

NR6-45

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What happens when you preach the gospel from the Gospels to lost sinners? Does it work any more? I mean does the gospel impact lives like it did in the world of Christ and the Apostles?

Sometimes it seems that the Roman World of Bible times that Jesus and Paul lived in 20 centuries ago -- is so far removed from us. And we may think that our sins today, and the power of the world is stronger. Whenever I have those thoughts, especially when I see folks unwilling to turn from their sins and see the freedom Christ offers – I stop and look back again at our recent history.

Modern history testifies to what will happen to those who hear the Bible preached. To illustrate that go back with me just 70 years ago to a living legend named [\[1\]](#) CT Studd. After serving 15 years in China and 6 in India, he invested his final 21 in the heart of Africa's vast, dark jungles among the fierce, cannibal, head-hunting pygmies.

Once [\[2\]](#) a lean and fit professional athlete, C.T. is now gaunt and emaciated. He is hunched over, halting with each step. But in July 1931 he is surrounded by thousands of glistening black bodies wearing banana leaves. The pygmies of the heart of Africa's jungles have come to hear their beloved Bwana for the last time. He speaks to them only after over two hours of singing the songs he had so lovingly taught them: "Wounded for me, wounded for me, there on the cross He was wounded for me, gone my transgressions and now I can sing, all because Jesus was wounded for me!"

There in front of his cot sit 5,000 former headhunters.

- Once their bodies were the habitation of dark, foul fiends from the pit – now they are temples of the Living God.
- Once they were naked and grossly immoral lovers of darkness, now they are not only clothed in Christ but also modestly clothed in banana leaves.
- Once they lived as a continuation of generations of murderer, years of darkness, and lives of savagery – now before their beloved father in the faith they sit in an immense sea of white-toothed smiles.
- Once they were all mortal enemies, never without the weapons of war. But no weapons of war are left, only the bond of love. With faces turned heavenward these former enemies sit shoulder to shoulder, singing of the sweet by and by and that beautiful shore they will someday see.

That congregation of saints were converted and transformed by the Lord through the simple, passionate preaching of the truth of God's Word in the Bible. Why have believers all through the ages seen lives transformed by the preaching of the gospel? Because they simply obeyed what Jesus left them and us to do.

That is why we are beginning the 4th and final phase of our look at the Master's Message. 1st we saw **The Master's Message In Matthew**, then **The Master's Message In Mark**, then the **The Master's Message In Luke**.

Now we come to John. **The Master's Message In John** is watching Jesus, the One who sent us to go and preach the gospel, through the eyes and ears of the Apostle John. Jesus is the best One to summarize the message He wants us to share in His name. What is the Gospel? Christ Jesus answers through the eyes and ears of the Apostle that He loved – John.

Last August we began an overview of the Gospel by John in what I like to call the Jesus is all I need Series. I would like to summarize that series this morning. And as we remind ourselves what Jesus offered then, we should pause to ask ourselves the simple question, "Am I enjoying this great salvation Jesus offered?" And if there is any doubt, or if my life is any less than the way Jesus described it, how about making this morning another one of those new beginnings?

Remember what I started this series with? The overcoming, or victorious Christian life is nothing more than a series of new beginnings. The blessed privilege Christ's grace offers us is to be able to start over -- clean and fresh and new, each time we run to Jesus and simply take what He offers!

Now the summary. Jesus inspired John the Apostle to write this gospel around a seven sign frame. We learned that in chapter one Jesus is introduced by a seven-titled "calling card". What are the seven titles, and their significance as recorded in John chapter one? Jesus is recorded as being: The Word (John 1:1–3, 14), The Light (John 1:4–13), God the Son (John 1:15–28, 49), God the Lamb (John 1:29–34), The Messiah (John 1:35–42), The King (John 1:43–49), and the Son of Man (John 1:50–51) or the "living link" between heaven and earth. Christ is God's "ladder" between heaven and earth. "No man cometh to the Father, but by Me" (John 14:6). The Jewish people knew that "Son of man" was a name for their Messiah (John 12:34). By this seven-titled "calling card" Jesus reveals to them and to us that God is here!

