

Behold the Lamb
Publications

“THE TRUTH”



“Who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had, and bought it.”

Matthew 13:46

Message by: Leroy Surface

“The Truth”

Message by: Leroy Surface

John 8:32: “*And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.*”

“*What do you mean, ‘make us free’?*” This explosive question could have come from any one of thousands of bible teachers who do not understand the truth of “*The Christ*” who came into the world to “*make an end of sins*” (Daniel 9:24-25). It could have come from perhaps a majority of the pastors in our churches today. Instead, it came from a group of devout Jews who were looking for and expecting the imminent arrival of their Messiah. It is possible that the explosive situation that is described in the eighth chapter of John actually began when Jesus forgave the sins of an adulterous woman and sent her away to “*sin no more*” (John 8:11). The Jews had been searching for their Messiah for some time. The angel Gabriel had told the prophet Daniel the exact year “*the Messiah*” would make his appearance in ministry (Daniel 9:25). He also told the prophet exactly why the Messiah (the Christ) would come. He would “*...finish the transgression ...make and end of sins ...make reconciliation for iniquity,*” and “*...bring in everlasting righteousness*” (Daniel 9:24). The appointed time had come, and excitement filled the hearts of the people. The priests and rabbis had been pointing to this very year for generations past, and now the time had come. Luke described the general mood of the people, “*...the people were in expectation, and all men mused in their hearts of John, whether he were the Christ, or not*” (Luke 3:15). This was the year the angel Gabriel had pinpointed, but it came and went without the scribes and Pharisees finding anyone to fit the image they had of their Messiah. They were looking for a great “*prince*” (the angel Gabriel had called Him ‘*the Messiah, the Prince*’) who would drive the Romans out of their land and restore the former glory of David’s kingdom to Jerusalem. Wonderful fables about the coming of Messiah had been passed

down from generation to generation by mothers who would recite them to their children. The fables would all begin with “*when Messiah comes...*,” and would tell of the coming prosperity and glory the Messiah would bring. Poor mothers would sing to their children songs to this effect, “*When Messiah comes, the land will be so fruitful that a single cluster of grapes will yield five firkins of new wine.*” Most certainly, paradise would be restored, “*when Messiah comes.*”

It was in such a religious climate as this that Jesus of Nazareth made His appearance at John’s baptism service (Matthew 3:13-17). He was baptized by John, and the Holy Ghost came upon Him. A voice from heaven announced that He was the “*beloved Son of God.*” John the Baptist introduced Him to the people as “*the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world*” (John 1:29). John understood the words the angel Gabriel gave to the prophet Daniel that the Messiah (Christ) would “*make an end of sins.*” When he saw the Holy Ghost come upon Jesus of Nazareth, he knew that this is the one who would “*take away the sin of the world.*” God had given John a sign by which he would know: “*I knew him not: but he that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, **Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and remaining on him, the same is he which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost.** And I saw, and bare record that **this is the Son of God***” (John 1:33-34). Several of John’s disciples immediately turned to follow Jesus, telling their closest friends and loved ones, “*We have found the Messiah (the Christ; John 1:41-45).*”

After fasting and praying forty days and nights in the wilderness, Jesus “*returned in the power of the Spirit into Galilee*” (Luke 4:14) where He began to preach the kingdom of God, saying, “***the time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel***” (Mark 1:15). The time was “*fulfilled,*” the year the angel Gabriel had pinpointed for the appearing of the Messiah had come. Without telling them He was their Messiah, Jesus healed the sick, cast out devils, and performed many miracles for the people. Each of His great miracles were a testimony that He was in fact the “*Messiah*” they were looking for (John 5:36). When He told the people,

“I am the light of the world,” He confirmed it by giving sight to one that was born blind (John 9:5-7). After telling Martha, *“I am the resurrection and the life,”* He proved it by raising Lazarus from the dead. Near the end of Jesus’ life and ministry on earth, John wrote of Him, *“...though he had done so many miracles before them, yet they believed not on him”* (John 12:37). Some believed in Him as a great teacher, others believed He was a prophet, but very few believed that Jesus of Nazareth was the Messiah whom Gabriel had said would come into the world to *“make an end of sins.”*

The prophet Malachi had prophesied the rejection of Jesus over four hundred years before: *“...and the Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple, even the messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in: behold, he shall come, saith the LORD of hosts. But who may abide the day of his coming? and who shall stand when he appeareth? for he is like a refiner's fire, and like fullers' soap”* (Malachi 3:1-2). The prophet Isaiah wrote of Him, *“He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not”* (Isaiah 53:3).

Jesus of Nazareth knew who He was and where He came from (John 13:3). His Father was God, who gave witness of Jesus with an audible voice from heaven on two separate occasions. First, at the beginning of His ministry: *“This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased”* (Matthew 3:17), and second, near the end of His ministry: *“This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him”* (Matthew 17:5-6). He did the works of His Father, which no one before Him had done (John 9:32). His words were *“Spirit and Life”* to all who would receive them (John 6:63). He spoke with such authority that even the winds and the waves obeyed His voice (Mark 4:39-41). At the very beginning of His ministry in Capernaum, a man possessed by an unclean spirit cried out against Him, *“Let us alone; what have we to do with thee, thou Jesus of Nazareth? art thou come to destroy us? I know thee who thou art, the Holy One of God”* (Mark 1:23-24). Jesus rebuked the unclean spirit with His word, and it cried with a loud voice and came out of the man. The congregation was amazed: *“What thing is this?”*

what new doctrine is this? for with authority commandeth he even the unclean spirits, and they do obey him” (Mark 1:27).

Freed from Sin

In our text for this message, Jesus told the Jews, “...*the truth shall make you free*” (John 8:32). The logical follow-up question is, “*Free from what?*” That was exactly what the Jews wanted to know. “*We be Abraham's seed, and were never in bondage to any man: how sayest thou, Ye shall be made free?*” (Verse 33). Jesus answered them simply; “*Whosoever committeth sin is the servant (slave) of sin*” (verse 34). He explained something about “*slaves*” to make His point: one who is a slave may work in the house, but he does not live in the house. The son, however, lives in the house and is heir to the house. At the end of the day, the “*slave*” must return to the “*slave quarters*.” Jesus spoke to those who were yet “*slaves to sin*,” saying, “*If the Son therefore shall make you free, you shall be free indeed.*” There is a discrepancy between some versions of the bible concerning what Jesus actually said. The KJV says the truth “*shall make you free*,” while the “*NIV*” and the “*Living Bible*” both tell us the truth “*will set you free.*” There is a great difference in the message these bring. Jesus uses the analogy of slaves. Before the thirteenth amendment to the United States constitution was ratified on December 6, 1865, many “*slaves*” were “*set free*,” only to be captured and brought back in chains to their taskmasters. Now that the war had been won and the thirteenth amendment ratified, no one could bring them back into slavery. Their freedom was won at the cost of the lives of over a million men who died in the Civil War. The “*slaves*” were “*made free*,” and never again could anyone force them into slavery.

