

# The Message of John

by  
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## I Am The Lamb of God

In all gospel preaching you find ministers, preachers, evangelists and missionaries trying to communicate the message of God to man. God has something He wants man to know about, something that God will do for man if man will yield himself to Him. His own eternal purpose through the Lord Jesus Christ is to be communicated directly to us. It is formulated in certain promises and He wants us to know about these promises.

The proclamation of the gospel is to show what God is doing and will do for us. It is to show what we can do in believing in God and what we should do as we believe in God that we might have His blessing.

The church is to tell the world the truth of what God has *done, is doing, will do* through Jesus Christ. This is the gospel. This makes it the "good news," because God will do more for you than you can ever ask or think.

To tell us about these things we have the Scriptures, written specifically to convey this message of God. We are now going to be turning our attention to certain aspects of the revelation of the truth in Jesus Christ as set forth in the Gospel of John.

The aspect that we are going to be looking at is what He came to do: *He came to die*. That isn't going to sound right, because it doesn't sound profound enough. But I mean it exactly that way. *He came to die*.

Later we are going to see that He didn't come to stay dead. He is going to be raised from the dead. He is going to show us that death of the human nature is not the end of existence. It is actually the beginning of eternal life. The death of Jesus of Nazareth on Calvary is not to be thought of as an unfortunate tragedy that occurred in the course of events by some tragic mistake. No, you'll understand it better if you have in mind that this is exactly what He came to do.

The Lord Jesus Himself said, "The Son of Man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many." Before God ever created the world He had a full plan of what He intended to do in the creation. He evidently had in mind that He would create man first in the physical, and then He would give this man an opportunity of sharing with Him by believing in Him, and in this way man would be lifted from the physical into the spiritual. All men are to die in the physical, but not to stay dead. It is intended that man should be raised by the power of God into spiritual, eternal life.

This plan, this overall purpose of God, is known as the Word – the express will of God. John begins his gospel by affirming that Jesus of Nazareth, Jesus Christ, is the Word. This plan of God became flesh incarnate. We read that "the Word [God's plan] was made flesh, and dwelt among us." Somehow we are going to find, by looking at Jesus of Nazareth, what God's plan of coming in and living in us really is.

We are to understand from this that the creation of Adam was not the final work of God. Adam would sin and would be condemned, but Adam would be forgiven and Adam would be raised a spiritual being. All this is set forth in the incarnation of the Son of God as Jesus of Nazareth.

There is a passage in the Book of Hebrews that puts the emphasis on the very thing we're talking about: it says that the Son of God, when He came into this world, did not take on Himself the nature of

angels, which would not have died, "but he took on him the seed of Abraham," that He might "taste death for every man." Notice that, "for every man." It is not because man sins, but that through this man can be provided the necessary forgiveness. Our Lord understood this was to be His fate (to taste death for every man) when He first began His public preaching. "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up." His disciples didn't understand what He was saying, but after His death and resurrection they understood those words – that He was talking about His body and had His death and resurrection in mind.

The death of the Lord Jesus Christ as it actually took place on Calvary's cross involved more than the physical. I do know that the prospect of it was horrible, because the Bible says about the Lord Jesus in Gethsemane that "his sweat was as it were great drops of blood." And yet for our sakes He endured the cross. All of this is intimated to us when in the Gospel of John we read in the first chapter what John the Baptist said about Him, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world."

Now this concept of the Lamb of God was known to the Jews. This brings to mind an innocent creature that would die so that the worshipper might live. These people knew the story of Isaac. They knew how Abraham felt when he was told that he should offer up Isaac as a sacrifice. They knew how Abraham had taken Isaac to the top of the mountain and even bound him and put him on the altar before he heard a voice calling his name; and when he looked around he saw a ram caught in a thicket. Immediately it was made clear to him that the ram was to die in place of his son. So he went over and took the ram that was caught in the thicket, brought it to the altar, and it was slain in the place of Isaac.

The idea of the Lamb of God was also remembered from the time of the Passover. The Angel of Death was going through the land and the first born in every family was going to die except in the houses of those where blood had been applied on the doorposts. When the blood was put on the two sideposts and on the upper doorpost according to instructions, God said, ". . . when I see the blood, I will pass over you." And so the idea of the passover lamb, of an innocent substitute dying in order to save guilty people, was early put into the thinking and the consciousness of the Jewish people. When John the Baptist described the Lord Jesus Christ saying, "Behold the Lamb of God," many would think about the innocent lamb that was slain in order that the people inside the house might be spared. "When I see the blood, I will pass over you," meant that an innocent substitute was to be accepted in the plan of God.

