



Behold the Lamb

Publications

Jesus is The Christ Why does it matter?

Also in this issue:

Expectancy!

"And as the people were in expectation,
and all men mused in their hearts of John,
whether he were the Christ, or not."

Messages by: Leroy Surface

A Simple Gospel

When God reveals something to you it never makes you feel as though you are the smartest person around. Usually you are left wondering why you had never seen this before. You may say to yourself: “A child could have understood this. Why have I been blind to it for so long?” True revelation from God is as though you just discovered that $2 + 2 = 4$. The thing God reveals becomes so simple that you feel as though every one else should understand it also.

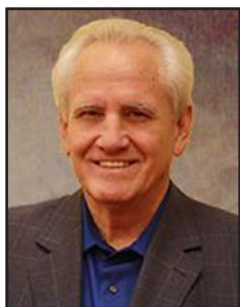
“...thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes.” Matthew 11:25

At times the gospel is presented in a fashion that resembles a person attempting to prove that $2 + 2 = 5$. A person may spend their entire life seeking to understand what is being presented to them,

but never seem to be able to grasp it. Some may come to the conclusion of themselves that they are just not “smart” enough to understand it. “Why does it make sense to everyone else besides me?” We need to consider that sometimes things do not because make sense because they simply DO NOT MAKE SENSE!

The purpose of Simply Christ and other Behold the Lamb

Publications is to share the gospel of Christ according to what the scriptures actually say. We dare not attempt to “put a square peg in a round hole” or make the scripture say something other than what God has said.



Leroy Surface

As a young man I was told by an elder minister that I should just accept what the



Keith Surface

leaders of “our movement” told us was true rather than believe what I saw the scriptures to be saying. I chose to believe that the word of God is true. Anyone that will do the same will find the gospel of Christ to be a simple message with the power to make everyone who believes it ...free indeed!

Expectancy!

Message by: Leroy Surface

Luke 3:15: *“And as the people were in expectation, and all men mused in their hearts of John, whether he were the Christ, or not.”*

It was the year 26 A.D. according to our modern Gregorian calendar, and expectancy filled the air in Jerusalem and throughout all of Judea. The year the nation had so long waited for had arrived, and the people of the land were excited about the prospect that the one whom the prophet Daniel had called *“The Christ,”* would come. For almost five hundred years the priests and scribes of Jerusalem had told of this wonderful year. Almost certainly, whether right or wrong, they believed that this year, 26 A.D., would be *“the acceptable year of the Lord”* which was prophesied in Isaiah 61:2. God had spoken of this year through the prophet Malachi, saying, *“Behold, I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me: 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”* Malachi 3:1. Malachi spoke of *“the Lord whom ye seek...shall come.”* For many generations the Jews had gathered to the synagogues on the Sabbath to hear about their wonderful *“Messiah, The Christ”* who was to come. These four hundred years were years of great oppression against the people of Israel, first at the hands of Antiochus of the Greek empire, and finally under the rule of the Caesars of Rome. Even in times of great suffering at the hands of their enemies, the Jews received strength from the knowledge that God had not utterly forsaken them, but had given them the promise of a *“savior”* who would come to them. A little over thirty years before this time, Zacharias, the father of John the Baptist, had prophesied of the *“savior,”* saying, *“Blessed be the Lord God of Israel; for he hath visited and redeemed his people, And hath raised up an horn of salvation*

*for us in the house of his servant David; As he spake by the mouth of his holy prophets, which have been since the world began: **That we should be saved from our enemies, and from the hand of all that hate us***” Luke 1:68-71. This prophecy was given at the birth of John the Baptist, six months before Jesus was born to Mary.

The year 26 A.D. was pinpointed by the angel Gabriel in his message to Daniel Daniel 9:24-27. It is the words of this most important of all prophecies in the Old Testament that caused the excitement in Judea. The prophecy was given to Daniel near the end of the seventy years of the Babylonian captivity, while he sought God in fasting and prayer to receive understanding for the future of the children of Israel. The answer Daniel received was not the answer he had hoped for. Certainly Daniel and the people of the captivity had hoped for an immediate restoration to the former power and glory they had experienced under the reign of David. Having been sufficiently humiliated by the seventy years of captivity, they would become, once again, the dominant kingdom on earth, with Jerusalem being rebuilt and the throne of David restored. Had not the prophet Isaiah prophesied of such restoration and the glory of a “*new Jerusalem?*” Such was not to be the case, however. Seventy years of captivity had indeed passed, but seven times seventy years were to follow before full restoration would be possible. Gabriel told Daniel of a four hundred and ninety year period which was yet in their future; years in which they would yet be humiliated and oppressed by the Gentile powers of the world. There was, however, the wonderful promise of the “*redeemer*” that Isaiah said would “*come to Zion*” Isaiah 59:20. In the last week of the seventy weeks prophecy, one called “*Messiah, the Prince* (the Christ)” would come to “*make an end of sins...and to bring in everlasting righteousness*” Daniel 9:24. In this year, 26 A.D., the sixty nine weeks (483 years) of oppression were ended, and the time appointed for the Messiah had come. It is the promise of what He would do that brought such wonderful expectation to the Jews.

Daniel 9:24: “*Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an*

end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy.”

