

Jesus, The Way

Introducing Jesus As The Way

INTRODUCTION

- I. As most of you know by now I'm one of those preachers who loves to preach sermons in a series of related lessons.
 - A. One of the reasons for doing this is it allows us to examine a topic in far greater depth than we could by simply preaching one or two sermons.
 1. Therefore, I am going to launch a new series of sermons this morning that is comprised of only seven lessons.
 2. All of these sermons center around the theme of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, as simply **"The Way."**
 - B. And there's a reason for examining all the ways in which Jesus Christ **IS "The Way."**
 1. On the evening before His crucifixion, Jesus met one last time with His disciples.
 - a. During the course of the evening, Jesus taught them many wonderful truths.
 - b. Among the things Jesus said was this: **John 14:1-4** – *"Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me. 2 In My Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I*

would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. 3 And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also. 4 And where I go you know, and the way you know."

2. The disciples still had not grasped the fact that Jesus was about to be crucified on the cross.
 - a. Therefore, this statement didn't make any sense.
 - b. What did he mean by "*I go to prepare a place for you*" or "*where I go you know, and the way you know*"?
3. And so, Thomas, who thinks in such absolute terms, asks, **John 14:5** – "*Lord, we do not know where You are going, and how can we know the way?*"
 - a. In other words, Lord we don't have the slightest clue how to get from here to wherever your going because we don't have the slightest clue where your going.
4. Therefore, Jesus replied, **John 14:6** – "*I am the way, the truth, and the life...*"
 - a. Jesus is simply telling his disciples that He's going to return to the Father in heaven – that's WHERE he's going.
 - b. And the WAY to the Father is ONLY THROUGH Jesus Christ.

- c. And the reason WHY Jesus Christ is the ONLY WAY to the Father is simply because he is TRUTH PERSONIFIED, and he is LIFE PERSONIFIED.
 - d. Which is another way of saying that Jesus is the only TRUE AND LIVING WAY to the Father in heaven.
 - C. However, the way to the Father in heaven starts here on earth. And along the way, the Lord offers all we need to live a faithful, full and productive life of peace and joy in the Lord.
- II. And so, we're going to look at all the ways in which Jesus is truly **"The Way."**
 - A. We're not going to focus ONLY on how Jesus is the way to the Father in heaven, but how he is ALSO the one and only way through all the difficult times and pitfalls we experience in this life.
 - 1. And so, beginning with this lesson, I want to preview some of the topics we will be dealing with.
 - 2. Then, beginning next week, I'll be launching into the first of these sermons.
 - 3. So... what ARE all the ways in which Jesus is the TRUE AND LIVING WAY to real peace and joy now, and to the Father in heaven after this life is over?

BODY:

- I. The first lesson in this series will reveal how we actually FIND Jesus, who is ***"The Way."***
 - A. Jesus can be found throughout the scriptures.
 1. He can be found in the hundreds of Old Testament prophecies that speak about the King of Kings and Lord of Lords, who would also become the Savior of the world.
 - a. Even though the prophets of Old Testament times spoke about the coming Messiah and the salvation he would bring, it was still all a mystery to them.
 - b. **1 Peter 1:10-12** – *Of this salvation the prophets have inquired and searched carefully, who prophesied of the grace that would come to you, 11 searching what, or what manner of time, the Spirit of Christ who was in them was indicating when He testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ and the glories that would follow. 12 To them it was revealed that, not to themselves, but to us they were ministering the things which now have been reported to you through those who have preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven — things which angels desire to look into.*

2. He can be found in the Gospels where we find a detailed account of the life of Jesus, and overwhelming evidence that proves beyond doubt that he is the Christ, the Son of the Living God.
 - a. The apostle John summed it up this way in his gospel: **John 20:30-31** – *And truly Jesus did many other signs in the presence of His disciples, which are not written in this book; 31 but these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name.*
 3. Jesus can also be found in the book of Acts and in the Epistles, where he is preached as the way of salvation, the head of the church, and the hope of the resurrection.
- B. However, after we have FOUND Jesus and truly BELIEVE that he IS the Christ, the Son of the Living God, there remains one more thing we must do – we must OBEY him.
1. Jesus said this to those who believed in him: **John 8:31-32** – *"If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed. And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."*
 2. To receive the full benefits of being a believer and a follower of Jesus Christ, we MUST be willing to abide in his word.

- II. Once we have discovered that Jesus the Christ is revealed throughout the Old and New Testaments, we will then discover that Jesus is truly THE WAY TO A BETTER LIFE.
 - A. In the **tenth chapter of John**, Jesus was confronting his old enemies, the Pharisees.
 - 1. In the middle of the discussion Jesus launches into his famous discourse of how he is the GOOD SHEPHERD who protects and cares for his sheep.
 - 2. In **John 10:10**, Jesus concluded: *"...I have come that they [those who are his sheep] may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly."*
 - B. The "abundant life" Jesus offers is more than simply eternal life in heaven.
 - 1. Although Jesus certainly doesn't promise wealth or luxury, He does assure us of a loving Father in Heaven, who cares for His children.
 - 2. He taught the same thing in the "Sermon on the Mount":
 - a. **Matthew 6:31-33** – *"Therefore do not worry, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' For after all these things the Gentiles seek. For your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. But*

seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you."

