

A close-up photograph of red granite with a dark, speckled texture and prominent veins. The text is overlaid on this image.

Red Granite

31 Daily Devotions

JESUS CHRIST THE MYSTERY UNCOVERED

brought to you by
Marshall and Jessica Jones

Published by
Red Thread Poets

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ENDORSEMENTS

From: Kelli

[November 2020]

Comment from Kelli, who read the Climb, a poem by Marshall on Red Thread Poets Website
www.redthreadpoets.com/the-climb/

Re: The Climb, by Marshall Jones:

This poem personally speaks to my heart because I know the struggle of many who are fighting for their freedom from incarceration. Prisons are full of people who have been given unmerciful harsh sentencing who are just wanting to be given a chance to redeem themselves in society to help others. God wants to use those who have surrendered their hearts to His Son Jesus Christ who's incarcerated to become the mentors for our youths in today's culture. God has a plan for every individual's life. Keeping people confined to incarceration who God need to be Ambassadors for His Kingdom is certainly not the answer. Treating all people how one would want to be treated should be the defining moment when passing a judgment onto others. Love and mercy covers a multitude of sins. God and the Lord Jesus are expressing love and mercy everyday towards all people and humanity must practice in doing the same.

God Bless all who read this comment and take it to heart.

From: Jessica Reavis-Christensen,

[November 2020]

<https://www.facebook.com/search/top?q=forged%20by%20fire%3B%20iron%20sharpening%20iron>

I'm a former Recreational Leader of the New Lisbon Correctional Institution ("N.L.C.I.") and I have to say that I am SO thankful for the 9 months I got to spend in prison. I would have never understood the need for prison reform if it wasn't for my experience.

When I was hired at N.L.C.I., I came in with the understanding that my position was to help rehabilitate the men to become successful citizens of society. I encouraged them to put the work in during their time, so they would have the tools to thrive in their freedom. Well, administration did not like that. The administration was threatened by the joy and empowerment that I brought to Recreation. They didn't like that the men were choosing healthy outlets, they didn't like that the countenance of the general population was lifting, they didn't like that the men were excited to be treated with humanity rather than as unimportant scum. My time in prison was cut short because of the administration feeling threatened by the atmosphere I brought to the dark institution. Light is not wanted within those walls and that is something I believe needs to change.

After 40 days of unpaid administrative leave, I was terminated on Friday, December 13th, 2019, for "not passing probationary standards". It didn't matter that all the programming I had added and built upon was changing the atmosphere in the institution for the better. They needed a scapegoat to get rid of me, and "not passing probationary standards" was it. Friday, December 13th was a day of sadness but also a day of resolution. As I drove away from N.L.C.I., no longer employed by the DOC, I made a pivotal decision to write Marshall Jones.

Marshall Jones was one of four inmate workers that assisted me in my Rec Leader position. He led fitness classes, refed all competitive events, assisted setting up Rec events, helped encourage men that came to Recreation, and counseled the men to prepare for their release. Marshall's conduct spoke for itself, and I could see he was a man of his word by the actions displayed. He worked hard in Rec and Marshall worked even harder doing his time by becoming a published author of his first book, "A Raven's Meal". While working with Marshall, I learned he was serving a double life sentence, and I was shocked he would be there for the rest of his life. The reason I was shocked was because Marshall lived more freely within the walls of that prison than any other person I've met in my life. How is that possible? It was possible because of the faith he so boldly lives. Marshall was incarcerated at 21 years old and has served 17 years of his sentence. When I drove away from N.L.C.I. I decided I wanted Marshall to know that he was remembered by someone. I wanted him to know he made an impact on my life by living the way he did within the walls of prison. I wanted him to know that despite the circumstances, I wanted to extend the olive branch of becoming his friend. Writing Marshall Jones was one of the best choices I have ever made in my life.

I believe so many men like Marshall are deserving of a second chance. This is something I wouldn't have ever understood if I didn't have my time in prison, working closely with the general population. There is a deep need for prison reform and Marshall is the perfect story of a cast away finding redemption. I know how many second chances I have had. I believe it's time for those who have proven rehabilitation exists, get their second chance. To make evident their efforts aren't for nothing.

From: Peter William Stevens,

[November 2020]

Friend to the Founder of Red Thread Poets (Our Triune God). www.redthreadpoets.com/category/100-poets/peter-will/

I met Marshall through Jessica, I was looking for poets on facebook in mid 2020. We have become very close brothers in just a few short months emailing every day. I live north of Toronto in Canada and was building a website to glorify God and honour poets - Red Thread Poets (.com). Marshall sent me his poems, I have his book a Raven's Meal and he is one of our honoured poets on the site. HOWEVER, it is his daily devotionals under the 'banner 'RED GRANITE' that show his anointing - they are high impact for me every day. We post them in Facebook under Red Thread Poets and recap them on the website. <https://www.redthreadpoets.com/daily-devotions/>. Marshall is DEARLY LOVED, peter

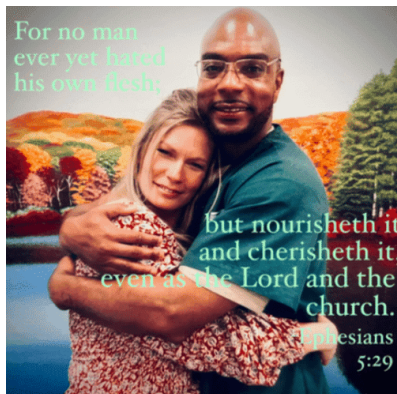
Peter's April 2025 update on Marshall and Jessica Jones:

Since November 1, 2020, Marshall and later with Jessica have written over 1,100 Daily Devotions, of which there are now 17 Series, not all published yet.

On November 1, 2022, they were married. Hallelujah.

Marshall continues to study and write from within the confines he remains in for now. He commenced a bachelor's degree in biblical studies in 2024, please pray for them both, and for The Lord to arrange his release before too long. **Jessica posted this recently:**

"I can confidently say my husband is everything he's supposed to be in our marriage, and he is always wanting to love me more tomorrow than he did today. He's not smothering, nor is he one who says things but doesn't follow with action. My husband is the real deal, and I am so thankful to know what it means to truly be loved by him like Christ loves the Church. Today's message (Ephesians 5:29) is great encouragement to husbands, wives, and the whole walk of marriage. God bless each of you and the marriages you are committed to! Much love!"



INTRODUCTION

Never in life has one Name invoked so much power and caused so much controversy. That Name? Jesus Christ, the Messiah of God, the Savior, the Atoning sacrifice for sin. It is by the Name of Jesus Christ that salvation comes, it is the Name of Jesus Christ that activates our prayers and it is the Name of Jesus Christ that seals our professions of faith. Some have attributed Christ to be a prophet, but not The Savior; as a teacher but not Lord, as a man of power, but not God. In this series, "Jesus Christ: Mystery Uncovered", we will unlock the mystery of who Jesus Christ is, and why His presence on earth was absolutely vital; to the redemption and salvation of mankind. We will unwrap who Jesus Christ is, what His purpose was, and what His life, death, and resurrection mean for those who choose to believe in His Name. We will learn that without Christ, there is no access into the kingdom of God, no promises, nor is there eternal life. There is power in the Name of Jesus Christ, and this series will show that Christ is more than just an iconic figure in world history, but He is THE Author and Finisher of our faith!

Bless You!
Marshall & Jessica

This Study Series was first posted on Red Thread Poets Facebook Page commencing on January 28, 2021, and is also available at <https://www.redthreadpoets.com/daily-devotions-1st-quarter-2021/>

1. John 1:1 – In the beginning was the Word

The life of Jesus Christ didn't begin at his birth in Bethlehem. Most people consider Christ to be separate from God, as though He was a totally different person from God. Many religions classified Christ as a prophet, as a powerful person, but don't consider Him to be God. There are even factions from the "Christian" umbrella that classify Christ as the Messiah, but not as God. Because Jesus Christ is the Author and Finisher of our faith, knowing exactly who Christ is, begins everything we need to know, learn, and understand about the Word of God, and God's plan for mankind.

If we don't know who Christ is, then our faith in God is suspect, because everything we have, and are as believers comes through Him. If we don't understand who Christ is, then it makes understanding the Bible difficult, as there is much in scripture we won't be able to receive if we haven't come to know Christ.

Today, we will look at John 1:1, the beginning of the series, "Jesus Christ: The Mystery Uncovered".

"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God."

The word "beginning" means "commencement of all things". We think of the word commencement, and some of us think of college graduation ceremonies signifying the "beginning to our entry into society". In Genesis 1:1, the Bible says, ***"In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth."*** Where we come from is just as important as where we are going, and in fact, where we come from becomes the foundation for what we build upon it. "Know thyself" is a powerful statement because if our foundation isn't the Word of God then what we build on it won't stand.

In 1 Corinthians 3:11, the Bible says, ***"For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ."***

In construction, the foundation is the beginning of the structure, so is Jesus Christ that foundation we are to build our lives on?

Likewise, doesn't Christ HAVE to be the beginning?

If God says in Exodus 20:3, ***"Thou shalt have no other gods before me"***, then why would God have us build on any other foundation but Him? Why would God have us declare anyone else but Him to be our beginning, especially one believed to come after Him?

In Proverbs 8:22-23, the Bible says, ***"The LORD possessed me in the beginning of his way, before his works of old. I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was."*** This part of Proverbs dealt with not only wisdom, but it also represented Christ being in existence since the beginning. To know Christ is to understand His beginning, and not only was Christ there from the beginning, but He was also there from everlasting, meaning Christ was there before time existed!

The word "Word" means "the Divine Expression". This is speaking directly of Christ, so in the beginning, Christ was the Divine Expression of God. In Colossians 1:16-17, the Bible says, ***"For by him were all things created, that are in heaven,***

and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: And he is before all things, and by him all things consist. All power and authority was established by Christ from the beginning, and He is also the mastermind of everything setting them together perfectly.

In 1 John 1:1, the Apostle John goes further to write, this time from a deeper experience, ***"That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life"***. The phrase "have handled" means "to verify by contact". This means it is time to not only know who the "Word of God" is, but it is time to experience the Word of God, as in Psalm 34:8, where it says, ***"O taste and see that the LORD is good: blessed is the man that trusteth in him."***

The word "God" here means "the Supreme Divinity". Not only is Christ with God, but Christ is God. In Isaiah 9:6, the Bible says, ***"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."*** This was prophecy concerning Christ, and this establishes Christ as God some 700 years before Christ appeared in the flesh.

In Revelation 19:13, the Bible says, ***"And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called The Word of God."*** Christ still is the Word of God. From the beginning to the end, He never stopped being the Word of God.

In John 20:28-29, the Bible says, ***"And Thomas answered and said unto him, My LORD and my God. Jesus saith unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed."***

Christ didn't deny He was indeed God, another confirmation that it is true! Jesus Christ is God!

God Bless!
Marshall & Jessica

2. John 1:14 - the power of the Word of God becoming flesh for us

Jesus Christ, the Word of God, the Word being with God, and the Word being God, became flesh and blood for us! God knew from the beginning that there would be no payment for our sin debt that we could offer up sufficient to pay the cost, so He arranged for us to experience salvation through the shed blood of Jesus Christ.

In order for Christ to shed His blood for us, He had to be here on earth to do it. It also goes deeper than salvation, because Christ coming to the earth gave us the perfect example of how we are to live on this earth ourselves. Christ came and experienced this world on our level, so He can show His Church how to do the same thing, but He also can then serve as our Intercessor, able to identify with our struggles here on earth.

This is all-encompassing love, and is something we have the privilege of walking in. Today, we are going to look at John 1:14, the power of the Word of God becoming flesh for us!

"And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father), full of grace and truth."

The word "Word" means "the Divine Expression of God", speaking of the pre-existent nature of Christ, that spiritual and divine nature spoken of in the Jewish writings before and about the time of Christ. The phrase "was made" means "became, came into physical existence, generated, and came to be". In 2 Timothy 3:16, the Bible says, ***"All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness"***. When the Word of God became flesh, He brought the divine living expression of doctrine, reproof, correction, and instruction in righteousness in the earth. Christ shows us how it is done, how to live according to the Word of God.

The word "flesh" speaks of the incarnate human nature of Christ. This doesn't carry the same meaning as "flesh", the sinful nature that keeps us separate from God. In 1 Timothy 3:16, the Bible says, ***"And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory."*** The Bible always confirms its truth in multiple verses, especially of Christ being God manifested in the flesh.

In John 14:9, in response to Philip asking Christ to show them the Father, the Bible says, ***"Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Shew us the Father?"*** Christ seems a little frustrated with Philip because he walked with the Lord, heard His teaching, saw the miracles, but still didn't connect the dots. That is an example of our having the truth right in our face but not seeing it clearly.

The word "dwelt" means "to encamp, to tent upon, to occupy, and to reside in and with." Not only does God desire to live with us, but He wants to live in us. Imagine this along with me.

God came down and took on flesh, just so He could reside with us, and then offer Himself up as the only perfect sacrifice so we could receive the Spirit of God, which dwells in us. He wants to live with us, live in us, and be a covering for us.

In Psalm 91:1, the Bible says, ***"He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty."*** "The shadow" is a covering! In John 14:17, Christ says, ***"Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you."*** God's precise purpose for Christ's presence on earth was to be a conduit to produce God's intended purpose for us as believers.

"(And we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father), full of grace and truth."

The word "beheld" means 'to perceive, or to look closely at'. The word "glory" refers to internal character: glorious moral attributes, excellence, infinite perfection, divine majesty, and holiness." The phrase "only begotten of the Father" refers to Christ being the only one born of God. In Matthew 1:20-21, the Bible says, ***"But while he thought on these things, behold, the angel of the LORD appeared unto him in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, 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."*** To experience this is far better than just knowing it.

The word "grace" speaks of God's divine influence, and the word "truth" speaks of God's divine truth. Christ didn't possess anything that wasn't directly of God and the word "full" means "abounding or complete".

There is no emptiness in Christ Jesus. His flesh was a shell for the fullness of God to dwell in Him!

3. Nov 30, 2021 – John 3:31 – where our Christ comes from

Jesus Christ came from heaven. That is His origin, He was there from the beginning. Because Christ came from above, the language He speaks, the things He does, the authority He walks in is the product of who He is *and* where He comes from. Christ is The King, and even though He lived in the earth, He knew who He was and where He came from.

Our Church suffers from identity issues, we have the Word of God declaring who we are and where we came from, yet we walk as if we are still of the earth, like we aren't royalty. Jesus Christ wasn't just some man who walked the earth doing some cool stuff while He was here. Jesus Christ came from Heaven on a Godly mission to save the world from sin and redeem the lost who have faith in Him. Because of where He comes from and the authority He walks in, we have a sure guide into the kingdom of God! Today we look at John 3:31, where our Christ comes from.

"He that cometh from above is above all: he that is of the earth is earthly, and speaketh of the earth: he that cometh from heaven is above all."

The word "above" actually means "from the first, or from the beginning". John the Baptist is attesting that Jesus Christ, the Person, and His ministry paves the way for us from the beginning, so to come "from above" is to "come from the beginning." In Revelation 1:8, Christ says out of His own mouth, ***"I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty."*** Jesus Christ is the first and the last Word!

