

In Memoriam

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In Memoriam

A Man Like No Other

Friends, we are reading this because of the life and death of one man. He is a man like no other. This one life has had a significant impact upon our own, one so profound that it changed the course of human history and the course of each of our lives individually. Were it not for him, we would not be the men and women we are, nor, would we even be reading this now.

It is recorded of him, and him alone: "And there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved." Acts 4:12 ESV

If that is not clear enough, John the Baptist testified of Christ Jesus saying, "He who believes in the Son has eternal life; but he who does not obey the Son will not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him." John 3:36 NASB

It is through Him and Him alone that we can have a standing before God. We are told this in Rom. 4:22-Rom 5:1: "And therefore it was imputed to him [Abraham] for righteousness. Now it was not written for his sake alone, that it was imputed to him; But for us also, to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead; Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification. Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ:"

His Identity

Jesus never claimed to be anything more than the Son of God. He did not claim to be God, nor did He ever claim to be part of God.

Jesus supported His claim to be the Son of God using the requirements of the Law: "A single witness shall not rise up against a man on account of any iniquity or any sin which he has committed; on the evidence of two or three witnesses a matter shall be confirmed." Deut. 19:15 NASB

Jesus cites John the Baptist as His first witness: "If I alone testify about Myself, My testimony is not true. There is another who testifies of Me, and I know that the testimony which He gives about Me is true. You have sent to John, and he has testified to the truth." John 5:31-33 NASB

What was the testimony of John the Baptist regarding Jesus? John 3:28-36 (NASB) says: "You yourselves are my witnesses that I said, 'I am not the Christ,' but, 'I have been sent ahead of Him.' He who has the bride is the bridegroom; but the friend of the bridegroom, who stands and hears him, rejoices greatly because of the bridegroom's voice. So this joy of mine has been made full. He must increase, but I must decrease. He who comes from above is above all, he who is of the earth is from the earth and speaks of the earth. He who comes from heaven is above all. What He has seen and heard, of that He testifies; and no one receives His testimony. He who has received His testimony has set his seal to this, that God is true. For He whom God has sent speaks the words of God; for He gives the Spirit without measure. The Father loves the Son and has given all things into His hand. He who believes in the Son has eternal life; but he who does not obey the Son will not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him."

Notice how John says Jesus is the Son of God and nothing more?

Then Jesus cites His second witness saying in John 5:36: "But the testimony which I have is greater than the testimony of John; for the works which the Father has given Me to accomplish--the very works that I do--testify about Me, that the Father has sent Me."

What are "the works" that Jesus did? There are three main types of works the Lord Jesus performed. The first type is the many miracles He performed. Matt. 16:9-10 summarizes two miracles mentioning that 5 loaves of bread was sufficient to feed 5,000, and 7 loaves was more than enough to feed 4,000. It even plainly states that there were leftovers. The second type of work was the many healings the Lord Jesus performed. The greatest of these is recorded in John chapter 9 where a man blind from birth was healed and given sight. The last and greatest type of work He performed was restoring life to individuals who had already died. He performed three such miracles as proof of who He was. In Luke 7:11-16 He raised the widow's son back to life during the funeral procession. In Luke 8:41-56, He raised Jairus' daughter back to life and in John 11 He raised Lazarus, who was dead and buried already, back to life.

The religious leaders and many others recognized the works Jesus did as signs. Consider the conversation between Jesus and Nicodemus in John 3:1-2: "Now there was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews; this man came to Jesus by night and said to Him, 'Rabbi, we know that You have come from God as a teacher; for no one can do these signs that You do unless God is with him.'" Even the man born blind who was made to see recognized the miracle as a sign: John 9:30-33, (Healed man) "'Since the beginning of time it has never been heard that anyone opened the eyes of a person born blind. If this man were not from God, He could do nothing.'" John 9:32-33 NASB And lastly, the Apostles recognized and proclaimed that God was working through the Lord Jesus: Acts 2:22, (Peter/Apostles) "...miracles and wonders and signs which God performed through Him in your midst..."

