

# ***THE GOSPEL OF CHRIST***

SPREADING THE SOUL-SAVING MESSAGE OF JESUS

## **SOUL-SAVING LESSONS**

### **“Jesus—The Way, the Truth, and the Life”**

#### **Introduction by narrator accompanied by a cappella singing:**

*THE GOSPEL OF CHRIST*. Spreading the soul-saving message of Jesus. And now, Ben Bailey.

World religions cannot save us from our sin problem. The philosophies of men cannot save us from the sin problem. Medical science and technological advancements cannot save us from the plague of sin. Jesus Christ is the only way that we can be saved from the sin problem. Welcome to our study of “Jesus—The Way, the Truth, and the Life.” The text for our study comes from John 14:6. Jesus said in that passage, “I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.” It has been properly said, “Jesus is the Way; without Him there is no going. Jesus is the Truth; without Him there is no knowing. Jesus is the Life; without Him there is no living.” Jesus is the only way that we can access salvation, and the only way that we can have the best life in the here and now.

As we think about Jesus as the Way, the Truth, and the Life, we first must examine Him as the Way. As we do this, we must understand that He is the only way that we can be saved. Jesus is the only avenue of salvation. World religions cannot save us. They may offer up the concept of reincarnation, as the Buddhist religion does. They may offer up ways regarding how to get back into “the wheel of life,” but that is not what man needs. Man needs salvation from the sin problem. Jesus is the only way that we today can be saved. I am reminded of the words of Acts 4:12—“Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved.” There is no salvation in others. The only name (with “name” representing the person and the life that He lived) by which we can be saved is Jesus Christ. The Jews thought that they could be saved by following Moses. Some today may think that they can be saved by following Mohammed or by following some latter-day “prophet.” But Jesus is still the only way to salvation. He is the only One Who lived a perfect life. Hebrews 4:14-15 teaches us that Jesus was “tempted in all points as we are, yet without sin.” The text of 1 Peter 2:21-22 states that He “committed no sin, nor was deceit found in His mouth.” Jesus is the Perfect One Who gave Himself as the perfect sacrifice for our sins. And He is the only way that we are ever going to be saved.

Matthew 1:21 teaches us that Mary was going to give birth to a son Whom she should call Jesus (which is from Immanuel—“God with us”). The idea is that God would be with us and that He would save His people from their sins. His name indicates that He would be the Savior of the world. Jesus said in Matthew 26:28, “This is My blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.” Thus, as we think about Jesus being the way to salvation, we need to be reminded about His mission. In Luke 19:10, the Bible says that Jesus came “to seek and to save that which is lost.” All men are lost. Therefore, Jesus came to seek and to save all of God’s people who had gone astray. I am reminded of the words of 1 John 2:2, which tells us that Jesus is “the propitiation [atoning sacrifice] for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the whole world.” Jesus came and gave His life as an atoning sacrifice (Heb 2:9), and “tasted of death for everyone” so that we could have the hope of eternal life. The Bible says in 1 Timothy 2:4 that God wants all people to be

saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth. God desires that greatly. But the only way that is going to be possible is if we are willing to obey Jesus, Who is the only way to salvation.

As we think of Jesus as the Way, we also can see that Jesus is the only way to a life that has real meaning and purpose. So many people meander through life without any real meaning or purpose. They live only for the pleasure of the moment. What kind of life is that? Look at people who have had almost everything imaginable in life. Some of those people are the saddest people in the world because they have no real meaning or value in their lives. When this life is over, so far as they are concerned, that is the end of everything. But for the Christian, Jesus gives greater meaning to life. Let's think about the questions that Jesus asked in Mark 8:36-37 that relate to this. Jesus said, "For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul?" In these rhetorical questions, Jesus teaches us that there is nothing more important than our souls. The real value of man is found in the spiritual side, not the physical. The purpose of life is for us to prepare in this life to live with God in eternity. This is our one chance to get right with God.

Ecclesiastes 12:13-14 teaches us the meaning of life. King Solomon sought for the meaning and purpose of life in many areas. Yet he found all of them to be vanity, worthless, and purposeless. He eventually did find real meaning, which prompted him to say in Ecclesiastes 12:13, "Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God and keep His commandments, for this is man's all. For God will bring every work into judgment, including every secret thing, whether good or evil." We learn that our purpose is to reverence God, respect Him, and obey His commandments. Isaiah said in Isaiah 43:7, "Everyone who is called by My name, whom I have created for My glory; I have formed him, yes, I have made him." We were created in the image of God to reverence God, respect Him, and give Him glory in this life. Paul said in 1 Corinthians 10:31, "Therefore, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God." Even the small things in life (such as eating and drinking) should praise and laud the name of God. In Philippians 1:21, Paul wrote, "For me to live is Christ, and to die is gain." Why could Paul say that? It was because he found Jesus as the way to live a life with real meaning. Matthew 6:33 teaches us, "But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you." This is what real meaning in life is about—putting God first! We are to make sure that **He** is the priority in everything we do.