This is my blessedness to this very day. I come before God as I am, and it certainly humbles me to be conscious of my weakness and my shortcoming, but I come into His presence as I am, and what actually makes me acceptable is that Christ Jesus died for me. "Christ, our Passover, is sacrificed for us." When I stand in the presence of God, believing in the Lord Jesus Christ, I am under His blood, and I am going to be spared. This is my salvation, and this is my blessedness.

In the Gospel of John, we read about the Good Shepherd. It is reassuring indeed to learn that He looks after His sheep by going out with them and leading them into pastures where they might feed and be well taken care of. But the Lord Jesus says that the Good Shepherd gives His life for the sheep.

The death of Jesus Christ on our behalf as set forth in the gospel was a voluntary act on His part to save us from our sins.

When you think of Him as being the One who is going to suffer and die on our behalf, that includes Gethsemane. You remember that incident. He went into the garden to pray. This was early in the night – before He was arrested and tried and condemned to death. That night, when he was with His disciples, He went into the Garden of Gethsemane.

First He took Peter, James and John with Him and went along with them for a distance. Then He left them also and went on further alone and cast Himself upon the ground and prayed. His prayer was, "O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me." He prayed for an hour, and then He came back to His disciples and spoke to them about the fact that they should remain awake and listen with Him because "the Spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak." They needed to watch and pray lest they enter into temptation.

Finally, at the end of those several hours of prayer, this One who was to give His life for us as a Lamb upon the altar, looking up to His Father, said, "Father, if this cup may not pass away from me except I drink it, thy will be done." And He came out in quietness and peace to drink the cup of judgment and to suffer and die on our behalf.

Later when the soldiers came to arrest Jesus, Peter was there with Him, as were doubtless others, but when the soldiers came to lay hands on Him and take Him in, Peter drew his sword and was going to fight for Him. The Lord Jesus stopped him. He asked Peter, "Isn't this what I came to do?" Then He also told Peter, "Don't you know that even now I could ask my Father and I could have twelve legions of angels?" Elsewhere He told His disciples, "No man taketh my life from me. I lay it down and I take it up again." And in this incident you're to know that even though the Roman soldiers took Him, and even though they put Him to death on the cross between two thieves, they only did what they were permitted to do; Almighty God was right there and could have helped the Lord Jesus in any way if it had been desirable. This is what He did for us. He suffered and He died for us.

The arrest is startling enough and the ultimate crucifixion is bad enough; but when you read about how He was abused by the soldiers, the way in which He was treated, the mockery to which He was subjected, the ridicule that was heaped upon Him, and the unbelief on the part of all the people there, your heart will hurt as you realize what He bore for you. "He came unto His own . . ." but the only reception He received was the callous mistreatment which was part of the suffering and shame that He was to endure on our behalf.

When He stood before Pontius Pilate, Pilate couldn't quite understand why this man, who was a good man, didn't defend Himself. He said to Him, "Hearest thou not what people are saying? What sayest thou for thyself?" The Lord Jesus answered never a word. He stood there quiet and peaceful . . . like "a lamb before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth." He knew what they were going to do, and He was going to accept it. They were going to kill Him, and He was going to be dead, but He would rise from the dead the third day.

Finally they took Him out and crucified Him. There is so much more in that crucifixion than you and I can ordinarily grasp. We remember when He lifted up His face to heaven and cried out, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" It always helps me to remember that those words are the first words of Psalm 22. If you will read it you will find the best description of the physical experience of crucifixion that I know of in literature.

So far as we personally are concerned, if we are walking with Him, we may find that we may be called to share in the fellowship of His suffering. We may discover from our own personal experience that "in the world you shall have tribulation" but we shall hear Him say, "Be of good cheer, for I have overcome the world." We may also find that even as He died for us, we also must die in His will. The way out of our predicament as sinners with sinful constitutions, sinful natures, sinful bodies and sinful minds is by death. This is God's plan. If we die with Him, we shall also be raised with Him to live in newness of life. And so, when we think about the Lord Jesus Christ coming to die on Calvary's cross, we say in awe and reverence, "Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world."

## *I Am The Bread of Life*

"Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." These are the words with which the Lord Jesus Christ drew attention to a very important truth. A man does live by bread because that does feed the physical body, but there is more to a man than his body. A man has a soul and the soul of man feeds on the Word of God.