The word "above" pertains to the authority Christ has in and over the earth, and if He is "above all" that means His authority is THE Authority. In Matthew 28:18, the Bible says, ***"And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, ALL POWER is given unto me in heaven and in earth."*** Not 'some' power, Christ has 'ALL' power, the Word of the Lord is the final word. How many people in the Church believe this in theory, but not in faith?

In John 1:13, the Bible says, ***"Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God."*** Christ was born of God, as the only begotten of the Father, He stands alone in power and majesty. Even John the Baptist knew Christ's place in the kingdom, as in John 1:15, he said, ***"John bare witness of him, and cried, saying, This was he of whom I spake, He that cometh after me is preferred before me: for he was before me."*** To "bear witness" means to "give testimony concerning Christ". John the Baptist gave testimony of who Christ is and where He came from, and we must do the same! John the Baptist was 'older' than Christ, in earth terms, but he says that Christ was before Him, and has a higher rank than him.

Christ speaks of John the Baptist in Matthew 11:11, saying, ***"Verily I say unto you, Among them that are born of women there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist: notwithstanding he that is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he."*** Christ says that John the Baptist was the greatest on earth, but the person that is on the lowest peg in the kingdom of God is greater than him. If Christ came from the earth, His authority would only go so far, but because He is God and came from heaven, there is no limit to the extent of his power!

"he that is of the earth is earthly, and speaketh of the earth."

The word "earth" means "of human nature and birth, pertaining to worldly things." The word "earthly" means "worldly, according to the flesh". In Romans 8:7-8, the Bible says, ***"Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God."*** Those who live according to the flesh only live to do what pleases themselves. This person is going to always be in contention with the things of God, never being able to be in God's will.

In John 8:29, Christ says, ***"And he that sent me is with me: the Father hath not left me alone; for I do always those things that please him."*** Even though Christ came to earth, He never lost sight of who He is, and He never stopped being God.

In Matthew 12:34, Christ says, ***"O generation of vipers, how can ye, being evil, speak good things? for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh."*** We are going to speak from the nature at work within us, but Christ spoke the refreshing Word of God. If you want to know what a person's nature is, listen to the place their conversation comes from!

The word "heaven" speaks of the upper and superior heaven, the abode of God and His glory, of the Messiah, of angels, everything said to be of God. In John 6:33, Christ says, ***"For the bread of God is he which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world."***

Christ came down from heaven to give us eternal life through Him. He left the place of eternal life to bring this beautiful life to us in earth, and because of it, He is THE AUTHORITY above all!

4. Ephesians 1:21 – the supreme power of Christ

Christ is the most powerful Person in the world. No one has ever come to this earth as God robed in flesh, and no one has ever been the full atoning sacrifice for the entire world. In our world we have governments, presidents, kings, heads of states, but none of their power will ever be able to come anywhere close to matching the power of our Lord Jesus Christ.

To fully believe in Christ's ability to do what His Word says, we must believe that He has the power to do it. We must understand that all the world's power comes from Him, and He allows power and dominion to be in place. Many have professed to have power, and have been sent crumbling, because there is only one God and our God's is supreme.

Today, we are going to look at Ephesians 1:21, the supreme power of Christ.

"Far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come:"

The word "above" is a word of precedence, assuring us that not only is Christ the authority, but His authority was before anything else that was set in place. The word above here not only signifies rank, but it also signifies authority. In Philippians 2:10-11, the Bible says, ***"That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."***

The word "Lord" means "Supreme in Authority, Controller". This means that the President of the United States, the Queen of England, or the Prime Minister of Canada does not have any control over the Lord Jesus Christ.

The word "principality" means "rule, or magistrate". The word "power" means "ability or authority". In Romans 13:1-2, the Bible says, ***"Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God. Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation."*** We are to be subject to the higher powers; our pastors and elders, our government leaders, our bosses, and any other people God put in authority over us. At the same time, our leaders are to submit to Christ as Lord and attribute their authority to Him.

There are real problems for our leaders and our people when Christ isn't Lord over them. In Daniel 2:37, the Bible says, ***"Thou, O king, art a king of kings: for the God of heaven hath given thee a kingdom, power, and strength, and glory."*** The authority of King Nebuchadnezzar was GIVEN to him by God. He was just fine as long as King Nebuchadnezzar gave the glory to God as he did in Daniel 2:47, by saying, ***"The king answered unto Daniel, and said, Of a truth it is, that your God is a God of gods, and a Lord of kings, and a revealer of secrets, seeing thou couldest reveal this secret,"***

Things vastly changed for him in Daniel 4:30-31, when the Bible says, ***"The king spake, and said, Is not this great Babylon, that I have built for the house of the kingdom by the might of my power, and for the honour of my majesty? While the word was in the king's mouth, there fell a voice from heaven, saying, O king Nebuchadnezzar, to thee it is spoken; The kingdom is departed from thee."*** When Nebuchadnezzar gave himself the glory instead of God, he lost everything God gave him, including his mind!

The word "might" means "power resulting from outside forces". The word "dominion" means "government or rulers". In Colossians 2:15, the Bible says, ***"And having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it."*** This means that Christ has dismantled all of the world's powers from the Cross and has shown the whole world who is really in charge.

The word "name" is used to imply character, dignity, referring to an honorable appellation, or title. In Acts 4:12, the Bible says, ***"Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved."*** The power is in the name of Jesus Christ, not in the titles that man gives to express authority. No matter how far we rise up the pecking order in this world, we must someday answer to Christ.

"Not only in this world, but also in that which is to come."

The word "world" not only speaks of the earth, but it really means "age or period of time". In Hebrews 2:8, the Bible says, ***"Thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet. For in that he put all in subjection under him, he left nothing that is not put under him. But now we see not yet all things put under him."*** We still don't have any idea just how far the authority of Christ goes. We can't see far enough or think long enough to begin to grasp how powerful our Lord is!

5. Ephesians 1:22 – looking to the Great Head of the Church, Jesus Christ

Christ is the Head of the church. It is by faith in Him that we receive salvation, receiving grace through faith in His name. Christ did it all so we can have the privilege of eternal life and walking in divine authority and power. Christ doesn't rule to control us, but He rules to liberate us of everything that has hindered us from living the most amazing life we can live in Christ. When Christ is Head in our lives, the Holy Spirit has room to move unrestricted through us, causing us to move in the same miraculous power that Christ did.

When Christ is the Head, we can walk in dominion and in power fulfilling what God desired for us since creation. So many people in the Church don't have victory because they haven't placed themselves in subjection to Christ, denying themselves access to the only Person on earth who has triumphed over everything in the earth, including death.

Today, we will look at Ephesians 1:22, looking to our Great Head of the Church, Jesus Christ.

"And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church"

The phrase "hath put" means "make subject to, to subordinate, to bring all things under the rule of". In Psalm 8:6, the Bible says, ***"Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands; thou hast put all things under his feet"***. Christ, the Head of the Church has authority over us, and also has authority over what we do. This is why obedience is so important, because if we aren't operating in obedience to God, then we are telling Christ, by our actions, that he is not the Head of the Church.

In Luke 6:46, Christ says, ***"And why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?"*** Christ isn't looking for a Church who says that He is Lord, but then lives in complete disobedience to His Word, when it would highly benefit them to listen? There are many in the Church that rob themselves of the blessings of God because they won't bring themselves under subjection to Christ.

In 1 Corinthians 15:27, the Bible says, ***"For he hath put all things under his feet. But when he saith all things are put under him, it is manifest that he is excepted, which did put all things under him."*** Until Christ is in full control of all things in our lives, our persons, our relationships, our finances, our minds, our hearts, and our purpose, we will never grow into the people God has created us to be. Christ isn't the Head of our lives to be some domineering figure in our lives, nor is he trying to be our slave driver.

In Romans 8:17, the Bible says, ***"And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together."*** See, when we are obedient to the reign of Christ in our lives, we will learn kingdom principles that will ultimately make us kings and priests, able to reign with Christ in heaven,

but it also gives us the ability to be an heir of God together with Christ to bring the things from heaven to earth. Christ is in authority so He can teach us, by the Holy Spirit, how to operate in heavenly dominion on earth!

"and gave him to be the head over all things to the church"

The word "head" means "chief, spoken of Christ in relation to His Church which is His body, and its members are His members." In Matthew 28:18, the Bible says, ***"And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth."*** Christ walked in the power of God in earth, but in earth, He was always subject to the Father, living His life in every way to please God. Christ answered to God while on earth, but when He ascended to the Father, the power He has always had returned back to Him, being fully God now again, not subject to the robing of flesh anymore.

In 1 Corinthians 15:28, the Bible says, ***"And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all."*** Christ shows us how to be subject unto God, and shows us how to be subject to Him in the process. Because Christ and the Father are one, our obedience ensures that God can freely reign through us.

In Ephesians 4:15-16, the Bible says, ***"But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ: From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love."*** Who would've thought that our individual obedience to God would help ensure that the whole body moves, grows, and builds like a well-oiled machine? It is bigger than just us! Our obedience affects the whole Church, the same way Christ's obedience on the cross affected the whole Church! His obedience and Headship is the reason we have the Church today.

6. Nehemiah 9:6 – The creative power of Christ

Jesus Christ is not only the Lord of salvation, but He is also Lord of creation. Remember, Christ is the Word, being with God in the beginning, and being God in the beginning as well. The wonders of this beautiful world are the result of His creative power, with all things being created by Him and for Him. What Christ has done both since creation all the way through salvation sets Him completely apart from anyone and anything in the earth.

Because Christ is the Word and is indeed God, and He is responsible for creation, He will sustain everything He has created. In doing this, the world will have a front row seat to the power and majesty of Christ, which compels our worship. Does Christ have our worship for all He has done?

Today, we will look at Nehemiah 9:6, the creative power of Christ.

"Thou, even thou, art LORD alone; thou hast made heaven, the heaven of heavens, with all their host, the earth, and all things that are therein, the seas, and all that is therein, and thou preservest them all; and the host of heaven worshippeth thee."

The word Lord means "Supreme in authority, Controller". The word "alone" means "separately, apart, or chief". Christ stands out by just being who He is. That is because who He is, displays the difference between the Spirit and the flesh. Despite our being created for God working through us, we can't be the shining symbol of God's creation if we look no different from the world around us.

In 2 Kings 19:15, the Bible says, **"And Hezekiah prayed before the LORD, and said, O LORD God of Israel, which dwellest between the cherubims, thou art the God, even thou alone, of all the kingdoms of the earth; thou hast made heaven and earth."** The phrase "hast made" means "to accomplish, to fulfill, to bring to pass". The word "heaven" means "the sky". But it goes deeper. Christ has also made the "heaven of heavens", which is the abode of God, the place where God and the heavenly host reside, the place our heavenly blessings come from.

The word "hosts" speaks of a mass of people forming into an army of the Lord, built and established for his use. In 2 Kings 19:19, the Bible says, **"Now therefore, O LORD our God, I beseech thee, save thou us out of his hand, that all the kingdoms of the earth may know that thou art the LORD God, even thou only."** It is one thing to know that Christ is God alone, but it takes on a quite different form when we experience the deliverance that only Christ can give, to know by experience that Christ stands alone!

"The earth, and all things that are therein, the seas, and all that is therein"

The word "earth" means "the land under God's authority". In Genesis 1:1, the Bible says, **"In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth."** God knew when He created the world that there would come a point where heaven and earth would need to be separate, so He could stand separate from a world of sin. In Deuteronomy 10:14-15, the Bible says, **"Behold, the heaven and the heaven of heavens is the LORD's thy God, the earth also, with all that therein is. Only the LORD had a delight in thy fathers to love them, and he chose their seed after them, even you above all people, as it is this day."** See, God created this world for us to not only live in, but to stand out in as well.

In 1 Corinthians 8:6, the Bible says, **"But to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him."** Creation was set in place for man to become one with God in Christ, thus being one with God Himself.

"And thou preservest them all; and the host of heaven worshippeth thee"

The word "preservest" means "to revive, to keep alive, in a sense of flourishing". In Proverbs 2:8-9, the Bible says, **"He keepeth the paths of judgment, and preserveth the way of his saints. Then shalt thou understand righteousness, and judgment, and equity; yea, every good path."** We are sustained by Christ to understand Godliness in every aspect, so that we can put our full trust in Him to provide all we need to live as He created us to live.

The word "worshippeth" means "to depress, to prostrate oneself, bow down, or to do reverence. In Psalm 86:8-9, the Bible says, **"Among the gods there is none like unto thee, O Lord; neither are there any works like unto thy works. All nations whom thou hast made shall come and worship before thee, O Lord; and shall glorify thy name."**

When we can understand Christ as Creator as well, it should add a whole different aspect to our worship, because He not only made us, but He saved us to experience an unbreakable relationship with Him, one where we will worship Him in spirit and in truth.

7. Isaiah 7:14 – the precious Name of Jesus Christ

There is power in our names.

Our names declare what we will ultimately become, so it is expressly important to seek God's perspective on what we should name our children.

Also, it is just as important as believers that we name ourselves correctly, declaring ourselves to be the children of God, the redeemed of the Lord, the righteousness of God in Christ Jesus.

God ensured that when Christ was sent, His name would already be established to confirm His identity and His role in the earth. With the name of Jesus came the answer to the burning question, "Is Jesus Christ God?", to which we can answer boldly, "Yes He is!"

When God makes a declaration in a name, it will be exactly as He ordains it. Since creation, a name was powerful, and in the name of Jesus Christ we have salvation and eternal life by faith in His name.

Today, we are going to look at Isaiah 7:14, the precious Name of Jesus Christ.

"Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel."

The context of this passage is important. The Lord spoke to King Ahaz, and told him to ask God for a sign from God. Basically, God is telling Ahaz, *"Let me show you that it is really ME talking to you, that I AM who I say I AM"*.

Whenever God is the one desiring to send us a sign and it is not us looking for a sign, then God really wants to show us something important!!

The word **"sign"** means "evidence, miracle, token, or signal", all of which carry immense value when it comes from God.

In Luke 2:12-14, the Bible says, ***"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."***

God sent the angel to appear to the shepherds, people you don't really hear about being a part of the congregation, because their profession typically made them ceremonially unclean. Imagine God opening up heaven to the shepherds, allowing them to see this heavenly miraculous sign, but according to "religion", they were unqualified to be in God's presence.

Isn't this a picture of salvation; unclean people, having no place to experience the presence of God, yet He does it anyway, opening up heaven to people that society may feel don't deserve it?

The shepherds went to experience the Word of God, and in Luke 2:17-18, the Bible says, ***"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."***

God chose the people disqualified from attending church to be His ministers, proclaiming the birth of Christ everywhere they went! Never say that you are too unclean, because all you need is a word from God and a sign from Him and He will build a ministry in you. This all came from a sign!!!

The word ***"virgin"*** here refers to a woman who has not had any sexual relations with a man.

The virgin spoken of here is Mary, as confirmed by Luke 1:34-35, which says, ***"Then said Mary unto the angel, How shall this be, seeing I know not a man? And the angel answered and said unto her, 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."***

Everything about Christ's arrival on earth brought the supernatural into the earth, and Mary was impregnated by the Holy Spirit of God!

The word ***"conceive"*** means "to be pregnant, or to be with child".

The word ***"bear"*** refers to the delivery of a baby.

