

# *Program Transcripts*

**For September 2020**



IN  
**SEARCH**  
OF THE LORD'S WAY<sup>®</sup>

# **SEARCH PROGRAMS**

**September 2020**

**Topics subject to change without notice**

## **SEPTEMBER 6 – JESUS THE SON OF GOD**

This is the first in a series of lessons describing Jesus Christ. This lesson points to Jesus as the Son of God and what that means. We want to know the Lord Jesus Christ. Nothing else is so important.

## **SEPTEMBER 13 – JESUS THE CHRIST**

When we confess Jesus is the Christ, we are pointing to One who has fulfilled the prophecies of the Messiah in the Old Testament. He is indeed the Christ, and as Christ has set up His kingdom.

## **SEPTEMBER 20 – JESUS THE SAVIOR**

Because Jesus came into this world to “save His people from their sins,” we can look at Jesus as the Savior. Only Jesus could save us from sin by the offering of His body and atoning blood to cleanse us.

## **SEPTEMBER 27 – JESUS THE LORD**

Because Jesus rose from the dead, we can call Him “Lord.” What does being the Lord of all mean? If Jesus is Lord, should we not listen to Him? We must realize He will judge us on the last day.

## Jesus the Son of God

We want to know the Lord Jesus Christ. Nothing else is so important. Today, we focus on Jesus Christ as the Son of God. Acts 17:11 speaks of the noble Bereans: “Now these Jews were more noble than those in Thessalonica; they received the word with all eagerness, examining the Scriptures daily to see if these things were so.” God considers it noble when people eagerly and daily examine the Scriptures. God considers it noble to find out whether what you hear is true. Many believe whatever they hear and they rarely question whether it’s true. God wants people who will search for the truth! Proverbs 23:23 says, “Buy (the) truth, and do not sell it; buy wisdom, instruction, and understanding.” That’s why we search for the Lord’s way.

In Search of the Lord’s Way began forty years ago this week on a single station, KTEN, in Ada, Oklahoma. Mack Lyon started this television ministry and dreamed of having a program that would cover the whole state. As the decades passed this program grew until it covers not only Oklahoma but also the whole United States and many other countries through television, radio, and the internet. We’re convinced that God opened these doors so the truth of the gospel could reach every nation. We pray God will keep on opening doors and that God’s Word will touch hearts and lives. Much has changed in forty years. The culture in 1980 differs much from what we see today, but people need the truth of Scripture to overcome religious and moral confusion. They still need to know what God has done for them, what God teaches, and what God desires of them. Our culture needs the healing only God can give. We need to listen to Jesus, who is the Son of God, and find the Lord’s way.

Our reading today comes from Mark 9:2-8.

Six days later, Jesus took with Him Peter and James and John, and brought them up on a high mountain by themselves. And He was transfigured before them; and His garments became radiant and exceedingly white, as no launderer on earth can whiten them. Elijah appeared to them along with Moses; and they were talking with Jesus. Peter said to Jesus, “Rabbi, it is good for us to be here; let us make three tabernacles, one for You, and one for Moses, and one for Elijah.” For he did not know what to answer; for they became terrified. Then a cloud formed, overshadowing them, and a voice came out of the cloud, “This is My beloved Son, listen to Him!” All at once they looked around and saw no one with them anymore, except Jesus alone.

Yes, Jesus is the Son of God, and we ought to listen to Him.

When we become Christians, we confess Jesus Christ is the Son of God. The New Testament clearly applies this title, Son of God, to Jesus. That He is the Son of God is taught throughout the New Testament. The angel Gabriel told Mary of Nazareth, “Do not be afraid, Mary; for you have found favor with God. And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall name Him Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David” (Luke 1:30-32).

A little bit later Mary said to the angel, “How can this be, since I am a virgin?” The angel answered and said to her, “The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; and for that reason the holy Child shall be called the Son of God” (Luke 1:34-35).

When Jesus came to John the Baptist to be baptized, the Father Himself recognized Jesus as His Son. Matthew 3:17 says, “After being baptized, Jesus came up immediately from the water; and behold, the heavens were opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending as a dove and lighting on Him, and behold, a voice out of the heavens said, ‘This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well-pleased.’”

As God’s Son, Jesus cast out demons, and the demons knew who Jesus really was. For instance, Mark 3:10,11 says, “for He had healed many, with the result that all those who had afflictions pressed around Him in order to touch Him. Whenever the unclean spirits saw Him, they would fall down before Him and shout, ‘You are the Son of God!’”

When Jesus led Peter, James, and John up on a high mountain, as we read a moment ago, He was transfigured before them. His face shone like the sun, and His garments became as white as light. Moses and Elijah appeared to them and talked with Jesus. When Peter suggested building three tabernacles, one for Jesus, one for Moses, and one for Elijah, Matthew 17:5 says, “While he was still speaking, a bright cloud overshadowed them, and behold, a voice out of the cloud said, ‘This is My beloved Son, with whom I am well-pleased; listen to Him!’”

The apostle Peter remembered that occasion and commented on it. “For we did not follow cleverly devised tales when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we were eyewitnesses of His majesty. For when He received honor and glory from God the Father, such an utterance as this was made to Him by the Majestic Glory, ‘This is My beloved Son with whom I am well-pleased’— and we ourselves heard this utterance made from heaven when we were with Him on the holy mountain” (2 Peter 1:16-18). Here is the second time God, from heaven, acknowledged Jesus as His Son.

As Christians, we must listen to the Lord Jesus as God’s Son. Hebrews 1:1-5 says, “Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed the heir of all things, through whom also he created the world. He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature, and he upholds the universe by the word of his power. After making purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, having become as much superior to angels as the name he has inherited is more excellent than theirs. For to which of the angels did God ever say, ‘You are my Son, today I have begotten you’? Or again, ‘I will be to him a father, and he shall be to me a son’?”