The words “*made free*,” fit perfectly with the results Jesus promised. Jesus said “*You shall be free indeed*” (John 8:36). The Greek word “*eleutheros*,” which was translated as “*free*” in this verse, is defined in “*Strong's Greek Dictionary*” as “*unrestrained (to go at pleasure), that is, (as a citizen) not a slave (whether freeborn or manumitted).*”

In the analogy Jesus gave, “*sin*” was the taskmaster and the people were the slaves. To answer the question, “*free from what?*” the only possible answer is “*free from sin.*” It must be understood that “*slaves*” will never be “*free*” based upon “*power over*” their taskmasters. That would be “*mutiny,*” which would immediately be overruled by the superior strength of the taskmasters. The slave to sin can only be “*made free from sin*” by the absolute destruction of sin which Christ wrought for the believer through His death on the CROSS (Romans 6:6). The “*body of sin*” being “*destroyed,*” it is taken out of the heart and nature of all who believe the truth, and they are “*made free from sin.*” There is no other way.

“The Truth that Makes Free”

I John 5:1: “*Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God.*”

This is the “*truth*” which Jesus said would “*make you free.*” Jesus is “*the Christ.*” What is it about believing this that will make everyone who believes it “*free from sin?*” The answer is found again in the eighth chapter of John. The scribes and Pharisees were expecting the appearing of their Messiah (The Christ) at the same time they were mocking and ridiculing Jesus of Nazareth. Because of the things they believed about the Messiah, they loved him and longed for his appearing, but they hated Jesus and viewed Him as an imposter and deceiver. Jesus clearly told them, “*I go my way, and ye shall seek me, and shall die in your sins: whither I go, ye cannot come*” (John 8:21). What an incredible statement by our Lord; “*Ye shall seek me, and shall die in your sins.*” It seems impossible that anyone could “*seek Jesus*” and die in their sins, but almost two thousand years later, the most devout among the Jews are still seeking and longing for the coming of their Messiah (the Christ) and are dying in their sins because they continue to reject Jesus. At this point, the Jews did not understand the words of Jesus and accused Him of being suicidal, to which He answered, “*Ye are from beneath; I am from above: ye are of this world; I am not of this world. I said therefore unto you, that ye shall die in your sins: for if ye believe*

not that I AM HE, ye shall die in your sins” (John 8:23-24). Among the things the Jews understood about the Messiah, they knew the angel Gabriel had said He would “*finish the transgression*” and “*make an end of sins*” (Daniel 9:24-25). Jesus had not come as a “*conquering prince*” to rid the land of the occupying Romans. He had no inclination to ascend to the throne of David in Jerusalem and rule by edict to “*make an end of sins*” throughout the land. Such was the “*messiah*” the Jews looked and longed for. Jesus was their Messiah (the Christ), however, but they were blinded by their traditions and doctrines. Their “*messiah (Christ)*” had come into the world as “*the Lamb of God*” who would suffer and die to “*take away the sin of the world*” (John 1:29). Did He do it? Sixty years after Calvary, the apostle John wrote something that was common knowledge to first century Christians; “*And ye know that he was manifested to take away our sins; and in him is no sin*” (1 John 3:5). What is the result for those whose sin has been “*taken away?*” John tells us in the next verse: “*Whosoever abideth in him sinneth not...*” (1 John 3:5-6). They have no sin.

Jesus Is “The Christ”

In the same way the Jews have rejected Jesus for almost two thousand years, the “*church*” of the twenty first century is rejecting “*the Christ.*” I realize this statement must seem absurd to many, but for those who understand who Christ is and what He came into the world to do, there is no other conclusion. Notice that John did not say, as the modern church teaches, that “*whosoever believes in Jesus Christ is born of God.*” Muslims, Hindus, and Buddhists can believe in Jesus Christ without receiving any saving grace whatsoever, and so can we. Jesus of Nazareth was never called “*Jesus Christ*” at any time during His life on earth. Most of His disciples believed He was “*the Christ*” when Peter made his confession in Matthew 16:16, “*Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God,*” but Jesus commanded them not to tell anyone: “*Then charged He his disciples that they should tell no man that He was Jesus the Christ.*” Jesus told Peter, “*Flesh and blood hath not*

revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven.” Almost two thousand years later it is still a revelation from the Father that Jesus is “*the Christ,*” and very few have received it. Jesus told His disciples, “*No man knoweth who the Son is, but the Father; and who the Father is, but the Son, and he to whom the Son will reveal him*” (Luke 10:22). These are the “*revelations*” Jesus had in mind when He “*rejoiced in spirit*“ and said, “*I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that **thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes***” (Luke 10:21). Those who exalt themselves over their brethren with self-appointed titles will never understand, but those who come as “*little children*” (Matthew 18:3) “*into the kingdom of God will understand all things*” (Proverbs 28:5), for God will reveal Himself to them.

No one preached Jesus Christ until after His resurrection and the Day of Pentecost. Then, being “*full of the Holy Ghost,*” they went everywhere, preaching “*Jesus is the Christ,*” and turned the world upside down in their generation. Within three years after his conversion, Saul of Tarsus, received the greatest revelation ever given to man. It was the revelation of “*who Christ is,*” and that “*Jesus is the Christ.*” He called it the “*Revelation of Jesus Christ.*” When Paul entered a new city, he always went to the synagogue to preach the gospel, “*to the Jews first*” (Romans 1:16). He would begin by preaching from the Old Testament Prophets, that “*Christ is the Son of God*” (Acts 9:20). After establishing that Christ, whom the Jews believed in, is the Son of God, Paul would prove by the same prophets that “*Jesus is the Christ,*” which most often brought the wrath of the unbelieving Jews upon him. When the Jews refused to hear, the apostle would preach the same gospel to the Gentiles. The Jews believed their Messiah, “*The Christ,*” would “*make an end of sins*” when He came. The only thing lacking in their faith was to believe that “*Jesus is the Christ.*” Those among them who believed were “*made free from sin*” (Romans 6:18-22) “*to serve God*” “*in holiness and righteousness before Him, all the days of their life*” (Luke 1:67-75).