Jesus, citing His third witness, says in John 5:37 NASB, "And the Father who sent Me, He has testified of Me. You have neither heard His voice at any time nor seen His form. The Father testified of Jesus twice, both times saying Jesus was His Son. The first time was at Jesus' baptism and is recorded in Luke 3:21-22 NASB: "Now when all the people were baptized, Jesus was also baptized, and while He was praying, heaven was opened, and the Holy Spirit descended upon Him in bodily form like a dove, and a voice came out of heaven, 'You are My beloved Son, in You I am well-pleased.'" The second time was when Jesus was transfigured and is recorded in Matt.17:2, 5 NASB:"And He was transfigured before them; and His face shone like the sun, and His garments became as white as light. ... While He was still speaking, a bright cloud overshadowed them, and behold, a voice out of the cloud said, 'This is My beloved Son, with whom I am well-pleased; listen to Him!'"

No one could do these works unless he was of God.

His Life

His birth was eagerly looked forward to, for centuries in fact. However, when the time came, his mother was very surprised by her pregnancy. When her fiancé found out, he didn't want to marry her. It took an angelic intervention to convince him to proceed with their marriage: "But when he [Joseph] had considered this, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife; for the Child who has been conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit." Matt.1:20 NASB

The future King of the universe was born in a barn to a humble virgin woman while traveling on the road because there was no other place to stay. And they named him Jesus, "Jehovah is Salvation", as directed to by the angel who foretold his birth: "She [Mary] will bear a Son; and you [Joseph] shall call His name Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins." Matt. 1:21 NASB

Jesus learned the trade of carpentry from his stepfather; He learned the skills of taking an object (a piece of wood) in one form, and transforming it into a much more useful object in another form, i.e., furniture, tableware, housing, tools, farm implements, etc. He learned and practiced this trade from the age of twelve until He was thirty years old. Then He took that skill, the craft of transformation, and applied it in his daily life for the next three and a half years on people as an itinerate teacher, teaching all who would listen about His Father in Heaven and his purpose in life and impacting their lives for repentance and change.

No other life has been so longed for, so loved, and yet, so despised. Every individual that encounters the Lord Jesus has a decision to make; it is an unavoidable one. You either accept Him as your Savior or you reject Him. There

is no middle ground. For the world of mankind the prospect of life in and beyond the Millennial Age hinges upon the decision they make regarding Him. The world of mankind makes this choice in the future. In contrast we, and many others who have made a dedication of their life in service to Christ Jesus since the Lord Jesus' resurrection, have the opportunity now to respond to a call to life above that of human perfection as sons and joint-heirs with the Lord Jesus.

For three and a half years He walked the land of Israel, healing the sick, feeding the hungry, and teaching about the kingdom of heaven. He gathered many together who were trying to serve God, and from these, He chose disciples, and from them, He chose twelve men to be his closest associates and Apostles.

The Greek word for "disciple" in Strong's Concordance (#3101) means "*A learner, a pupil*".

The Greek word for "Apostle" (Strong's 652) means "*a delegate, messenger, one sent forth with orders...specifically applied to the twelve apostles of Christ*".

This man, Jesus, has been called Master and teacher, saint and sinner, blasphemer and healer, Savior and Messiah. He was cursed, struck, and spit upon; He was blessed, praised and cried over. He was whipped, beaten, crucified and laid in another's tomb.

And no matter what his fellow man said or did to him, He was true to his cause--doing the will of His Father in heaven. He arose from the dead on the third day and became victor over the power of death, not only for himself, but also for every man, woman and child who was ever conceived over the course of human history.

Few recognized these events, the most significant events in the course of human history; events that actually changed the course of the world.

The hymns we sing, and the prayers we pray inadequately express the love and appreciation we have of our Lord Jesus and the gift of His life on our behalf.

It is very difficult to separate the life of the Lord Jesus from His teachings because He lived what He taught. But we want to reflect on:

His Teachings

When one thinks about what the Lord Jesus taught – perhaps the Beatitudes, the Parables, the answers He gave to questions, or the personal fellowship recorded with his disciples comes to mind.

How does one rank the Lord Jesus' teachings in order of importance? How does one, can one, even designate one as more important than another? What criteria can one use to determine which of them is the most important?

Jesus talked to/taught many different people, but did He talk or teach differently to the different demographics of people? Did He teach differently to the general Israelite than He did to the religious leaders? Did He teach differently to the religious leaders than He did to his disciples? Did He teach differently to his disciples than He did to his Apostles?