I love how precise God's word is because God knows our name, our sex, and our purpose before we come to the world. Remember, Isaiah wrote this prophecy some 700 years before Christ's arrival.

The phrase ***"shall call"*** is really an instruction for us "to pronounce, or to address by name".

In Genesis 2:19-20, the Bible says, ***"And out of the ground the LORD God formed every beast of the field, and every fowl of the air; and brought them unto Adam to see what he would call them: and whatsoever Adam called every living creature, that was the name thereof."***

God gave Adam the authority to name every living creature and those names haven't changed. God gives us our names and with our names, come our roles.

In Matthew 1:23, the Bible says, ***"Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us."***

This name came straight from God himself! This passage is the impending fulfillment of the prophecy initially spoken to King Ahaz in Isaiah.

Whatever God declares, it will be.

When Christ was named Immanuel, it established that Christ is definitely God!!

8. John 5:43 – coming in the Name of God

The authority a person has also reveals the extent of their power.

When ambassadors go to different countries, they fully represent their home country and are so acknowledged in the country they visit.

The goal of ambassadorship is to bring the value of the home country to the visiting country, to form a partnership, so the visiting country can also receive the benefit of the home country.

Jesus Christ came from heaven to earth to serve as an Ambassador of God, representing the interests of heaven and also bringing the power of heaven to earth. The goal is to re-establish the partnership between us and God, so we can become one country, one breath, one power. God wants the same for us individually.

Today, we will look at John 5:43, coming in the Name of God.

"I am come in my Father's name, and ye receive me not: if another shall come in his own name, him ye will receive."

The word **"come"** means "to appear, to enter into, or to exist".

The word **"name"** means "authority or character".

To come in God's name means to represent Him in every aspect of our lives, but He didn't only desire that Christ represented Him. He wants us to represent Him as well.

In Genesis 1:26, the Bible says, ***"And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth."***

God wanted a *direct representation* of Him in the earth, to reflect His image, but also to move in His authority.

Remember, in Genesis 2:19, the Bible says, ***"And out of the ground the LORD God formed every beast of the field, and every fowl of the air; and brought them unto Adam to see what he would call them: and whatsoever Adam called every living creature, that was the name thereof."***

God provided Adam with ways to exercise his God given authority, the same way He does with us.

In Proverbs 13:17, the Bible says, ***"A wicked messenger falleth into mischief: but a faithful ambassador is health."***

Christ came to restore our spiritual health by re-establishing our relationship with God.

In 2 Corinthians 5:19-20, the Bible says, ***"To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation. Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God."***

Ambassadorship was so there could be a final reconciliation between us and God through salvation by faith in Jesus Christ. Not only do we partake in God's authority, but we partake in His grace as well.

In John 7:28-29, the Bible says, ***"Then cried Jesus in the temple as he taught, saying, Ye both know me, and ye know whence I am: and I am not come of myself, but he that sent me is true, whom ye know not. But I know him: for I am from him, and he hath sent me."***

See, even though Christ was God robed in flesh, and possessed the authority of God in the earth, He never once forgot where He came from and Whose interests He was serving in earth. This is why the servant of God must not grow conceited, but remain humble, understanding that we are only sent, not the Sender!

In John 16:28, Christ says, ***"I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world: again, I leave the world, and go to the Father."***

Our job on earth is simple: come, fulfill God's Word and purpose for our lives, and leave the earth to be joined with the Father. Christ didn't come for His own glory, but to glorify God by His life and by His death.

The word ***"receive"*** means "to take hold of, to seize with force", but it also means simply, "to believe as true".

In Matthew 24:4-5, Christ says, ***"And Jesus answered and said unto them, Take heed that no man deceive you. For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many."***

The fact that Christ was telling them to not be deceived shows that He knew people would be deceived.

In John 1:11-12, the Bible says, ***"He came unto his own, and his own received him not. 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"***.

When we receive the Lord Jesus, when we believe His testimony to be true, and accept Him, first as Lord, then Savior, we have the privilege to be called the children of God.

In 2 Timothy 4:4, the Bible says, ***"And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables."***

The world is being deceived into not believing in God, and we have immeasurable problems because of it.

Christ came in the Father's name so that by faith in His name, we can have salvation for our souls and the gift of eternal life.

Whose name do we come in?

9. Philippians 2:9 - the Name above all Names

The power of Jesus Christ is the power of God, and because of Christ's victory over the world, and His triumph over death and sin, His is a name that is above every name.

Because Christ gave up the fullness of the Deity to take on flesh, humbling Himself to the Word of God, He was able to bring the kingdom to earth. The only reason we have access to salvation, eternal life, and the indwelling of the Holy Spirit is because of the humility of Jesus Christ.

How many doors will open to us when we humble ourselves before God?

How many doors close when we are not humble, when we exalt ourselves, when we lift ourselves up above others because of where we stand in the faith?

Our greatest example is Christ, who could've come to earth to reign, but instead, came to earth to serve and became greater than all of us.

Today, we will look at Philippians 2:9, the Name above all Names.

"Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name"

The word ***"exalted"*** means "elevated above others, to raise to the highest position".

It didn't say "a higher position", but it said "the highest position". This means that nothing and no one is above Christ.

In Luke 1:32-33, the Bible says, ***"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."***

Not only is Jesus Christ named as the Son of the highest, but it also says that His reign won't end. There has never been a king on earth whose reign hasn't ended, and many times, it ended before the king died! We serve a King that will never lose His throne.

In Hebrews 7:25-26, the Bible says, ***"Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them. For such an high priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens."***

Because His reign won't ever end, the provisions of his reign are still available to us to this day! Jesus Christ is able to save us to "the uttermost" so this means the person who is furthest from the kingdom of God can still be reached in order for Christ to save them!

How many people have we discounted as being incorrigible, giving up on them before the Lord was able to change their hearts, and turn them into the children of God?

Notice something here. Christ never exalted Himself even though He had every right to.

In Matthew 23:11-12, Christ says, ***"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."***

Christ is showing us a system that is the complete opposite of how the world works. The greatest people in the kingdom are the greatest servants, people who make themselves available to God to use as He sees fit. We live in a world where families are broken severely due to power struggles, where governments crumble because it's leadership won't humble themselves as servants under God.

In Acts 2:33, the Bible says, ***"Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear."***

Christ knew His power came from God to do what had to be done in the earth, and He was in full submission to the power, authority, and purpose of God. The Word of God was the only priority for Christ, a perfect example of how we must be in the earth as well. When we are humble, we empty out our vessels, in order to be filled by the Holy Spirit.

In John 5:19-20, Christ says, ***"Then answered Jesus and said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do: for what things soever he doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise. For the Father loveth the Son, and sheweth him all things that himself doeth: and he will shew him greater works than these, that ye may marvel."***

Christ showed us that everything He had came from God, and if anyone marvels, then it is God that gets the glory!

The word **"given"** means "to grant as a favor, or by favor something freely given".

The word **"name"** implies authority or character, it is also used to imply dignity, an honorable appellation or title."

In Hebrews 1:3-4, the Bible says, ***"Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high: Being made so much better than the angels, as he hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they."***

Christ used everything in His life, everything God gave Him, to uphold God's Word and power, to live in full obedience to God as a humble servant, instead of a King! now He IS the King of Kings!

10. Jeremiah 23:5 – Christ the Righteous Branch

Since creation, God has already established Christ's presence in the earth.

God has been setting His purpose in order, all to bring Christ to the earth.

It shouldn't surprise anyone that Christ comes from the lineage of kings, especially as He is the King of Kings and the Lord of Lords.

No matter what has happened over history since creation, God has ordained event after event, only to guide us forward into His plan for our lives.

There have been imprisonments, slavery, wilderness, whole generations of unfaithful people dead, kingdoms overthrown and regained, and overthrown again, but nothing has stopped the prophecy of Christ from coming to pass.

Today, we will look at yet another piece of evidence of Christ's role in the earth in Jeremiah 23:5, Christ, the Righteous Branch.

"Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth."

The word **"behold"** implies that we fix our attention upon what is being revealed, whether it's shown by the Word of God, or whether it's manifested in the physical.

There is importance behind the word "behold" because God really wants us to understand where He is coming from.

In Malachi 3:1, the Bible says, ***"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."***

God has been preparing the way for Christ long before He physically arrived, because God desires us to be ready to receive Him.

In Matthew 21:37-38, Christ spoke of Himself by saying, ***"But last of all he sent unto them his son, saying, They will reverence my son. But when the husbandmen saw the son, they said among themselves, This is the heir; come, let us kill him, and let us seize on his inheritance."***

God sent so many people ahead of Christ to speak of His coming which is more evidence that God had been paving the way for Christ since the beginning.

The word **"raise"** means "to ordain, to establish, or to set in place".

The word **"righteous"** means "just or lawful because of conformity to the standard of God."

In John 4:34, the Bible says, ***"Jesus saith unto them, My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work."***

To compare the work and will of the Lord to food is to suggest that it is necessary for survival!

Is doing the will of God a necessity for us to survive?

The word **"Branch"** means "sprout or shoot", speaking of offspring or a descendant.

The fact that the word "Branch" is capitalized lets us know that the Word of God is speaking of Christ.

In Isaiah 11:1-2, the Bible says, ***"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."***

Christ came from the line of David, who was Jesse's son, and once again, the Branch here speaks of Christ. A "rod" is typically a tool for correction of sheep, and this verse also shows that the Holy Spirit will rest on Christ, allowing Him to possess wisdom, understanding, counsel, might, knowledge and the fear of the Lord.

"And a King shall reign and prosper and shall execute judgement and justice in the earth."

The word **"reign"** means "to ascend the throne"

The word **"prosper"** means "to make or act circumspectly or intelligently, to act with insight".

Immediately, when most people think of the word "prosper", they shift towards finances, but this is true prosperity: *to know the Lord, to serve Him, to receive of His Spirit the things we need to succeed in our faith.*

There is a time and place for Christ to reign in the earth, but it isn't when He came to the earth.

In John 6:15, the Bible says, ***"When Jesus therefore perceived that they would come and take him by force, to make him a king, he departed again into a mountain himself alone."***

Christ knew this was His time to serve, not to reign, which is why He wouldn't allow them then to make Him a king.

The word **"judgement"** means a formal decree or verdict".

The word **"justice"** means "blameless conduct or integrity".

This verse is not only stating that Christ would come, but it is expressing what would happen when He left the earth!

In Revelation 15:3, the Bible says, ***"And they sing the song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints."***

When Christ ascended to the Father, He also ascended back to the throne, and that is where He reigns and from there will judge the earth.

Who would've thought that this one verse of prophecy established Christ to the end times?

11. Isaiah 8:14 - the sanctuary and the stumbling block of Christ

Christ has many roles in a believer's life.

Christ is always a place of refuge for us to have shelter, protection and rest, and from this amazing blessing, we can have confidence in God that what we need from God He will provide.

In addition to being a refuge, Christ will also become a stumbling block to any who are disobedient to God.

Ever wonder why we didn't become the "successful sinners" that we may have hoped we would be?

It was because we belong to God and He has an incredible purpose for our lives in Him, so He will let us fall when we live in disobedience. Sometimes, allowing us to trip and fall is the only thing that will keep us from falling off the edge completely!

Christ doesn't love to punish us, and in fact, Christ did not come for us to experience condemnation.

Correction? Yes! Condemnation? No way!

Today, we will look at Isaiah 8:14, the sanctuary and the stumbling block of Christ.

"And he shall be for a sanctuary; but for a stone of stumbling and for a rock of offence to both the houses of Israel, for a gin and for a snare to the inhabitants of Jerusalem."

The word ***"sanctuary"*** means "a place of refuge, a consecrated thing or place, an asylum or holy place".

In Psalm 91:1-2, the Bible says, ***"He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty. I will say of the LORD, He is my refuge and my fortress: my God; in him will I trust."***

God is truly a refuge for us, a resting place for His children to be whole and protected.

In Proverbs 18:10, the Bible says, ***"The name of the LORD is a strong tower: the righteous runneth into it, and is safe."***

Running to the strong tower implies importance and urgency, an assurance that where we are running to is a place of safety.

Are we confident in Christ to be this strong tower in our lives, or has He just become a story at Christmas and Easter?

In Isaiah 4:5-6, the Bible says, ***"And the LORD will create upon every dwelling place of mount Zion, and upon her assemblies, a cloud and smoke by day, and the shining of a flaming fire by night: for upon all the glory shall be a defence. And there shall be a tabernacle for a shadow in the day time from the heat, and for a place of refuge, and for a covert from storm and from rain."***

God is going to protect His glory, because His protection preserves us for a mighty work in God, that will ultimately bring glory to His name. Christ is this sanctuary for us, this beautiful shelter sent especially for us! He not only protects us, but He saves us from the penalty of death for our sin.

In Isaiah 25:3-4, the Bible says, ***"Therefore shall the strong people glorify thee, the city of the terrible nations shall fear thee. For thou hast been a strength to the poor, a strength to the needy in his distress, a refuge from the storm, a shadow from the heat, when the blast of the terrible ones is as a storm against the wall."***

God deserves our glory for sending Christ to us to fill every gap we have, for covering us from fear and torment, and for protecting us from the storms that come. Christ is a true sanctuary for anyone who believes in His name.

"but for a stone of stumbling, and for a rock of offense to both the houses of Israel for a gin and for a snare to the inhabitants of Jerusalem"

The phrase ***"stone of stumbling"*** refers to a "built stone to inflict, smite or strike."

The phrase ***"rock of offense"*** implies an obstacle designed for one to trip over.

In Psalm 23:4, the Bible says, ***"Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy ROD and thy STAFF they comfort me."***

The rod is for correction, and the staff is for direction.

In Romans 9:32-33, the Bible says, ***"Wherefore? Because they sought it not by faith, but as it were by the works of the law. For they stumbled at that stumblingstone; As it is written, Behold, I lay in Sion a stumblingstone and rock of offence: and whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed."***

When we don't move by the Word of God in obedience, when we don't operate in faith, when we don't trust in the salvation of Christ, we are certain to stumble and fall.

The word ***"gin"*** means "a bird trap or spring net".

The word ***"snare"*** is also a trapping tool like a noose or a bait hook.

In Proverbs 12:13, the Bible says, ***"The wicked is snared by the transgression of his lips: but the just shall come out of trouble."***

Christ being a stumbling stone for us isn't meant for our fall to be permanent, but it is meant for us to learn from it and pursue righteousness and obedience to God.

In Luke 2:34, the Bible says, ***"And Simeon blessed them, and said unto Mary his mother, Behold, this child is set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel; and for a sign which shall be spoken against"***.

Our fall is only meant for us to rise again victorious as the children of God, saved by the Lord Jesus Christ!

12. Galatians 4:4 - the Anointed One of God, sent to the perfect place at the perfect time

God's timetable is absolutely perfect.

Sometimes, we feel like God is moving way too slow as we wait on our promises to materialize into reality, but when they arrive, then we understand that it couldn't have come at a better time or with more perfect timing.

God sent Christ the same way at the perfect time, when the disciples were ready for Him, when the Jews were in full rejection of Him, and He caused this perfect time to produce the atmosphere for the perfect sacrifice to live, die, and be resurrected, ascending back to the Father.