Who is “The Christ?”

John 1:1-3: *“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.”*

It is amazing how close a person may come to the truth, yet miss it entirely. Devout Jews have understood more about “*the Christ*” for the past twenty-five hundred years than most of the church has understood since the end of the first century. They understand because they believe the prophets concerning the purpose and mission of their Messiah, “*the Christ.*” They “*miss the mark,*” however, because they do not believe “*Jesus is the Christ.*” A very dear Jewish friend emphatically told me many years ago, “*Jesus is not the Christ. If he had been the Christ, he would have made an end of sins.*” He continued to say, “*...and there wouldn’t be all these prostitutes on the streets of Houston.*” Shortly thereafter I watched a debate between a Catholic priest and a Jewish Rabbi on the subject. The Rabbi’s final and most convincing argument was, “*If Jesus had been the Christ he would have made an end of sins.*” Both the Rabbi and my friend were correct in their understanding of what the purpose and mission of their messiah would be. It is the view of Jesus that is promoted in the modern church that continues to repel the Jew from believing in Jesus.

The church, on the other hand, preaches about Jesus. We call Him “*Jesus Christ*” without any understanding of what we are saying. The original gospel message was what the apostle Paul called “*the simplicity of Christ*” (II Corinthians 11:3). The message was simple; “*Christ is the Son of God*” and “*Jesus is **very Christ***” (Acts 9:20-22). After five-hundred years of teaching in the synagogues about the coming of “*The Messiah, the Prince*” (Daniel 9:25), and what he would do when he came (Daniel 9:24), the message of “*Christ*” was easily understood by both friends and enemies. It was a message that gloriously saves those who believed and received Jesus as “*the Christ,*” but it eternally damns those who reject Him (Mark 16:15-16).

Acts 5:42: *“And daily in the temple, and in every house, they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ.”*

The apostles had been scourged with whips and commanded not to teach or preach in the name of Jesus. Their first response was to *“rejoice”* that they were *“counted worthy to suffer for His name”* (Verse 41). Their second response was to *“cease not to teach and preach Jesus Christ”* (Jesus, the Christ). What was so important about the message of Christ that the apostles continued preaching *“Jesus is the Christ”* under the threat of death from the Sanhedrin court? Why were they willing to die, if necessary, to give the message even to those who wanted to kill them?

The message of Jesus, as preached by most of the church today, begins at the manger and ends at the cross. This is what the apostle Paul called *“Christ after the flesh.”* He said, *“...though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we him no more. Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature...”* (II Corinthians 5:16-19). *“Christ after the flesh”* is the thirty-three and a half years of the life of Jesus of Nazareth from the manger to the cross. Jesus was born of a virgin and He was the Son of God. He *“went about doing good, healing all that were oppressed of the devil”* (Acts 10:38). These things are absolutely true, but I have never read where Peter, Paul, or John, the chief among the apostles, ever mentioned the miracles and healings of Jesus in their Epistles. It is worthy of notice that when Matthew and Luke gave their record of the life of Jesus, they began with His birth, while Mark began with His baptism. Each of these tell us things about Jesus that we should know and teach our children from generation to generation. The life and ministry of Jesus as given in the four *“gospels”* should be required curriculum in every school in America, but we should also remember that it is the *“gospel of Christ”* alone that is *“the power of God unto salvation to everyone who believeth”* (Romans 1:16). Among the apostles, it is Paul and John who most clearly give us this gospel as *“the truth”* that will make the believer *“free from sin.”*

The gospel record the apostle John wrote does not begin at the “manger” to tell us about Jesus. Instead, he begins “*in the beginning*” to tell us about Christ. “***In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God...***” (John 1:1). John presents Christ as “*The Word of God.*” He uses the Greek word “*logos,*” which when preceded by the definite article becomes “*The Logos,*” which is properly defined by Strong’s Greek Dictionary as “*The Divine Expression (that is, Christ).*” Man expresses himself with “*words,*” but God has eternally expressed Himself with “*The Word,*” which is “*Christ.*” Our bible begins with the words “*In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth*” (Genesis 1:1). John speaks of Christ (The Word) when he continues to say, “*...the same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by Him, and without Him was not anything made that was made*” (John 1:2-3). The manner of creation is revealed in Genesis 1:3: “*...and God said, Let there be light: and there was light.*” God “*said*” and Christ (The Word), who is eternally the “*Divine Expression,*” created. The apostle Paul wrote in Hebrews 11:3, “*Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear.*” God did not use “*faith*” to create the universe: He used “*words,*” which in this verse is translated from the Greek word “*rhema,*” which means “*an utterance.*” God “*spoke*” and Christ “*created.*” Christ is as eternal as God Himself. He was “*with God,*” and He “*was God.*”

Philippians 2:5: “*Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus:*”

When the apostle speaks of “*Christ Jesus*” instead of “*Jesus Christ,*” he is calling our attention to who and what He was before He was “*made flesh*” to “ *dwell among us*” (John 1:14).

Philippians 2:6: “*Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God:*”

Christ was eternally “*in the form of God.*” Remember, He was “*with God*” and He “*was God.*” Being “*in the form of God*” He was “*equal with God.*”

Philippians 2:7: *“But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men:”*

The term *“made in the likeness of men”* answers to the words of John in John 1:14: *“And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.”* “The Word” was made flesh in the womb of the virgin girl, Mary, and Jesus, the Son of God was born. Paul says in Galatians 4:4, *“...when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman”*

The Seed of the Woman

Genesis 3:14-15: *“And the LORD God said unto the serpent, Because thou hast done this, thou art cursed above all cattle, and above every beast of the field; ...And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.”*

It is amazing that the first promise God gave after Adam disobeyed was given to the serpent. It was a promise of vengeance and recompense against the serpent for deceiving Eve and bringing about the transgression of Adam. The *“seed of the woman”* would *“bruise the head of the serpent.”* Isaiah prophesied of the *“day of vengeance of our God,”* a prophecy which was fulfilled when Christ died for us on the cross. It was *“the day of vengeance”* against sin and Satan. Christ became *“the seed of the woman”* to *“bruise the head of the serpent”* through His death on the cross. The apostle Paul explained it this way: *“Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, He (Christ, The Word) also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage”* (Hebrews 2:14-15). John wrote, *“For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil”* (1 John 3:8). In that which we call *“the incarnation,”* the *“eternal Christ”* became a man for the sole purpose of dying on the cross, in order

that “*through death*” He would destroy both the devil and all his works for those who believe.