The prophecy is given in four verses. The first verse gets straight to the point in words that clearly define the purpose of the seventy weeks. It should be understood that the “*seventy weeks*” on the Jewish calendar were actually seventy weeks of years, which was another way of saying “*four hundred and ninety years*” in our reckoning of time. Over a hundred and fifty years ago, President Lincoln did something similar in his Gettysburg address, which begins with the words, “*Four score and ten years ago,*” which we understand to be ninety years in our reckoning of time. Gabriel told Daniel about six things that would be accomplished before the end of the “*seventy weeks,*” or “*four hundred and ninety years.*” He listed them as follows:

1. “*Finish the transgression*”
2. “*Make an end of sins*”
3. “*Make reconciliation for iniquity*”
4. “*Bring in everlasting righteousness*”
5. “*Seal up the vision and prophecy*”
6. “*Anoint the most holy*”

There is no hint as to how these things would be accomplished in the first verse of the prophecy. Is God saying that they must stop sinning and make reconciliation for their sins during this time? Are these a list of six things they must accomplish for themselves before God will bless them once more? Certainly, there must be an end of sins. Reconciliation must be made for their iniquity, and their “*righteousness*” must be without end; but how can these things be accomplished in a people whose heart has never been able to contain the laws of God. It is the second verse of the prophecy ^{Daniel 9:25} that gives the answers as to the “*who*” and “*when*” of the prophecy.

Daniel 9:25: “*Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build*

Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks: the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times.”

The prophecy is divided into three time periods; the first is forty nine years, during which the street and the wall would be rebuilt, *“even in troublous times.”* The second time period is four hundred and thirty four years, which would bring them to the appearing of one called *“The Messiah the Prince.”* The third and last time period is seven years, during which *“The Messiah (The Christ)”* would accomplish all the wonderful things which were promised. Gabriel gave Daniel a sign by which the people would know when the four hundred and ninety years would begin, a sign that was fulfilled when King Artaxerxes of the Medes gave a decree for the restoration of Jerusalem in 457 B.C. It was at this time that the prophecy of seventy weeks really took on meaning for the Jews. They set about rebuilding the wall and street of Jerusalem, and began counting down the years until the Messiah would come. The Messiah, *“The Christ,”* became the common subject of Sabbath day teachings. We know by the tradition of the Jews that mothers would sing songs to their little children of how wonderful life would be *“when Messiah comes.”* It would be a time of great prosperity when Messiah came. Israel would be restored to its former glory. Jerusalem would become the capital of the world. Evil would be taken out of the world as all of Israel’s enemies were destroyed. Peace and righteousness would prevail in every part of the earth, because the Messiah, The Christ, would reign on the throne of his father David. These wonderful prophecies became known worldwide among all those who believed the prophets. Gabriel had called the Messiah *“The Prince,”* which gives understanding to the question of the wise men to King Herod, *“Where is he that is born King of the Jews?”* Matthew 2:2. Herod was greatly troubled by this saying, because he also knew of the prophecy. He called on the chief priests and scribes of the people and *“demanded of them where Christ should be born”* Matthew 2:4. The priests and scribes were well aware of the prophecies, for they answered, *“In Bethlehem of*

Judaea: for thus it is written by the prophet, And thou Bethlehem, in the land of Juda, art not the least among the princes of Juda: for out of thee shall come a Governor, that shall rule my people Israel” Matthew 2:5-6.

At the end of the first forty nine years of the prophecy, the Jews entered into a four hundred year time period which has become known as “*the silent years.*” These were years during which there was no message from heaven to the people. Malachi was the last of the Jewish prophets, whose prophecy was a warning from God, sprinkled with promises of blessing upon those who “*fear the name of the LORD.*” The last chapter of Malachi promises “*...the Sun of righteousness shall arise with healing in his wings...*” upon those who “*fear the LORD.*” The chapter closes with an insight into the ministry of “*John the Baptist* (I will send you Elijah the prophet)” ending with the words, “*And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse*” Malachi 4:6. With that ominous warning began four hundred years of silence in the heavens.

The “*silence*” was not broken until Gabriel, the same “*Gabriel*” who told Daniel about the coming of “*The Christ*” hundreds of years before, paid a visit to Zacharias, the priest. His mission was to tell Zacharias that his wife Elizabeth would conceive in her old age and bring forth a son, whom they would call John. “*And thou shall have joy and gladness; and many shall rejoice at his birth. For he shall be great in the sight of the Lord, and shall drink neither wine nor strong drink; and he shall be filled with the Holy Ghost, even from his mother’s womb. And many of the children of Israel shall he turn to the Lord their God. And he shall go before Him in the spirit and power of Elias, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just; to make ready a people prepared for the Lord*” Luke 1:14-17. It is worthy of note that the silence in heaven began with the promise of John the Baptist in the last two verses of Malachi, and ended with the announcement of his upcoming birth.

Six months later, Gabriel made another visit, this time to a young virgin in the city of Nazareth, whose name was Mary. His message was astounding, even unbelievable at first. *“Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favour with God. And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end”* Luke 1:30-33. Mary was astonished. She questioned Gabriel, *“How shall this be, seeing I know not a man?”* Gabriel answered, *“The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God”* Luke 1:35.

Gabriel would make two more visits before his mission was complete. The first was to Joseph the carpenter, the man whom Mary was engaged to marry. Joseph saw that Mary was obviously with child. Rather than make a public example of her (Moses in the law said she should be stoned), he determined to *“put her away privately.”* Gabriel appeared to Joseph in a dream to tell him, *“fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost. And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins”* Matthew 1:20-21. It must have been about six months later that Gabriel made his final visit. His *“mission”* was fulfilled when *“The Christ”* was born, and it was to shepherds who tended their flocks by night on the hills outside of Bethlehem that Gabriel made the announcement. Luke gives the record of that night; *“And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid. And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye*

shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger. And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men” Luke 8-12.