The first three signs show salvation's reception *by the believer*:

- HE TURNS water into wine (2:1–11)— Christ's salvation is always Miraculous;
- he heals the nobleman's son (4:46–54)—Christ's salvation is only by faith;
- he heals the paralytic (5:1–9)—salvation is only by grace;

The last four signs show salvation's results *in the believer*:

- he Feeds the 5,000 (6:1–14)—salvation brings inexhaustible satisfaction;
- he Stills the storm (6:16–21)—salvation brings complete peace;
- he heals the blind man (9:1–7)—salvation brings light to our souls;
- he Raises Lazarus (11:38–45)—salvation brings the power of an endless life;

Now what else does it mean to find Jesus as all I need? That was the next lesson in this book. By seven clearly described miraculous signs, Jesus describes the wonders of the salvation all who come to Him experience. This is the best part of the book in my opinion. John wrote in 20:31 "These (seven miraculous signs) are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ (the living link, the only ladder, or way to the God of Heaven) and that believing you may have life (the overflowing joy filled life of endless new beginnings) in His name."

I AM THE BREAD OF LIFE (6:35, 41, 48, 51) – jesus is all I need to BE SATISFIED; apart from Him is only unsatisfied hunger.

- Jesus alone feeds our soul and satisfies our hungers, all else is emptiness, hopelessness and empty mirages.
- *Jesus said I am your food that satisfies; I am the Bread you need. I have settled the longings of your soul, I can satisfy all the hungers of your life. What do you really hunger for?*
- Moses endured and overcame all the temptations of Egypt and the backside of the desert seeing Him Who is invisible. David confessed he would be satisfied to awake in Christ's likeness.
- *A believer HUNGERS FOR JESUS AS MY BREAD OF LIFE.*

I AM THE LIGHT OF WORLD (8:12) - JESUS IS ALL I NEED TO LIGHT MY PATH; apart from Him is only impenetrable darkness.

- Jesus said I am the Light, I have settled the darkness of fear, the darkness of death, the darkness of dying, it is all settled by Me!
- Jesus promises He will direct our paths (Prov 3.5-6); Jeremiah 6 says He would be the Voice behind us guiding our steps. Jacob (Genesis 48.15-16) confessed that the Good Shepherd had led him all of his days. David says you will show me the path of life (Ps.16.11)

- *A believer* WALKS WITH JESUS WHO LIGHTS MY PATH OF LIFE.

I AM THE DOOR OF LIFE TO MY SHEEP (10:7,9) - JESUS IS ALL I NEED TO GET INTO GOD'S FAMILY, apart from Him is only hopeless exclusion.

- Jesus said I am the Door of Life, all your security and access needs are settled, by Me! We can't wander out without stumbling over Him and no predator could slip in without stirring Him. So Jesus says I keep you safe from harm and secure from wandering away from my salvation!
- *A believer* ENTERS THROUGH JESUS WHO IS MY DOOR TO LIFE.

I AM THE GOOD SHEPHERD (10:11, 14) - JESUS IS ALL I NEED TO MAKE IT THROUGH LIFE AND GET HOME, apart from Him is only aimless wandering.

- Jesus said I am the Good Shepherd who died; I have settled the issue of the unknown.
- I am your companion through life and death.
- Jesus gives us the perfect example of how to live and how to die!
- *A believer* FOLLOWS THE GOOD SHEPHERD WHO FEEDS AND PROTECTS THEM.

I AM THE RESURRECTION AND LIFE (11:25) - JESUS IS ALL I NEED TO CONQUER DEATH, but apart from Him is only endless dying.

- Jesus says I am the Resurrection; I am the Life so I have settled the issue of Hope.
- You can count on me, hope in me all through life and into death!
- *A believer* RESTS IN JESUS WHOSE RESURRECTION ASSURES THEIR ENDLESS LIFE.