Immanuel: “God With Us”

Isaiah 7:14: “*Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.*”

Over three thousand years pass before we learn that the “*Seed of the Woman*” will be born to a virgin. Even though this prophecy seems to have had a fulfilment in the days of Isaiah as a sign to Israel, it is unquestionably a sign that had its perfect fulfilment in the virgin birth of Jesus of Nazareth. By virtue of the virgin birth, it is obvious that “*The Seed of the Woman*” is also “*The Son of God.*” Isaiah said His “*name*” would be called “*Immanuel,*” which means “*God with us*” (Matthew 1:22-23).

Isaiah 9:6: “*For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.*”

In Isaiah 28:10, the prophet explains how God reveals Himself and His word to man. He says, “*Precept must be upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, and there a little.*” The words “*precept upon precept*” speaks of the prescriptive words of God to the people which He spoke through His prophets. “*Line upon line*” speaks of the “*line*” a bricklayer stretches to keep each course of bricks straight and true. One course is laid to the line and another course is laid upon it. “*Here a little and there a little*” shows that God never gives all the pieces of the “*puzzle*” at one time. People must diligently seek God for understanding, which will come to them “*precept upon precept, line upon line, here a little, there a little.*” Such understanding cannot be taught by man, it must come from God. Such is the manner God used in revealing the redeemer and our redemption to the prophet Isaiah. It began with the vision of “*Immanuel*” (God with us), born of a virgin. Sometime later, God gave him a vision of a child whose

“name” would be called **“Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace”** (Isaiah 9:6). Certainly this was a great mystery to Isaiah at the time, one he could not possibly understand, but God is faithful, and He will give more understanding to His prophet, *“here a little and there a little.”*

God has chosen to speak to His prophets in dreams and visions (Numbers 12:6), and what He call *“dark speeches (puzzles)”* in Numbers 12:8. Isaiah would continue receiving *“pieces of the puzzle”* throughout his lifetime, presenting a *“picture”* of one that a believer can clearly see is Jesus of Nazareth. He is *“Immanuel;”* He is *“God with us;”* He is *“Wonderful”* and *“Counselor.”* Even more, He is *“mighty God, everlasting Father, and Prince of Peace.”* He is *“The Christ,”* who was *“in the beginning with God”* and *“was God.”* He is *“That which (He who) was from the beginning...”* (I John 1:1).

Isaiah 11:1-4: *“And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots: And the spirit of the LORD shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the LORD; And shall make him of quick understanding in the fear of the LORD: and he shall not judge after the sight of his eyes, neither reprove after the hearing of his ears: But with righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth.”*

From revelation to revelation, Isaiah is receiving greater understanding of the child *“Immanuel.”* He will be both *“a rod out of the stem of Jesse”* and *“a branch out of his roots.”* David is *“the stem of Jesse”* because he was the son of Jesse. Jesus was called *“the son of David,”* which means He was the *“rod out of the stem of Jesse.”* Christ, the creator of all things is the root of David, thus Jesus is also the *“branch out of his root.”* Jesus confirmed this identity to John in his visions on the Isle of Patmos. At the end of the visions, Jesus spoke to John from the throne in heaven: *“I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches. I am the root and the offspring of David, and the bright and morning star.”*

Immanuel: “God’s Servant”

Isaiah 42:1-4: *“Behold my servant, whom I uphold; mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth; I have put my spirit upon him: he shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles. He shall not cry, nor lift up, nor cause his voice to be heard in the street. A bruised reed shall he not break, and the smoking flax shall he not quench: he shall bring forth judgment unto truth. He shall not fail nor be discouraged, till he have set judgment in the earth: and the isles shall wait for his law.”*

In the prophecies of Isaiah, God speaks of “my servant” in sixteen different verses. Among those whom He calls “my servant” is Isaiah, Eliakim, David, and Jacob. In eight of these verses, God refers to the nation of Israel as His “servant.” There are also several verses that foretell the ministry of Jesus Christ as God’s servant. He is “Immanuel;” He is both the Son of God and the son of Mary. He is “the seed of the woman,” which God promised to “bruise the head of the serpent” (Genesis 3:14-15). In this verse, Isaiah sees Immanuel as a “servant” whose only purpose is to do the will of God. He knows that Immanuel is “God with us.” He knows the wonderful names of divinity which define who He is but Isaiah knows nothing about the wonderful name of “Jesus” that will be given Him at His birth. As of yet, the prophet knows nothing about His sufferings or why He will suffer. In this verse, the prophet describes the meekness, lowliness, and kindness of Immanuel, as well as his success in accomplishing the thing He is sent to do. “He shall not fail nor be discouraged, till he have set judgment in the earth.”

Isaiah 42:6-7: *“I the LORD have called thee in righteousness, and will hold thine hand, and will keep thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people, for a light of the Gentiles; To open the blind eyes, to bring out the prisoners from the prison, and them that sit in darkness out of the prison house.”*

Immanuel: “His Face is Marred...”

Isaiah 52:13-15: *“Behold, my servant shall deal prudently, he shall be exalted and extolled, and be very high. As many were astonished at thee; **his visage was so marred** more than any man, and his form more than the sons of men: **So shall he sprinkle many nations ...**”*

To this point in Isaiah’s revelation, “Immanuel,” which means “God with us,” has been described both as “The almighty God, the everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace,” as well as “the servant of the LORD.” This seems to be a great mystery, but it fits exactly with what the apostle Paul tells us in Philippians 2:6: “Who (Christ), being in the **form of God**, thought it not robbery to be **equal with God**: But made himself of no reputation, and **took upon him the form of a servant**, and was made in the likeness of men.” Paul also wrote to Timothy of these things, saying, “Without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: **God was manifest in the flesh**, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory” (1 Timothy 3:16). The “mystery of godliness” is “Immanuel” (God with us). The New Testament Apostles had the advantage of looking back upon the events surrounding the life and death of Jesus to see how perfectly He fulfilled all the scriptures of redemption, but Isaiah saw those same things in visions and revelations almost seven hundred years before Jesus was born to Mary. A thousand years before Christ, and three hundred years before the ministry of Isaiah, David had written in the twenty-second Psalm an amazing description of Christ’s suffering at Calvary. He literally gave a “*blow by blow account*” of the events at Calvary, yet no one in his day could understand what David described. Thus far in his visions of Immanuel, Isaiah has seen both His humanity (the seed of the woman) and His divinity (the Son of God). He has seen His meekness, His lowliness, His kindness and His sense of justice. Every revelation of Immanuel has been one of great victory and accomplishment. This text begins the same: “...my servant shall deal prudently, **he shall be exalted and extolled, and be very high.**” Certainly Isaiah was not prepared for