Claiming to be God’s Son had a price to pay for Jesus. John 5:8 says, “For this reason therefore the Jews were seeking all the more to kill Him, because He not only was breaking the Sabbath, but also was calling God His own Father, making Himself equal with God.” Jesus knew this and claimed to be the Son of God, and this stresses His deity.

In John 10:30-33 the Lord Jesus said, “‘I and the Father are one.’ The Jews picked up stones again to stone Him. Jesus answered them, ‘I showed you many good works from the Father; for which of them are you stoning Me?’ The Jews answered Him, ‘For a good work we do not stone You, but for blasphemy; and because You, being a man, make Yourself out to be God.’” This is not the only place in the gospel of John where Jesus is called “God.” John 1:1 says, “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.” When Jesus appeared to Thomas, who had doubted His resurrection, Jesus offered to show him His hands and His side, Thomas said, “My Lord and my God!” (John 20:28).

At His trial before the Jewish Council they asked Jesus about this claim: “And they all said, ‘Are You the Son of God, then?’ And He said to them, ‘Yes, I am.’ Then they said, ‘What further need do we have of testimony? For we have heard it ourselves from His own mouth’” (Luke 22:70-71). They condemned Jesus to death for blasphemy when He admitted to being the Son of God.

Perhaps, here we should remember the marvelous grace of God our Father. John 3:16-17 reminds us, “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only (only begotten) Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him.” The gift of Jesus was not a petty gift; it had a most important reason. God wanted so much to save you and me from sin that He willingly sacrificed His Son Jesus. Jesus did not come to earth to condemn us but to save us. God loved you, no matter who you are, enough to sacrifice His precious Son, who bore the punishment for your sins and mine.

Isaiah 53:5-6 says, “But he was pierced for our transgressions; he was crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace, and with his wounds we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned—every one—to his own way; and the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all.” I can only imagine the sorrow, pain, and anguish the Lord Jesus endured bearing the iniquity of us all.

Jesus also fulfilled God’s prophecy as the Son of God in His resurrection. In Psalm 2:7, we have the prophecy: “I will surely tell of the decree of the LORD: He said to Me, ‘You are My Son, Today I have begotten You.’” When Paul was on his first missionary journey he referred to this passage and showed that it referred to the risen Lord Jesus. He said, “And we preach to you the good news of the promise made to the fathers, that God has fulfilled this promise to our children in that He raised up Jesus, as it is also written in the second Psalm, ‘You are my son; today I have begotten you’” (Acts 13:32-33). The resurrection was indeed a powerful moment for the Lord Jesus. While from His birth He was the Son of God, God made this fact undeniable at His resurrection. Romans 1:4 says Jesus “was declared the Son of God with power by the resurrection from the dead.”

We can see the character and power of God when we focus on Jesus. The Jews thought it was wrong for Jesus to call Himself the Son of God. In John 5:19 Jesus answered their charge and explained, “Truly, truly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of Himself, unless it is something He sees the Father doing; for whatever the Father does, these things the Son also does in like manner.” We can know the Father in heaven by knowing the Son, Jesus.

How we treat Jesus Christ shows how we treat the Father in heaven. Disbelief in Jesus as the Son of God is the same as disbelief in God the Father Himself. The Lord Jesus said, “For not even the Father judges anyone, but He has given all judgment to the Son, so that all will honor the Son even as they honor the Father. He who does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent Him” (John 5:22-23). We must listen to the Son because the Son, Jesus, will judge us on the last day.

The Lord Jesus said, “He who rejects Me and does not receive My sayings, has one who judges him; the word I spoke is what will judge him at the last day. For I did not speak on My own initiative, but the Father Himself who sent Me has given Me a commandment as to what to say and what to speak. I know that His commandment is eternal life; therefore the things I speak, I speak just as the Father has told Me” (John 12:48-50). We must learn to obey the Son if we wish to live eternally with the Father. The words of the Son are actually the words of the Father. He now speaks through His Son not through false prophets. We must learn to abide in His words in all that they

teach. Second John 9 speaks of a particular false teaching. “Everyone who goes on ahead and does not abide in the teaching of Christ, does not have God. Whoever abides in the teaching has both the Father and the Son.” I do not know of any teaching of Jesus that one can change or willfully disobey and still please God. To stop listening to Jesus causes one to lose his relationship with God the Father.

One day, as the Son of God, Jesus will raise everyone from the dead. Though your body may be in the grave, the Lord will raise you up. He said, “Truly, truly, I say to you, an hour is coming and now is, when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God, and those who hear will live. For just as the Father has life in Himself, even so He gave to the Son also to have life in Himself; and He gave Him authority to execute judgment, because He is the Son of Man. Do not marvel at this; for an hour is coming, in which all who are in the tombs will hear His voice, and will come forth; those who did the good deeds to a resurrection of life, those who committed the evil deeds to a resurrection of judgment” (John 5:25-29). By your life and your attitudes, you’re determining what kind of resurrection you will face.

Jesus makes this promise to the faithful and obedient when He returns. “Let not your hearts be troubled. Believe in God; believe also in me. In my Father’s house are many rooms (or mansions). If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, that where I am you may be also” (John 14:1-3). I want to live with the Lord forever, and I pray that you do too. Jesus is in deed, God’s Son, listen to Him.