I think many would agree that He did. In a general way that is true, He didn't teach the general public the same as He taught his apostles. However, all of his teachings were to bring the hearer, whatever their demographic, into a closer relationship as a son of God during the Gospel Age. As the hearer responded and pursued the message they were hearing, they drew closer to the Lord Jesus. As they drew closer to Him, He taught them deeper truths. So, those who loved the Lord Jesus and recognized Him as the Messiah changed the demographic group they were in; they went generally from unbeliever to believer. They moved from the demographic of General Israelite or Religious Leader to that of a Disciple and some then moved from the group of Disciple to a subset of Apostleship. But after our Lord Jesus' death and resurrection *many* moved from those demographics into Sonship.

Let's look at what He taught the different demographic groups.

General Israelite

After hearing about John the Baptist's death Jesus left Nazareth, withdrew into Galilee, settled in Capernaum and Matthew 4:17 NASB says, "From that time Jesus began to preach and say, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."

We read in Matthew 4:23-25 NASB, "Jesus was going throughout all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom, and **healing** every kind of disease and every kind of sickness among the people. The news about Him spread throughout all Syria; and they brought to Him all who were ill, those suffering with various diseases and pains, demoniacs, epileptics, paralytics; and He healed them. Large crowds followed Him from Galilee and the Decapolis and Jerusalem and Judea and from beyond the Jordan."

In Matthew chapters 5 - 7 we have the record of the Sermon on the Mount. "When Jesus saw the crowds, He went up on the mountain; and after He sat down, His disciples came to Him. He opened His mouth and began to teach them..." Matt. 5:1-2 NASB

He started with the teaching we call the Beatitudes (Matt. 5:3-12 NASB):

"Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

"Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.

"Blessed are the gentle, for they shall inherit the earth.

"Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied.

"Blessed are the merciful, for they shall receive mercy.

"Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.

"Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God.

"Blessed are those who have been persecuted for the sake of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

"Blessed are you when people insult you and persecute you, and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of Me.

"Rejoice and be glad, for your reward in heaven is great; for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you."

He continues with teaching about salt and light: "You are the salt of the earth; but if the salt has become tasteless, how can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled under foot by men." Matt. 5:13 NASB

"Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven." Matt. 5:16 NASB

He taught that there was more to the Laws regulating murder, adultery, divorce, vows, justice and love than what they had been taught. He taught they had to elevate their game, they must change their perspective of the Law from "What am I not allowed?" (the "*shall nots*," if you will) to "What does love require me to do?"

In chapter 6 Jesus gave an example of piety, brevity, devotion, and trust in the form of a petition that is known as "The Lord's Prayer".

Then He taught about how little importance believers should place upon the things of this earth (such as wealth, earthly friendships, power, family relationships, social distinction, etc.), and that the pursuit of heavenly treasures was far more important: "But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys, and where thieves do not break in or steal; for where your treasure is, there your heart will be also." Matt. 6:20-21 NASB

He taught instead of striving for an accumulation of material goods, believers should seek first the kingdom of God and its righteousness, and all other necessary things would be provided according to the Father's will: "But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you." Matt. 6:33 NASB

In chapter 7 the Lord Jesus gave explicit instructions that we should not judge others. (The word “judge” comes from Strong’s No.2919 and includes such meanings as ‘try’, ‘punish’, and ‘condemn’.)

Then He teaches the importance of diligence in self-examination (remove the log from your own eye first) as well as seeking the Lord’s will and more of the Holy Spirit. “Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you.” Matt. 7:7 NASB

He continues with the lesson of the Golden Rule: our Father in heaven will reward our efforts to pursue Him far beyond what a parent would do for his child. “Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets.” Matt.7:12

Then the Lord Jesus teaches discretion; judge by the results and not by profession only. Those who claim to know God and those whom God claims to know may not be one and the same. “Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father who is in heaven will enter.” Matt. 7:21 NASB

This Sermon on the Mount concludes with a simile: those who build a structure of faith and character likeness upon the foundation of Christ Jesus survive the storms and those who don’t - don’t! “And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and slammed against that house; and yet it did not fall, for it had been founded on the rock. Everyone who hears these words of Mine and does not act on them, will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand.” Matt.7:25-26 NASB

The teachings were aimed to elevate and call the hearer closer. They covered foundational truths of character and conduct.

Now, let’s consider the next demographic group of...

Religious Leaders

We may be familiar with the interchange between Nicodemus and the Lord Jesus. Nicodemus comes to Jesus and acknowledges that he recognizes Jesus as a teacher sent from God. Jesus’ reply, “...unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God.” (John 3:3 NASB) is, in effect, telling Nicodemus that acknowledgment of the Christ without transformation of the heart (begetting of the Holy Spirit) is of little value.