what comes next in his visions of Immanuel; “...*his visage* (face) *was so marred more than any man, and his form* (body) *more than the sons of men.*” Suddenly, in the midst of all the wonderful visions of Immanuel, Isaiah sees for the first time a most horrible sight; his face and his body are battered, bruised, and torn beyond recognition. The prophet has never seen any man whose face and body has been so mutilated. Still in shock from what he has seen, the prophet hears the voice of God saying, “**So shall he sprinkle many nations.**” It is at this point in the visions of Immanuel that the purpose of Calvary begins to be seen. This is the “*report*” that is impossible for a natural man to believe. Who could believe that redemption would come through the mutilated face and body of Immanuel, the Son of God? God had promised to be a redeemer to His people. Every account to this point indicates that Immanuel would be the redeemer. It is true! The “*redeemer*” is Immanuel, “*God with us.*” The mutilated face and body? “*In this way*” God said, “*He will cleanse many nations.*”

“...**so shall he sprinkle many nations.**” Look at the word “*so*” in this verse. In John 3:16, often called the “*golden text*” of the bible, we read the words, “*For God so loved the world...*” The Greek word translated “*so*” is “*houto,*” which means “*in this way.*” This verse is not an expression of “*how much*” God loved the world, but “*the manner*” of His love, and “*the way*” His love was manifested. In the two verses previous to John 3:16, Jesus said “*As* (just as) *Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so* (in this same way) *must the Son of man be lifted up: that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life*” (John 3:14-15). Correctly paraphrased for understanding, John 3:16 refers to Moses lifting up the brazen serpent on a pole, and says, “*This is the way God loved the world; He gave His Son to be lifted up on the cross ...that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.*”

Isaiah 53:1-3: “*Who hath believed our report? and to whom is the arm of the LORD revealed? For he shall grow up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground: he hath no form nor*

comeliness; and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him. He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not.”

“Who hath believed our report?” No one would believe that the redeemer, the great deliverer who was yet to come would suffer his face and body to be mutilated and himself nailed to a cross in shame before men. Who could believe such things? Certainly, unbelievers did not and do not until this present time.

“...and to whom is the arm of the LORD revealed?” The fifty-third chapter of Isaiah was written to explain the last two verses of the fifty-second chapter; *“His visage is marred more than any mans, and His form more than the sons of men.”* Who can believe such a report? *“...and to whom is the arm of the LORD revealed?”* Over a dozen times in the Old Testament the *“mighty hand”* and *“stretched out arm”* of God is spoken of. In Isaiah 52:10 the prophet said, *“The LORD hath made bare his holy arm in the eyes of all the nations; and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God.”* The *“holy arm of God”* is Christ, the eternal *“Word”* of God which was *“made flesh, and dwelt among us”* (John 1:14). Isaiah spoke these things as the Holy Ghost moved upon him almost seven-hundred years before they were fulfilled in Jesus Christ. The eternal Christ became a man, and that man, Jesus Christ, is *“the salvation of God.”*

“...and when we shall see him,” Isaiah said, **“there is no beauty that we should desire Him,”** yet the prophet Malachi called Him *“The desire of all nations”* (Haggai 2:7). Isaiah was seeing through the eyes of those Jews who were greatly desiring the coming of their Messiah at the same time they were rejecting Jesus. There was nothing about Jesus of Nazareth that fit their image of what the Messiah, *“the Christ,”* would be when He came. The *“attraction”* of Jesus was not in His physical features or a charming personality. He actually broke all the rules of *“How to win friends and influence people.”* That was not His mission on earth. There was a *“beauty”* about Him, however, that caused many who met Him for the first time to forsake everything to follow Him. It was *“the beauty of*

holiness” (Psalms 110:3), which was manifest in the “*glory of God*” that was upon Him (Hebrews 2:9). It is amazing that two people can see the same thing, yet see it so differently. Isaiah must have seen through the eyes of those who rejected Him in the day of His humiliation. Those who loved Him and trusted in Him saw something totally different. John says, “*We beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father...*” (John 1:14). Peter tells us, “*We have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of his majesty*” (II Peter 1:16).

The Atonement: Why Did Christ Die?

The word “*atonement*” is an English word that was coined by William Tyndale, when he translated the scriptures from Greek to English almost a hundred years before the 1611 KJV. The Greek word “*katallage*,” which Tyndale translated as “*atonement*” is properly defined by Strong’s Greek Dictionary as “*exchange (figuratively adjustment), that is, restoration to (the divine) favor,*” and is usually translated as “*reconciliation.*” Tyndale wanted a better word to express what reconciliation is, so he took two English words, “*at*” and “*one*,” and added the suffix “*ment*” to give us the new word “*at-one-ment*,” or, “*atonement.*” The use of the same English word in the Old Testament serves to blind us to the true meaning of the word in the New Testament. In the Old Testament, “*atonement*” was normally used to express a “*covering*” that was made for sin, because, as Paul tells us, “*it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins*” (Hebrews 10:4). It is very obvious that Christ came into the world, not to “*cover sin*,” but to “*put away sin*,” (Hebrews 9:26), or to “*take away the sin of the world*” (John 1:29). If we are to “*know the truth*” that Jesus said “*will make us free from sin*,” we must cast off every thought that Jesus died to “*take our punishment*,” to “*take our penalty*,” or to “*pay our debt*” for sin. These all come far short of the glory of God, who sent Christ, the creator of all things, into the world to “*take away*” the sin that entered the world when Adam disobeyed God.

Joh 17:20-21: *“Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; **That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me.**”*

This prayer, which Jesus prayed the night before He was crucified, is not a prayer for “unity” among the different faiths. It is instead a prayer for “atonement (at-one-ment); ...that they may be one in us.” It is God’s will in the atonement that every gospel believer would have the same relationship with Christ as Jesus had with the Father. Only hours before, Jesus had said to Phillip, *“Believest thou not that **I am in the Father, and the Father in me?** the words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works”* (John 10:14). Jesus continued in His prayer to say, *“And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one: **I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one;** and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me”* (John 17:22-23). Only three hours before He was arrested in Gethsemane, Christ reviewed with His Father those things He was sent into the world to do; things for which He was willing to die in order to accomplish. Notice in the fifth verse of this chapter, Jesus prayed, *“...glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee **before the world was**”* (John 17:5). He did not say “before the earth was,” but “before the world was,” which speaks of “this present evil world” (Galatians 1:4), which began when Adam disobeyed God and gave an “entrance for sin.” The “glory” which Christ sought to restore, is the glorious state of paradise, with man in the image and likeness of God, which was lost through the entrance of sin. It could only be restored when the “sin,” that entered through Adam’s disobedience, was “taken away” by the “obedience” of Jesus Christ to the “death of the cross” (Philippians 2:8). *“For as by one man’s disobedience many were made sinners, **so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous**”* (Romans 5:19). This is the atonement Christ made for us, to “take away our sin” and make us to be “one with Him.”