“Although He was a Son, He learned obedience from the things which He suffered. And having been made perfect, He became to all those who obey Him the source of eternal salvation” (Hebrews 5:8-9). Jesus, as God’s Son, obeyed His Father. Because He obeyed and was made perfect He could become the source of our eternal salvation to those who obey Him. Not everyone is willing to believe in Christ or obey Him. John 1:11-13 says, “He came to His own, and those who were His own did not receive Him. But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in His name, who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God.” You and I can, by faith and obedience, be born again and can become children of God!

John 3:36 makes it clear: “He who believes in the Son has eternal life; but he who does not obey the Son will not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him.” To say we believe but then be unwilling to repent or be unwilling to obey or unwilling to be baptized for the forgiveness of our sins is an empty, dead faith. Peter told the people at Pentecost in Acts 2:38 to repent and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of their sins. That stands true for us today. We become the children of God when we believe and are baptized. Galatians 3:26-27 says, “For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. For all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ.” You can become a child of God today because of the Son of God.

## Jesus the Christ

We frequently hear Jesus called Jesus Christ. What does the word “Christ” mean? Grab your Bible and examine the passages telling us Jesus is the Christ! Paul said, “For I determined to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ, and Him crucified” (1 Corinthians 2:2). The focus of this ministry is our Lord Jesus Christ, how He suffered for our sins and rose from the dead by the power of God. Jesus is both our Savior and our Lord; He came into this world in fulfillment of many prophecies to be the Christ, the Messiah. The Scriptures describe this and it’s worth our time to study. Today, we’re examining passages that speak of Jesus as the Christ. The word “Christ” is not the name of Jesus but an official title given to Him in the New Testament. It signifies his office as the anointed Savior and King that the prophets of the Old Testament predicted. The word “Christ” comes from the Greek word, “Christos,” which translates the Hebrew word, “Messiah.” John 1:41 tells of Andrew saying to his brother Simon Peter, “We have found the Messiah”; and John adds “(which means Christ).” Both Messiah and Christ come from words that mean “to anoint with sacred oil”; these titles refer to “the anointed one.”

In the Old Testament three groups received an anointing to establish their role as God’s servants: prophets, priests, and kings. The anointed person was not a free agent to do as he pleased. As a prophet, priest, or king he spoke, served, or ruled in the name and served as God’s representative to the people of God. Jesus Christ, unlike anyone else served in all three ways; God anointed Him prophet, priest, and king.

Our reading today comes from the gospel according to Matthew 16:13-18, and contains a question that many of us need to consider.

Now when Jesus came into the district of Caesarea Philippi, He was asking His disciples, “Who do people say that the Son of Man is?” And they said, “Some say John the Baptist; and others, Elijah; but still others, Jeremiah, or one of the prophets.” He said to them, “But who do you say that I am?” Simon Peter answered, “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.” And Jesus said to him, “Blessed are you, Simon Barjona, because flesh and blood did not reveal this to you, but My Father who is in heaven. I also say to you that you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build My church; and the gates of Hades will not overpower it.

Asking that question, “Who do we think the Lord is?” is so important.

The Old Testament prophesies how the Messiah would come and would save His people. The New Testament reveals how Jesus fulfilled these prophecies and was indeed the Messiah or the Christ. The Lord Jesus was Himself a prophet. God revealed to Moses and Moses declared, “I will raise up for them a prophet like you from among their brothers. And I will put my words in his mouth, and he shall speak to them all that I command him. And whoever will not listen to my words that he shall speak in my name, I myself will require it of him” (Deuteronomy 18:18-19). The apostle Peter, in Acts 3:22-23, referred to this prophecy and pointed to Jesus Christ.

The Lord Jesus is our high priest. He was not a Levitical priest and did not serve in the Temple of the first century. Rather, He is now our high priest. In Psalm 110:4, God declared to the Lord Jesus, who sat at His right hand, “You are a priest forever According to the order of Melchizedek.” The book of Hebrews several times makes it clear Jesus Christ is the fulfillment of this very prophecy. Hebrews 5:10 says that Jesus was “designated by God a high priest after the order of Melchizedek.”

I am grateful Jesus is our high priest. Hebrews 4:14-16 says, “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 is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in

every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin. Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.” Not only did Jesus die on the cross for my sins; He is ready to give me mercy and grace in those times of need, when I’m tempted.

The Old Testament also predicts that Jesus is a king. God told David through Nathan the prophet, “When your days are complete and you lie down with your fathers, I will raise up your descendant after you, who will come forth from you, and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build a house for My name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever” (2 Samuel 7:12-13).

Isaiah also knew a child in the future would establish a kingdom that would last forever. Isaiah 9:6-7 says, “For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and of peace there will be no end, on the throne of David and over his kingdom, to establish it and to uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time forth and forevermore. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this.”

The prophet Daniel also spoke of Jesus’ kingdom when he interpreted Nebuchadnezzar’s dream. Daniel 2:44 says, “In the days of those kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom which will never be destroyed.”

Mary, the mother of Jesus, sang of Him, “He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David; and He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and His kingdom will have no end” (Luke 1:32-33). Even the Samaritan woman at the well knew that the “Messiah is coming (He who is called Christ); when that One comes, He will declare all things to us” (John 4:25).

On the day of Pentecost Peter said, “And so, because he (that is, David) was a prophet and knew that GOD had sworn to him with an oath to seat one of his descendants on His throne, he looked ahead and spoke of the resurrection of the Christ” (Acts 2:30-31). Peter concluded in verses 34-36, “For it was not David who ascended into heaven, but he himself says: ‘The LORD said to my LORD, “sit at my right hand, until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet.”’ Therefore let all the house of Israel know for certain that God has made Him both Lord and Christ—this Jesus whom you crucified.”