“Good tidings of great joy!” That is what the coming of *“The Christ”* is to all who find Him. The joy and rejoicing of the shepherds that night must have been beyond description as they made their way to find the child that was born. *“And they came with haste, and found Mary, and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger. And when they had seen it, they made known abroad the saying which was told them concerning this child. And all they that heard it wondered at those things which were told them by the shepherds. But Mary kept all these things, and pondered them in her heart. And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was told unto them”* Luke 2:16-20. The shepherds told everyone about the events of that blessed night, and the scripture says, *“All they that heard it wondered at those things which were told them by the shepherds.”* Can you imagine the joy which possessed the shepherds which they could not contain? *“We have found Him! We have seen The Christ!”* Someone asks, *“Where is he?”* The shepherds answer, *“He was born in a stable. We say him lying in a manger with the sheep and oxen.”* I recall the words of the prophet Isaiah, *“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”* Isaiah 53:1-2. Who could believe the report of the shepherds? The *“son of David,”* the *“king of the Jews,”* born in a stable? The shepherds must have seemed very foolish to those who heard their report, but nevertheless, many would remember the night the shepherds claimed *“The Christ”* was born.

Forty days later, at the end of Mary’s time of purification according to the Law of Moses, the baby Jesus was brought into the temple to be *“presented to the LORD.”* Moses had

commanded that the firstborn child of every family must be a *“sacrifice to the LORD,”* but could be *“redeemed”* by a substitute sacrifice, as Isaac had been almost two thousand years before *Genesis 22:13*. The specified sacrifice was a spotless firstborn lamb out of the flocks, with the exception that the very poor could bring either two turtledoves or a pair of pigeons. Mary and Joseph brought two birds for an offering, another indication of their low estate at the time.

There was an old man of God living in Jerusalem, whose name was Simeon. The Holy Ghost had spoken to Simeon that he would not *“see death”* before he had seen *“the Lord’s Christ”* *Luke 2:26*. The scripture tells us that Simeon *“came by the Spirit into the temple: and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him after the custom of the law, then took he him up in his arms, and blessed God, and said, Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word: For mine eyes have seen thy salvation”* *Luke 2:27-30*.

The Fullness of “The Time”

Galatians 4:4-5: *“But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.”*

The phrase *“The fullness of the time”* does not speak of the birth of Jesus. It isn’t the nine month gestation period of a woman that is spoken of in this verse, as *“the time.”* This is rather another reference to the *“Seventy Weeks”* prophecy. The prophecy says, *“Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks”* *Daniel 9:25*. This makes a total of sixty nine weeks or four hundred and eighty three years *“unto the Messiah the Prince.”* When the *“fulness of the time”* came, *“The Christ”* would be *“made manifest”* for all to see. This was the purpose of John the Baptist’s ministry. John said, *“I knew him not: but that he should be made manifest to Israel, therefore am I come baptizing with*

water” John 1:31. He continues in verse 32 to say, “*I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and it abode upon him. And 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 1:32-34. This day was “*the fullness of the time.*”

The Jews, wherever they were in the world at that time, knew this was the year for the Christ to come. It was “*the fullness of the time.*” Excitement about his appearing was everywhere. Our text for this message says, “*And as the people were in expectation, and all men mused in their hearts of John, whether he were the Christ, or not”* Luke 3:15. Speculation about John grew to the point that the Jews sent emissaries of priests and Levites to question him, “*Who art thou?”* John 1:19. Verse twenty tells us that John “*...denied not; but confessed, I am not the Christ.*” Scarcely with words could John convince them that he was not “*The Christ.*” Yet, they continued questioning, “*What then? Art thou Elias? And he saith, I am not. Art thou that prophet? And he answered, No. Then said they unto him, Who art thou? that we may give an answer to them that sent us. What sayest thou of thyself? He said, I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness, Make straight the way of the Lord, as said the prophet Esaias. And they which were sent were of the Pharisees. And they asked him, and said unto him, Why baptizest thou then, if thou be not that Christ, nor Elias, neither that prophet?”* John 1:21-25.

The Jewish year in those days began with the month of the Passover feast, which corresponds approximately with the Gentile “*Easter,*” which always comes in either March or April. Most certainly the appearing of “*The Christ*” must have been the number one topic of conversation at Passover that year. Priests and rabbis proved by the scriptures that “*this is the year The Christ will come.*” Jews from every part of the world heard the teachings, and returned to their homes with great excitement; “*This is the appointed time for The Christ to appear.*” The expectancy only increased as several months passed, and the

attention of the people turned to John the Baptist. Our text says, *“all men mused in their hearts of John, whether he were the Christ, or not.”* It was about six months into the year that the priests and Levites questioned John, and though he did not reveal Christ to them at the time, there is an indication that Jesus must have received baptism from John earlier that same day, because John told the priests and Levites, *“...there standeth one among you, whom ye know not; He it is, who coming after me is preferred before me, whose shoe’s latchet I am not worthy to unloose”* John 1:26-27.

The Day of His Appearing

Matthew 3:13-17: *“Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to Jordan unto John, to be baptized of him. But John forbad him, saying, I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me? And Jesus answering said unto him, Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness. Then he suffered him. And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him: And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.”*

The scriptures give a day by day account of the first four days after Jesus came to John’s baptism. There was a large crowd of people at the river the day Jesus was baptized by John. There must have been many eye witnesses who saw the Spirit of God come upon Him. Luke said, *“And the Holy Ghost descended in a bodily shape like a dove upon him...”* Luke 3:22. It was a sight the crowd could see with their own eyes, as well as *“a voice from heaven,”* which they could hear with their ears, saying, *“This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.”* Imagine the effect upon Jerusalem and all of Judea as the news of that day spread throughout the region by those who saw and heard the wonderful events of the day. It was the next day that John the Baptist saw Jesus and announced Him to all who could see and hear, *“Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world”* John 1:29.

“This is the lamb Abraham spoke of when he said, ‘God will provide Himself a Lamb’ Genesis 22:8, 14. This was *“The Christ,”* whom the angel Gabriel had said would *“make an end of sins”* Daniel 9:24-25. The *“sin”* that entered through the disobedience of Adam Romans 5:12, would be *“taken away”* by this wonderful *“Lamb of God”* which God has provided. This is the essence of John’s words to his disciples on that second day.