There is no accident to God's plan, and nothing is ever a surprise to God. Usually, God allows everything to fall into place before He sends His Promise, and in this case, the Promised Messiah, the hope of nations, the Savior of the whole world. God did it this way - He was only going to do this once!

Today we will look at Galatians 4:4, the Anointed One of God, sent to the perfect place at the perfect time.

"But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law".

The phrase ***"fulness of the time"*** means "the completion or fulfillment of an era or season."

The word ***"come"*** means "to arrive or appear, to be made public".

In Habakkuk 2:3, the Bible says, ***"For the vision is yet for an appointed time, but at the end it shall speak, and not lie: though it tarry, wait for it; because it will surely come, it will not tarry."***

There is always an appointed time for the things, people, purposes, Word and vision of God to appear.

Think about the word "appoint". When we have an appointment, it is a pre-set time to arrive somewhere, and in the kingdom of God, Christ had an appointment, an appointed time to appear on earth in the flesh.

In Daniel 9:24-25, the Bible says, ***"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. 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."***

This prophecy is speaking of the time period leading into the triumphal entry of Christ, where He will ultimately be the perfect atoning sacrifice for sin. God had every precise detail taken care of, including the right leadership in place, that would not receive Christ as a baby, but target him so severely that his parents would have to flee to Egypt to avoid his death!

Then, in Matthew 2:14-15, the Bible says, ***"When he arose, he took the young child and his mother by night, and departed into Egypt: And was there until the death of Herod: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, Out of Egypt have I called my son."***

Every moment of Christ's life on earth was appointed by God, to preserve Him for His mission.

"God sent forth His Son"

The word **"sent"** means "to despatch"

Almost every country in the world has some kind of emergency service, where when someone calls help is despatched. The world was in dire trouble, and God despatched Christ!

Now for the people who believe that Christ's life began in Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, I have news for you.

In John 8:57-58, the Bible says, ***"Then said the Jews unto him, Thou art not yet fifty years old, and hast thou seen Abraham? Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I am."***

Christ was here before and because He is God robed in flesh, He always was!

In Genesis 49:10, the Bible says, ***"The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be."***

Shiloh speaks of the Messiah, Jesus Christ. If Christ is coming, then that means that He is here already, ready to be despatched!

"Made of a woman, made under the Law"

The word **"made"** means "to come into being".

In Matthew 1:23, the Bible says, *"Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us."*

God sent Christ into the world, and used Mary to give birth to Christ, to bring His purpose to pass.

The word **"Law"** speaks of the Mosaic Law, the rules the Jews were governed under at that time.

In Matthew 5:17, Christ says, *"Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil."*

If Christ came to fulfill the Law, then that means He came to follow the Law to the letter. Christ was despatched to the earth to experience life under the law, but without sin!

Our Christ has triumphed in life and death!

13. Galatians 4:5 – the redemption and adoption of God's children by the precious blood of Jesus Christ

Adoption is an act of love and compassion, where a person or couple takes in a child, and raises them as their own.

The child has all the same rights as a child naturally born to the parents, and odds are, will go on to bear the attributes of the parents as well.

Christ wasn't sent just to save the world from sin, but He was sent so that we can, through salvation, experience adoption into the family of God by faith in Jesus Christ.

God not only desires to take a mop and clean up our failures, but He desires we be the children of God, operating in the fullness of the Spirit He places inside each of us.

This adoption comes by redemption, which is the result of God's investment of love in us at a time where we don't deserve God's love.

Today, we will look at Galatians 4:5, the redemption and adoption of God's children by the precious blood of Jesus Christ.

"To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons."

The word **"redeem"** means "to purchase out, to buy up from the possession or power of someone, to set free from the service or bondage of."

Our sin made us slaves and prisoners to sin, but our Redeemer lives!

In Matthew 20:28, Christ says, ***"Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many."***

Christ had every right to come to earth and be served by the world. He is God robed in flesh! Christ forsook His rightful role to reign in order to minister to us, to give us the truth of the Word of God, and give His life to *buy us back* from the bondage from sin and the penalty of death.

In Galatians 3:13-14, the Bible says, ***"Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree: That the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith."***

In order for Christ to redeem us, He had to take our place, becoming a curse for us, so the punishment we so freely deserved would pass away. Christ also redeemed us in order to give the Gentiles the same right as the Jews, to the promise of Abraham, but only by faith in Jesus Christ.

How can we ever activate a promise by God when we don't believe in the Activator of the promise?

The phrase ***"under the law"*** implies that one is subject to Mosaic law.

In Galatians 3:23, the Bible says, ***"But before faith came, we were kept under the law, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed."***

The law was what governed our lives before Christ came to establish faith in Him as the redemption from the curse of the law.

In Romans 8:2-3, the Bible says, ***"For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death. For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh"***.

Christ not only came to save us, to redeem us, but He came to condemn sin in our flesh.

Condemning something suggests that you declare it, (that's us) subject to ruin or death.

Titus 2:13-14 says, ***"Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ; Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works."***

When Christ came to the earth, He came to remove the curse of the law, and redeem us so we could be a unique possession of God, on fire to do His will.

Remember, adopted children have the same rights as naturally born children, so we have access to walk in the same power Christ did on the earth.

In John 14:12, Christ says out of His own mouth, ***"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father."***

Our faith in Jesus Christ, in the Word of God, and in the authority God has given us as the children of God give us the ability to walk in the Holy Spirit's power in the earth.

The word **"receive"** means "to take in full".

The phrase **"adoption of sons"** means "the placing as a child of God by faith in Jesus Christ".

In Romans 8:15-17, the Bible says, ***"For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together."***

We are heirs through the death of Christ, and we experience the spirit of adoption through faith in His name. It is only by faith in Jesus Christ that we will ever be the children of God, redeemed and adopted in Him.

14. John 6:38 - the obedience of Christ to the will of God

Do we live our lives to do God's will on the earth?

Are our lives Christ-centered, and is our mission in life to fulfill the purpose God has for our lives?

Jesus Christ, the Author and Finisher of our faith, came to earth for one purpose and one purpose only: to do what God had called Him to do.

How many of our lives become entangled in the pursuit of our own ambitions and our own desire to do the things which bring us pleasure and value.

Christ is not only Lord and Savior, but He came to be an example of how our faith is to be lived out on earth.

Christ shows us that we must die to self, declaring the Word of God to be the only truth we receive into our spirits. When we become a people of God, living our lives completely for Him, according to His will, we will have access to the abundant lives that His Word promises.

Today, we will look at John 6:38, the obedience of Christ to the will of God.

"For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me."

For Christ to say ***"I came down"***, is further evidence of His existence before His physical arrival on the earth.

In Colossians 1:17, the Bible says, ***"And He is before all things, and by him all things consist."***

Christ was present from the beginning and is still present now.

As we have mentioned in this study so far, Christ was "despatched" to earth from heaven.

In John 3:12-13, Christ says, ***"If I have told you earthly things, and ye believe not, how shall ye believe, if I tell you of heavenly things? And no man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man which is in heaven."***

We need to receive the things of God from a spiritual perspective, and for us to do that, we must have the Holy Spirit teaching and guiding us into all truth.

Who came down from heaven? Jesus Christ.

Who ascended back unto the Father and is seated at the right hand of God? Jesus Christ.

The word **"heaven"** speaks of the upper or superior heaven, beyond the visible firmament, the abode of God and His glory, of the Messiah, and of the angels, the spirits of the righteous after death, and everything said to be with God.

Christ didn't come from some place on earth. He came from heaven to share an existence with us on earth!

In the Lord's prayer in Matthew 6:9-10, Christ instructs the disciples on how to pray by saying, ***"After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven."***

This is very important to this study; because Christ is identifying God as being in heaven, identifying God as being holy, He's asking for the kingdom of God to come to earth, and also is submitting to God's will on earth the same way it is in heaven. Christ came down from heaven to do the will of God, and God's will is for the kingdom of heaven to come to earth for us to live and experience!

Christ is not only the Mediator of the New Covenant, but He is the gateway to the kingdom of God!

In John 4:34, the Bible says, ***"Jesus saith unto them, My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work."***

Food is necessary for survival, so doing the will of God was necessary for Christ's survival.

When will the will of God become so necessary, for us, that our survival depends upon our doing the will of God?

Christ came to bring the kingdom of God to us, and we should live to bring the kingdom of God to others. God desires fellowship with His creation and when we don't do our part, we break fellowship not only for ourselves, but also for the people who God wants to reach.

The word **"will"** means "purpose, or pleasure".

In Job 23:11-12, the Bible says, ***"My foot hath held his steps, his way have I kept, and not declined. Neither have I gone back from the commandment of his lips; I have esteemed the words of his mouth more than my necessary food."***

Job understood this completely, and there was no man like unto Job, because he lived and breathed to do the will of God. The will of God has to become food and water to us.

In John 5:30, Christ says, ***"I can of mine own self do nothing: as I hear, I judge: and my judgment is just; because I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me."***

When we are in the will of God, the words we speak and the judgement calls we make are the ones that God desires us to make, so we move, think, and speak as Christ did in the earth.

The word **"sent"** here is where we get the word "apostle", which means to be sent for a mission from God.

Matthew 26:39 says of Christ, ***"And he went a little farther, and fell on his face, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt."***

True obedience is to do God's will, even when we are trying to find a way out. Christ set the example, and we must follow it.

15. Colossians 2:10 - Jesus Christ the Completer

The authority of Christ gives us the ability to have everything we need provided to us by Him.

We have the ability as believers to live, grow, and excel as believers, enabling us to stand over the lies of the enemy that tries to exercise authority over us.

God desires us to walk in victory, to triumph in the earth as Christ did, but in order for us to have this precious victory, we must allow Him to complete us and be complete in Him.

Whether we acknowledge it or not, we have voids and gaps within us without Christ, and we must allow Christ entry, to allow the Holy Spirit to fill in these empty places. The enemy is also looking for voids within us because those are points of weakness where they can gain entry and blind the Word of God in us.

The authority of Christ is above all other authorities, but we must allow Christ to complete us in order for us to walk fully in Him.

Today, we will look at Colossians 2:10, Jesus Christ the Completer.

"And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power"

The word **"complete"** means "filled, supplied abundantly with, imparted richly", suggesting a spiritual maturity that gives us the ability to walk in the power of God in the earth.

There is only one way we can be complete, and that is in Christ. We have sought completion in friendships, in relationships, with children, and in our professions, but the only one who can complete us is Christ.

In John 1:16-17, the Bible says, ***"And of his fulness have all we received, and grace for grace. For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ."***

We must receive the fullness of Christ within us, understanding that grace is the thing that God gives us that makes us complete in Him.

In 2 Corinthians 9:8, the Bible says, ***"And God is able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work"***.

God makes us complete in Christ Jesus, so we have everything we need in order for God's will to be done.

God doesn't want to just give us "some" grace, nor did He fill Christ with "some" grace. God is an all-or-nothing God who readily prepares us for our work in Him.

In 2 Peter 1:3-4, the Bible says, ***"According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue: Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust."***

God wants us to fully participate in the divine nature, to operate in the earth as if we are in heaven, and He makes us complete in Christ for this purpose.

In Ephesians 3:17-19, the Bible says, ***"That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, May be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; And to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God."***

When we place our faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit has the permission to inhabit our hearts and we become anchored in the love of God. Our eyes become opened to the love of God, to the extent of His immeasurable power, and to the knowledge of the Word of God.

All of these things give us a rock-solid foundation, that allow us to build an indestructible dwelling.

In Hebrews 5:14, the Bible say, ***"But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil."***

God wants us to mature spiritually as believers, to be able to put the Word of God to use.

The word **"head"** means "chief one", speaking of Christ being the Head of the Church.

The word "*principality*" means "power, dominion, speaking of the princes and chief among angels".

The word "*power*" means "privilege, authority, jurisdiction, rule, or influence".

In 1 Peter 3:22, the Bible says, "*Who is gone into heaven, and is on the right hand of God; angels and authorities and powers being made subject unto him.*"

Christ has all power and in possessing all power, everything in earth and in heaven is subject to Him.

This is our Savior, but is Jesus Christ Lord in our lives as well?

In 1 Corinthians 15:27-28, the Bible says, "*For he hath put all things under his feet. But when he saith all things are put under him, it is manifest that he is excepted which did put all things under him. And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all.*"

Just as Christ came to earth and subjected Himself to God, we must subject ourselves to Christ, who IS the authority and power over heaven and earth. If we are complete in Christ, there is nothing we can't do!

16. Isaiah 40:11 – Jesus Christ, the Good Shepherd

Jesus Christ is our Savior, our Lord, God robed in flesh, the Author and Finisher of our faith. He existed before the world began and He is seated at the right hand of the Father in power and in strength.

Have we come to know our Lord as Shepherd?

A shepherd tends to the needs of the sheep, leading them by day, and protecting them by night, guiding them into places where they can eat, drink, and be filled. A shepherd's life is about the needs of his sheep, and a good shepherd is willing to give his life for his sheep.

Our Lord and Savior is that Good Shepherd, and His love for His sheep made Him give His life for us, so that we could live eternally in Him.

No matter how far we have strayed and no matter how much wrong we've done, the Good Shepherd can find us, carry us in His arms, and bring us back into the flock.

Today, we will look at Isaiah 40:11, Jesus Christ, the Good Shepherd.

"He shall feed his flock like a shepherd: he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young."

The word "**feed**" means "to pasture, to graze".

This suggests that Christ puts us in a position to eat and drink and our sustenance comes from what the Lord provides. Sometimes, we get to a point in our lives where we try to be our own providers, where we try to feed ourselves instead of entrusting God to do it.

Isaiah 49:10, the Bible says, ***"They shall not hunger nor thirst; neither shall the heat nor sun smite them: for he that hath mercy on them shall lead them, even by the springs of water shall he guide them."***

Our loving God is going to make sure that we have everything we need to live, and to live out the purpose God has for us.

The word **"flock"** means "an arrangement of animals, or an arrangement of people who believe in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior".

In Ezekiel 34:30-31, the Bible says, ***"Thus shall they know that I the LORD their God am with them, and that they, even the house of Israel, are my people, saith the Lord GOD. And ye my flock, the flock of my pasture, are men, and I am your God, saith the Lord GOD."***

Our being in the flock of God is the privilege we have of being children of God, and to display our identities as children of God to the world around us.

God's desire is to see His children well taken care of, which is why Matthew 6:33 says, ***"But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you."***

God wants to give us everything He has, but we first have to seek the kingdom of God and the righteousness of God.

The word **"shepherd"** means "to tend to a flock, to pastor, or to rule."

Not only are we called to be sheep under Christ, but we are also called to shepherd others to the Lord as well.

In Ezekiel 37:24-25, the Bible says, ***"And David my servant shall be king over them; and they all shall have one shepherd: they shall also walk in my judgments, and observe my statutes, and do them. And they shall dwell in the land that I have given unto Jacob my servant, wherein your fathers have dwelt; and they shall dwell therein, even they, and their children, and their children's children for ever: and my servant David shall be their prince for ever."***

Even though David's name is being mentioned, the scripture is talking about Christ, who is in the lineage of David. God has already destined Christ to rule and pastor His Church, and for Him to be our Head.

"He shall gather the lambs with his arm, and shall carry them in his bosom, and he shall gently lead those that are with young."