Jesus became the prophesied king when God raised Him from the dead, and He established His kingdom. So He rules and reigns over the entire world today. Some people think Jesus Christ will one day in the future set up an earthly throne in Jerusalem and reign for a thousand years. They miss the fact He is already reigning over His kingdom now, and has been since God raised Him up and seated Him at His right hand. While Christ reigns over all, not everybody is in His kingdom.

Paul wrote to the church in Colossae, “For He rescued us from the domain of darkness, and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins” (Colossians 1:13-14). Many are accountable to Jesus but remain in that domain of darkness outside the kingdom of His beloved Son. The apostle John said, “We know that we are of God, and that the whole world lies in the power of the evil one” (1 John 5:19). Without Christ, we’re following the world; we’re lost and under the power of the evil one.

The Father never wanted us to follow darkness but to come to the light. The kingdom of Christ brings redemption and the forgiveness of sins. The kingdom today is the church. In Acts 20:28 Jesus shed His blood to purchase the church. In Revelation 5:9-10, the host in heaven sang that Christ “purchased for God with Your blood men from every tribe and tongue and people and nation. You have made them to be a kingdom and priests to our God; and they will reign upon the earth.”



The blood that purchased the church also purchased the kingdom, and those who are in the church are also in the kingdom and described as priests.

First Peter 2:9-10 says, “But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation (that is, kingdom), a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light. Once you were not a people, but now you are God’s people; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.” Every Christian can enjoy God’s mercy in God’s holy nation, His holy kingdom, as a priest. They become members of that kingdom.

Many do not follow Jesus but follow the world. Jesus Christ said, “Enter through the narrow gate; for the gate is wide and the way is broad that leads to destruction, and there are many who enter through it. For the gate is small and the way is narrow that leads to life, and there are few who find it” (Matthew 7:13-14). Some listen to what others say but ignore what God says in Scripture. They were not like the those noble Bereans, “Now these were more noble-minded than those in Thessalonica, for they received the word with great eagerness, examining the Scriptures daily to see whether these things were so” (Acts 17:11). Many blindly follow the crowd and never ask where the crowd is going.

The Lord Jesus said after His resurrection, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me” (Matthew 28:18). Acts 2 has Jesus sitting as the Messiah or Christ on the throne; He is already ruling as the son of David. Ephesians 1:20-23 says God raised Jesus from the dead “and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly places, far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and above every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the one to come. And he put all things under his feet and gave him as head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all.” From the moment He arose from the dead Jesus has been ruling over all.

Jesus Christ not only has all authority in heaven and on earth, He is also the “head” of the church. He is the only “head” of the church in this or in any generation. Some ignore this; they have an earthly leader they exalt in the place of Christ. But no human can ever replace Christ. Just as there is but “one Lord” (Ephesians 4:5), there can only be one head of the church, only one Christ! Men who build their own churches and preach their own doctrines cannot substitute for true Christianity. First Corinthians 3:11 says, “For no man can lay a foundation other than the one which is laid, which is Jesus Christ.” The Lord Jesus Himself said, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes (and no one) to the Father but through Me” (John 14:6).

Colossians 1:16 explains a little more, “For by him (that is, by Christ) all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities— all things were created through him and for him.” God created you and me to serve the Lord Jesus. Whether in this life or in the life to come, we belong to the Lord. Romans 14:7-9 says, “For none of us lives to himself, and none of us dies to himself. For if we live, we live to the Lord, and if we die, we die to the Lord. So then, whether we live or whether we die, we are the Lord’s. For to this end Christ died and lived again, that he might be Lord both of the dead and of the living.” The word “Christian” actually means one who belongs to Christ. If we give ourselves to Him in this life, we’ll have a relationship with Him in the life to come.

The Lord Jesus said, “And whoever does not take his cross and follow me is not worthy of me. Whoever finds his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it” (Matthew 10:38-39). Many people spend a lifetime trying to find themselves only to miss having a relationship with the Lord Jesus. If you wish to find yourself, lose your life for Christ’s sake. When you give yourself entirely to the Lord, you will find an abundant life enriched by all the spiritual

blessings in the heavenly places. You'll live with a purpose that God gave you. You'll live with love in your heart, hope for the future, peace in your salvation, and joy in your faith. That's what the Messiah came to give.

Many live in selfish ambition; they lust for money and power and step on others to possess and keep it. They have bitter jealousy if they cannot be first, if they can't get their way, and if others don't fall at their feet. James 3:14-16 says, "But if you have bitter jealousy and selfish ambition in your hearts, do not boast and be false to the truth. This is not the wisdom that comes down from above, no, but is earthly, unspiritual, demonic. For where jealousy and selfish ambition exist, there will be disorder and every vile practice." The Lord Jesus Christ "gave himself for our sins to deliver us from the present evil age" (Galatians 1:4). As the Messiah, as the Christ, He gave us a way of life and a kingdom that delivers us from all the harm that evil does in this world. Do you live for yourself? Or, do you live for Jesus Christ?

Jesus asked His disciples, "Who do people say that I, the Son of Man, am?" They gave a variety of answers, and all of them were incorrect. Jesus became personal with His disciples. He asked them, "But who do you say that I am?" Simon Peter answered correctly: "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God." Jesus said the Father revealed that to him. I ask you, and think seriously about your answer, "Who do you say Jesus is?" That's the most important question of your life. It affects your soul, it affects how you think and how you live, it also affects your morals and where you will spend eternity.

The Lord Jesus is indeed the Christ, the Son of the living God. He told some Jews who didn't believe, "I told you that you would die in your sins, for unless you believe that I am he you will die in your sins" (John 8:24). What the Lord Jesus said is still true; faith is necessary to be saved. "And without faith it's impossible to please him, for whoever would draw near to God must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who seek him" (Hebrews 11:6).