What is in the atonement?

Isaiah 53:4: *“Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted.”*

This verse is often mistaken to indicate that our *“griefs and sorrows”* are the things Jesus died to atone for. Under the umbrella of griefs and sorrows, well-meaning teachers have added many things which they say are *“included in the atonement.”* For example, the Pentecostal revival of the early twentieth century was a great outpouring of the Spirit of God. Great miracles and healings took place on a regular basis as God *“confirmed the word”* (Mark 16:20) of the gospel they preached just as He had for the original apostles after the Day of Pentecost. Almost immediately there were those who taught that *“divine healing”* was included in the atonement. *“After all,”* they said, *“it is the children’s bread”* (Mark 7:27). Sixty years later, there came those who teach *“financial prosperity”* as included *“in the atonement.”* This is a gross error, one which denies the admonition of the apostle Paul to the children of God to *“...set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth”* (Colossians 3:2). A large portion of the *“church”* was led away from *“the things of Christ”* to *“the things of the world,”* and the result was a revival of the *“Laodicean church,”* who confessed, *“I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing...”* (Revelation 3:17). Their *“confession”* became their *“condemnation”* as Jesus defined for them their true condition: *“...and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked.”* The so called *“proof text”* for both healing and prosperity in the atonement became III John 1:1 where the apostle John gave his *“best wishes”* to his friend Gaius: *“Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth.”* Preachers who preach the *“wishes”* of a man as the greatest *“will”* of God have filled their churches with the world, and caused the *“world”* to despise the churches.

“Surely he hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows...” The apostle Matthew explained that these words were fulfilled by Jesus when He healed the sick and delivered the oppressed. He wrote, *“...they brought unto him many that were possessed with devils: and he cast out the spirits with his word, and healed all that were sick: **That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying, Himself took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses”*** (Matthew 8:16-18).

“...yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted.” Isaiah saw in his visions from God that Immanuel would do many wonderful works of kindness and miraculous works of deliverance, “yet,” in spite of all these “wonderful works,” the people would believe it was God who was punishing Him on the cross. The “reality” of the cross, however, is that Christ “bare our sins in His own body” with the result that we would be “dead to sins” and “live unto righteousness” (I Peter 2:24). God did not “punish” Jesus in our place. Christ “died for us,” to “take away our sins.”

The “atonement” which Christ made at Calvary is broad enough to include every person on earth if they will “believe God” and “trust in Christ.” It is also very narrow in its scope as to what Christ died for. Christ, the creator of heaven and earth, did not suffer and die on the cross to do anything a person could have received if Christ had not suffered, and died. Did God heal the sick before Christ died for us? The affirmative answer proves that Jesus did not suffer and die for our physical healing. Did God give prosperity to many before Christ died for us? Absolutely! David, Solomon, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, and Job are all proof that Christ did not have to die on the cross for God to prosper His people. The next question will shock many, but did God forgive sins before Christ died for us? Again, the answer is absolutely yes! When God declared His great name to Moses, he revealed Himself to be “*The LORD, The LORD God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, **forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin ...***” (Exodus 34:6-7). The prophet Isaiah knew God as a merciful and forgiving God when he said, “***Let the wicked***

forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the LORD, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon” (Isaiah 55:7).

If physical healing, prosperity, and forgiveness of sins is not what the atonement of Christ is about, then what is it? The Greek word that was translated as “*atonement*” in Romans 5:11 explains it best: Christ came to earth for the sole purpose of the reconciliation and restoration of His fallen creation to God. Paul says in II Corinthians 5:19, “*God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself.*” Notice that God was not “*reconciled to fallen man,*” but “*fallen man*” was reconciled to God, which requires a transformation, not in God, but in fallen man. It was man (Adam) who moved away from God, and it was the entrance of “*sin*” that destroyed humanity from the presence and glory of God. Man no longer bears the image and likeness of God because of the nature of sin that is in him. For fallen man to be reconciled to God, sin had to be “*taken away*” (I John 3:5), that is, “*taken out*” out of the heart and nature of man. There is a popular theory of redemption that has been around for about five hundred years that says Jesus died to take our punishment and pay our sin debt. This “*theory*” (it is nothing more than a theory, because there is no verse of scripture that says such a thing) says that Jesus took the penalty for sin, with the result that a “*believer*” can “*continue in sin*” without collecting the “*wages of sin*” (Romans 6:23) which is “*death*” (the “*second death;*” Revelation 20:14-15). **NO!** Reconciliation requires something that no one can do for themselves. It “*requires*” that the sin, which entered into the world through the first man Adam, would be taken away by the “*second man,*” whom Paul says is “*the Lord from heaven*” (I Corinthians 15:45-47). Those who believe this great truth and trust in Christ who has already died the death to take away our sin are both reconciled to God and restored to the innocence of man before the transgression of Adam. Sin has been taken away, and they serve God with a pure heart. They dwell “*in Christ*” (II Corinthians 5:17) where there “*is no sin*” (I John 3:5), and they “*sin not*” (I John 3:6) because they are “*made free from sin*” (Romans 6:22).

It is Christ who Died for Our Sins

There is a common belief among certain of the *“faith teachers”* which says *“Jesus Christ was a natural man while on earth, and everything he did, he did by faith, fasting, and prayer, as an example of what a natural man can do by faith, fasting, and prayer.”* It is also commonly believed that Jesus Christ *“could have sinned”* because he was *“tempted to sin”* and *“would have sinned”* if God had not sent the Holy Ghost to help him. Let me clearly state several facts concerning this horrible teaching. First, Jesus could not have sinned because He was *“born of God”* (1 John 3:9), and had no sin in Him. He was never *“tempted to sin”* as we understand the word *“tempted,”* but according to the Greek word *“peirazo”* which was translated as *“tempted”* in Hebrews 4:15, He was *“tested”* in every way that fallen man is *“tempted,”* but there was no sin in Him. Jesus is *“the Christ.”* Christ is the one who was *“in the beginning with God”* and *“was God”* (John 1:1). John said, *“All things were made by Him, and without Him was not anything made that was made”* (John 1:3). Paul said, *“For by (in) him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him. And he is before all things, and by (in) him all things consist”* (Colossians 1:16-17). Christ was the creator of the original creation, but Jesus was the first man of the New Creation, *“the beginning of the creation of God”* (Revelation 3:14). He was the perfect example on earth, not of what a natural man can do, but of what a child of God is.