Continuing, the Lord Jesus teaches Nicodemus. We quote from the book, “What Pastor Russell Said”, page 796:2 “...*no Jew could become a follower of the Lord Jesus and enter into the kingdom, until first of all he had experienced this reformation (a return to God and to a recognition of the repentance and*

reformation of heart and life) and had been baptized, 'born of water,' in addition to this there must be the begetting of the spirit, and then in the resurrection, the birth to the spirit nature—'born of the spirit.' Only those who experience this complete reformation of heart and mind, and who are 'changed' in the resurrection, will ever enter into the kingdom of God."

Much has been said about Nicodemus' lack of faith or courage, but the Lord Jesus *doesn't* say any such thing! What we should note is that it was Nicodemus who stood up for Jesus before the other Pharisees and it was Nicodemus who defiled himself and became unclean under the Law (preventing him from participating in the Passover) when he buried the Lord Jesus.

Contrast this to what the Lord Jesus *did* say about the religious leaders in Matthew 23 where most of the chapter is condemnation for their hypocrisy, teachings and spiritual blindness. He makes eight pronouncements of 'woe', calls them 'blind' four times, 'fools' two times, and 'serpents' and 'vipers' once each.

He was the hardest on the religious leaders because they should have known better; they were shepherds and teachers, and they claimed to see, (though they actually did not). For those reasons Jesus held them accountable before the nation of Israel.

Many of the religious leaders heard the same teachings as the other Israelites, but their station and pride prevented them from drawing closer and changing their attitude. So the Master collectively rebuked them for the hardness of their hearts and their blindness of sight.

The third demographic group we want to consider are the...

Disciples

Self Denial

Listen carefully to the next three examples of teaching.

"Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any [man] will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me." Matt.16:24 KJV

"But Jesus said to him, "No one, after putting his hand to the plow and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God." Luke 9:62 NASB

"Then He left the crowds and went into the house. And His disciples came to Him and said, "Explain to us the parable of the tares of the field." Matt.13:36 NASB

Did you notice how the emphases of Jesus' teachings vary from the other demographic groups? To the general Israelite audience He taught morals, principles, character and conduct. To the disciples He is teaching self denial, sacrifice and commitment. While Jesus spoke many parables to a general audience, He gave the explanations to His disciples.

You may be familiar with the exchange between Jesus and His disciples as recorded in John 6. Consider these excerpts from a longer conversation.

"I am the living bread that came down out of heaven; if anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever; and the bread also which I will give for the life of the world is My flesh.'... So Jesus said to them, 'Truly, truly, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, you have no life in yourselves. He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day. For My flesh is true food, and My blood is true drink. He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood abides in Me, and I in him.'... Therefore many of His disciples, when they heard this said, 'This is a difficult statement; who can listen to it?'... But Jesus, conscious that His disciples grumbled at this, said to them, 'Does this cause you to stumble?'... And He was saying, 'For this reason I have said to you, that no one can come to Me unless it has been granted him from the Father.'" John 6:51, 53-56, 60, 61, 65 NASB

The result of this conversation is recorded in the next verse: "As a result of this many of His disciples withdrew and were not walking with Him anymore." John 6:66 NASB

He had to winnow the wheat. We remember what Jesus said in Matthew 22:14 NASB, "For many are called, but few are chosen."

The Apostles are the last demographic group and, by extension, include those after His resurrection who are running for the prize of the High Calling.

Apostles

Love

I think most would agree that the theme of love was one of the major teachings of the Lord Jesus.

We mentioned earlier that Jesus elevated his teaching as the demographic group became closer to him. Here is an example. Note how Jesus replied when asked by a religious leader what one must do to inherit eternal life.

"And a lawyer stood up and put Him to the test, saying, 'Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?' And He said to him, 'What is written in the Law? How does it read to you?' And he answered, 'YOU SHALL LOVE THE LORD YOUR GOD WITH ALL YOUR HEART, AND WITH ALL YOUR SOUL, AND WITH ALL YOUR

STRENGTH, AND WITH ALL YOUR MIND; AND YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF.' And He said to him, 'You have answered correctly; DO THIS AND YOU WILL LIVE.'" Luke 10:25-28 NASB

You may remember that in the upper room with his Apostles He said in John 13:34-35 NASB, "A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another, even as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all men will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another."