If you believe in Jesus you will penitently forsake your sins. You can't remain in sin and still please God. If you believe in Jesus you'll confess your faith in the presence of others. You won't hide it. If you truly believe in Jesus you'll choose to be united with Him by being baptized into Christ. Baptism is a burial, a resurrection in water that unites us with Christ. Romans 6:3-7 says God frees us from sin and gives us newness of life when we're baptized into Christ. God will bless you when you put your faith into action.

## Jesus the Savior

If Jesus is the Savior, then someone needs saving. Today we're going to explore what it means to call Jesus our Savior. More than through any other means we come to know our Father in heaven and the Lord Jesus Christ through the inspired Scriptures. In fact, if it were not for the Scriptures, we would never know the most important truths of life. We wouldn't know where we came from, why we exist, or what will happen to us when this life is over. God's message from the beginning to end is a message of life, of hope, and of love.

Jesus came to this earth to be a Savior. The angel told Joseph before Jesus was born, "She will bear a Son; and you shall call His name Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins" (Matthew 1:21). When John the Baptist introduced Jesus to his disciples, he said, "Behold, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!" (John 1:29). Jesus "bore our sins in His body on the cross, so that we might die to sin and live to righteousness; for by His wounds you were healed" (1 Peter 2:24). Saving us isn't simply ridding us of the sin; it's also transforming our hearts and lives to live for righteousness.

John 3:16-17 says, "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten (or His only) Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have (everlasting) eternal life. For God did not send the Son into the world to judge the world, but that the world might be saved through Him." Jesus is indeed in the saving business. That Jesus is our Savior from sin implies that we needed saving and that sin is a real problem.

Our reading today is 1 Timothy 1:12-16 and comes from the apostle Paul written to the younger preacher Timothy. He is writing to him about his role as a gospel preacher and about his life and the changes that took place because of the grace of God.

I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who has strengthened me, because He considered me faithful, putting me into service, even though I was formerly a blasphemer and a persecutor and a violent aggressor. Yet I was shown mercy because I acted ignorantly in unbelief; and the grace of our Lord was more than abundant, with the faith and love which are *found* in Christ Jesus. It is a trustworthy statement, deserving full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, among whom I am foremost *of all*. Yet for this reason I found mercy, so that in me as the foremost, Jesus Christ might demonstrate His perfect patience as an example for those who would believe in Him for eternal life.

We all have a common problem, and the Scriptures are clear, that problem is sin. The sin problem is universal. You have it, I have it, and every responsible person has it. Psalm 14:2-3 says, "The LORD has looked down from heaven upon the sons of men To see if there are any who understand, Who seek after God. They have all turned aside, together they have become corrupt; There is no one who does good, not even one." Isaiah understood the problem when he wrote, "All of us like sheep have gone astray, Each of us has turned to his own way" (Isaiah 53:6). Again, Romans 3:23 simply says, "for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God."

When you say things like this, sometimes people object. They don't like the idea of being called a sinner. They want to deny it, excuse it, or blame someone else for their sin. Some even blame God for their sins. James 1:13-15 says, "Let no one say when he is tempted, 'I am being tempted by God'; for God cannot be tempted by evil, and He Himself does not tempt anyone. But each one is tempted

when he is carried away and enticed by his own lust. Then when lust has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and when sin is accomplished, it brings forth death.”

The most critical day in your life comes when you face up to the reality that you’re lost in sin, and that sin separated you from God and heaven, and that you need a Savior. Sadly, some folks never give a second thought to their sins; and other people deny sin exists. Deceived people fail to realize that they’re deceived spiritually until it’s too late. People who give in to their temptations frequently find ways to justify themselves rather than admit that they’ve sinned. For these reasons, many will do everything possible to avoid facing up to their sins.

John replies to people who think they never sin , “If we say that we have no sin, we are deceiving ourselves and the truth is not in us. ... If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar and His word is not in us” (1 John 1:8, 10). Saying we have no sin in our lives means that we’re lying to ourselves; we aren’t facing up to the truth. Saying we haven’t sinned makes the Lord out to be a liar for saying that we really do sin. When people deny they have sinned, they’re also denying what God says in Scripture.

The apostle Paul, looking back at his life, said, “For we know that the Law is spiritual, but I am of flesh, sold into bondage to sin. For what I am doing, I do not understand; for I am not practicing what I would like to do, but I am doing the very thing I hate” (Romans 7:14-15). He continues in verses 19 to 24, “For the good that I want, I do not do, but I practice the very evil that I do not want. But if I am doing the very thing I do not want, I am no longer the one doing it, but sin which dwells in me. I find then the principle that evil is present in me, the one who wants to do good. For I joyfully concur with the law of God in the inner man, but I see a different law in the members of my body, waging war against the law of my mind and making me a prisoner of the law of sin which is in my members. Wretched man that I am! Who will set me free from the body of this death?”

Think a little about Paul’s despair, “Wretched man that I am!” Have you ever felt that way about yourself when you considered your sins? Most of us might admit that we’ve sinned, but we don’t realize how the sins we commit have affected us. People do unspeakable things they never thought or wanted to do, and this makes them feel guilty about doing it and ashamed of themselves for being the kind of person who would do it. Some feel there’s no hope and no way out of this despair, because of the pleasures of sin and how they enslave us. Paul asked, “Who will set me free from the body of this death?” He knew that if he continued his sinful ways, he would face eternal separation from the God that he loved.

Thankfully, Paul answers the question. He said in verse 25, “Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord! So then, on the one hand I myself with my mind am serving the law of God, but on the other, with my flesh the law of sin.” This struggle goes on in the heart and mind of every person; but Jesus is the answer! He can deliver us from the spiritual death caused by sin. Romans 8:1-2 explains, “Therefore there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set you free from the law of sin and of death.”