3. All this means that the Lord provides for all our needs – not all our wants, but all our needs – as long as we are willing to follow him as **THE WAY**.
- C. But the "abundant life" Jesus offers is more than just having all our material needs met.
1. On another occasion Jesus said: **Mark 10:29-30** – *"Assuredly, I say to you, there is no one who has left house or brothers or sisters or father or mother or wife or children or lands, for My sake and the gospel's, who shall not receive a hundredfold now in this time; houses and brothers and sisters and mothers and children and lands, with persecutions; and in the age to come, eternal life."*
 2. From this we see that the Lord also supplies all our emotional and social needs through our spiritual family – our brothers and sisters in Christ.
 3. This means that Christians should be among the happiest people in the world because we have completely committed ourselves to following Jesus as **THE WAY** and have the Lord supplying all our physical, emotional and social needs.
 4. The apostle Paul alluded to this in one of his great epistles.

- a. When Paul wrote his letter to the church at Philippi, he was under house arrest at the time.
- b. And yet, he wrote: **Philippians 4:11-13** – *Not that I speak in regard to need, for I have learned in whatever state I am, to be content: I know how to be abased, and I know how to abound. Everywhere and in all things I have learned both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need. I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.*

5. When the apostle Peter wrote to Christians who were undergoing extreme forms of persecution, he could honestly say:

- a. **1 Peter 1:6-8** – *In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while, if need be, you have been grieved by various trials, that the genuineness of your faith, being much more precious than gold that perishes, though it is tested by fire, may be found to praise, honor, and glory at the revelation of Jesus Christ, whom having not seen you love. Though now you do not see Him, yet believing, you rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory...*

III. However, in addition to Jesus being the way to an abundant life, Jesus is also THE WAY TO FORGIVENESS OF SINS.

- A. Jesus Christ is the **ONLY** solution to a very serious problem.
1. In fact, it's the most serious threat to our well-being that we face:
SIN!
 2. The reason for this is simply because everyone of us is guilty of sin:
 - a. The apostle Paul wrote: **Romans 3:23** – *For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.*
 3. But what we often **OVERLOOK** is the fact that sin has consequences – and **NOT** just spiritual consequences, but **PHYSICAL** and **EMOTIONAL** consequences as well.
- B. However, through Jesus Christ, God has made provision for the **FORGIVENESS** of our sins **AND** some of the most devastating physical and emotional consequences of our sins!
1. For example, the apostle John tells us that out of his deep love for us, God offered Jesus as the "propitiation" or the "satisfaction" for our sins:
 - a. **1 John 4:9-10** – *In this the love of God was manifested toward us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him. In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins.*

- b. This simply means that Jesus stepped forward and suffered the death WE should have experienced, and thus SATISFIED the demands of JUSTICE that the sinner must die.
- 2. The apostle Paul goes on to tell us that through the blood Jesus shed on the cross, he provides forgiveness for our sins:
 - a. The only way we can have redemption from our sins was for Jesus to die.
 - b. Therefore, Paul wrote: **Ephesians 1:7** – *In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace.*
- 3. And after His sacrificial death for us, Jesus explained how those lost in sin could be saved:
 - a. It requires repentance on our part: **Luke 24:47-48** – *Then He said to them, "Thus it is written, and thus it was necessary for the Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead the third day, and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem."*
 - b. It also involves faith and baptism: **Mark 16:16** – *"He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned."*

4. But to be truly happy, we need more than just the forgiveness of sins; we need to be restored to the close union with God which we lost by our sins – we need to truly experience the JOY of our salvation.
 - a. The psalmist David needed the joy of salvation restored when his sins had separated him from his God.
 - b. **Psalm 51:12-17** – *Restore to me the joy of Your salvation, and uphold me by Your generous Spirit. 13 Then I will teach transgressors Your ways, and sinners shall be converted to You. 14 Deliver me from the guilt of bloodshed, O God, the God of my salvation, and my tongue shall sing aloud of Your righteousness. 15 O Lord, open my lips, and my mouth shall show forth Your praise. 16 For You do not desire sacrifice, or else I would give it; You do not delight in burnt offering. 17 The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit, a broken and a contrite heart — These, O God, You will not despise.*
- IV. In addition to Jesus being the way to an ABUNDANT LIFE, and the way to real lasting FORGIVENESS and the restoration of real JOY, Jesus is also THE WAY TO GOD.