Not only is Jesus the Way when it comes to a life with real meaning, but He also is the only way by which we can find forgiveness and peace. The peace that we have through Jesus is one of the greatest privileges for the child of God. Jesus is the only way by which we can ever live a life that offers peace of mind, a life of tranquility, and a life of satisfaction. Listen to Paul's words in Philippians 4:6-7:

"Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus."

Notice that we are to hand our lives over to God. We are to ask Him for assistance through prayer and not be anxious about it. In doing so, we shall have "the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding." What a wonderful blessing it is to be a child of God. Jesus is the only way by which we may obtain peace. Do you want to go home a night, lie down in your bed, and know that everything is going to be all right, regardless of what happens during the night? To be able to do that, you must know Jesus as the Way to true peace. Jesus is also the way to forgiveness. As we look throughout Scripture, we see that forgiveness is offered through Jesus Christ. Yes, God wants to forgive our sins. The psalmist said in Psalm 103:10 that the Lord "has not dealt with us according to our sins, nor punished

us according to our iniquities.” We have not received what we deserved—and the reason is because of Jesus. He is the Way to forgiveness. Micah said that all our sins have been “cast into the depths of the sea” (Mic. 7:18-19). Our sins have been removed so far from us that they cannot hurt us any longer. In fact, in Hebrews 8:12 God said, “Their sins and their lawless deeds I will remember no more.” That is the blessing that is available only through Jesus. As we think about Jesus as the Way to forgiveness, we need to remember the great sacrifice that He made. The text of 2 Corinthians 5:21 says, “For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.” The only way to forgiveness is through Jesus. No mere man can forgive us of sin. No human can “bless you” in some way, or say certain words, that will forgive your sins. Jesus is the only way to forgiveness from sin. What a wonderful blessing it is to know that Jesus can offer this to us.

Jesus is also the only way to defeat Satan. Do you want to defeat Satan in your life? Think about the horrible effects that Satan and sin have had on humankind. In Genesis 3, the old serpent Satan tempted Adam and Eve, and they ate of the fruit of which God had commanded them not to eat. As a result, they were cast out of the Garden of Eden and suffered death—both physically and spiritually because of Satan. Think about what Satan did to Job. Satan caused Job to lose all his wealth, and his children died at Satan’s hands. Job was given a dreaded disease because Satan was trying to tempt him to do wrong and be lost. Think about this evil adversary, whom Peter described in 1 Peter 5:8 as “a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour.” How can we defeat Satan today? We cannot defeat him by ourselves. We are helpless to defeat Satan without Jesus Christ, Who is the only way to defeat Satan. Here is the wonderful news. Jesus has **already** defeated Satan. Listen to the words of Hebrews 2:14, where the Bible says, “Inasmuch then as the children have partaken of flesh and blood, He Himself likewise shared in the same, that through death He might destroy him who had the power of death, that is, the devil.” When Jesus died on the cross, He dealt a death blow to Satan. If we are going to be saved today from Satan so that we, too, can defeat Him, then we must be in Jesus’ body. We must be a child of God because that is the only way that we will ever experience victory over Satan in this life.

But not only is Jesus the Way, but He also is seen in Scripture as the Truth. Jesus is the source of truth, and He is the truth for men and women today. In fact, Jesus is seen as the embodiment of all religious truth. Jesus holds the truth within Himself. He came to Earth in order to speak the truth to men. He is the embodiment of that truth—which saves men from sin. Think about the words of Ephesians 4:21 where Paul said, “You indeed have heard Him and have been taught by Him, as the truth is in Jesus.” Truth does not reside within men today. It is not in someone who claims to be a latter-day prophet with a message from God. It is no mere man on Earth who holds the message from God. The truth is found in Jesus and in His Words. In John 1:1, we are told, “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.” John 1:14 teaches us that “the Word became flesh and dwelt among us.” Who is that Word? It is Jesus, Who is the embodiment of truth among men and women today. John 8:32 tells us exactly how essential this truth is: “You shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.” The writer of Proverbs said, “Buy the truth, and sell it not” (Prov. 23:23). We need to take hold of Jesus as the embodiment of truth so that we can incorporate His life and teaching into our lives. The only way that we can access Jesus as the Truth is to bring His life into our lives and to mold our lives in the image of Christ. That is what the Scriptures teach us to do. The text of 1 Peter 2:21 teaches us that we are to walk in the steps of Jesus. Paul said in 1 Corinthians 11:1, “Imitate me as I also imitate Christ.” I am reminded of the words of Jesus in Matthew 5:16—“Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.”