On the third day John was with two of his disciples when he saw Jesus and said, *“Behold the Lamb of God”* John 1:36. Immediately, both disciples left John to follow Jesus. Jesus noticed they were following Him and said, *“What seek ye?”* They answered, *“Where do you dwell,”* to which Jesus said, *“Come and see.”* The scripture says it was *“about the tenth hour.”* In Jewish reckoning of time, it would have been about 4:00 in the afternoon, but the scripture also says, *“They came and saw where he dwelt, and abode with him that day”* John 1:39. In the Roman reckoning of time, which is the culture they lived in, it would have been about 10:00 o’clock in the morning, which is more likely to be the truth of the matter, because they spent the day with Jesus. One of the two disciples was Peter’s brother, Andrew. When Andrew departed from Jesus that evening, he went straight to Peter, saying, *“We have found the Messiah,”* which is to say, *“The Christ”* John 1:41.

“He of whom Moses and the Prophets did write”

On the fourth day, Jesus determined to go into Galilee, and finding Phillip, He said, *“Follow me.”* When Phillip found Nathaniel, he said, *“We have found him, of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets, did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph”* John 1:45. Phillip was not yet aware that Jesus was *“the Son of God,”* but he was certain He was *“The Christ,”* whom Gabriel said would *“make an end of sins.”* In fact, Phillip went beyond others in that he believed Jesus was the one Moses and the prophets had written of in the ancient scriptures.

The day the serpent deceived Eve to eat the forbidden fruit and give it to Adam was the same day sin entered into the world when

Adam ate the fruit. This was “*Adam’s disobedience,*” which caused every descendant of Adam to be sinners by nature Romans 5:29. In the same day sin entered, God gave the promise of “*the seed of the woman,*” which would “*bruise the head of the serpent*” Genesis 3:15. What an earthshaking event this was to Phillip when he realized he had found “*the seed of the woman,*” who would “*bruise the head of the serpent.*”

Abraham had said, “*God will provide Himself a lamb for a sacrifice*” Genesis 22:8. Abraham and Isaac were ascending Mount Moriah, where God had told Abraham to offer his son Isaac as a burnt offering. Abraham believed and obeyed God, and just before he would have plunged the knife into Isaac’s heart, God stopped him and gave him a ram, “*caught in the thicket,*” to offer instead of Isaac Genesis 22:13. While they were rejoicing over this wonderful deliverance for Isaac, Abraham understood the significance of what God had done, and named the altar of sacrifice “*Jehovah-Jireh,*” which means “*The LORD will provide.*” Several hundred years later, Moses wrote about this event, saying, “*...as it is said to this day, In the mount of the LORD it shall be seen*” Genesis 22:14. Both Abraham and Moses understood that God would provide a lamb to take away the sin of the world. John the Baptist understood that “*Jesus is the Lamb.*” Perhaps Phillip heard John the Baptist when he proclaimed Jesus to be the “*...lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world*” John 1:29, but he understood when he met Jesus that he had found “*the lamb*” which Abraham said God would provide.

Isaiah writes, “*Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel,*” which means “*God with us*” Isaiah 7:14. Phillip had found “*Immanuel,*” and after walking with Him for a day his excitement could not be concealed. Even though Phillip did not know it at the time, he had walked with the Son of God.

Christ, the Fulfilment of all Vision and Prophecy

Gabriel told Daniel that “*The Christ*” would “*seal up the vision and prophecy.*” This means that every vision and prophecy of

redemption and restoration that had been given during the four thousand years from Adam to Jesus would be fulfilled in Jesus Christ. Isaiah was the most prolific of all the prophets concerning the redeemer who was to come. He writes, *“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”* Isaiah 9:6.

Isaiah 11:1-3: *“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.”*

Isaiah 52:9-10: *“Break forth into joy, sing together, ye waste places of Jerusalem: for the LORD hath comforted his people, he hath redeemed Jerusalem. 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.**”*

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.**”*

Isaiah 53:1-5: *“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. Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and*

afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed."

Isaiah 50:5-6: *"I was not rebellious, neither turned away back. I gave my back to the smiters, and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair: I hid not my face from shame and spitting."*

It is not possible in this short message to show all the references the prophets made of the redeemer which was to come, but we may be certain that Phillip knew that he had *"found Him, of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets did write."* As Isaiah said, he *"brake forth in joy"* ^{Isaiah 52:9}, because he had found *"the Christ."* Expectancy turned into reality for Phillip, Andrew, Peter, and Nathaniel, as it did for many others in the weeks and months that followed as they *"made the connection"* that *"Jesus is The Christ"* ^{1 John 5:1}.

The "Joy" of Finding "The Christ"

Religion is a dreary thing. It is dead, and it is death to all who trust in it. Those who *"find Him"* are rejoicing with *"joy unspeakable and full of glory"* ^{1 Peter 1:8}. Someone said to me recently, *"I walk by faith, and not by sight."* I asked what that meant to him, and he told me that he seldom feels the presence of God, and he continues to struggle with sinful thoughts, but he believes he is saved because he has done everything required of him to be saved. The *"faith"* he walks in is, *"believing"* he is saved, even though he doesn't feel saved. It is amazing how *"spiritual"* a person can feel, who *"feels nothing,"* because they think they *"walk by faith."* Why do people believe that to *"walk by faith"* is to *"walk in darkness?"* The reality is that the person who truly *"walks by faith"* is the only one who can truly see, because they are the one who *"walks in the light."* John says, *"If we say that we have fellowship with Him and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth"* ^{1 John 1:6}. John continues in verse seven, *"But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus (the) Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin."* The person who *"walks by*

faith” walks “*in the presence of God almighty,*” and they “*have fellowship with Him.*”