Just as a man has a body and soul, so there are two worlds in which he lives. The Bible calls this world "this present, evil world," the physical world, or the temporal world.

Where *this* world is natural, *that* world is spiritual. Where you speak of this world as earth, you speak of that world as heaven. Where you come to know this world by the senses, you come to know that world by faith. This world is temporal and will pass away; that world is eternal and will last forever. One is born, as we say, in Adam, and born again in Christ.

We speak of the first world as *life*, the second world as *eternal life*. Eternal life is not merely the same original life going on forever: it has a different quality. A man is born into this world once as, say John Smith. Then he is born again, into the spiritual world, as a child of God. In the natural world, I develop an ego, self interests. In the spiritual world I have no ego, no self. I know myself as a member of the Body of Christ. I don't stand alone in this spiritual world, and here I have the interests of Christ in my heart or in my hands.

In the natural world where I am born as a human being, I seek satisfaction. In the second world where I have been born again and am now adopted as a child of God, I have joy. In the first world, I sin and am doomed to die. In the second world, the spiritual world, Christ in me obeys the Father, and I have passed from death into life. This is the operation of the gospel and the gospel itself works in conjunction with these two worlds.

The gospel says, first of all, confess your sins, repent and be forgiven. Then it says, receive Jesus Christ, believe and obey God. These two belong to each other in succession. First comes repentance and then comes faith. This is the meaning of salvation. I am actually being saved when I am translated out of myself and out of the flesh into the kingdom of the Son and His love. We say with reference to this whole matter that "whosoever believeth in him hath everlasting life." As I have just said, everlasting life is not an endless extension of natural living, but a new participation in God, receiving from God, as a child of God, His life which we call eternal life or everlasting life.

One of the characteristics of eternal life, of the life we have in Christ, the life of God in us, is that we are never alone.

In this connection I am rather of the opinion that Jesus of Nazareth developed no natural ego. He did not think of Himself as a human being apart from God. He thought of Himself as a child of God, and as God always being with Him. In one place He says, "I can of mine own self do nothing . . . I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father." And He says in another place, "I and my Father are one."

Jesus Christ manifested in Himself the plan of God, the will of God. He actually was a living, walking demonstration of the mind of God about life in this world. He was born once in the flesh in Bethlehem. He lived His life for thirty-odd years in the will of God. He took His life, His body, to the cross of Calvary and there died in the will of God. He was raised from the dead by the power of God, and then He went about demonstrating and manifesting the presence of God. And He is coming to reveal God to the whole world.

He said, "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow me." Now *denying himself* means that he takes himself in hand as a human being and says, "No." To *take up his cross* means he brings his human life to a close. He puts it on the cross. *Follow me* means he lives the rest of his days following in his heart and spirit the things of the Lord Jesus.

So the Apostle Paul could say, "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me." Actually, he had the living Lord Jesus Christ in him guiding him.

The Apostle Paul emphasized all this when he spoke about the old man and the new man. He would tell us to *put off* the old man and *put on* the new man.

Now eternal life is an experience in us of living by faith, although we are here in this world we live, as far as eternal life is concerned, by receiving the promises of God. The Apostle Paul said, "How shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard?" And in many utterances the Lord Jesus Christ

said, you *hear* the Word of God; *understand* the Word of God; then you can believe it.

On one occasion when the Lord Jesus Christ was stressing this truth and making reference to Himself as the Word of God, telling His disciples that they would grow as they understood Him, He spoke of Himself as the *bread of life*. He said, "I am the bread of life." Everybody must eat His flesh and drink His blood. You need to assimilate into yourself the death of His natural self on Calvary if you want to come into the Christian experience and walk with the Lord.

So far as my human nature is concerned, I am to reckon myself dead that I might be raised from the dead by the power of God in the newness of life through the Lord Jesus Christ. As a human being, I am to willingly, openly, understandably: intelligently yield myself into the will of God that this may be done to me. The Apostle Paul could say, "I am crucified with Christ, yet, not I, but Christ liveth in me." On another occasion when he was writing about this he said, "If we die with him, we shall also be raised with him."

I yield myself into His hands, to the end that my own physical body and my own human nature are to be reckoned as if they were dead. I still live on, but I now live by the power of God. I am raised up from this condition of deadness into the very presence of God by the power of God.