If we follow in the footsteps of Jesus, then we can not only be the embodiment of the truth, but we also can teach others about the truth. I am reminded of the powerful example found in Acts 4:13. Here, Peter and John were being questioned about the authority by which they spoke. Then the Bible says of the people who were doing the questioning, "They realized that they had been with Jesus." Peter and John had placed Jesus into their own lives in such a way that it made a very real impression upon the Jewish religious leaders. We need to know that while Jesus is the Truth, God's Word also is the truth for us today. The Word of God is our source for the truth. Where do we go when we want to find the truth about Jesus, about matters of salvation, or about matters of salvation today? We need look no farther than the pages of God's Holy Word. In John 17:17, Jesus taught, "Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth." What is the source of truth for us today? It is the Bible, which is the only truth from God. It is the only truth that can save our souls, and it is the only way to salvation. James told us to "receive with meekness the implanted word which is able to save your souls" (Jas. 1:21). What is great about the Bible is that it is not a compilation of the writings of men. It is not men's thoughts or ideas. Rather, it is the inspired words of God. Psalm 119:160 says, "The entirety of Your word is truth." As we think about Scripture, we need to remember 2 Timothy 3:16-17—"All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work." The Bible is the way of salvation and in it we find the only hope that we have. It is the truth on how to live the best life in the here and now.

As we think about Jesus as the Truth, we need to know that He represents the truth on matters of salvation. There is only One Person who can save us from sin. There is only one truth regarding salvation—Jesus Christ, Who is the Way to the Father. Remember that Jesus is the Way; without Him there is no knowing. We cannot know salvation apart from Jesus and His great sacrifice. The writer of the book of Hebrews addressed this in Hebrews 7:25 when he wrote, "Therefore He is also able to save to the uttermost those who come to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them." Jesus is the only One Who can give us the salvation that is available. Why? Because "He always lives to make intercession" for us. When you think of Jesus' role as seen in the Bible, you see that He is presented in the role of prophet. He gave us the words of God. Hebrews 1:1-2 says, "God, who at various times and in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets, has in these last days spoken to us by His Son." Jesus is the One Who gave us the Word of God. But Jesus also is seen as a priest—a priest who offered Himself as the sacrifice for our sins. Hebrews 10:4 teaches us, "It is not possible that the blood of bulls and goats could take away sins." But Hebrews 10:12 goes on to say, "But this Man, after He had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down at the right hand of God." Hebrews 9:22 says that without the shedding of blood, there can be no remission of sins. Yet Jesus shed His precious, sinless blood so that we could be forgiven of our sins. He is Prophet, Priest, and King. Jesus is the King of His kingdom. Revelation 19:16-17 speaks of Him as "King of kings and Lord of lords." Therefore, Jesus alone is the truth on salvation.

But Jesus is not only the Way and the Truth, but also the Life. He is the only way that we can live the best life now and later with God in eternity. As the Life, Jesus offers us "the abundant life." Jesus said in John 10:10, "I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly." As we look through the Bible, the Old Testament clearly refers to Jesus as the Way, the Truth, and the Life. The Old Testament Scriptures present Jesus as the Way of salvation. If we go all the way back to Genesis 3 and the Garden of Eden, we see that it was prophesied and promised that the "seed of woman" would deal a death blow to Satan himself. Jesus is the One Who did that. In Romans 16:20, Satan was being defeated by that death blow at that very time. Jesus defeated Satan, just as was

prophesied. In Genesis 22:17-18, it is promised that there would be someone of the seed of Abraham and Isaac who would bless all nations. That was Jesus Christ. Ephesians 1:3 teaches us that we receive “all spiritual blessings” in Christ. It was promised in 2 Samuel 7:13-14 that someone would sit upon the throne of David, and that of His kingdom there would “be no end.” Luke 1:32-33 is the fulfillment of that. Luke wrote:

“He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Highest; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David. And He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of His kingdom there will be no end.”

The Old Testament pointed us toward Jesus, and the New Testament declares to us that Jesus is the Way. He is the Way, the Truth, and the Life. Jesus is the only way that we today can be saved. Please think very seriously today about the way of salvation. When we think about salvation, we must ask the question, “What must we do to have eternal life?” If Jesus is the Way, and if without Him there is no going; if He is the Life, and without Him there is no living; if He is the Truth, and without Him there is no knowing, then we need to ask: What must one do to inherit eternal life? We need to know that we cannot earn our salvation. Regardless of what we do in this life, salvation is the free gift of our God. Ephesians 2:8-9 says, “For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast.” Please understand that we are **not** saying that we can **earn** salvation. That simply is not possible. Salvation is the free gift of God. Yet at the same time there are conditions that we must meet. God has said in His Word that we must be willing to obey the conditions that He has set forth. Throughout the Bible we are taught this principle. Jesus asked the question in Luke 6:46, ““But why do you call Me ‘Lord, Lord,’ and do not do the things which I say?” He was saying, “Do not call me ‘Lord’ if you are not willing to obey My teachings.” God said to King Saul in 1 Samuel 15:22, “Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice.” His point was that it was acceptable to sacrifice, but obedience needed to be combined with the sacrifice. Today, we understand that obedience is necessary in the plan of salvation. What must we obey? What must we do to be saved? The wonderful thing for us today is that we can read and understand the Bible, and know beyond the shadow of a doubt exactly what we must do to be saved.