The word **"gather"** means "to bring together. to assemble".

The word **"lambs"** refer to believers of God, the children of God, and the saints of God.

The word **"arm"** means "might, power, or strength".

In Ezekiel 34:22-23, the Bible says, ***"Therefore will I save my flock, and they shall no more be a prey; and I will judge between cattle and cattle. And I will set up one shepherd over them, and he shall feed them, even my servant David; he shall feed them, and he shall be their shepherd."***

Our lives are in great jeopardy without our Shepherd, and so we then are extremely vulnerable.

We can't rely on our strength, power, and might, but we have to rely on the Lord.

This requires humility, because the word ***"carry"*** means "to lift or bear up", so we have to allow God to lift us, not be misled by elevating ourselves.

In 1 Peter 5:6, the Bible says ***"Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time"***.

The phrase ***"gently lead"*** means "conduct, guide, sustain, or protect".

Our Lord Jesus Christ is guiding us into our destiny, sustaining our dreams and visions in Him. He is protecting His purpose over our lives, and He is leading us into our Promised Land.

Before He did any of this, He came to earth and became the Passover Lamb, giving His life for us to find pasture in Him, and bringing us together, serving the Lord as one!

17. John 3:16 - the love of God making salvation available to us

We have an amazing love from God, an unconditional love that is all-encompassing, that takes us from a position of death and condemnation to a position of life and peace through Jesus Christ our Lord.

In the depths of His generosity to us, God gave His Son Jesus Christ to the world as the Atoning Sacrifice for the sins of the world.

He gives us one condition: to believe in Christ, the only begotten Son of God.

Salvation came through Christ and is available to us by faith, so that we can not only partake in the divine nature of God, but so we can obtain everlasting life, a boarding pass to the new heaven and earth, to live with God forever.

This is the verse our whole faith rests upon, because without belief in the name of Jesus Christ, there is no salvation, no Holy Spirit indwelling, no everlasting life in heaven.

Today, we will look at one of the most known Scriptures of the Bible, John 3:16, the love of God making salvation available to us.

"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

The word **"God"** means "Supreme Divinity".

The word **"loved"** means "to regard with strong affection, favor, goodwill, or benevolence, to serve with fidelity".

The word **"world"** speaks for the earth and its people.

In Romans 5:6-8, the Bible says, ***"For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. For scarcely for a righteous man will one die: yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die. But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us."***

If our salvation depends upon our strength or perfection, then there is no way any of us would be saved. God takes us in our roughest possible state, completely separated from God in all our ways, unable to resist enemy advances, yet He still loved us enough to make provision for our salvation.

In Ephesians 2:4-5, the Bible says, ***"But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;)"***.

God's mercy withholds the penalty due to us for our sin and His love spearheads our salvation when there is no way that we can earn it.

I remember who I used to be before I found true salvation and redemption in Jesus Christ, and even as I type, the enemy is mounting a powerful offensive on me, completely disrupting my confidence in Christ. I am so happy I don't have to rely on me, but on Christ, and because of my status as a believer, I have the power in Christ to resist the enemy and cleave to the Word of God's declaration of my identity.

"That he gave His only begotten Son"

The word **"gave"** means "to bestow upon".

The phrase **"only begotten Son"** refers to The Word, the only begotten Son in the highest sense, as alone knowing and revealing the essence of God.

This is Christ Jesus!

In 1 John 4:9-10, the Bible says, ***"In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins."***

Love isn't "lip service", it is manifested in our actions. If someone on earth gave up their child as a sacrifice so we could live, there would be no doubt as to their love for us, so why do we question God's undying love for us?

In Romans 8:32, the Bible says, ***"He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?"***

Why do we walk this earth feeling disqualified to partake in the divine nature of God when Christ clearly made the ultimate sacrifice so we can?

"That whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but everlasting life."

The word ***"believeth"*** means "to entrust oneself to, to be fully persuaded".

God extended this invitation to everyone, no matter the background or the sin.

Don't feel that you are too bad for salvation, just believe in Jesus Christ!

In Romans 8:1, the Bible says, ***"There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit."***

The word ***"perish"*** means "to destroy fully".

The phrase ***"everlasting life"*** refers to the life of bliss and glory in the kingdom of God, after we die physically, which awaits the true disciples of Christ.

We're talking about heaven! God doesn't ask for much from us in order for us to attain the most incredible gift imaginable.

Someone died so we could live an abundant life in God and that someone is Jesus Christ.

May we come to receive the gift of God into our spirits and receive Christ as Lord and Savior. In doing so, we also receive the love of God as well!

18. John 3:17 – Christ sent to save, not condemn

Christ was sent to earth to become the perfect sacrifice for sin, giving all who believe in Him salvation, redemption and eternal life.

Some people are still waiting for Christ to come, expecting to see a great war commander, or a brutal judge that will reprove the world of sin.

Then, you have the people who beg God to send Christ back right now, so they can be taken with Him to heaven without once considering all of the people who will miss out on heaven if He did come right now.

Even as Christ now sits at the right hand of God, He serves as an Advocate and Intercessor for us, so we all can experience heaven just as He has. Christ didn't come to earth to condemn us, but He came to save our souls, to declare us alive in Him forever.

Today, we are going to look at John 3:17, Christ sent to save, not condemn.

"For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved."

The word **"sent"** implies being set apart in order to be despatched as an agent and messenger of God.

The word **"world"** refers to the present world and present order of things, as opposed of the kingdom of Christ, and hence, always with the idea of transience, worthlessness, and evil both physical and moral, the seat of cares, temptations and irregular desires.

This verse says, ***"For God SENT not His Son INTO the world"***.

This has to mean that Christ's life didn't begin at His birth in Bethlehem, but Christ existed before His birth in heaven, because He was SENT INTO the world!

In John 17:3-4, Christ prays to God saying, ***"And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent. I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do."***

This is important! Christ existed before the world began, and He was sent to earth with a mission and purpose from God, one which He fulfilled. Whether we see it this way or not, when God created the world, everything in it was finished, including us, then He rested,!

We weren't just born, but we were sent at an appointed time, for an appointed purpose, and just as Christ came and fulfilled His purpose, we each must do the same.

In John 17:8, Christ also prays, ***"I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me; and they have received them, and have known surely that I came out from thee, and they have believed that thou didst send me."***

See, God not only appointed Christ to arrive on earth at a specific time and place, but He also gave Christ a Word to share, and appointed people that would receive His Word and believe that Christ was SENT by God.

Our lives must reflect that we were sent by God and the Word we share was given by God. Our lives are supposed to be a testimony of God in Christ that will cause others to believe in God as well.

Just in case someone believes I am wrong to make this comparison, let's look at John 17:18, where Christ prays, ***"As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world."***

We are sent as well! This is for the person who feels like they don't have purpose, or their lives don't have meaning. We are alive because God has a purpose for our lives and a Word He wants us to speak.

In 1 John 4:17, the Bible says, ***"Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment: because AS HE IS, SO ARE WE IN THIS WORLD!"***

The word **"condemn"** means "to judge, imparting penalty for sin". The word **"condemn"** also expresses that a structure is uninhabitable and declared slated for ruin or destruction.

There is no hope for something condemned, which is why Christ didn't come to condemn the world.

In Colossians 1:27, the Bible says, ***"To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the HOPE of glory"***.

In Christ, we have hope because we have salvation, redemption, and eternal life.

In John 8:15, Christ says, ***"Ye judge after the flesh; I judge no man."***

No man. Christ didn't come in judgement, but He came in the power of God to seek and save the lost. Why do you think His most powerful moments in His ministry were with people society declared outcasts?

The word **"saved"** means "salvation from eternal death, sin, and the punishment and misery consequent to sin". Christ was sent to deliver us from everything associated with sin, so that we could deliver the Word and purpose that God has for us.

In Luke 9:56, the Bible says, ***"For the Son of man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them..."***

We have the wrong perception of Christ if we think He came to rain fire and brimstone on our heads. Christ was sent with a message of repentance and salvation.

Don't ever say that there is no hope for you because Christ's life and death secured your hope in Him, giving you a life of victory, not condemnation.

19. Isaiah 53:12 – a generous Intercessor in Jesus Christ

Jesus Christ, in all His glory and power, made a choice that very few of us would ever make. Imagine giving up your most prized possessions, and accepting poverty for people in dire need, knowing that many wouldn't take your gift, or have any appreciation for it?

Imagine sharing your inheritance with a bunch of people who will squander what your Father sacrificed for? Imagine volunteering to take the death penalty for someone else's crimes, when you have never done anything other than what God has desired you to do since birth?

Place Jesus Christ into that imagination because that is exactly what He did, and He also did it to be able to speak on our behalf to God. Christ did much more than die for us. He lived for us, to share the kingdom of God with us, no matter how much we didn't deserve it.

Today, we will look at Isaiah 53:12, a generous Intercessor in Jesus Christ.

"Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he hath poured out his soul unto death: and he was numbered with the transgressors; and he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors."

The word **"divide"** means "to separate, to apportion".

The word **"portion"** means "inheritance or allotment".

The word **"great"** refers to the multitude, speaking of believers.

This shows that Christ was given something by God and He shared it with us!

In John 17:6-7, Christ prays, ***"I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world: thine they were, and thou gavest them me; and they have kept thy word. Now they have known that all things whatsoever thou hast given me are of thee."***

Christ life and ministry on earth equipped us with everything we need to be the children of God, and not only children, but ministers and heirs in Him.

In Psalm 2:7-8, the Bible says, ***"I will declare the decree: the LORD hath said unto me, Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee. Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession."***

God declared Christ as His Son and then gave Him us and the earth for an inheritance.

In Psalm 24:1, the Bible says, ***"The earth is the LORD's, and the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein."***

See, God owns everything, then He gave it to Christ, and now He is sharing it with us. Christ is able to do all of this because He triumphed in the world through His death.

In Colossians 2:15, the Bible says, ***"And having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it."***

Christ not only received all power from God, but He takes away the power of everything in authority in the earth. Then He shares this power with us!

The word **"spoil"** refers to booty, something acquired from others, usually taken by force.

Think of pirates when you think of booty, and you'll understand that it is something of value.

The word **"strong"** means "powerful or numerous".

This gives us the impression that there is more than enough to go around.

In Philippians 2:10, the Bible says, ***"That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth."***

Our Christ has everything so all that He has He has freely given us so we can walk and live in His power as well.

In Acts 26:18, Christ says, ***"To open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me."***

God destines His children to walk in victory and He sent Christ to ensure that we would!

"Because he hath poured out his soul unto death; and he was numbered with the transgressors;"

The phrase **"poured out"** means "to be emptied out or lay out, be demolished".

The word **"death"** means "ruin".

The word **"numbered"** means "counted or enrolled".

The word **"transgressors"** means "rebels, offenders, and people who revolt against the Word of God".

In Mark 15:27-28, the Bible says, ***"And with him they crucify two thieves; the one on his right hand, and the other on his left. And the scripture was fulfilled, which saith, And he was numbered with the transgressors."***

Christ took on an identity that never belonged to Him and was strung up on the cross with people who were guilty of their offenses. His sacrifice gave us His power.

"And he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors."

The word **"bare"** means "to carry or take away".

The word **"sin"** means "crime or penalty".

In 2 Corinthians 5:21, the Bible says, ***"For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him."***

Not only did Christ love us when He offered himself up for us, but He did it to ensure that we had an inheritance with God.

The word **"intercession"** suggests a person who operates as a go-between, someone who speaks on the behalf of another.

In Hebrews 7:25, the Bible says, ***"Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them."***

Christ is still making intercession for us with God, still beckoning that God gives us chance after chance to give our lives fully over to Him. He wants us to have what He has, an inheritance in God that no one can take away, and the ability to triumph in the earth against anything that comes our way.

In 1 John 2:1, the Bible says, ***"My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous"***. Our God is something truly amazing, to send Christ to pay the cost for our sins, and then have Christ also serve as our Advocate when we do sin.

Imagine advocating for the person who contributed towards your death, but doing it willingly and with abounding love. That is the Christ we serve!!!!

20. Zechariah 13:7 - a Shepherd struck and a Church that scattered

People are equipped with a fight, flight or freeze response to fear. When His enemies came for Christ, His followers fled. Even Peter, who cut off the High Priest servant's ear, eventually ran and then denied our Lord three times. Peter would go on to be the chief pastor of the church, but he had a period in his life where he acted like he never knew Christ.

None of this caught Christ by surprise, and God even prepared us for this in prophecy. Not only did the prophecy point to the existence of Christ, but it also pointed to the people that would flee from His presence, and also of the Church that would be scattered as well.

God doesn't make a mistake in His plan for our lives, and as we learn more about Christ, we will discover how we fit into this perfect plan as well.

Today, we will look at Zechariah 13:7, a Shepherd struck and a Church that scattered.

"Awake, O sword, against my shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow, saith the LORD of hosts: smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered: and I will turn mine hand upon the little ones."

The word **"awake"** suggests a lifting or raising up in battle.

The word **"sword"** means "a destructive, cutting instrument used as a symbol of judgement.

The word **"shepherd"** means "to tend to a flock, to rule, or to pastor".

This is speaking of Jesus Christ.

In John 10:14-15, Christ says, ***"I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine. As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father: and I lay down my life for the sheep."***

Christ knew that not only was His job to lead us into a right relationship with God through salvation, but He knew there would be a time where He would have to lay down His life for us. Only Christ could make this sacrifice and He was obedient to His call. When the crowd came to seize Him, He didn't flee their capture, nor did He try to get out of their grasp. Our Lord and Savior set the perfect example for how we are to obey the Lord, no matter the cost. This shows us how to be living sacrifices on the earth.

The word ***"man"*** doesn't just mean "male or human being", but it actually means "valiant warrior".

You have to be a valiant warrior to go to your death for your people, and that's what Christ did for us!

The word ***"fellow"*** means "associate or companion", and the term expresses a union between God and Christ.

In John 17:21-23, Christ prays, ***"That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one: I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me."***

Christ was that valiant warrior that went to His death in order to unite the Church, to make us one with God and one with each other.

"smite the shepherd and the sheep shall be scattered: and I will turn mine hand upon the little ones."

The word ***"smite"*** means "to strike, kill or wound".

The word ***"sheep"*** means 'the flock, the believers of God, or the disciples of God'.

The word ***"scattered"*** means "dispersed or spread out".

In Mark 14:50-52, the Bible says, ***"And they all forsook him, and fled. And there followed him a certain young man, having a linen cloth cast about his naked body; and the young men laid hold on him: And he left the linen cloth, and fled from them naked."***

Imagine the disciples, experiencing the miracles of Christ, seeing the Word of God in action, but when they faced persecution, they fled, and one even shook out of his clothes to run. These men would go on to pastor the Church, so they experienced the same redemption we have!

Christ wasn't surprised because He even said in Matthew 26:31, ***"Then saith Jesus unto them, All ye shall be offended because of me this night: for it is written, I will smite the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock shall be scattered abroad."***

Even before His death He knew they would flee, because He IS the Word of God.

The phrase "*turn my hand*" implies that the Church is going to be persecuted.