I AM THE WAY, TRUTH & LIFE (14:6) - Jesus is all I need to not get lost, but apart from Him is only endless lost ness.

- Jesus said I am the way, I have settled the issue of your home.
- I am making it, your very own room, and the minute that it is ready I am coming to get you!
- Hebrews 11 describes Old Testament saints as, "These all died in faith...having seen...afar off...a city God has prepared for them."
- *A believer* TRUSTS THE WAY OF JESUS, BELIEVES THE TRUTH OF JESUS, AND LIVES THE LIFE OF JESUS.

I AM THE TRUE VINE (15:1) - JESUS IS ALL I NEED TO BE FRUITFUL TO THE LAST DAY OF MY LIFE, apart from Him is only continual withering.

- Jesus says I am the Vine, your source of life and health. The state of your health is all in my hands.
 - I will provide for you living grace, enduring declining life grace, and dying grace. Each just when you need them!
 - If the vine speaks of all of life as one growing season, then we should get more fruit filled the older we get (Psalm 92); if life is many growing seasons then life is a succession of growing /pruning /bearing /resting and then growing/pruning...
 - *A believer* ABIDES IN JESUS WHO IS THE SUPPLY OF ALL THEY EVER NEED.
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- **LESSON ONE:** come to Christ for salvation. If you are empty, call out to Christ. Do not let yourself go through another day without coming to him. Be born again, receive life, be filled, be delivered, and join the victory parade! If you are spiritually dead—without resurrection life—under sin—under guilt—empty, Christ invites you to come to him: Come, all you who are thirsty, come to the waters; and you who have no money, come, buy and eat! Come, buy wine and milk without money and without cost. Why spend money on what is not bread, and your labor on what does not satisfy? Listen, listen to me, and eat what is good, and your soul will delight in the richest of fare. (Isaiah 55:1, 2) The Spirit and the bride say, “Come!” And let him who hears say, “Come!” Whoever is thirsty, let him come; and whoever wishes, let him take the free gift of the water of life. (Revelation 22:17)
 - **LESSON TWO:** look only to Christ for satisfaction. Cultivate human relationships, but do not look for ultimate fulfillment in them because they will disappoint you. Energetically pursue your career, but do not imagine that you will find transcending fulfillment in it. In Christ we have everything. May our prayer be: I want to know Christ and the power of his resurrection and the fellowship of sharing in his sufferings, becoming like him in his death. (Philippians 3:10)
 - **LESSON THREE: BE FILLED WITH CHRIST'S SPIRIT.** Our lives can be victorious. Jesus has been there before us; He has met the worst Satan can give and has been victorious. The most important factor in victorious Christian living is to be filled with the Spirit of Christ, the Holy Spirit (Romans 8:9). Christ is the victor over temptation and sin. His very words to us are, “Take heart! I have overcome the world” (John 16:33). When Martin Luther was asked how he overcame the Devil, he replied, “Well, when he comes knocking upon the door of my heart, and asks ‘Who lives here?’ the dear Lord Jesus goes to the door and says, ‘Martin Luther used to live here, but he has moved out. Now I live here.’” When Christ fills our lives, Satan has no entrance.
 - **LESSON FOUR: STAY FILLED WITH CHRIST'S WORD.** The other factor in the victorious Christian Life is to be filled with God’s Word. In response to each of the three temptations, Christ answered with Scripture (Deuteronomy 8:3, 6:16, and 6:13). He knew the truth of, “I have hidden your word in my heart that I might not sin against you” (Psalm 119:11). Why is this so? God’s Word reveals God’s mind, and God’s mind cannot be subject to sin. Therefore, if we fill our hearts with his Word, sin and temptation cannot dominate.

[1] Born 1858, and went on after salvation to serve in China 1885-1900; then to serve in India 1900-1906; returning to organize a mission in England 1906-1908; and finally to expend his life in Africa from 1910-1931. His beloved wife Mrs. Studd died in 1929. And finally C.T. died July 1931.

[2] Norman Grubb, CT Studd, p. 216-217.