Another young man quoted Hebrews 11:6, “*But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.*” This is a very sincere young man who believes that “*faith*” is the most important thing. He said he is seeking to develop a “*relationship*” with God through the scriptures. Jesus told the Jews, “(You) *search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me. And ye will not come to me, that ye might have life*” John 5:39-40. They continued to “*search the scriptures*” for a lifetime, but they never found Jesus. The scripture says, “*...He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him.*” The “*reward*” of those who diligently seek Him is to “*find Him,*” yet there are many who seek God daily, but have never found “*The Christ.*”

I have been in the church all my life. Most of the preaching I have heard during my lifetime has been from the Old Testament. I have never understood that, because my savior and salvation is revealed in the New Testament. I have heard hundreds of messages from the book of Daniel, mostly about the “*three Hebrew children in the fiery furnace,*” or “*Daniel in the lion’s den,*” but in all my years, I have never heard a single preacher who has preached from the book of Daniel, “*The Christ*” whom God promised would come to “*finish the transgression,*” and “*make an end of sins.*” Now that is something to shout about. I have heard of how David killed Goliath, and how Sampson killed a thousand philistines, but who has found “*the seed of the woman*” who “*bruised the head of the serpent?*” Genesis 3:15. I know that Josiah, the child king, gave the most wonderful Passover feast ever when he offered thirty thousand Lambs II Chronicles 35:7, and that Solomon offered a hundred and twenty thousand lambs in one day at the dedication of the temple I Kings 8:63, but how many messages have we heard on “*the Lamb,*” which Abraham said “*God will provide*” Genesis 22:8-14. John the

Baptist saw Him when he cried, *“Behold the lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world”* John 1:29.

The Jews searched the scriptures for a lifetime and never found Jesus. They knew all about *“The Christ”* and longed for His appearing; but rejected Him when He came, because they refused to believe that the lowly Jesus of Nazareth could indeed be, *“The Christ”* whom they sought. Jesus said to them, *“Ye shall seek me, and shall die in your sins”* John 8:21. How sad, that someone could seek *“The Christ”* all of their life and still die in their sins, but Jesus explained this three verses later, saying, *“I said therefore unto you, that ye shall die in your sins: for if ye believe not that I am he (The Christ), ye shall die in your sins”* John 8:24. It is just as sad that *“Christians”* can *“sing and rejoice in Jesus,”* and not comprehend that He is *“The Christ”* whom God sent into the world to *“make an end of sins.”* They do not, will not, and therefore cannot, see that He is *“The Lamb”* whom God promised would *“take away the sin of the world.”*

“...to them that believe on His name.”

John 1:12: *“But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.”*

The word *“power”* in this verse was translated from the Greek word *“exousia,”* which means *“privilege.”* It has been variously translated as *“authority, jurisdiction, liberty, power, right,”* and *“strength,”* all of which accompany the *“privilege”* of being the *“sons of God.”* John says this *“privilege”* is given to those who *“believe on His name.”* Another simple word study reveals that the Greek word translated *“name”* is *“onoma,”* which is properly defined as *“authority and character.”* The *“character”* of an individual tells what they are, and their *“authority”* tells what they do. When the apostle Paul calls Jesus the *“express image”* of God Hebrews 1:3, the Greek word is *“charakter,”* which speaks of an identical imprint such as a typewriter key makes on the paper. To *“believe on the name of Jesus,”* is to believe who

Christ is, and what He came into the world to do. He is “*The Logos (The Word)*,” which means He is “*the divine expression*” of everything God is and does. He is “*The Word*” which was “*in the beginning with God*” John 1:1, and John says, “*All things were made by Him, and without Him was not anything made that was made*” John 1:3. He is “*the seed of the woman*” who came to “*bruise the head of the serpent.*” He is “*Immanuel,*” which means “*God with us.*” He is “*The Son of God,*” who was manifested to “*destroy the works of the devil*” I John 3:8. He is the mighty “*arm of the LORD,*” which was “*made bare*” before the people as He suffered the death of the cross to bring salvation to the “*ends of the earth*” Isaiah 52:10. He is “*The Lamb of God*” which Abraham said, “*God will provide*” Genesis 22:8 to “*take away the sin of the world*” John 1:29. He is “*the redeemer,*” which, Isaiah said would “*come to Zion*” Isaiah 59:20, to “*redeem us from all iniquity*” Titus 2:14. Finally, He is “*The Christ,*” whom God “*sent into the world*” John 3:17 to “*make an end of sins*” Daniel 9:24-25.

To believe upon the name (the character and authority) of Jesus is to believe that Christ did what He was sent to do. The immediate “*mission*” of “*The Christ,*” when came into the world, was to “*finish the transgression, make an end of sins, make reconciliation for iniquity, and bring in everlasting righteousness*” Daniel 9:24-25. The apostle John says, “*He came unto His own, and His own received Him not...*” John 1:12. This means that He came to the nation God had chosen in Abraham; those who were known as “*the children of Israel,*” and later, “*the Jews.*” The promise of “*The Christ (The Messiah)*” in Daniel 9:24-25 was given to “*thy people (the Jew) and thy holy city (Jerusalem).*” These were the ones John speaks of when he says, “*...and His own received Him not.*” The rejection of Jesus by the Jews and all of Jerusalem was absolute, demanding that He must be crucified. Only a hundred and twenty of His followers remained on the Day of Pentecost, when God “*poured out of His Spirit*” and “*filled them all with the Holy Ghost.*” These were those who “*received Him.*”

What Christ could not do for the unbelieving Jews in that generation, He did for the hundred and twenty on the Day of Pentecost, and He will do today for everyone who receives Jesus as *“The Christ,”* who *“came into the world to take away sin.”* For *“as many as receive Him,”* He gives the privilege of being the *“sons of God.”* He has *“taken away their sin,”* and they are *“righteous.”* Their hearts are pure, and they do not sin, because it is Christ who *“liveth”* in them Galatians 2:20. He has *“made an end of sins”* and *“brought in everlasting righteousness”* in the heart and nature of those who believe the truth and *“trust in Him”* Ephesians 1:12. None of this is accomplished through a *“process,”* because it is *“finished”* on the cross and *“fulfilled”* in all who will believe.