Our salvation is a deliverance, a rescue from sin and from an evil way of life. God wanted something better for us, and the blood of Jesus sacrificed on the cross provides the way of freedom from sin and the way to a better and more abundant life. Galatians 1:4 says that Jesus Christ “gave Himself for our sins so that He might rescue (save) us from this present evil age, according to the will of our God and Father.” The first century was an evil, pagan age. Centuries have passed; but we still live in an evil age, filled with deception and temptation.

God wants to make a difference! Colossians 1:13-14 says, “For He rescued us from the domain (that is, the power) of darkness, and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.” We don’t have to be under the devil’s control and be condemned with him. Jesus can rescue us from the consequences of our sins and give us hope and eternal life.

Jesus rescues sinners because He loves us and doesn’t want us to be lost eternally. Jesus rescues sinners not only by sacrificing Himself for our sins but also through giving us hope through His teaching, in the Word of God. Salvation becomes precious, because the consequences of sin are so great. Knowing the fear of the Lord, we persuade people (2 Corinthians 5-11). Talking about these matters is essential! It’s cruel to suggest sin doesn’t matter. We talk about sin, but we speak of the joy of the gospel message. We preach in love. We preach hope by speaking of the love and the grace of God who offers forgiveness and eternal life with the Father in heaven.

Have you considered people in Scripture that Jesus rescued? I think of the prodigal son who selfishly lived for his own pleasure until he came to his senses. I think of the woman at the well, who had five previous husbands and was at the time living with a man. I think of the chief tax collector Zacchaeus, who may have been the most despised man in Jericho for collecting taxes for Rome and for possibly defrauding the taxpayers. Jesus still loved all these people and wanted them to follow Him. He was not like the Pharisees who grumbled at Him for eating with sinners.

Have you considered the chief of sinners, Saul of Tarsus, who became the apostle Paul? Paul said, “It is a trustworthy statement, deserving full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, among whom I am foremost of all. (And) Yet for this reason I found mercy, so that in me as the foremost, Jesus Christ might demonstrate His perfect patience as an example for those who would believe in Him for eternal life” (1 Timothy 1:15-16). If Christ could save the chief of sinners, He can save you too. If He can find mercy, so can you. If Christ could have perfect patience with the foremost sinner, He can have perfect patience with you!

Salvation is not merely given to forgive; God wants to transform our lives. He wants something better for us than slavery to sin. He doesn’t want us so enslaved to evil. He wants us to live for righteousness and to become a blessing. Paul describes this salvation and change in Titus 3:3-7. He says, “For we also once were foolish ourselves, disobedient, deceived, enslaved to various lusts and pleasures, spending our life in malice and envy, hateful, hating one another. But when the kindness of God our Savior and His love for mankind appeared, He saved us, not on the basis of deeds which we have done in righteousness, but according to His mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewing by the Holy Spirit, whom He poured out upon us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, so that being justified by His grace we would be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life.”

The world without Christ has all those characteristics. You can see foolishness, and disobedience, and deception, enslavement to lusts and pleasures. You can see people spending their lives in malice and envy. You can see the hatefulness present in so many lives. What we need is an answer to these selfish ways. People speak of worldly religions as an answer, but false religions won’t change the inner man from living for sin to living for righteousness. They may have strict rules, but they forget the role of the heart in changing life. The Lord Jesus touches our hearts and helps us leave evil by washing us clean, causing us to be born again, and living new lives. The Lord justifies us by grace and makes us heirs according to the hope of eternal life.

Our hearts can deceive us. The prophet Jeremiah said, “The heart is more deceitful than all else And is desperately sick; Who can understand it?” (Jeremiah 17:9). If we have a selfish heart, we’ll do

selfish and hurtful things. The Lord Jesus said, “For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed the evil thoughts, fornications, thefts, murders, adulteries, deeds of coveting and wickedness, as well as deceit, sensuality, envy, slander, pride and foolishness. All these evil things proceed from within and defile the man” (Mark 7:21-23).

What can change the heart? What can lead our hearts in a different direction? What can help us understand there is something bigger and better than living for ourselves? It’s the cross of Christ. The Lord Jesus said, “And I, if I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all men to Myself” (John 12:32). How does the cross draw us? By its wonderful love! Romans 2:4 says “the kindness of God leads to repentance.” God’s love causes us to repent, to change our hearts and change our lives. That love was shown when Jesus bore the cross. That leads to our forgiveness and to our becoming new people.

Titus 2:11-14 says, “For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all men, instructing us to deny ungodliness and worldly desires and to live sensibly, righteously and godly in the present age, looking for the blessed hope and the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Christ Jesus, who gave Himself for us to redeem us from every lawless deed, and to purify for Himself a people for His own possession, zealous for good deeds.” God’s grace and love have a transforming power in our lives. Jesus Christ through the cross gives us reason to leave sin and follow Him. He is indeed a Savior! Won’t you follow Him?

Since we all sin, we all need a Savior. You may not believe in Jesus, but you still need a Savior. You may have rebelled against God and wandered away from the church, you need to repent and come back to God; and yes, you need your sins forgiven by the Savior. Sin may not be a big deal to you, but you’re not the One offended by sin. God doesn’t see sin as trivial. He wouldn’t have given up His Son Jesus to be crucified as a sacrifice for your sin, if sin were insignificant.