This teaching was so important that Jesus said it three times to his Apostles, and He said it only in the conversation started in the upper room (John 13:34) and continued on the way to the garden. (John 15:12,17) It was one of his very last teachings.

If it was so important, why didn't Jesus state this to the lawyer who asked about eternal life? Why are His Apostles **the first ones** to hear about a new commandment?

Perhaps because it didn't apply to those who would not be invited into sonship; it would apply only to those who would be running for the prize of the high calling. For those who are not, like the lawyer at that point in time, eternal life in the kingdom of God during the Millennial Age is dependent upon embracing and living these two commandments - hence, Jesus' answer. But, for the Apostles and the Church, a selfless, Godlike love is required to become heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ.

This was so impressed upon them that the Apostle John, many years later, writes of the importance of love in his epistle in 1John 4:20-21 NASB, "If someone says, 'I love God,' and hates his brother, he is a liar; for the one who does not love his brother whom he has seen, cannot love God whom he has not seen. And this commandment we have from Him, that the one who loves God should love his brother also."

Servanthood

Another of the major teachings of the Lord Jesus to the Apostles concerned Servanthood.

Let's read what the Lord Jesus taught about service.

"But Jesus called them [sons of Zebedee] to Himself and said, 'You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great men exercise authority over them. It is not this way among you, but whoever wishes to become great among you shall be your servant, and whoever wishes to be first among you shall be your slave; just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many.'" Matt. 20:25-28 NASB

He said in Matthew 23:11-12 KJV, "But he that is greatest among you shall be your servant. And whosoever shall exalt himself shall be abased; and he that shall humble himself shall be exalted".

"Then He poured water into the basin, and began to wash the disciples' feet and to wipe them with the towel with which He was girded." John 13:5 NASB

"If I then, the Lord and the Teacher, washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet." John 13:14 NASB

Servanthood is about a humble condition of heart; it is the condition or state of being a servant to others. For followers of Christ it means submission to our Father in Heaven and submission to Christ first, then submission to one another. It is about service to others rather than the service of self. It is willingly giving of oneself to minister for and to others - doing whatever it takes to accomplish what is best for another.

Yes, the Lord Jesus did teach differently to the different demographic groups – but all of His teachings had the same goal and purpose! He was calling out those 'true Israelites' indeed and preparing them for the roles they would fill as leaders in the true faith. His teachings to each group became more specific and demanding in preparation for the role they would have to complete - without Him.

His Invitation

Those who came to the Lord Jesus recognized that He was different from everyone else. He taught with authority, He stood up to the religious leaders; He told stories using everyday situations to teach spiritual truths, He made his audiences think. And, He gave relief to many through healing, but He was looking for the pure of heart - the "Israelite indeed".

When you study the topic of the call of the Church you quickly realize that the Lord Jesus said very little about the invitation into sonship and participation with Him in the body of the Church. After being begotten of the Holy Spirit His apostles did that work for Him, they taught and explained this doctrine to us.

But the Lord Jesus, in a subtle way, told us of this invitation. It is recorded in the seventeenth chapter of the book of John in a very intimate prayer for his current and future followers. The whole chapter applies but let's consider John 17:13-26.

"But now I come to You; and these things I speak in the world so that they may have My joy made full in themselves. I have given them Your word; and the world has hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. I do not ask You to take them out of the world, but to keep them from the evil one. They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. Sanctify them in the truth; Your word is truth. As You sent Me into the world, I also have sent

them into the world. For their sakes I sanctify Myself, that they themselves also may be sanctified in truth. I do not ask on behalf of these alone, but for those also who believe in Me through their word; that they may all be one; even as You, Father, are in Me and I in You, that they also may be in Us, so that the world may believe that You sent Me. The glory which You have given Me I have given to them, that they may be one, just as We are one; I in them and You in Me, that they may be perfected in unity, so that the world may know that You sent Me, and loved them, even as You have loved Me. Father, I desire that they also, whom You have given Me, be with Me where I am, so that they may see My glory which You have given Me, for You loved Me before the foundation of the world. O righteous Father, although the world has not known You, yet I have known You; and these have known that You sent Me; and I have made Your name known to them, and will make it known, so that the love with which You loved Me may be in them, and I in them." John 17:13-26 NASB

His Death and Legacy

Isaiah, the prophet, gave the prophecy of the Lord Jesus' death about 750 years (in the eighth century B.C) before Jesus' crucifixion. It was written during the times of four kings of Israel and Judah: Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz and Hezekiah, spanning a period of time of at least forty years. Chapter 53 of Isaiah is known as the Great Prophecy of the Suffering Servant.