What must I do to be Saved?

This is the question of the Philippian jailer, who, after he saw the mighty hand of God release Paul and Silas from the stocks and chains which held them in bondage, asked the question, *“Sirs, what must I do to be saved?”* Their answer, *“Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house.”* Let’s consider their answer for a moment. **First**, believe that He is *“The Lord,”* who sits at the right hand of God. David spoke of Him when he said, *“The LORD said unto my Lord, sit thou at my right hand until I make thy enemies thy footstool”* Psalms 110:1. **Second**, believe that He is *“The Savior.”* The angel Gabriel told Joseph, *“Thou shalt call His name Jesus, for He shall save His people from their sins”* Matthew 1:21. **Third**, believe that He is *“The Christ,”* whom God sent into the world *“to make an end of sins”* Daniel 9:24-25. The apostle John says, *“Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God”* I John 5:1. It is not by your works or abilities that you become a *“son of God.”* It is by a *“new birth,”* because you believe *“who He is, what He came into the world to do,”* and *“He did it all”* through His death on the cross. The moment this wonderful light of truth shines into your heart, you are *“born of God.”* You have *“received Christ,”* and everything He is and everything He came into the world to do, He is and He does in you. The apostle Paul says, *“I am crucified with*

Christ... Galatians 2:20. That is what Christ “*died for,*” in order that our “*old man of sin*” would “*die with Him*” Romans 6:6. Paul continues, “*...nevertheless I live,*” and everyone can see by his life that he is not the same old Saul of Tarsus they once knew. Before he was “*born of God,*” Saul of Tarsus had a “*disclaimer*” when he sinned; “*...it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me*” Romans 7:20. After he is “*born of God,*” he has a “*disclaimer*” for his righteousness; “*I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me.*” Do you find yourself continually having to repent for sin? Or, do you find yourself “*making excuses*” for your “*weaknesses,*” which in honesty would be called sin? Paul says, “*Christ is **the end of the law** for righteousness to everyone that believeth*” Romans 10:4. This is true because He is also “*the end of sin*” for everyone who will believe the truth and trust in Christ. Do you believe that “*Jesus is The Christ?*”

The message of “*The Christ*” is not intended to bring any person into the “*struggle*” of “*striving for perfection.*” It will, in fact, deliver you from the struggle of religion and give you the “*rest*” which Jesus promised to all who would “*come to Him.*” The apostle Paul said, “*Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone that believeth.*” He is also “*the end of the struggle*” of trying but failing to “*please God.*” The message of “*the Christ*” can do absolutely nothing for those who continue in sin and believe they are saved. Instead, it is for those who have been so destroyed by sin that the cry of their heart is “*Oh wretched man that I am*” Romans 7:24. Religion will seek to improve the “*self-image*” of that person, and tell them “*God sees them as righteous and holy,*” and if possible, convince them their experience is the normal experience of the children of God. Yet Jesus Christ continues to speak through the ages, “*Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest*” Matthew 11:18. He will “*take your sin away,*” and you will have it no more. The same redemption that makes you “*Free from sin*” Romans 6:18, is how you are also “*delivered from the law,*” not to “*break the law,*” but to “*serve God in newness of spirit*” Romans 7:6. Simply “*trust in Christ*” to do in you what He came to do.

Jesus is “The Christ”

Why Does it Matter?

Message by: Leroy Surface

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

Why does it matter what I believe about Jesus as long as I believe He is the Son of God? This is the question in the minds of many who will read this, and it is the question I hope to answer as simply as possible. First, the apostle Paul said, “*I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ....*” Notice, the apostle specifies that it is “***the gospel of Christ.***” According to the apostle John, both the simplicity and the necessity of the gospel is to “*believe that Jesus is the Christ.*” The apostle Paul expressed a fear for the future of the church in his day when he said, “*I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ*” ^{II} Corinthians 11:3. There is something that has been lost to modern generations of the church; something that was common knowledge to those first believers, most of whom were the students of Peter, Paul, and John. They were the generation that “*turned the world upside down*” with the gospel they preached. It was a simple gospel, one that said, “*Jesus of Nazareth is **the Christ** whom God has sent into the world.*” They understood the prophecy in Daniel 9:24-27, which clearly tells of one called “*The Messiah*” in the Hebrew language, and “*The Christ*” in the Greek, whom God would send into the world. He would come in a year specified by the prophecy, and the purpose of His coming would be “*to finish the transgressions, to make an end of sins, to*

make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness.” No other scripture in the entire Bible tells in such simple terms the reason God sent Christ into the world. Every Jew in the generation in which Jesus was born clearly understood the prophecy of *“The Christ,”* because it had been taught in their synagogues for generations. They knew the approximate time of his birth, because the prophecy foretold the exact year He would make His public appearance. The same night Jesus was born to Mary in a stable in Bethlehem, the angel of the Lord (Gabriel) appeared to shepherds in the field, saying, *“Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord”* Luke 2:10-11. What wonderful good news this was to the shepherds. For all their lives they had heard of one called *“The Christ”* who would come into the world to make an end of sins and bring in everlasting righteousness. They left the fields and hurried to Bethlehem to see the baby, whom the angel said they would find *“wrapped in swaddling clothes, and lying in a manger.”* Who could believe such a report? The shepherds were probably mocked when they told their friends they had found *“The Christ.”* Who would believe a child who was born in such a lowly estate as to make his first bed in a manger with the cattle, could be the Christ? Who could accept such foolishness as to believe that this child would one day fulfill all the prophecies of redemption and restoration for a sin-torn world, yet that is exactly why this baby was born into this world.