In Acts 8:3-4, the Bible says, "*As for Saul, he made havock of the church, entering into every house, and haling men and women committed them to prison. Therefore they that were scattered abroad WENT EVERY WHERE PREACHING THE WORD.*"

Even the disciples fleeing and the Church scattering had a monumental purpose, to spread the Word of God all over the world. The enemy had no clue that when Christ died on the cross, the Church would explode all over the world, in full demonstration of God's power! Who knew that God had a purpose for our fear?

The Shepherd was struck down, the disciples fled, the Church scattered, but the Word of God spread all over the world as a result. May God's perfect will be done!

21. Ephesians 1:20 - the power Christ possesses at God's right hand

When God raised Christ from the dead, He activated great power in Him, even greater than Christ had in earth. When Christ was on earth, He operated within the confines of His body, of human limitations, but when He had risen from the dead He had all power again, all ability and unlimited reach! He sits at the Father's right hand in power, truth, and love, which He despatches to us through the Holy Spirit. In addition to despatching power, truth, and love, He also sends His grace, and makes intercession for us, so that at all points of our lives, we have someone speaking on our behalf to God.

Even as His work is finished, He is still working for us, still in service, and the most beautiful thing about it is, He went back to heaven, but didn't forget about us on earth!

Today, we will look at Ephesians 1:20, the power Christ possesses at God's right hand.

"Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places"

The word "**wrought**" means "to be active, to be efficient, to produce an effect."

In Matthew 28:18, the Bible says, "***And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.***"

When God rose Christ from the dead, He gave Him all power, power He freely makes available to us.

In Ephesians 1:19, the Bible says, "***And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power.***"

We are included in receiving this power, and now this power is completely active in us, the same way it is in Christ.

In John 6:63, Christ says, ***"It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life."***

The Spirit of God activates the power in us, and the word "wrought" comes from the word for "energy". Energy always produces an effect, and the Spirit of God working in us will always produce an effect.

The word ***"raise"*** means "to rouse from sleep".

The word ***"dead"*** refers to a corpse.

In Acts 2:24-25, the Bible says, ***"Whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death: because it was not possible that he should be holden of it. For David speaketh concerning him, I foresaw the Lord always before my face, for he is on my right hand, that I should not be moved"***.

Christ's death and resurrection took away the power of death from the enemy because death wasn't the final place for our Lord, neither is it for us.

In Romans 6:4, the Bible says, ***"Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life."***

God raised Christ from the dead to give him all power, but to also give us the ability to walk in the power of the Holy Spirit here on earth. This power gives us the power to live a new life in Christ, and experience the same leading of the Holy Spirit as Christ did.

In Romans 10:9, the Bible says, ***"That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved."***

Our salvation is a product of our confessing the Lord Jesus and also believing that God raised Him from the dead. Without that belief, there is neither salvation nor power.

"And set him at his own right hand in heavenly places"

The word ***"set"*** means "to seat down, or to appoint".

The phrase ***"right hand"*** is a place of the highest honor and distinction, designated for the person next in rank and power.

If Christ is at the right hand of God seated, then He IS the power of God!

In Colossians 3:1-2, the Bible says, ***"If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth."***

As believers, we died to our former selves, and were raised up in Christ, so our perspective has to always be on the kingdom of God, not of the earth. We are no longer of this world.

In Hebrews 1:3, the Bible says, ***"Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high".***

Christ is the express image of the person of God, fulfilling the complete purpose of God with His life on earth, and after his work was done, He sat at the right hand of God in heaven and in all power.

In Ephesians 1:3, the Bible says, ***"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ".***

God doesn't just want to give us some of heaven, some of His kingdom, and some of His power. He wants to give it all to us, so we can walk as Christ did, full power of the Holy Spirit active and effectual in us.

22. Acts 5:31 - Jesus Christ, who receives our repentance and gives us forgiveness

Our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, came to earth and did a powerful work for us. With access to repentance and salvation we can turn from wickedness that keeps us separated from God.

I know this very well. I've been the worst person I knew.

I lied, stole, sold drugs, robbed people, been a gang member, and unfortunately, have taken life.

I am the absolute last person on earth deserving the forgiveness God offers freely, knowing how far I had strayed from the path.

Sometimes I don't feel qualified to teach anyone anything about God.

Do I rely on my own feelings, or on the Word of God, and what it says about forgiveness, and repentance?

Many don't come to Church or develop a relationship with God because they have no clue what cost Christ really paid for ALL of their sins.

Today, we look at Acts 5:31, Jesus Christ, who receives our repentance and gives us forgiveness.

"Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins."

The word **"exalted"** means "elevated or lifted up".

In Acts 2:33, the Bible says, ***"Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear."***

Because Christ was raised from the dead, and now is seated at the right hand of God, we now have access to the Holy Spirit's manifestation in our lives. Evidence of the Holy Spirit in someone's life will be related to Godly things they see or hear.

In Acts 2:36, the Bible also says, ***"Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made the same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ."***

Christ isn't just the Messiah, and He definitely isn't just a Savior, He is also Lord, the Supreme Controller, and the Possessor of all power.

The word **"right hand"** refers to strength, might, power, and authority, designated for someone of the highest rank of honor and distinction.

In Hebrews 2:10, the Bible says, ***"For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings."***

Christ's power brings us back into the presence of God, so we can receive the presence and power of the Holy Spirit, and live lives that bring glory to God. Christ endured sufferings and remained perfect throughout His time on earth, and His victory is a victory for all mankind, but especially those who by faith believe His name.

The word **"Prince"** means "chief leader or author".

An author writes the story, so they know its beginning, middle, and ending.

In Hebrews 12:2, the Bible says, ***"Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God."***

Christ knew He would triumph over the cross, over death, and over sin, and that His victory would open-up the door for people like me, who felt they were far too bad to receive forgiveness, or to be called children of the Most-High God.

A Prince is the Son of a King, and now we, as children of God, are royalty as well. Never let the world tell you who you are. Let the Word of God tell you who you are!

The word **"Savior"** means "deliverer" and speaks of Jesus the Messiah, who saves people from guilt and the power of sin and from eternal death, from punishment and misery as the consequence of sin, and gives them eternal life and the blessedness of His kingdom.

If we are still walking in guilt, then that means we haven't accepted what the Word has said about our salvation.

"To give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins."

The word **"repentance"** means "a change of the mind or direction, implying pious sorrow for unbelief and sin and a turning from them to God and the gospel of Christ".

The word **"forgiveness"** means "freedom, pardon, to release one's sins from sinners, to deliver from captivity".

The word **"sins"** means 'offense or aberration from a prescribed law or rule of duty".

In Acts 3:26, the bible says, ***"Unto you first God, having raised up his Son Jesus, sent him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from his iniquities."***

We can be changed by the blessing of God making forgiveness and repentance available to us.

In Ephesians 1:7, the Bible says, ***"In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace"***.

God gave us the access, but we have to receive it.

2 Corinthians 7:10 says, ***"For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death."***

Godly sorrow is what I experienced, where I knew I sinned against God, and it produced a desire in me to want to change my life, to serve Him with all my heart. God took the worst of the worst and turned me into a child of The King!

23. Proverbs 30:4 - the ascension and triumph of Jesus Christ

Jesus Christ descended to the earth from heaven, to live as we do but without sin, becoming the perfect atoning sacrifice for our sin.

When He died, He conquered Satan, who had the power over death, and released us from the curse we were under.

After triumphing over death, He was resurrected, appearing to many witnesses, before ascending back to the Father in heaven. He came to earth with a mission and fulfilled His mission on earth.

Everything in the earth belongs to the Lord, and there is nothing that He isn't in control of, including nature.

We serve a Lord who has conquered everything that we face today in our lives, and is seated in heaven, a place we as believers will experience when this physical life is over.

Today, we will look at Proverbs 30:4, the ascension and triumph of Jesus Christ.

"Who hath ascended up into heaven, or descended? who hath gathered the wind in his fists? who hath bound the waters in a garment? who hath established all the ends of the earth? what is his name, and what is his son's name, if thou canst tell?"

The word **"ascended"** means "upward motion" and in this case, "an upward motion into the appearance and presence of God in heaven".

The word **"heaven"** means "the abode of God, the place of the Lord's throne, the place where God operates."

In John 3:12-13, Christ says, ***"If I have told you earthly things, and ye believe not, how shall ye believe, if I tell you of heavenly things? And no man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man which is in heaven."***

Christ not only came to earth, but He came and shared heavenly things with us.

For the people who believe that our taste of heaven comes when we die, you have missed the beauty God has provided to us here on earth. God wants us to experience the kingdom of God on earth too! Christ is speaking prophecy concerning himself, by telling Nicodemus about His ascension to heaven.

This is how powerful Christ's words are.

In John 8:18-19, He says, ***"I am one that bear witness of myself, and the Father that sent me beareth witness of me. Then said they unto him, Where is thy Father? Jesus answered, Ye neither know me, nor my Father: if ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also."***

Christ's words are the Word of God!

The word **"descended"** means "to do downward to a lower region".

In John 6:32-33, Christ says, ***"Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Moses gave you not that bread from heaven; but my Father giveth you the true bread from heaven. For the bread of God is he which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world."***

Christ didn't just come down from heaven to live on earth, He came to give us life, to build a Church that He will come back for!

In Revelation 1:17-18, the Bible says, ***"And when I saw him, I fell at his feet as dead. And he laid his right hand upon me, saying unto me, Fear not; I am the first and the last: I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death."***

On our own, we can't stand in the presence of God, But if He touches us with His right hand, through His power, we can live and not die, because our Christ has conquered the grave!

"who hath gathered the wind in his fist? Who hath bound the waters in a garment? Who hath established all the ends of the earth?"

The word **"gathered"** means "to collect or harvest together".

The word **"bound"** means "to cramp" implying a confinement to a space.

The word **"established"** means "accomplished, ordained, or made sure".

This is showing Christ as being in control of all nature.

In Luke 8:24-25, Christ shows His power over the elements of nature and weather, because the Word says, ***"And they came to him, and awoke him, saying, Master, master, we perish. Then he arose, and rebuked the wind and the raging of the water: and they ceased, and there was a calm. And he said unto them, Where is your faith? And they being afraid wondered, saying one to another, What manner of man is this! for he commandeth even the winds and water, and they obey him."***

The disciples walked with Him, saw miracles, but still couldn't fully comprehend the measure of His power on earth.

In Proverbs 8:29-30, the Bible says, ***"When he gave to the sea his decree, that the waters should not pass his commandment: when he appointed the foundations of the earth: Then I was by him, as one brought up with him: and I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him"***.

Nothing on earth moves without the permission of God, and Christ was God robed in flesh. Christ enjoyed seeing the mighty hand of God move in the earth. Do we?

"What is his name, and what is his son's name if thou canst tell?"

The word **"name"** means "an appellation of authority, honor, or character". The word "tell" means "to confess, know recognize or discern".

In Acts 4:12, it says, ***"Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved."***

In the name of Jesus Christ lies salvation, redemption, and the power of the Holy Spirit in us.

In Romans 10:9-10, the Bible says, ***"That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation."***

When we confess the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, our lives change forever! Not only can our Lord and Savior control the elements of nature, but He also controls the elements of our lives, and His desire is to bring the kingdom of God into our lives.

24. Psalm 68:18 – the ascension of Christ and the liberation of us

The power of Jesus Christ's ascension to heaven unlocked a power within us.

We have been set free from the bondage that kept us from salvation, that greatly hindered our redemption, and had us slated for permanent destruction. God not only set us free, but He also imprisoned captivity, restricting our access to it.

Imagine the day I am freed from prison, and am united with my family, but then, instead of enjoying my freedom, I leave home, drive back to the prison I was set free from, pound on the doors of the prison, and tell them to let me back in!

That would be insane, wouldn't it?

Yet, many of us return back to the sinful activities we were delivered from, from the attitudes we were saved from, and we *PUT ON CAPTIVITY* as if we were never freed.

This is not what Christ ascended to the Father for. He ascended so we would be *FREE INDEED*, operating in the fullness of the Holy Spirit's power working in us.

Today, we are going to look at Psalm 68:18, the ascension of Christ and the liberation of us.

"Thou hast ascended on high, thou hast led captivity captive: thou hast received gifts for men; yea, for the rebellious also, that the LORD God might dwell among them."

The phrase "*ascended*" means "to make an upward motion into the presence of God", speaking of Christ going back to heaven.

In Acts 1:8-9, the Bible says, "*But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth. And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight.*"

Christ's ascension to the Father meant Holy Spirit power for us, so we can live in the earth as His witnesses, so people would turn their lives over to Christ, and have their souls saved as well. The Word of God gives us promises, but we must follow the Word of God in order to activate the promises.

The disciples had to follow Christ's command, when He told them in Luke 24:49, "*And, behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high.*"

What this means for us is, God has promises prepared for us as His children, but we must be obedient, and we must be in position to receive them.

The disciples were terrified; their Lord crucified, resurrected, and now ascended, and His command was for them to stay in Jerusalem, the same place where Christ was persecuted for being our Lord. Obedience isn't easy, but it is necessary!

The phrase **"hast led captivity captive"** implies a taking prisoner of the institution of imprisonment as in spoils of war or military raid.

When Christ ascended to the Father, He took our bondage away from Satan, giving all who believe in His name freedom.

In Ephesians 4:8-10, the Bible says, **"Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men. (Now that he ascended, what is it but that he also descended first into the lower parts of the earth? He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that he might fill all things.)"**

I am currently in prison, currently sentenced to life imprisonment without parole, unable to leave. If someone was to gift me a car or a house while I am still in prison, what tangible, immediate good would it do for me?

Now if I am released from prison and then bestowed these gifts, then they have the power to change my life.

Christ's death allowed him to descend into the deep, to conduct a military raid on Hell, to take away death, bondage and the power of death away from Satan, giving us true freedom in Him to receive His gifts fully.

The word **"receive"** means "to take hold of, or to seize".

The word **"gift"** means "a present or offering".

In Acts 2:33, the Bible says, **"Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear."**

There is always going to be evidence of the gift of God working in us, and Christ died, rose, and ascended to give us the gift of the Holy Spirit.

"Yea, for the rebellious also, that the Lord God might dwell among them."

The word **"rebellious"** refers to the backslider and the person who revolts against the Word of God.

The word **"dwell"** means "to reside in, to rest in, or to inhabit."

In Romans 5:10, the Bible says, **"For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life."**

Christ's ascension to the Father ensured that a person like me, a person who was a disgrace to the kingdom to God, can receive salvation and adoption through Jesus Christ.

Christ's victory became mine because the Holy Spirit now dwells in me! The rebel becomes restored through the victory of Christ.

25. Hebrew 9:15 – Mediator of our New Testament, Jesus Christ

The New Testament of the Bible begins with the 4 Gospels, all speaking about Christ's life, death, and resurrection.

Christ's death did much more than just save us from sin and redeem us from the penalty of death.

His death began the New Testament itself, a new agreement that fulfilled the Old Testament, and bestowed upon us even greater promises than that of the Old Testament. God desired to walk with His children and be their God in the Old Testament, but in the New Testament, He desired to dwell IN US by the Holy Spirit, the Promised Comforter.

God desires that, through the New Testament, we would walk on earth in the power of God, as children of God, experiencing the kingdom of God on earth, and then obtain our inheritance of eternal life when our life here is over, to once again dwell WITH God again.

Christ's death activated this Promise!

