of God and precious in His sight. Why not come to Jesus today!

We hope that today's study about knowing Jesus has stirred you to believe in Him. And if you live in the United States and want a free printed copy of this message, mail your request to In Search of the Lord's Way, P.O. Box 371, Edmond, OK 73083 or you can send an e-mail to searchtv@searchtv.org. Or you can call the Search office toll-free at 1-800-321-8633. Now you can download these lessons or a newsletter online at our website, that's www.searchtv.org. There's also a schedule of our programs and a map with the location of churches that are in your area. You can watch SEARCH actually anytime on YouTube! Subscribe to our channel, "SearchTVMinistry." That's all one word. Now we also offer free Bible Correspondence courses, and people have been asking for them a lot lately. Now if you get a hold of us for one reason or another, don't worry, we're not asking for money, we're not here to exploit you. We're here to help you to know Jesus and to get to heaven.

We do ask that you focus your heart on God today. And if it's Sunday, and many of you watch on it every Sunday, why not worship at church today. Now everybody needs a church family, and you do too. There's probably a church of Christ in your area. And if you're looking for a healthy, Biblical church home, we'll be happy to help you find one. Well, we'll be back next week, Lord willing. So keep searching God's Word with us and tell a friend about the program. God bless you and we love you from all of us at In Search of the Lord's Way.