Yes, no matter who you are, you need a Savior, and the only one who can save you from sin and give you eternal life is our Lord Jesus Christ. We’re all in the same condition. We cannot save ourselves by ourselves. We can’t earn salvation or eternal life on our own. Ephesians 2:8-9 says, “For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not as a result of works, so that no one may boast.” God is not indebted to us, but we are accountable to Him.

So how do we respond to this gift of grace from God? We place our trust in Him by believing in Jesus Christ and His promises. If we take God seriously, we can’t continue in sin. We must repent of our evil and start living according to His will. With faith and repentance, we confess our faith in Jesus Christ and are baptized into His death. In baptism we’re united with Him in His burial and resurrection. God gives us newness of life (we’re born again) when we are baptized (Romans 6:3-7). Oh, won’t you respond today?

## Jesus the Lord

We call Him Jesus Christ, but the Scriptures many times call Him the Lord Jesus Christ. Today we're exploring what it means to call Jesus "Lord." We search the Scriptures for many reasons; but we primarily search because we love the Lord. We want to know Him and all He has done for us. Because we love Him we want to know how to please Him. We search what the Lord says because as Christians we belong to Him and want to walk in His way. We know the Lord's way is the best way and the right way to live. We thank God that He's left His Scriptures so that we might know these things and enjoy eternal life in heaven with Him.

When we speak of Jesus, we think of Him as the Christ. The word "Christ" means, "Anointed"; it's the Greek equivalent of the Hebrew word "Messiah." For centuries, the Jews longed for and looked for the Messiah to come. The prophets spoke of the Messiah, the Son of David, the new king of Israel; but they didn't understand the kingdom was spiritual, and His kingdom would include people from all nations. To say Jesus is the Christ, is to say He is truly the King of kings and the Lord of lords. We also confess Jesus as the Son of God. At His baptism the Heavenly Father said of Jesus, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well-pleased" (Matthew 3:17). Later, the Father acknowledging Jesus as His Son said, "Listen to Him!" (Matthew 17:5).

The New Testament also speaks of our confessing "Jesus is Lord" in Romans 10:9. For some this confession sounds different; but the phrase "Lord Jesus" or "Lord Jesus Christ" appears more than a hundred times in the New Testament. What does it mean to call Jesus, "Lord"?

Our reading today comes from the book of Philippians 2:5-11. There are some people who think this may have been turned into a hymn in ancient times.

Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus, who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, *and* being made in the likeness of men. Being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. For this reason also, God highly exalted Him, and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus EVERY KNEE WILL BOW, of those who are in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and that every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

God promised in Isaiah 9:6-7, "For a child will be born to us, a son will be given to us; And the government will rest upon 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."

The angel Gabriel reaffirmed this promise and told Mary, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. And the Lord God will give to him the throne of his father David, and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end" (Luke 1:30-33).

On the day of Pentecost, the apostle Peter, as the Spirit gave him utterance, preached the first gospel sermon about Jesus Christ. He spoke of His miracles, His death, His burial, and His resurrection. He spoke how Jesus had ascended to the Father and how God exalted Him and placed Jesus at His right hand. He concluded his message in Acts 2:36, "Let all the house of Israel therefore know for certain that God has made him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom you crucified." You should be thankful for this declaration because Peter later promised in Acts 5:31, "He is the one whom God exalted to His right hand as a Prince and a Savior, to grant repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins." Because Jesus is Lord and Savior you have the ability to repent and can be forgiven. This is a great blessing.

Though some like the idea of Jesus as their Savior, they don't like the idea of Him as our Lord. Since Jesus is Lord, that means that we must listen and obey Him. In Acts 3:22-23 Moses described the authority of the Lord Jesus, "THE LORD GOD will raise up for you a prophet like me from your brethren; to him you shall give heed to everything He says to you. And it will be that every soul that does not heed that prophet shall be utterly destroyed from among the people." Since Jesus is Lord we must pay attention to everything He says. We can't claim Him as Lord and then question if we will obey Him. Nor can we obey Him when it's convenient and then rebel when it's not. If Jesus is Lord, He is Lord in every aspect of our lives.

The Lord Jesus said to His disciples, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth" (Matthew 28:18). All authority is not some authority. John 17:2 says God gave Jesus "authority over all flesh." Peter said Jesus Christ is "Lord of all" in Acts 10:36. "All" includes everyone who has ever lived and those who are alive now. Romans 10:12 says, "For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; for the same Lord is Lord of all, abounding in riches for all who call on Him." Whether you call upon Him or not, He is still your Lord. Whether you believe in Him or not, He is still your Lord. Whether you love Him or not, He is still your Lord. He is indeed Lord of all.

Hebrews 1:1-2 says, "God, after He spoke long ago to the fathers in the prophets in many portions and in many ways, in these last days has spoken to us in His Son, whom He appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the world." The book of Hebrews speaks to people who were spiritually weak. They were sluggish, dull of hearing, and drifting from the truth. They were in danger of falling back into sin, hardening their hearts, and having evil hearts of unbelief.

Hebrews 12:25 says, "See that you do not refuse him who is speaking. For if they did not escape when they refused him who warned them on earth, much less will we escape if we reject him who warns from heaven." We must not ignore what the Lord Jesus says. The Lord punished those who refused to obey Him in earlier times, and He'll punish us if we fail to listen. This verse makes us look back to chapter two. Hebrews 2:1-3 says, "Therefore we must pay much closer attention to what we have heard, lest we drift away from it. For since the message declared by angels proved to be reliable, and every transgression or disobedience received a just retribution, how shall we escape if we neglect such a great salvation?" We won't escape retribution if we ignore the Lord.

John 3:36 says in the New American Standard Version, that "He who believes in the Son has eternal life; but he who does not obey the Son will not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him." God made us free moral agents with the ability to choose what we believe and what we will do. Each day we choose whether to submit to the Lord's teaching or give in to sin and the world.