The *“gospel of Christ”* is *“good tidings of great joy”* to everyone who believes it. The shepherds rejoiced to hear that Christ had come. The old man of God, Simeon, rejoiced to see the baby Jesus when Joseph and Mary brought Him to the temple to *“present Him to the LORD”* according to the command of the Law of Moses. The Holy Ghost had told Simeon that he would not die until he had seen *“the Lord’s Christ.”* He held baby Jesus in his arms and rejoiced, *“Let thy servant die in peace, for my eyes have seen thy salvation”* Luke 2:30. Thirty years later, the young man Andrew rejoiced after meeting Jesus. He ran to Peter,

crying aloud, *"We have found the Messiah,"* which is by interpretation, *"the Christ"* John 1:41. It was the same for Philip the next day. After meeting Jesus, he ran to Nathaniel, saying, *"We have found Him of whom Moses in the law, and all the prophets did speak"* John 1:45. It was no different for Peter, James, and John some six weeks later as Jesus began calling His disciples, simply saying *"Follow me."* There was no talk of wages or retirement plans if they would follow. It did not matter; they had found *"The Christ"* and He would *"make an end of sins."* He would *"bring in everlasting righteousness."*

Jesus forbade his disciples to tell anyone during the three plus years of His ministry that He was *"The Christ"* Matthew 16:20. To do so would have resulted in His death by stoning, which Moses had commanded in his law as the punishment for heretics. When Jesus was finally condemned to death for blasphemy, it was because He confessed under oath that He was *"The Christ, the Son of the Blessed"* Mark 14:61-62. After His resurrection, Jesus commanded His disciples to *"go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature"* Mark 16:15. Everywhere they went, they preached the *"gospel of Christ"* in its simplicity, which is *"Jesus is the Christ."* The gospel was preached to none but the Jews for a number of years because of an erroneous belief that it was not for the Gentiles. In every place they preached, the Jews already believed the prophecy of *"The Christ,"* the one who would come to make an end of sins and bring in everlasting righteousness. The message the apostles carried to them was simply *"Jesus is the Christ."* When Saul of Tarsus was converted on his journey to Damascus where he had planned to persecute the believers, he heard the voice of the Lord speaking to him from heaven. He asked, *"Who are you, Lord?"* He heard the answer that instantly transformed his life; *"I am Jesus whom thou persecutest"* Acts 9:5. Saul's next question was *"What would you have me do, Lord."* Instantly, Saul of Tarsus was changed from a Jesus hater to a Jesus lover, because he learned firsthand that Jesus is *"The Christ"* whom he loved and had longed for all his lifetime. Three days later, Saul was filled with the Holy Ghost

and immediately went into the synagogues of Damascus, where he *“preached Christ, that He is the Son of God”* Act 9:20. Verse 22 says, *“But Saul increased the more in strength, and confounded the Jews which dwelt at Damascus, proving that this is very (the) Christ.”* Those who believed rejoiced with great joy, but those who did not believe tried without ceasing to kill Saul for preaching *“Jesus is the Christ.”* So it was throughout Paul’s life and ministry in every place he preached the gospel.

When Jesus commanded the disciples to *“preach the gospel to every creature,”* He told them, *“He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, and he that believeth not shall be damned”* Mark 16:15-16. In Matthew 28:19-20, Jesus tells His disciples to *“Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen.”* To the Jew, who already knew about *“The Christ,”* the gospel message was simply *“Jesus is the Christ.”* Those who believed were *“saved.”* This means that everything *“The Christ”* came into the world to do, He had accomplished through His death on the cross, and He arose from the dead on the third day to do it in the heart and nature of everyone who would believe the gospel. Transgressions were finished, sin was ended, and those who believed were reconciled to God, and received everlasting righteousness, because they trusted in Jesus, that He is *“The Christ.”* They understood that Jesus died as *“The Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world”* John 1:29. The *“sin of the world”* is the sin that entered into the world by Adam’s disobedience Romans 5:12. It is by the obedience of Jesus Christ to the death of the cross Philippians 2:8 that sin is taken out of the heart and nature of everyone who knows the truth and trusts in Christ.

The modern church has misunderstood the words of Jesus in Matthew 28:19-20. Billions of dollars have been spent on a worldwide church structure which seeks to *“make disciples”* of the people. The disciples of Jesus were indeed students, but they were *“taught by Him.”* In the root meaning of the word

“disciples,” they were *“pupils of Christ.”* Paul refers to this in Ephesians 4:20-21 *“But ye have not so learned Christ; If so be that ye have heard him, and have been **taught by him**, as the truth is in Jesus.”* He was speaking to Gentile believers who had never seen or heard Jesus in the days of His flesh, yet they had been *“taught by Him.”* They were believers.

The modern idea of the word *“disciple”* plays on the word *“discipline”* when there is really no connection between the two. Salvation and discipline are two different things. The law was given to discipline the sinner, but grace is given to save the people from their sin. In Romans 6:13-14, Paul says, *“...yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God. For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace.”* Literally translated from the Greek text, Paul gave the reason the believer can yield their members to God: *“...**because** sin has no dominion over you, **because** you are not under the law, but under grace.”* When sin continues in the heart and nature of man, it is impossible for that person to yield their members to God. Even the effort to do so requires much *“discipline,”* which comes by the commandments of men. It is the source of the eternal struggle against sin which is the *“hallmark”* of most *“believers”* today.