Jesus, though He was born of Mary, was the Son of God, and could not have been *“just a natural man”* on earth. If that were the case, His death on the cross would have been in vain; it would have accomplished nothing. If He were a natural man, His blood would have done no more than the blood of animals, which had been offered for thousands of years as a *“covering for sin.”* Those who believe the blood of Jesus only *“covers sin”* are themselves guilty of the greatest of sins. Paul explained it this way: *“He that despised*

Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses: Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace?" (Hebrews 10:28-29). His blood was "precious blood;" it was "holy blood;" it was the "blood of Christ" (Hebrews 9:14).

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

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

Romans 8:34: "Who is he that condemneth? **It is Christ that died**, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us."

Romans 14:9: "For to this end **Christ both died**, and rose, and revived, that he might be Lord both of the dead and living."

Romans 14:15: "Destroy not him with thy meat, for whom **Christ died**."

I Corinthians 8:11: "...shall the weak brother perish, for whom **Christ died?**"

I Corinthians 15:3: "For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that **Christ died** for our sins according to the scriptures...."

Each of the preceding scriptures have one thing in common: "*Christ died*." It is significant to full understanding of the "*Gospel of Christ*" to understand that it was not "*just a man*" that died on the cross, but it was "*The Christ*," the creator of heaven and earth, who died for us. On the other hand, there is only one verse in the bible which contains the words "*Jesus died*." In that verse, the apostle Paul uses the death and resurrection of Jesus to reassure the believers that if we "*die in Christ*" we will also have a better resurrection: "*For if we believe that **Jesus died and rose again**, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him*" (I Thessalonians 4:14).

Jesus is the Christ! If He were not the Christ, His death on the cross would have been nothing more than a tragic miscarriage of justice which would have done nothing for lost humanity. Jesus did die for us. He *“laid His life down”* for us. He was the sacrifice, the *“Lamb of God”* which was offered to *“take away the sin of the world.”*

Hebrews 9:14: *“How much more shall the blood of Christ (Jesus is ‘the Christ’), who through the eternal Spirit (Christ is the ‘eternal Spirit’) offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?”*

Hebrews 9:15: *“And for this cause (because He offered Himself through the eternal Spirit) he (Jesus) is the mediator of the new testament, that by means of death (the death of Christ), for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance.”*

The death of “The Testator”

Hebrews 9:16: *“For where a testament is, there must also of necessity be the death of the testator.”*

The language the apostle uses in verse 16 is legal language which concerns a person that has made their *“last will and testament”* which is to be carried out after their death. The one who makes the will and testament is the *“testator.”* The *“testament”* contains the *“will”* of the *“testator”* concerning the distribution of his estate to the heirs. It should be understood that a *“testament”* is not a *“covenant.”* A covenant is an agreement between two parties, with each party having their part to supply. God did not say to Abraham, *“If you will offer your son to me, I will bless you and your seed;”* instead, He said, *“By myself have I sworn, saith the LORD, for because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only son: That in blessing I will bless thee...”* (Genesis 22:16-17). God gave His promise to Abraham and his seed, and confirmed it with an oath when He *“swore by Himself”* to Abraham.

Forty-five years ago, the Lord spoke something to me while I was seeking Him in prayer for a message to preach. He said, *“Preach my last will and testament.”* I protested, *“But God, you are not dead,”* to which He replied, *“But I died.”* This strange exchange between me and the Lord began my search for a more clear understanding of the gospel of Christ, a search that has lasted for all the years since that time. At the time, I thought Jesus must be the testator, because He was the one who died on the cross. There was some confusion over this in my mind, however, because the previous verse (verse 15) speaks of Jesus as *“the mediator of the New Testament.”* It did not seem possible that Jesus could be both the *“testator”* and the *“mediator.”* Only when I came to understand that it is *“Christ, the eternal Spirit”* that had to die to take away sin, was I able to know who the *“testator”* is. Look at verse 14 above again: *“How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God...”* (Hebrews 9:14). It was *“Christ, the eternal Spirit”* that had to die before the *“will and testament”* of God could come into effect for those who *“believe God.”*

The Testament

Hebrews 6:13-14: *“For when God made promise to Abraham, because he could swear by no greater, he sware by himself, saying, Surely blessing I will bless thee, and multiplying I will multiply thee.”*

It is not a coincidence that Paul brings up the *“oath”* which God gave when He made promise to Abraham in Genesis 22:16-18: *“By myself have I sworn, saith the LORD, for because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only son: That in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea shore; and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies; And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed my voice.”*

When God *“swore by Himself”* to Abraham His promise became a *“testament”* and He became the *“testator.”* With His oath, God

gave Himself to be the “*collateral*” or “*surety*” of the promise. If God could not bestow this wonderful blessing on the descendants of Abraham, He must deliver Himself up, because He “*swore by Himself*” to Abraham. When God brought the children of Israel (Abraham’s natural seed through Isaac) out of Egypt to meet with Him at the “*mount of God*” (Sinai), His purpose was to bestow the blessing of Abraham on them. To Abraham, the promise was immutable; it was the “*will and testament*” of God to him and his “*seed.*” To the children of Israel, it was a “*covenant promise,*” and their part of the covenant was to “*believe God*” exactly as Abraham had believed God. He promised them, “*If ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine: And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation*” (Exodus 19:5-6). The children of Israel refused to even listen to God when He spoke, and within six weeks they were worshipping a golden calf, calling it by the name of the LORD and giving it the glory that belonged only to God. At this point in time it was determined by God that the natural descendants of Abraham could never be “*the seed*” which He could both bless and make them to be a blessing to all nations. Due to the fact that God had “*sworn by Himself*” to Abraham, the only remedy was that God would deliver Himself into the hands of that same nation that rejected Him when He spoke at Sinai. This He did through the eternal Spirit of Christ, who became a man for the purpose of dying at the hands of sinners. God, “*the testator*” died in Christ, and the promise of the testament is freely given to all those who “*believe God*” as Abraham also “*believed God.*” Please don’t be deceived by the traditions of men. God was not in heaven, turning His back on Jesus because He “*can’t look upon sin.*” He had promised in Isaiah 42:6-7, “*I the LORD have called thee (Christ Jesus) in righteousness, and will hold thine hand, and will keep thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people, for a light of the Gentiles; to open the blind eyes, to bring out the prisoners from the prison, and them that sit in darkness out of the prison house.*” The apostle Paul explained it this way; “**God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself.**”