Today, we will look at Hebrew 9:15, Mediator of our New Testament, Jesus Christ.

"And for this cause he is the mediator of the new testament, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance."

The word "**cause**" means "the channel of an act, or the reason for being".

The word "**mediator**" means "go-between, intercessor, or reconciler".

In 1 Timothy 2:5-6, the Bible says, ***"For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; Who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time."***

The Mediator is the executor of the New Testament, the person who ensures the terms of the agreement are met, the promises are established, and all parties involved know what they must do and what they are entitled to.

Jesus Christ died on a cross to ensure that the New Testament would be activated, also to ensure that we would have intercession between us and God.

The "New Testament" is a new covenant between us and God, sanctioned by the blood of Christ, which means Christ had to die in order for the new covenant to have power.

In Hebrews 9:16-17, the Bible says, ***"For where a testament is, there must also of necessity be the death of the testator. For a testament is of force after men are dead: otherwise it is of NO STRENGTH AT ALL while the testator liveth."***

Do we understand that our sin put Christ in a position where He had to come down from heaven and die, so we can receive the promises of the New Testament?

The phrase ***"by means"*** implies the method by which the New Testament was activated and that method was "death". This didn't signify a natural death, but this word "death" means "a violent death".

In Acts 8:32, the Bible says, ***"The place of the scripture which he read was this, He was led as a sheep to the slaughter; and like a lamb dumb before his shearer, so opened he not his mouth."***

Christ knew what His mission was on earth; He knew that His death would be brutal, but He was still obedient, so we could then be partakers in this new covenant, full of promise.

In Luke 22:42, the Bible says, ***"Saying, Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me: nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done."*** Obedience isn't doing what is easy, but true obedience is when you'd rather flee than obey and you still obey.

"for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament"

The word ***"redemption"*** means "ransom paid in full, deliverance, or salvation for those who believe in the name of Jesus Christ, that He died to save us from our sins."

The word ***"transgressions"*** means "law breaking, deliberately stepping over the boundary." The Old Testament showed us that it was impossible for us to keep the entire law perfectly, that something more was needed.

In Romans 3:24-25, the Bible says, ***"Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God"***.

God made sure we had a substitute, a perfect sacrifice, to replace our inability to keep the law. Christ's death bought us back, when there was nothing we could do on our own to pay the cost for our sin.

"They which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance"

The word ***"called"*** means "invited to repentance and salvation".

The word ***"receive"*** means "to seize or take hold of".

The word ***"promise"*** means "divine assurance of God".

The New Testament is one big promise, a divine assurance of good, because those who receive the promise experience victory over sin and death.

In Hebrews 3:1-2, the Bible says, ***"Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus; Who was faithful to him that appointed him, as also Moses was faithful in all his house."***

Because we are called into this wonderful salvation and repentance, we must consider the means by which we received such an amazing gift, and then live in complete faithfulness to God.

We cannot live our lives as if there was no great sacrifice made by Christ so that we could receive His gift.

The phrase ***"eternal inheritance"*** speaks of perpetual heir-ship, and admission into the kingdom of God, to spend the rest of our lives with Him.

In Acts 20:32, the Bible says, ***"And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified."***

The New Testament positions us to be *OF the kingdom of God on earth*, and also enables us to be admitted *INTO the kingdom of God in heaven*.

If we believe in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, and believe that God raised Him from the dead, then the kingdom of God is ours for the taking, both now and for eternity!

26. Galatians 4:7 - the gateway to our inheritance of God

Jesus Christ's presence on earth showed us how to live according to the kingdom of God. He lived in authority, spoke in divine truth, and provided miracles that only someone sent by God could do.

Christ also lived to prepare us for a world where the Holy Spirit dwells in us and guides us into all truth.

His death ensured that we would have access to the kingdom of God now and in eternity, but we have to believe in the name of Jesus Christ, believe God rose Him from the dead, and receive Him as both Lord and Savior. If we just receive Him as Savior, but not Lord, while we may be free and may have our ticket to heaven, but ***will we learn how to live kingdom lives on earth, reigning with Christ as priests and kings?***

In sin, we were in bondage, but in salvation we are children of God and heirs to His promises, promises freely available to us by the Word of God.

Today, we will look at Galatians 4:7, Jesus Christ, the gateway to our inheritance of God.

"Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ."

The word ***"servant"*** means "a slave, involuntarily or voluntarily in a qualified sense of subjection or subservience."

Whether we acknowledge it or not, when we are living in sin, we are enslaved by sin.

In John 8:34, the Bible says, "**Jesus answered them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin.**"

We become enslaved to what we conform ourselves to, which is why Romans 12:2 says, "**And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.**"

When we are enslaved by sin, our minds can't be renewed daily, and we won't be able to perform, and to establish by evidence that the will of God is perfect.

Sin keeps us away from the will of God, and when we live in sin, we live our lives to please the flesh.

In Romans 6:16, the Bible says, "**Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?**"

What we obey is what we serve, and if we serve our flesh, then we obey its desires.

Our actions give testimony to whom we serve.

In Romans 6:22, the Bible says, "**But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life.**"

We bear fruit that demonstrates a holy life when we are servants to the Word of God, and then we become partakers of eternal life. As servants to the Word of God, we are obeying the Word of God and walking in great fellowship with God.

Our position in the kingdom changes when we say "yes" to our God. It doesn't become servitude out of obligation, but it is the will of God out of a loving relationship with God.

Our title changes from "servant" to "son".

The word "**son**" here doesn't stress gender, but it stresses role.

The word "**son**" here means "the bearer of the family name, or offspring".

In Romans 8:16-17, the Bible says, "**The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together.**"

Inside our spirits lies the evidence that we are the children of God, only given to us by the Word of God. It is our job as believers to properly claim our new role in the kingdom and learn how to live out our roles properly.

In John 1:12-13, the Bible says, ***"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."***

We are empowered to become children of God, something our best efforts won't ever allow us to experience. The flesh doesn't profit anything but death, but God desires we become His children, not just His creation.

The word **"heir"** means "a partaker of the blessings which God bestows upon his children, implying admission to the kingdom of heaven and its privileges."

Christ didn't die on the cross just so we could be saved, but so we can from 'now on' actively partake in the divine kingdom of God,

In Galatians 4:1-2, the Bible says, ***"Now I say, That the heir, as long as he is a child, differeth nothing from a servant, though he be lord of all; But is under tutors and governors until the time appointed of the father."***

Even as children of God, we must mature spiritually to partake fully in the divine kingdom of God.

"Through Christ" is a phrase that expresses that Christ is the vehicle or conduit to our successful inheritance of the kingdom of God.

There is an appointed time for our maturity as believers, when as heirs we can operate fully as the children of God. Christ came to bring us the kingdom, but will we seize it for ourselves?

27. John 16:7 – the promised Comforter's presence in our lives

One of the most powerful gifts we could ever receive is the gift of the promised Holy Spirit.

The inhabitation of the Holy Spirit in us is evidence of God's existence. But it is also evidence that the words of Christ are true when He spoke them on earth.

When the Holy Spirit comes upon us, we are filled with power to operate as children of God in the earth, with the privilege to experience the kingdom of God while we still live on the earth. Christ had to die, be resurrected and ascend to the Father in order for us to experience the Holy Spirit's arrival.

Christ came to earth to give us more than just salvation. He came to bring us a relationship with God that we never had before, one where the Spirit of God dwells richly in us, directing the course of our lives and minds from within.

Today, we will look at John 16:7, the promised Comforter's presence in our lives.

"Nevertheless I tell you the truth; it is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you."

The word **"truth"** means "evidence in relation to facts, what is not concealed, but in the open."

Truth stands against any lie the enemy tries to give us, because lies aim to redirect us from the instruction of God, and from the position God wants us to occupy.

In John 14:5-6, Christ says, ***"Thomas saith unto him, Lord, we know not whither thou goest; and how can we know the way? Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me."***

People want to get to God by their own way, and some even speak the lie that there are many ways to God, but there is only one Way, THE Way, and that is Jesus Christ.

In John 1:14, the Bible says, ***"And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth."***

The Word of God, Jesus Christ, became flesh and was full of grace and truth, because God's Holy Spirit dwelt completely in Him. When we can walk in truth, we can enjoy the privilege of being children of God.

In Psalm 91:4, the Bible says, ***"He shall cover thee with his feathers, and under his wings shalt thou trust: his truth shall be thy shield and buckler."***

The truth protects us in spiritual warfare when the enemy tries to launch attacks against us with his lies.

In 2 Timothy 2:15, the Bible says, ***"Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth."***

Filling our minds and heart with the truth of God makes God proud of us, and we are able to differentiate between the truth and lie with the truth planted within us. When Christ tells us the truth, it becomes the foundation that we place our whole lives upon.

The word **"expedient"** means "advantageous or profitable".

In Romans 8:28, the Bible says, ***"And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose."***

Christ is the Word of God, and He assures us that even the grief we suffer has a divine good for those who love God.

Because the disciples loved Christ, He is telling them it is profitable that He goes away, that it would benefit them greatly.

We know the phrase **"go away"** in this case to mean Christ's death, resurrection, and ascension back to the Father in heaven.

Christ even goes as far as to tell us why, that by His going away, the **"Comforter"** can come unto us.

The word **"Comforter"** means "Intercessor, Advocate, bestowing spiritual aid and consolation, spoken of the Holy Spirit".

In John 7:39, the Bible says, ***"But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified.)"***

Christ will send the Comforter, but we must believe in Christ in order to receive Him.

"but if I depart, I will send him unto you."

The word **"depart"** in this case speaks of Christ's ascension back to the Father.

The word **"send"** means "despatch".

Christ didn't say in this verse that God would send the Comforter, but He said, ***"if I depart, I will send Him unto you."***

In Matthew 28:18, the Bible says, ***"And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, ALL POWER is given unto me in heaven and in earth."***

Christ went back to the Father with all power, and His first thought was to give this power to those who believe.

In John 14:26, Christ says, ***"But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you."***

This further proves that Jesus Christ was God, because in John 14:7, Christ says, ***"If ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also: and from henceforth ye know him, and have seen him."***

God, Christ, and the Comforter are all one, the presence, power, and Person of God.

28. John 1:18 - God revealed to us by Jesus Christ our Lord

Jesus Christ came to earth for many reasons, much more than just salvation. We have discovered that Christ came

- to seek and save those who are lost,
- to rescue them from the penalty of eternal death
- to give believers the power to become the children of God
- to bring the kingdom of God to earth
- and by His ascension to the Father in heaven, have access to the Holy Spirit's inhabitation in us

The Holy Spirit who:

- teaches us about the Word of God
- guides us into all truth
- gives us the power to do the same and even greater works than Christ did while He was on earth

Additional reasons Christ came to earth:

- to declare who God is to us
- to give us a proper introduction to the Father, so that we can also share that with others
- to declare the goodness of God toward us
- and, to show us how to live our lives to please God here on earth

Today, we will look at John 1:18, God revealed to us by Jesus Christ our Lord.

"No man hath seen God at any time, the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him."

The phrase ***"hath seen"*** means "to discern clearly, to experience, to know, to be acquainted with or know God's character."

In Exodus 33:19-20, the Bible says, ***"And he said, I will make all my goodness pass before thee, and I will proclaim the name of the LORD before thee; and will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will shew mercy on whom I will shew mercy. And he said, Thou canst not see my face: for there shall no man see me, and live."***

Moses asked God to show him His glory, and God wouldn't allow him to see his face, but what He did allow Moses to see was the effect of God's face being upon him; he got to experience God's goodness, His favor, His grace and His mercy.

Christ came to show people that also, and while we may be unable to physically see God in His full spiritual essence, He is right here with us and we will experience His impact in our lives.

In Deuteronomy 4:12-13, the Bible says, ***"And the LORD spake unto you out of the midst of the fire: ye heard the voice of the words, but saw no similitude; only ye heard a voice. And he declared unto you his covenant, which he commanded you to perform, even ten commandments; and he wrote them upon two tables of stone."***

Even being unable to physically see God, we have received His covenant, His Word and His power living within us.

There is a ton of evidence of His presence that God has given us in our lives, so rather than focusing on seeing God physically, maybe we should focus our attention on what we can see, and that is His Word and his Word's effect in our lives.

The phrase ***"only begotten"*** means "only born, or sole, the Word, as alone knowing and revealing the essence of the Father."

In John 1:14, the Bible says, ***"And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth."***

Jesus Christ's birth was the first time God's glory was fully manifested in bodily form, fully possessing (and being) grace and truth. Christ came to give us a complete picture of who God is.

In John 3:18, Christ says, ***"He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God."***

Our believing in Christ is a lot deeper than just believing in a Savior. Christ is God robed in flesh, so to not believe in Him, who came in the expressed image and power of God in bodily form, is to suggest that God isn't real either!

The **"Son"** is in the gospel sense the Messiah, sent forth from God, as partaking of the divine nature and being in intimate union with God the Father.

In John 6:46, Christ says, ***"Not that any man hath seen the Father, save he which is of God, he hath seen the Father."***

Christ bears the complete record of who God is, and He makes that record available to us.

"Which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him."

Being ***"in the bosom of the Father"*** expresses mutual intimacy between Christ and God, an intimacy that is due to great relationship.

In John 13:23, the Bible says, ***"Now there was leaning on Jesus' bosom one of his disciples, whom Jesus loved."***

This disciple is John, and he had the closest level of intimacy with Christ of all the disciples. This is why John was entrusted to preach the Word about who God really is, and the intimacy God desires to have with us.

The word ***"declared"*** means "to unfold, to make known as a teacher,

In 1 John 4:16-17 the Bible says, ***"And we have known and believed the love that God hath to us. God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him. Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment: because as he is, so are we in this world."***

God is love, so if we walk in love, God manifests Himself to us, in us, and through us, just like He did in Christ in the earth!

29. Ephesians 1:23 - the Church, the body of Christ, where He is head

Jesus Christ is the head of our Church. He is the foundation, the Chief Cornerstone, the Rock the Church rests itself upon.

We are the body of Christ, in union together, moving according to the leadership of Jesus Christ, the Word of God.

Christ's ascension back to the Father allowed Him to send us the Holy Spirit, Who guides us into all truth. No matter if a believer is across an ocean, in a different city, or a different country, we make up this body, the physical movement of the Word of God, and we all are to work together to ensure the will of God is done.

How can I work together with someone I have never met?

By following the Word of God.

Through the Holy Spirit's inhabitation, we have the ability to live in power as Christ did and move as the Church in Acts moved. The power the Church moved in back then is still available to us, but we must allow Christ to be the Head just as they did then.

Today, we will look at Ephesians 1:23, the Church, the body of Christ, where He is head.

"Which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all."

The word **"body"** means "an organized whole made up of parts and members, spoken of the Christian Church, the whole body of Christians collectively, where Christ is the head."

The Scripture says **"His body"**, meaning we belong to Him.

In Psalm 24:1. the Bible says, ***"The earth is the LORD's, and the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein."***

Christ is the head of the Church and everything and everyone in it, and He is the Authority.

In Colossians 1:18, the Bible says, ***"And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence."***

If Christ is head, then that means He is also Lord, the Supreme Authority that the will of God operates through.

A body can't function without the Head, neither can we function without being in one body.