When Jesus told His disciples to *“teach all nations,”* He was speaking specifically of the Gentile nations, a people who knew nothing about the prophecy of *“The Christ”* as the Jews did. Preaching the gospel to the Gentiles required instructing them, not about the law, or rules of conduct, etc. but to teach them about *“The Christ”* of prophecy, and that Jesus is *“The Christ.”* The modern church, with its billions of dollars spent in *“making disciples”* around the world, has failed miserably to tell them about *“The Christ”* who came to *“finish the transgression, make an end of sins, make reconciliation for iniquity, and bring in everlasting righteousness”* Daniel 9:24. This message of *“The Christ”* is *“the simplicity that is in Christ”* which Paul speaks of in II Corinthians 11:3. The thing Paul *“feared”* in this verse,

however, has come upon the church worldwide in our modern age. Those teachers Paul warned against have come in our generation to preach “*another gospel*” about “*another Jesus*,” and cause their followers to receive “*another spirit*.”

II Corinthians 11:3-4: “*But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ. For if he that cometh preacheth **another Jesus**, whom we have not preached, or if ye receive **another spirit**, which ye have not received, or **another gospel**, which ye have not accepted....*”

I once believed that the preaching of “*another gospel*” was a phenomenon of the late twentieth century. I believed, as most “*believers*,” that those things I learned as a child in Sunday School and those things I heard shortly after I was saved and filled with the Holy Ghost in 1958, were absolute truth, and to deviate from those absolutes would be heresy. When I surrendered to preach the gospel in 1964, however, the Lord explicitly told me not to study the writings and doctrines of men, but to study only the scriptures, which I did with the help of “*Strong’s Concordance*” and the Greek and Hebrew Lexicons. I grew up knowing almost nothing about John Calvin’s doctrine concerning “*bondage of the will*,” or Jacobus Arminius’ doctrine concerning “*freedom of the will*.” I thank God that I understood enough about the scriptures to keep me before I encountered these and many other “*doctrines*” of the modern church.

Most of the church today is founded on religious foundations that were laid by various different men during the period of the reformation, which was less than five hundred years ago. I do not question the sincerity of the reformers as they tried to correct the doctrinal errors which had come into the church through almost twelve hundred years of Roman Catholic rule. Theologians during that time period believed there were three equal sources of truth, which were “*philosophy, nature, and the scriptures*.” With such a frame of mind, the apostles actually had no more influence on them than Socrates, and they could “*write off*” the entire

heathen world because they were “*without excuse* Romans 1:20” if they could see the sun, the moon, and the stars, as well as the grass and the trees. The “*truth*” that Jesus said “*will make you free*” from sin is not to be found in the writings of any of the reformers. These were great men who are not to be belittled, however. They were giants among men with their vast knowledge and understanding, but there is no indication that any one of them understood the truth of the gospel. In fact, to find that truth, we can go only to the scriptures. Jesus told the Jews in His day, “*Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me. And ye will not come to me, that ye might have life*” John 5:39-40. There can be no question that the reformers searched the scriptures, but I present that they repeatedly came to the wrong conclusions, because they never found “*The Christ*” in the scriptures. I confess that I am not a scholar on religious history, but I cannot find a single person among the great theologians of history, since the days of the apostles, who has told of “*The Christ*” who came into the world “*to make an end of sins*” and “*to bring in everlasting righteousness.*” It is equally important to understand that in His death on the cross, Christ fulfilled every “*vision and prophecy* Daniel 9:24” of redemption; of restoration; and of His resurrection on the third day. It is finished! The apostle John spoke of that which was common knowledge to believers in his generation, saying, “**And ye know** that he was manifested to take away our sins; and in him is no sin. Whosoever abideth in him sinneth not: whosoever sinneth hath not seen him, neither known him” I John 3:5-6. “*He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil*” I John 3:8.

The apostle Paul forewarned of another gospel that would come. It has been in the churches for hundreds of years. It is a “*gospel*” that tells of a “*Jesus*” who died on the cross to “*take the penalty for our sins.*” The Apostle John does not believe that “*gospel*” nor does he preach that “*Jesus.*” John says, and it is in the scriptures for all to see, that Christ was “*manifested to take away*

our sins” I John 3:5. John the Baptist introduced Jesus as “*The Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.*”

There is yet another “*gospel*” that tells of a “*Jesus*” who came to “*cover*” our sins with either “*his blood*” or “*his righteousness*,” to hide them from God. I do not doubt the sincerity of those who teach such things, but they are sincerely wrong. They tell the people we are all sinners, even though “*Jesus*” has come into our hearts, and that we will always be sinners as long as we live in a flesh and blood body. This teaching is not unique to our generation, however; it has dominated religious thought for at least five hundred years, and is presently taught by many preeminent theologians of our day. There is one problem, however; they are also wrong. Jesus told some skeptical Jews, “*I go my way, and ye shall seek me, and shall die in your sins*” John 8:21. Are you still “*in your sins*?” You may be one that seeks Him continually, but have you believed a “*gospel*” that does something less than take sin out of your heart and nature? Do you continue to struggle to please God, but find yourself condemned by the secrets of your heart? As long as you trust in a “*gospel*” that tells about a “*Jesus*” who only “*took the penalty*” for your sins and “*covers them*” with his “*grace*” and “*blood*,” you will continue to struggle with sin, even though you “*seek Him daily.*” Jesus explained His saying to the Jews in John 8:24, “*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.*” What must I do to be saved from my sins so I will have them no more? Believe that Jesus is **He**! The Jews understood exactly what Jesus was telling them even though they pretended ignorance, seeking to ensnare Him in His words. Every Jew was looking for, longing for, and “*seeking*” the appearance of “*The Christ.*” They knew He would make an end to sins and bring in everlasting righteousness, but they refused to accept even the possibility that Jesus was their Christ. There is no other way to be “*made free from sin*,” whether it’s the “*guilt of sin*,” the “*power of sin*,” or the “*presence of sin*,” except to believe that “*Jesus is The Christ.*”

“Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God

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