

A Journey with Christ the Messiah

The Heart of the Bible

John 1:1-14

INTRODUCTION:

This morning we are starting a new series that I have entitled *A Journey with Christ the Messiah*. This series will begin during this Christmas season and, Lord willing, culminate after the Easter season. It is my goal to go both through the old and the new testaments and discover **Christ the Messiah** that is written there. We will explore the old testament prophecies concerning Him and the fulfillment of those prophecies in the new testament. We will look at His birth, His character, His teachings, His miracles, His prophecies, some supernatural events that fulfilled prophecy, and most importantly, His death, burial, and resurrection from the dead and the significance of those events.

Through this journey, our goal will be to fully understand that Jesus **WAS** Who He claimed to be, the Messiah, the Son of God and the Son of man. During this journey we will also fully understand that the Bible has to be the inspired Word of God.

We will look at the testimony of the early disciples and the apostles who were so convinced of the Messiah that they were willing to die in order to proclaim the good news to the world. Such as Peter who wanted everyone to know that Jesus was Who He claimed to be. Peter said, I lived with Him and was taught by Him and I witnessed His miracles with my own eyes. I saw old testament prophecy and even some of Jesus' prophecies fulfilled before my eyes, I saw Him crucified on the cross as He had foretold, and witnessed the supernatural events during His death on the cross (the earthquake, the darkness in the middle of the day, and the veil in the temple torn from top to bottom). I saw and spoke with Jesus, in person, after the resurrection, and I witnessed Christ's glory as He ascended into the clouds before my own eyes! Where I **EVEN** heard **the voice of God** saying "This is My beloved Son in Whom I am well pleased"! **I WANT YOU TO KNOW THAT HE IS THE MESSIAH, THE SON OF THE LIVING GOD!**

We do not get to experience Christ in person as Peter and others during the time of Christ but we do have the experiences revealed to us through the inspired scriptures.

Let's begin the journey!

All Stand and Read Scripture

John 1:1-14 (NASB)

1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.
2 He was in the beginning with God. 3 All things came into being through Him, and apart from Him nothing came into being that has come into being. 4 In Him was life, and the life was the Light of men. 5 The Light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it.

6 There came a man sent from God, whose name was John. 7 He came as a witness, to testify about the Light, so that all might believe through him. 8 He was not the Light, but *he came* to testify about the Light.

9 There was the true Light which, coming into the world, enlightens every man. 10 He was in the world, and the world was made through Him, and the world did not know Him.

11 He came to His own, and those who were His own did not receive Him. 12 But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, *even* to those who believe in His name, 13 who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God.

14 And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we saw His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth.

As we prepare to begin this journey, let's bow in a word of prayer.

Prayer

I. WHAT IS THE HEART OF THE BIBLE?

The remainder of this message will be from the books of Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, and Acts the first few verses of each of the first chapters which you will find in your outlines.

The first four books are called the Gospels. The word Gospel means "good news" or "glad tidings". The "Heart of the Bible" is great news! They are bound up in these four books.

The Bible is like a man. Just like a man's heart, it has a portion of it **into** which and **out of** which everything flows. What is the heart of the Bible?

Anyone who is an author or a speaker knows that you want your first words to grab your listeners by the throat and not let them go. You want to get your point right out there. You will notice that each of the Gospel writers are doing that.

Let look at each of the Gospels opening verses. If we are trying to discover what the writers are saying that their book is about, then read what are they revealing from the beginning.

Matthew 1:1a (NASB)

1 The record of the genealogy of Jesus **the Messiah...**

Mark 1:1 (NASB)

1 The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, **the Son of God.**

Notice that this is the same subject (Jesus) that Matthew had.

Luke 1:1(NASB)

1 Inasmuch as many have undertaken to compile an account of the things accomplished (or believed) among us,

You might ask, "What are those things that are believed among us?" Well, Luke explained it more specifically in the opening verses of Acts when he points back to his first book Luke.