John 20:24-29 tells of doubting Thomas, one of the twelve, called the Twin, who was not with them when Jesus came the first time in that upper room. So the other disciples told him, “‘We have seen the Lord.’ But he (that is, Thomas) said to them, ‘Unless I see in his hands the mark of the nails, and place my finger into the mark of the nails, and place my hand into his side, I will never believe.’ Eight days later, his disciples were inside again, and Thomas was with them. Although the doors were locked, Jesus came and stood among them and said, ‘Peace be with you.’ Then he said to Thomas, ‘Put your finger here, and see my hands; and put out your hand, and place it in my side. Do not disbelieve, but believe.’ Thomas answered him, ‘My Lord and my God!’ Jesus said to him, ‘Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed.’” Do you believe Jesus is Lord?

Calling Jesus Lord is not just a theological matter; it’s also practical. Many people love Jesus as Savior, but they resist Jesus as the Lord who makes rules for their lives. They don’t want anyone telling them what to do, even Jesus Christ. They won’t let Him make rules for their morals or their beliefs. They don’t realize that sin is running their lives. Some reject the Lord altogether, simply because they do not want to face the fact they’re living in sin and breaking His commandments. It’s easier for them to deny Jesus as Lord than it is to give up the sin that they love.

The Lord Jesus said “No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and wealth” (Matthew 6:24). What’s true for the love of money is also true for the love of any other sinful activity. If you love sin more than the Lord you can’t enjoy the blessings of God. First John 2:15-17 says, “Do not love the world nor the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the boastful pride of life, is not from the Father, but is from the world. The world is passing away, and also its lusts; but the one who does the will of God lives forever.”

If the Lord Jesus is the one true Lord of all, He is your Lord and Master too. Your soul belongs to Him, and you really don’t belong to yourself. Having free will doesn’t mean that you aren’t accountable. Even if you don’t acknowledge Him as Lord, you’ll give an account to Him, one day, personally for the way that you live. Hebrews 12:14 says, “Strive for peace with everyone, and for the holiness without which no one will see the Lord.” Why? Strive because the Lord sees and knows your heart and your intentions.

Hebrews 4:12 to 13 says, “For the word of God is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing as far as the division of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart. And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are open and laid bare to the eyes of Him with whom we have to do.” We sometimes think God won’t see or know how we behave, but God sees everything. Job 34:21-22 says, “For His eyes are upon the ways of a man, And He sees all his steps. There is no darkness or deep shadow Where the workers of iniquity may hide themselves.” Please don’t fool yourselves into thinking that God doesn’t notice or that God doesn’t care. He sees and He cares.

There will always be enemies of the Lord Jesus and the cross, but the Lord will ultimately be victorious. No matter what powers the enemies of God seem to have or what deceptions they suggest, the Lord and His truth will prevail. The book of Revelation speaks of how the enemies of truth and righteousness will confront the people of God, but the Lord will not sit by and ignore

what they do. Revelation 17:14 says, “These will wage war against the Lamb, and the Lamb will overcome them, because He is Lord of lords and King of kings, and those who are with Him are the called and chosen and faithful.”

The Scriptures teach clearly that those who choose to follow Jesus will suffer persecution from those who are against Christianity. We have suffered at the hands of lawless men since the beginning of the church. First Peter 3:14-16 says, “But even if you should suffer for the sake of righteousness, you are blessed. Do not fear their intimidation, and do not be troubled, but sanctify Christ as Lord in your hearts, always being ready to make a defense to everyone who asks you to give an account for the hope that is in you, yet with gentleness and reverence; and keep a good conscience so that in the thing in which you are slandered, those who revile your good behavior in Christ will be put to shame.”

Second Corinthians 5:10 speaks of an appointment God has set for you and for me. We cannot escape it. “For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may be recompensed for his deeds in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad.”

The struggle that we all face with sin involves who will rule our hearts. Who has the right of complete sovereignty in the world for how we think and what will be our moral guide and choices. It's a struggle for our hearts, our lives, and our souls. We either serve our lusts and pleasures giving in to sin, or we will serve the Lord. Romans 6:16 says, “Do you not know that when you present yourselves to someone as slaves for obedience, you are slaves of the one whom you obey, either of sin resulting in death, or of obedience resulting in righteousness?” Who are you serving? Are you serving your passions or are you recognizing Jesus Christ as the Lord of your life? Are you following Him and living for Him.

The Lord Jesus said, “Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father who is in heaven will enter. Many will say to Me on that day, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in Your name, and in Your name cast out demons, and in Your name perform many miracles?’ And then I will declare to them, ‘I never knew you; depart from me, you who practice lawlessness’” (Matthew 7:21-23). You can be very religious, but that's not the same as being righteous. These folks thought they were working for the Lord, but they were only fooling themselves. What was the problem? They were workers of iniquity; that is, they were lawless. They were workers but ignored God's commandments and lived as they pleased. Calling Jesus “Lord” and making Jesus “Lord” of your everyday life are not the same thing. It takes obeying the Lord, because you believe He is Lord. Jesus once said to the people, “Why do you call Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ and do not do what I say?” (Luke 6:46).

Romans 10:13 says, “Whoever will call on the name of the LORD will be saved.” Some assume one is saved by merely saying a little prayer, but there's more involved. How does one call upon the name of the Lord? One calls because he believes; and one calls because she or he has repented of sins and wants to be saved. When Ananias came to the guilty chief of sinners, Saul of Tarsus, he said, “And now why do you wait? Rise and be baptized and wash away your sins, calling on his name” My friend, won't you call on the name of the Lord by being baptized?