In Romans 12:4-5, the Bible says, ***"For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office: So we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another."***

Even though we have different callings, and hold different positions, our job as the body is to operate as one, by following the Holy Spirit's direction for our lives.

In 1 Corinthians 12:12-13, the Bible says, ***"For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ. For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit."***

The Church is designed to move as one with Christ at the Head, who is also one with us. Unity in the Church and in the Spirit is the goal, so that the perfect will of God can be done, and the Word of God can come alive in the hearts and minds of people all over the world.

When the Church is active, lives are supposed to change, souls are supposed to be saved, people are supposed to be healed, and people in bondage are supposed to be set free.

Our movement in the earth should be no different than Christ's movements in the earth, because the last part of 1 John 4:17 says, ***"as he is, so are we in this world."***

The world is supposed to see us and see Christ in us.

In Acts 11:26, the Bible says, ***"And when he had found him, he brought him unto Antioch. And it came to pass, that a whole year they assembled themselves with the church, and taught much people. And the disciples were called Christians first in Antioch."***

They were called Christians because they represented Christ, doing the same things He did in the earth for a whole year in Antioch before people identified them with Christ.

The word ***"fulness"*** means "completion, speaking of a multitude reaching an intended goal in number".

In Ephesians 4:10-12, the Bible says, ***"He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that he might fill all things.) And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ"***.

The Church must grow because there are positions to fill by those who will edify the body of Christ, who will come into unity of the faith together with the saints and with Christ.

The word ***"filleth"*** means "to supply abundantly with something, to impart richly, or imbue with".

In 1 Corinthians 12:6-7, the Bible says, ***"And there are diversities of operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in all. But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal."***

The purpose of our individual capacities in the Lord is for all of us to fill gaps in the body, so every conceivable need in life is met by the Christ who is the Head of the Church.

As the body, we are the conduit for the power of God to reach the world.

30. Acts 7:59 - making ourselves available for the Lord to receive our spirits

Everything we are belongs to the Lord Jesus Christ.

Understanding Who we belong to, makes it easier for us to live for Him.

As His children, God has always desired us to understand the mystery of His kingdom, so that we can be one with God the same way Christ is one with God.

Is Jesus Christ Lord over our lives, even our spirits?

Do we know Christ, in all His glory, to be the one who receives our spirits into heaven?

When Christ ascended back into heaven, He received all power, and in having all power, He is the one we answer to, and the one who holds our safe passage into the kingdom of God.

We want to go to heaven, and experience eternal life, yet are we a part of the kingdom of God while we are on earth?

Does our spirit belong to the Lord, or do we believe that we are lord over our spirits?

Today, we look at Acts 7:59, making ourselves available for the Lord to receive our spirits.

"And they stoned Stephen, calling upon God, and saying, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit."

The word **"stoned"** refers to a penalty imposed by a crowd pelting or throwing stones at someone, usually until they die. In this case, Stephen was "on trial" for blasphemy, and the people in the synagogue wanted to murder him for speaking truth about the Lord Jesus Christ.

They couldn't make a case against him lawfully, because not only did he teach the infallible Gospel of Jesus Christ, but in Acts 6:8 the Bible says, ***"And Stephen, full of faith and power, did great wonders and miracles among the people."***

Stephen moved in the Holy Spirit's power and in His direction, he was faithful to His call.

In Acts 6:13, the Bible says, ***"And set up false witnesses, which said, This man ceaseth not to speak blasphemous words against this holy place, and the law"***.

We know the people lied about Stephen, but the thing that sticks out is that when they attested Stephen he "ceaseth not to speak".

Stephen taught and preached everywhere he went, and they hated him for it, especially since there was indisputable evidence of God's power working in Him.

What really angered the synagogue people was in Acts 7:55-56, which says, ***"But he, being full of the Holy Ghost, looked up steadfastly into heaven, and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God, And said, Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God."***

These two verses are powerful because they express what we must do as believers, that we must "look up steadfastly into heaven, seeing the glory of God", and we must testify to the things God reveals to us.

Stephen testified to what Christ showed him, and Christ allowed Stephen to see that Christ was no longer seated at God's right hand, but He was standing!!!

In Luke 22:69, Christ says, ***"Hereafter shall the Son of man sit on the right hand of the power of God,"***

but now He is standing and allowed Stephen to see it with His own eyes! When we do the will of God, Christ reveals the kingdom to us through the Holy Spirit. Stephen was stoned because he saw what Christ revealed and he was bold enough to speak.

In America, when we don't speak about what God reveals there is no fear of death.

The word ***"calling"*** means "appeal to; to invoke for aid, for worship, testimony, and decision". Who do we call upon when we are afflicted? Who do we call upon when are under persecution? Who do we call upon when we are broken?

I just had a horrible stretch of days, amounting to heavy spiritual war, and I have never been in a spiritual battle that heavy before. I tried to call on Jesus, but I was so wrapped in my brokenness that I didn't fully ask for help.

In Jeremiah 29:12-13, the Bible says, ***"Then shall ye call upon me, and ye shall go and pray unto me, and I will hearken unto you. And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart."***

The reason I struggled more mightily than I had to was because my heart was divided. My pain became more real than my God, and I couldn't give it all to Him, even knowing He is my only help.

This is important! Stephen calls ***"upon God, and saying, "Lord Jesus ..."***.

This is further evidence that Stephen uncovered the mystery of God, that Jesus Christ IS God!!

The word ***"receive"*** means "to accept, to take hold of, or to seize".

In 2 Corinthians 5:8, the Bible says, ***"We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord."***

Stephen knew his death was coming, he knew who would receive his spirit. He knew the kingdom of God would open up to receive him, and He called upon God for it.

In Luke 23:46, the Bible says, ***"And when Jesus had cried with a loud voice, he said, Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit: and having said thus, he gave up the ghost."***

There are parallels in Stephen and Christ, the same Holy Spirit was in both.

Who will receive our spirit when our time on earth ends?

31. Isaiah 44:6 – Christ, our Alpha and our Omega

Our Lord Jesus Christ came to earth and became the Savior to the whole world. We have access to salvation, redemption, and eternal life through faith in His name.

Christ was perfect in the earth because He is Emmanuel, God with us, God robed in flesh.

All of this puts us in a great position because we become the children of God, having direct access to the kingdom of God and all of His mysteries. We can know the things of God as believers through the Holy Spirit, who teaches us and leads us into all truth. We have all this amazing access as believers.

But is Jesus Christ Lord in our lives?

Christ was there in the beginning, creating the whole world, He came down to earth to become the perfect atoning sacrifice for us, and He has ascended back to heaven in all power, as Lord over all.

His reign has no end, because not only was He first, but He is also last.

Today, we close out this series into Jesus Christ with Isaiah 44:6, Christ, our Alpha and our Omega.

"Thus saith the LORD the King of Israel, and his redeemer the LORD of hosts; I am the first, and I am the last; and beside me there is no God."

The word "**Lord**" means "supreme in authority, controller"

A "**king**" is one who demonstrates his power and authority.

How did Christ demonstrate His authority and power?

In Matthew 20:26-28, Christ says, ***"But it shall not be so among you: but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister; And whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant: Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many."***

Christ exercised His authority to serve people, to heal the sick, to raise the dead, to cause the blind to see, and to stir the hearts of people so they would turn to God for forgiveness and healing.

In Luke 7:22-23, the Bible says, ***"Then Jesus answering said unto them, Go your way, and tell John what things ye have seen and heard; how that the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, to the poor the gospel is preached. And blessed is he, whosoever shall not be offended in me."***

Christ didn't come to have a power struggle with anyone, but He came so people could experience the kingdom of God while they still lived on earth.

In Matthew 21:5, the Bible says, ***"Tell ye the daughter of Sion, Behold, thy King cometh unto thee, meek, and sitting upon an ass, and a colt the foal of an ass."***

Christ moved in the authority as a king, and had every right to fully be God, but made himself a servant, coming in full obedience to the Word of God.

In the humility of Christ, we have an example of how we should be, no matter how we elevate spiritually, or the positions we hold in the Church.

"And His redeemer the Lord of Hosts"

The word ***"redeemer"*** means "one who buys someone back from spiritual death and bondage".

In Isaiah 43:1, the Bible says, ***"But now thus saith the LORD that created thee, O Jacob, and he that formed thee, O Israel, Fear not: for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name; thou art mine."***

When Christ came, He took our place on the cross, and because of His blood, shed on the cross for the sins of the world, we have access to redemption that our best behavior couldn't give.

In Isaiah 44:24, the Bible says, ***"Thus saith the LORD, thy redeemer, and he that formed thee from the womb, I am the LORD that maketh all things; that stretcheth forth the heavens alone; that spreadeth abroad the earth by myself."***

Our Redeemer, Jesus Christ, is also our Creator, and the Author of all things.

Think about our Savior, who has all power in earth and in heaven, making provision for our salvation by making Himself the Sacrifice for our sins.

We won't sacrifice time, money, effort, or love for someone else, even those we love, but our amazing God did it all.

The word ***"hosts"*** speaks of a mass of people organized like an army, or the Church, who is also the army of the Lord.

In Job 19:25, the Bible says, ***"For I know that my redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth"***.

Our Redeemer lives and is in all power in heaven!

The word ***"first"*** means "chief one" speaking of rank and order.

The word **"last"** speaks of Christ being an end.

The word **"beside"** means "without".

In Revelation 1:8, the Bible says,

"I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty."

Christ was there in the beginning, and He was there, the ONE making salvation available to us, and He will be there in the end when eternal life begins with a new heaven and a new earth, where Christ reigns forever.

In Revelation 1:17-18, the Bible says,

"And when I saw him, I fell at his feet as dead. And he laid his right hand upon me, saying unto me, Fear not; I am the first and the last: I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death."

Not only is our Loving Redeemer alive, but He is victorious over the enemy, as evidenced by Him having the keys to hell and death.

There is nothing to fear knowing our God, the Lord Jesus Christ, has won the battle, and came to earth in order to redeem His Church from the bondage of sin and the penalty of death.

God Bless!
Marshall & Jessica

WHY KJV (King James Version)

"Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." 2 Timothy 2:15

This is one of my favorite Bible verses, a constant source of encouragement for me to dig deeper and deeper into the Word of God to receive truth in its deepest form. I believe it is our job as believers to study as deep as we can, and then build our way up. The King James Version of the Bible is one of most popular early translations of the Bible to English, so that is where my study begins. I have come to learn that by putting the King James Version side by side with other translations that may be easier to read, that easier doesn't always keep the deeper meaning intact. The "thee", "thy", and "ye" can be a little overwhelming at first, but as with anything else we study continuously, it will become easier to decipher.

The Bible I use, the KJV AMG Hebrew-Greek Keyword Study Bible, gives me an enormous tool to not only study the Word of God from an earlier English translation, but gives me access to study the keywords in the Scripture to find the deeper meaning of the verses I study. The more I studied the Word of God, the deeper I wanted to go. When I first

started my incarceration over 17 years ago, I read the NIV version of the Bible. As I matured as a reader, I went back to the King James Version in 2007, wanting to learn the most difficult English translation. I went to the Hebrew-Greek Keyword Study Bible in 2014 and have been using it since. I recently was given a MacArthur Study Bible, NASB, which I use for scriptural cross-references and commentary purposes. I am in no way saying it is wrong for anyone to study any translation other than the King James Version, but I do suggest that everyone possesses one, so we can break down the Word of Truth side by side. It is important to go to the earliest possible translation, to see the modernized translations accurately convey the Word of God.

Studying the Word of God pleases Him, and I desire to break down the Scriptures rightly, understanding that by studying the Word of God, I am breaking down truth so I can position myself for the Holy Spirit's teaching. Whatever I learn, I then share, and by sheer repetition, I am able to retain what I learn better.

May the study of God's Word release amazing truths and powerful revelations in your lives.

Marshall's Bio, Poems, and History

Marshall's Bio

Marshall Jones is a 43-year-old man on a lifelong journey of bearing fruit for the Kingdom of God. The author of "A Raven's Meal" (RoseDog Books), a poetry collection, he aspires to target the grey areas, and the people who are terribly misunderstood by society. Believing that everyone deserves a voice, he not only shares his testimony in his biography *The Prodigal Son*, but he also tries to use his gifting to share other people's experiences as well. He writes from the prison system that has housed his body now for 21 years, but also from the place that has been the catalyst to his freedom. On November 1, 2022 he and Jessica were married, and together with her three children advocate for those imprisoned both behind bars and who do not know Jesus Christ. As of May 2025, they have been led to write over 1,100 Daily Devotionals. They will be seeking early release for Marshall, with funds to be raised this year.

Marshall's Poems

You can view Marshall's poems at <https://www.redthreadpoets.com/category/100-poets/marshall-jones/>

History

Red Granite Daily Devotions commenced on Red Thread Poets Facebook page on November 1, 2020. This is the 8th in his Daily Devotion Series. The Daily Devotions are recapped by date at www.redthreadpoets.com/daily-devotions/

Marshall uses these resources in his Bible Study: AMG Hebrew Greek Keyword Study Bible (KJV), Strong's Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible, The MacArthur Study Bible (NASB), Webster's New World College Dictionary.

ABOUT RED GRANITE DAILY DEVOTIONS AND MARSHALL JONES

- Entirely influenced by Holy God Almighty
- Conceived November 2020
- First Daily Devotion November 1, 2020
- 13 Series available as of Q2 2026
- Over 1,300 daily Devotions written since November 2020.
- Written by Marshall Jones from his cell in Wisconsin, United States of America
- 22 years to 2026 serving a double life homicide sentence
- Jessica his wife and partner from November 1, 2022
- We all await the Lord's grace for a positive outcome from the new 2026 Commutation Advisory Board in Wisconsin, please pray for such

FOLLOW MARSHALL AND JESSICA JONES:

<https://www.redthreadpoets.com/red-granite-daily-devotions/>

[Forged by Fire; Iron Sharpening Iron Private Facebook Group](#)

THE SERIES CURRENTLY AVAILABLE

1. PSALM 91: 16 Daily Devotions: The first was posted on January 2, 2021.
2. LOVING YOU: 30 Daily Devotions: The first was posted on January 28, 2021.
3. THE FEARLESSNESS OF FAITH: 21 Daily Devotions: The first was posted on March 13, 2021.
4. WARFARE IN THE SPIRIT: -16 Daily Devotions: The first was posted on May 19, 2021.
5. THE BEATITUDES: 10 Daily Devotion: The first was posted on July 21, 2021.
6. THE FORGIVENESS OF GOD: 15 Daily Devotions: The first was posted on August 13, 2021.
7. PSALM 23: 6 Daily Devotions: The first was posted in November 2020.
8. JESUS CHRIST - THE MYSTERY UNCOVERED: 31 Daily Devotiion. The first was posted on November 28, 2021.
9. MARITAL BLISS: 12 Daily Devotions: The first was posted on August 21, 2022.
10. GODLY PROSPERITY: 10 Daily Devotions: The first was posted on October 10, 2022.
11. SLAIN TO RECEIVE: 7 Daily Devotions: The first was posted on September 4, 2023.
12. FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT: 12 Daily Devotions. The first was posted on October 28, 2023.
13. LIGHT OF CHRIST: 31 Daily Devotions: The first was posted on February 23, 2025.

JESUS CHRIST - THE MYSTERY UNCOVERED

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