Christ; The Seed of Abraham

Galatians 3:16: *“Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ.”*

Galatians 3:19: *“Wherefore then serveth the law? It was added because of transgressions, till the seed (Christ) should come to whom the promise was made.”*

Christ Jesus is the “seed of Abraham” (Verse 16). Conceived of the Holy Ghost and born of a virgin (Matthew 1:20), Jesus of Nazareth is the Son of God. He is also “the Christ” who was in the beginning “with God” and “was God” (John 1:1). As Christ is the “seed of Abraham,” so everyone who “abides in Christ” is also the seed of Abraham. Paul explains it this way:

Galatians 3:6-7: *“Even as Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness. Know ye therefore that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham.”*

Galatians 3:9: *“So then they which be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham.”*

Galatians 3:26: *“For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus.”*

Galatians 3:28: *“There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus.”*

Galatians 3:29: *“And if ye be Christ's (one in Christ Jesus), then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.”*

Christ; the Kingdom of God

Over forty years ago when I was a young pastor, an older man of God preached a week long revival service in our church. Each night he would take a single verse of scripture concerning the “kingdom of God” and preach his entire message around that verse. I thought he had a wonderful revelation of the kingdom of God, and I wanted

to understand the kingdom for myself. I began a time of fasting and prayer, specifically to receive *“the revelation of the kingdom of God.”* It was after almost three weeks of fasting that I was *“caught up”* in the Spirit while praying in the midnight hour, and I knew God was ready to give me the revelation I sought from Him. Caught up in the Spirit, I heard God say these words, *“Christ is the kingdom of God.”* This was all I heard, and I was disappointed. I did not understand what I had heard, and I could not have preached ten minutes on the subject. Everything I thought I knew was destroyed, and I had nothing to replace it with. Many years later I understand that Christ is indeed the kingdom of God. Those who *“abide in Christ”* abide in a kingdom. The apostle Paul says, *“If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature”* (II Corinthians 5:17). In Ephesians 2:10 he says, *“...we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus....”* Christ is the kingdom of God. Those who *“abide in Him”* are *“one with Him,”* and the apostle John says they *“do not sin”* (I John 3:5-6). They are the children of God, the *“seed of Abraham,”* and the *“heirs according to the promise”* (Galatians 3:29).

Look back to the promise in Exodus 19:5-6 for a moment. *“...ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people...ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation.”* This is a *“promise”* to the *“seed of Abraham.”* God brought the children of Israel to Mount Sinai to reveal Himself to them. They could have received this wonderful promise because they were the natural descendants of Abraham through Isaac, but they *“failed to receive”* when they *“refused to believe.”* They heard the voice of God speaking to them, but they *“hardened their hearts.”* From that very day God determined that the *“children of the flesh”* would never be the *“seed of Abraham.”* Unable to give them the promise because of the hardness of their hearts, God gave them what they asked for: *“Moses, Speak thou with us, and we will hear: but let not God speak with us, lest we die”* (Exodus 20:19). Out of their own mouths came the basis for the *“Law of Moses.”* The apostle Paul says the Law of Moses *“...was added because of transgressions until the seed should come to whom the promise was made”* (Galatians 3:19). When

Christ the creator of all things became a man, He became the “*seed of the woman*,” the “*seed of Abraham*,” and the “*son of David*.” He was also “*the son of man*” and “*the Son of God*.” He was Jesus, and “*Jesus is the Christ*” who came into the world to “*make an end of sins*” (Daniel 9:24). Christ is the “*kingdom of God*” and thus “*God’s peculiar treasure*.” Those who abide in Him are a “*kingdom of priests*” and a “*holy nation*.” They are the “*children of God*,” the “*heirs of God*,” and “*joint heirs with (in union with) Christ*.” They are “*made free from sin*” (Romans 6:7, 18, 22), and they **do not sin** (1 John 3:5-6, 5:18).

Conclusion

Jesus spoke to those Jews who were sincerely looking and longing for the coming of their messiah (the Christ), “*If you believe not that I am He, you shall die in your sins*” (John 8:24). Many of those Jews died in sin, not because they did not believe in Christ, but because they rejected Jesus. The church today, which calls itself by the “*name of the Lord*” (Christian), is in the same quandary as the first century Jews, but for a different reason. We “*believe in Jesus*,” but we do not understand that “*Jesus is the Christ*” who came into the world to “*make an end of sins*.” Yes, we look for Christ to come to “*make an end of sins*” and “*bring in everlasting righteousness*,” and the devout Jew looks for the same thing. To us, it is His “*second coming*,” but to the Jew, it is His first. They believe in Christ, and we believe in Jesus, and both Jew and “*Christian*” continues in sin while they wait for His appearing. All the while, Jesus of Nazareth continues to say to one and all, both Jew and Gentile, “*If you believe not that I am He, you shall die in your sins*.” Christ came; Christ died for us; Christ made an end of sins through His death on the cross, and He will make an end of sins in everyone who believes the simple truth which Jesus said “*will make you free, and you shall be free indeed*.” If you “*die in your sins*,” you will be **lost**.

"Behold the Lamb" is a publication of Calvary Outreach Ministries. It is dedicated to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ. Messages by Leroy Surface, Keith Surface, and others will be printed for your edification. "Behold the Lamb" is sent without subscription charge to all those desiring to receive it. It will be published on a regular basis as funds permit.

"Behold the Lamb" is financed by the love gifts of those who love the truth. Your love gifts and offerings to this ministry are tax deductible and will be receipted upon request. Make all checks payable to CALVARY OUTREACH, and address your correspondence to...

**Leroy Surface
Calvary Outreach
P.O. Box 750
Porter, Texas, 77365**

If you are not on our mailing list, and would like to receive "Behold the Lamb," OR if you have a friend who would appreciate "Behold the Lamb," simply fill out the coupon below and mail it to the address above.

Please send "Behold the Lamb" to...

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

7-8/16

Email address _____

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

7-8/16

Email address _____

Remember, "Behold the Lamb" is financed by the love gifts of those who appreciate the messages they receive. Help us do more. Thanks!