Acts 1:1 (NASB)

1 The first account I composed,(the first account was what? The book of Luke.) Theophilus, about all that **Jesus** (the same subject as Matthew and Mark) **began to do and teach,**

When you look at John's opening, he uses a different title for the same person when he writes...

John 1:1-5 (NASB)

1 In the beginning was the Word, I am going to pause here. John is not talking about something spoken or written when he uses the term "Word". We know that because he himself specifies what he is talking about 13 verses later.

In verse 14, John says this...

John 1:14a (NASB)

¹⁴ And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us,

So he is not talking about a spoken word, but he is talking about a being. The same subject as Matthew, Mark, and Luke. The thing that you will immediately notice is that the heart of the Bible is that you are not being primarily being taught a new philosophy or a new set of laws by which to live. There is a philosophy that Jesus is teaching and He does give certain laws but that is not the primary thought. The primary subject matter is not philosophical or legal. The primary subject is a person. It is Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the promised Messiah.

II. WHO IS JESUS?

So if you are going to read a book about a person, what are you going to find out about that individual? What are the Gospels actually telling us about this person?

Once again the writers tell us right away. Look back at...

Matthew 1:1 (NASB)

1 The record of the genealogy of Jesus the Messiah,(and notice these words) **the son of David, the son of Abraham:**

Look at Mark's opening:

Mark 1:1 (NASB)

1 The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, **the Son of God.**

Both of those writers are telling you something about that person. What are they telling us? If you had to explain what you are reading here? They are both telling you what about Him? **He is the Son of God and the son of man!**

Have you ever heard the little piece of poetry by Rudyard Kipling?

ILLUSTRATION:

I KEEP six honest serving-men
(They taught me all I knew);
Their names are What and Why and When
And How and Where and Who.

Kipling is telling us that everything that we know is an answer to one of those six questions. All human information is an answer to one of those six questions.

Which of these questions are being answered by the writers?

WHO He is! When you read the Gospels you are reading about this person and you find out just exactly WHO He is.

And what is the answer from the Gospels to that? Matthew says Jesus is **the son of David, the son of Abraham**. Now if He is the son of human beings then He is a MAN!

On the other hand, Mark tells us "**The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.**" What is clear here is that Jesus is something beyond humanity. What the Gospels are actually telling us is that Jesus is BOTH the Son God and the son of Man.

Do you realize that that issue is the central issue of human history? Who is this individual? Because when you read the Gospels it is incredible what He does. When Jesus would encounter people who were under the absolute control of a demon or demons, the demons would shriek in terror.

One time Jesus stood up in a boat during a raging storm in the middle of a hundred square miles of water that was threatening to capsize the boat and He rebuked the winds and the sea and it became perfectly calm. The disciples were amazed and said, "**What kind of a man is this, that even the winds and the sea obey Him?**" Matt. 8:27.

The question from the unbeliever might be "How do you know that they are not lying or embellishing the story?" That is a good question, because if it is not true, then I am not staking my soul on what they wrote. And it would no longer be "good news".

But if it is true that all of those things took place, then I DO have a question. Mine is the same question the disciples had "**What kind of a man is this, that even the winds and the sea obey Him?**"

There is no question He is a man. Matthew says that He is a man, the Son of David, the Son of Abraham. He is in that lineage. Luke tells us that Jesus was conceived and Luke was a doctor. And as we continue to read in the Gospels we learn that He grew physically and He learned mentally. We learn that he hungered and He thirsted. He became tired and He wept. He bled and physically died. THAT IS A MAN!

On the other hand the Gospels tells us that Jesus was the Son of God. He was born of a virgin and did not have an earthly father. That became the controversy of Jesus' entire ministry.