- A. Many religions, claiming to be Christian, are almost totally silent about the new relationship Jesus provides with God, the Father.
1. They place a great deal of emphasis on their relationship with "Jesus" and speak often about the "Holy Spirit," but do they understand the real PURPOSE of Jesus and the ROLE or PURPOSE of the Holy Spirit?
 - a. Do WE??
 2. The scriptures tell us that Jesus came to this world to RECONCILE man back to God the Father.
 - a. As Paul told the Corinthians: **2 Corinthians 5:18-20** – *Now all things are of God, who has reconciled us to Himself through Jesus Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation, that is, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not imputing their trespasses to them, and has committed to us the word of reconciliation. Now then, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were pleading through us: we implore you on Christ's behalf, be reconciled to God.*
 3. But not only has God the Father reconciled us to Himself through Jesus Christ, the Father has also SEALED us and GIVEN us the Holy Spirit as a GUARANTEE!

- a. The apostle Paul wrote: **2 Corinthians 1:21-22** – *Now He who establishes us with you in Christ and has anointed us is God, 22 who also has sealed us and given us the Spirit in our hearts as a guarantee.*
 - b. Speaking of how God the Father has given us eternal life, the apostle Paul also wrote: **2 Corinthians 5:5-7** – *Now He who has prepared us for this very thing is God, who also has given us the Spirit as a guarantee. 6 So we are always confident, knowing that while we are at home in the body we are absent from the Lord. 7 For we walk by faith, not by sight.*
4. As we have already noted, Jesus claimed to be the only way to the Father: **John 14:6** – *"I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me."*
- a. Why emphasize this point?
 - b. Simply because we cannot truly experience what it means to have "eternal life" without having an intimate relationship with the FATHER, as well as with the SON, through the HOLY SPIRIT.
5. And this is exactly what Jesus has to offer us! As He mentioned in His prayer before His trial and crucifixion:

- a. **John 17:1-3** – *Jesus spoke these words, lifted up His eyes to heaven, and said: "Father, the hour has come. Glorify Your Son, that Your Son also may glorify You, as You have given Him authority over all flesh, that He should give eternal life to as many as You have given Him. And this is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent."*
 - b. The "eternal life" Jesus offers us includes "knowing" the Father as well as the Son!
 - c. And the "guarantee" that God has given us to truly KNOW the Father as well as the Son is the HOLY SPIRIT.
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- I. Jesus is clearly the way to an ABUNDANT LIFE, the way to FORGIVENESS OF SINS, the way to GOD...what wonderful blessings! But finally, we will also discover that Jesus is THE WAY TO ETERNAL LIFE.
 - A. Death is inevitable (unless Jesus returns first), and as the author of the epistle to the Hebrews wrote, it is followed by judgment:
 1. **Hebrews 9:27** – *And as it is appointed for men to die once, but after this the judgment.*
 - a. In this way, death becomes the door, either to eternal life or to eternal condemnation.

2. In His description of the Judgment scene, Jesus outlines only two alternatives: **Matthew 25:46** – *"And these will go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into eternal life."*
3. To die in Jesus is to die in THE WAY to ETERNAL LIFE!
 - a. The apostle John spoke of this in the book of Revelation:
Revelation 14:13 – *Then I heard a voice from heaven saying to me, "Write: 'Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on.' "Yes," says the Spirit, "that they may rest from their labors, and their works follow them."*

CONCLUSION:

- I. I hope all this has perhaps sparked your interest a little in wanting to learn more about Jesus as ***"The Way."***
 - A. As I mentioned at the beginning of this study, we'll be exploring all the wonderful blessings that can be found ONLY in Jesus.
 1. Therefore, my purpose in this series is really two-fold:
 - a. For those who are Christians, I hope these lessons increase your appreciation of Jesus as your Lord and Savior, so you will want to serve Him with greater zeal.

- b. And for those who are not Christians, I hope these lessons encourage you to let Jesus be YOUR way to everything that is truly good, both in this life and in the life to come!
- II. Have you ever thought about what life would be like WITHOUT Jesus Christ, and all he offers?
- A. The apostle Paul described what life was like without Jesus Christ before the gospel of Christ was preached to Gentiles (non-Jews) like those in the city of Ephesus.
 - 1. Paul reminds them: **Ephesians 2:12** – *... at that time you were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world.*
 - 2. But in the opening remarks of this same letter, the apostle Paul affirms the greatest of all blessings to be found in Jesus:
 - a. He simply put it this way: **Ephesians 1:7** – *In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace.*
 - B. Paul says those who were without Christ, without hope and without God in the world, have now obtained redemption and the forgiveness of their sins by the grace of God.

1. But only because they have been redeemed by the blood of Jesus Christ.
- C. Have you received redemption and remission of sins through the blood of Jesus Christ?
1. If you haven't, then come to Jesus Christ in complete faith and obedience, and be baptized into Jesus Christ for the remission (or forgiveness) of every sin you've ever committed.
 2. And if you have received redemption and remission of sins through the blood of Jesus, but have turned away and gone back into the world, the Lord stands ready to receive you and welcome you back home – if you will only confess those sins to him.