In Acts 18:8, we are presented with the plan of salvation in a nutshell. “Many of the Corinthians, hearing, believed and were baptized.” We must hear the message of salvation. It is the Word of God that saves us. We can know the truth, and the truth will make us free (Jn. 8:32). We must study the Scriptures in order to know what we must do to be saved. We cannot let someone else tell us what they think we must do to be saved. Salvation is an individual matter. It is something that we must search out for ourselves. Religious leaders cannot save us, and parents cannot save us. But we can come to the Bible to study it and see what we need to do. The Bible says in 2 Timothy 2:15, “Study to show yourself approved unto God.” Look at the example of the Bereans in Acts 17:11, “These were more fair-minded than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness, and searched the Scriptures daily to find out whether these things were so.” These people were happy to have someone preach to them, but then what did they do? They searched the Scriptures daily to see if what they were being taught was true to the Word of God. We therefore must study to see for ourselves exactly what the Bible says.

Then, once we have heard the Word of God, we must believe the message. In Acts 8, the Ethiopian was told that if he believed in Christ with all his heart, then he could be baptized and become a Christian. Thus, belief is essential. John 3:16 reminds us, “For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.”

Once we believe in the message of salvation, and once we believe in Jesus as the Way, the Truth, and the Life, then we must be willing to make changes in our lives. A perfect example of repentance is found in 1 Thessalonians 1:9. Of these Thessalonians it is said that they turned “from idols to serve the living and true God.” They had been living lives of sin in idolatry. They not only stopped doing that and turned from their sin, but they also turned to God so that they could be saved. We, too, must repent in the same way. We have to turn from a life of sin and turn to God so that we can be saved.

Then a person must confess Jesus as the Son of God. As we think of confession, we might remember Acts 8:36-39. When the Ethiopian nobleman asked if he could become a Christian, he was told, “If you believe with all your heart, you may.” He said, “I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.” This same type of thing is seen in Romans 10:10 and Matthew 10:32-33. Confessing Jesus is essential to salvation.

But there is another step in the plan of salvation that many people today omit. We must be baptized for the forgiveness of our sins. Peter said it this way in 1 Peter 3:21—“Baptism does also now save us.” Jesus said in Mark 16:16, “He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned.” Peter said to the people on the Day of Pentecost in Acts 2:38, “Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins.”

We are praying for you, and pleading with you to accept Jesus as the Way, the Truth, and the Life on matters of salvation. May God help you as you strive to live the right life.

**Narrator accompanied by a cappella singing:**

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## **STUDY QUESTIONS FOR “JESUS—THE WAY, THE TRUTH, AND THE LIFE”**

1. Name, according to John 14:6, three things that Jesus is.
2. What does the name Immanuel mean?
3. According to Acts 4:12, there is only one name by which we can be saved. What name is that?
4. Matthew 26:28 teaches us that there was a specific reason for Christ’s death. What was that reason?
5. Hebrews 4:14-15 provides us with the reason why Jesus Christ is qualified to serve as the sacrifice for our sins. What is that reason?
6. What did Peter say in 1 Peter 2:21-22 about Jesus?
7. In 1 John 2:2, John speaks of Christ as a “propitiation.” What is a propitiation?
8. What, according to 1 Timothy 2:4, does God want?
9. What two rhetorical questions did Jesus ask in Mark 8:36-37?
10. What was Christ teaching when He asked the two rhetorical questions in Mark 8:36-37?
11. What, according to Ecclesiastes 12:13-14, is our purpose while we live here on Earth?
12. What is the main thrust of Isaiah 43:7, and how does it apply to us today?
13. What, according to Philippians 4:6-7, is one of the blessings of being a child of God?
14. What important message is contained in Hebrews 2:14?
15. According to Ephesians 4:21, where is truth to be found?
16. According to John 17:17, truth also can be found somewhere else. Where?
17. What does Matthew 5:16 admonish Christians to do?
18. This lesson teaches that Jesus is the embodiment of something. What is that “something”?
19. Who, according to Revelation 19:16-17, is Jesus Christ?
20. According to Hebrews 1:1-2, how does God speak to people today?
21. What, according to John 10:10, is another blessing of being a child of God?
22. What does John 8:32 teach us about truth?