You will find in the Gospel of John, people will over and over and over continue to ask Jesus "Where did you come from? Who is your father?" Jesus would reply like this. On some occasions He would say "I am the Son of God". As soon as He would say that the Jews would know exactly what He was claiming and they would take up stones to stone Him and Jesus would ask "For what good deed are you stoning Me?" They would reply, "Not for any good deed that you have done, but because, You being a man, are claiming to be God. We are stoning You for blasphemy! You know, Jesus NEVER denied their interpretation. He did not back away from it to save His skin. In fact He **elevated** it. He would say to them "I and God the Father that you are talking about, We are ONE.

On another occasion He said to His own followers, "He that has seen Me has seen the Father".

On other occasions He would use the sacred name of God and say that "I AM". For instance He said "Before Abraham was, (remember what Matthew said, He is the Son of David and the Son of who? Abraham. And the Jews were talking about their father Abraham and how their father Abraham was greater than anyone, Jesus said "Alright, I am going to tell you something "Before Abraham was, I AM".

What He is claiming is the preexistence of deity before He became a man. This paradox, a complicated truth that seems utterly impossible, of somehow being both God and man was actually introduced in the opening statement of the Gospel of John.

John 1:1-2,14a (NASB)

1 In the beginning (way back at the beginning. Remember what he said? "Before Abraham was, I AM") **In the beginning was the Word,**

and the Word was with God (It is as if there are not one but two beings there) **the Word was with God,** (but then look at the next line) **and the Word was God.** This is exactly what Jesus taught "I and My Father are (what? You tell me!) ONE.

And what did verse 14 tell us? **¹⁴ And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us,...**

These deep paradoxical truths about Who He is that Jesus **expanded** to the Jews and others are actually introduced in the opening statements of the Gospels.

If you can **believe** the first lines of the Gospels, then nothing you read in them after that should be hard for you to **accept**. Because all the basic truths of His person is introduced in these opening statements.

III. WHAT DID JESUS DO AND TEACH?.

The Gospels explain who Jesus is, but secondly they teach us what He did.

Acts 1:1 (NASB)

1 The first account I composed, Theophilus, about all that **Jesus** began to **do and teach**,

The Gospels are the introduction of the person and the work of Jesus Christ. They are going to introduce you to three things: Who Jesus is. What Jesus did. And What Jesus said and taught.

What exactly did He do that makes Him the heart of the Bible? The Gospels devote a large portion to one day in Jesus' life. That is the day that the Jewish leaders handed Jesus over to the Roman authorities and demanded His death. And He was crucified.

But none of the Gospels ends there because it would not be very good news if Jesus died and was buried and everything ended. We are told that Jesus arose from the dead three days later.

CONCLUSION:

The scriptures tell us that Jesus came to this earth to save mankind. The human race was cast into sin when Adam and Eve ate of the forbidden fruit in the Garden of Eden.

We are all sinners and have no way on our own to restore ourselves from our sins to full righteousness. We must be righteous in order to live with God.

Jesus died on the cross as a perfect sacrifice to save us from our sins. He only asks that we believe in Him and turn our lives over to Him in full submission to His will.

50 days after Christ's death on the cross, Peter told the Jews on the day of Pentecost that they were guilty of crucifying the Son of God on the cross.

Acts 2:37-41 (NASB)

³⁷ Now when they heard *this*, they were pierced to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, "Brethren, what shall we do?" ³⁸ Peter *said* to them, "Repent, and each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. ³⁹ For the promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off, as many as the Lord our God will call to Himself." ⁴⁰ And with many other words he solemnly testified and kept on exhorting them, saying, "Be saved from this perverse generation!" ⁴¹ So then, those who had received his word were baptized; and that day there were added about three thousand souls.

If you do not know Christ as your Lord and Savior, I invite you to come forward this morning and place your faith in Christ and be immersed in the waters of baptism for the forgiveness of your sins. Don't wait until you have cleaned up your life. **You don't clean yourself up to come to the Christ; you surrender yourself to Christ, to let Him clean you up!**

He is Lord!