In Isaiah 53:5-6, 8, 12 (The New Living Translation) we read, "But He was wounded and crushed for our sins. He was beaten that we might have peace. He was whipped, and we were healed! All of us have strayed away like sheep. We have left God's paths to follow our own. Yet the Lord laid on Him the guilt and sins of us all. From prison and trial they led Him away to His death. But who among the people realized that He was dying for their sins – that He was suffering their punishment? I will give Him the honors of One who is mighty and great, because He exposed Himself to death. He was counted among those who were sinners. He bore the sins of many and interceded for sinners."

Much has been said about the unfairness and illegality of the inquisitions and trials of the Lord Jesus, how the Sadducees and the Pharisees united to rid themselves of a common enemy, of the false witnesses, of the crowd clamoring for Barabbas, and the cruel process of death on the cross.

While all that is true, the most important thing to remember is that the Lord Jesus **had the resources**, both heavenly and mentally, **to stop the process** at any point - and **He did not!** Though He could have – He **didn't!** And for that, we are most thankful!!

Listen to what the Apostles say about Him (all from the New Living Translation):

“He is the One all the prophets testified about, saying that everyone who believes in Him will have their sins forgiven through His name.” Acts 10:43

“Brothers, listen! In this man Jesus there is forgiveness for your sins. Everyone who believes in Him is freed from all guilt and declared right with God – something the Jewish law could never do.” Acts 13:38-39

“I passed on to you what was most important and what had also been passed on to me – that Christ died for our sins, just as the Scriptures said. He was buried, and He was raised from the dead on the third day, as the Scriptures said.”
1 Cor. 15:3-4

“He is so rich in kindness that He purchased our freedom through the blood of His Son, and our sins are forgiven.” Eph. 1:7

“He personally carried away our sins in His own body on the cross so we can be dead to sin and live for what is right. You have been healed by His wounds.”
1 Pet. 2:24

Listen to what the Apostle Paul says about the legacy the Lord Jesus left us, and how we can make the most of it.

“Long ago, even before He made the world, God loved us and chose us in Christ to be holy and without fault in His eyes. His unchanging plan has always been to adopt us into His own family by bringing us to Himself through Jesus Christ. And this gave Him great pleasure. Now He is far above any ruler or authority or power or leader or anything else in this world or in the world to come. And God has put all things under the authority of Christ, and He gave Him this authority for the benefit of the church. And the church is His body; it is filled by Christ, who fills everything everywhere with His presence.” Eph. 1:4-5, 21-23

“We do this [become the Church] by keeping our eyes on Jesus, on whom our faith depends from start to finish. He was willing to die a shameful death on the cross because of the joy He knew would be His afterward. Now He is seated in the place of highest honor beside God’s throne in heaven.” Heb. 12:2

Conclusion

No other individual has had such an impact upon the human race. No other had their birth, their purpose and their death prophesied centuries before their birth. No other has had the approval of God as He has. No other has given up their life, a perfect life, as a ransom for the human race. No other has given up their life on a spiritual plane to become a man, to die as a man so that we might have life, and then to be rewarded with divine life - at the right hand of God.

We study His life and teachings because we love Him, and “We love Him because He first loved us.” 1 John 4:19

You and I have the opportunity to be with Him in His kingdom, to be joint-heirs as Sons of God. Do we really understand what that means? We spend years of our lives trying to serve Him and even at our very best, we are not very good servants at all.

As you pursue our Lord Jesus, we encourage you to follow his example:
Walk in His footsteps and do not step outside of them.
Hold tighter to His hand than a child holds their parent's.

“...love not in words only nor with the lips, but in deed and in truth.”
1John 3:18 Weymouth New Testament

“Learn to be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, just as God in Christ has also forgiven you.” Eph. 4:31,32 WNT...

“Humble yourselves therefore beneath the mighty hand of God, so that at the right time He may set you on high.” 1Pet. 5:6 WNT

and

“Keep yourselves in the love of God, waiting anxiously for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ to eternal life.” Jude 1:21 NASB

We have come full circle and end with the very same verse we first cited, “And there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved.” Acts 4:12 ESV

May we live our lives in such a way that they reflect that we really, truly believe this!