In making reference to this, the Lord Jesus used the expression, "I am the bread of life." In other words, if you are a Christian, want to live and grow spiritually as a Christian, the life that you have in you, moving you now to do the will of God, is the life of the Lord Jesus Christ in you.

He used various figures in which He emphasized this. At a certain point, He said, "I am the light of the world." This meant that in any place where He wasn't present it was dark, and the only way in which you could really understand the world was to see it in Him. The way in which you will understand the real meaning of anything so far as this world is concerned, is by looking at the Lord Jesus Christ. As the Light of the world, the Lord Jesus makes the whole truth of the world open and manifest. Let me say it again: I yield myself in the will of God and the result is that I am reckoned dead; God will raise me from the dead by His power in the Lord Jesus Christ; and I will forever have fellowship with God and the blessing of God, because I am now in Christ Jesus. This truth is shown to me over and over again from the Bible through the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Another time the Lord Jesus used this expression: "I am the way, the truth and the life. No man cometh unto the Father but by me." Here again you have the idea about coming to God through the Lord Jesus Christ, coming through the truth that is in Him.

He is the *bread of life*. He is the one that supplies us with strength and sustains us. He is the *light of the world*. He helps us to understand and to see. He is the *way, the truth and the life*.

He also uses this expression: "I am the true vine" and you are the branches." Just like the vine and the branches are together, so the Lord Jesus Christ and His followers are together. And just the way the branch continues to live and prosper as long as it is connected with the vine, so with reference to us, we will continue and be strong in spiritual things as long as we are in the Lord Jesus Christ.

He stated that the branches do not bear fruit of themselves. They *cannot* bear fruit of themselves. To emphasize this in relation to ourselves He said, "Apart from me you can do nothing." The reason why we cannot do anything apart from Him is that the new life that is in us is not our own. The new life in us is the life of God that is shared with us. We need to be in constant fellowship with Him that the life of God in Him might bring forth the fruit.

He summarizes it all in words like this: "He that hath the Son the life, because it is Christ in you that is the hope of glory." And so you see in the Christian life we are to have daily fellowship with Him. Just as we eat and drink daily and in our natural food for our natural bodies, we should draw upon Him for our spiritual well-being that we might be alive in Him.

## *I Am The Door*

The gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ is not the opinion of men. The gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ is something revealed from heaven to men, of what God will do for man through Christ Jesus. The gospel is revealed to man for his benefit by God Himself in His Word.

The main purpose of the Bible is to give us a true, complete, adequate and reliable record – revelation – of what God has promised He will do in Jesus Christ. The Bible recognizes that between man and God there is a great gulf fixed. This man down here on earth needs help, and Almighty God in heaven has the power to help him; and yet they are separated from each other because of sin.

If you want to continue with this figure of speech and you think of the separation as being a great gap, then you will also see that God has established a connecting link. He has prepared a way to bring these two greatly different individuals together; namely, the sinner in his sin, and God in His holiness. These two can come together because the Lord Jesus Christ came to stand in between and to bring them together. Actually what the Lord Jesus Christ did was to come into this world to die for us and to teach us how to live as Christians. He did show His disciples these things, but He even had much more than that in mind. He knew that one day they would put their trust in Him, and He would come and live in them and living in them would effect many of the changes which they were now to recognize and to appreciate.

And now to change the figure of speech, we hold the Bible in our hands as a revelation of the fact that God has opened a door in the wall that was between the sinner and God. It is as though sin had raised up a barrier between the sinner and God. If the sinner wanted to come to God, he was always baffled and frustrated because of his sin. He felt his guilt. Well, God has opened a doorway. He has opened a way through to Him, and that door is in the person of His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ who said, "I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture."

Have you ever stopped to think or has anyone ever asked you, what makes a door so important? It is important because of the wall. If the wall wasn't there, you wouldn't need the door. But now you need to have a way to get through something that separates you from something else. The wall is a separator. So the door opens a way in the wall for you to get through.

When is a door really worthwhile? You would say right away it's really worthwhile when you go through it and get into better things, when you can go back and forth and in and out to get the help that you need. That's what the Lord Jesus Christ was. He was the living One who, standing up before all mankind, called upon them to come to Him and through Him to come to God.

We could all rejoice that the opportunity is there for man to come to God. We know how the Scriptures say that, "God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through him might be saved." Man certainly needs the blessing of God. Now, when you say about anyone that he needs the blessing of God, you should have certain things in mind. A man needs to have his sins forgiven, to be inwardly regenerated. He needs grace for living, and strength. He needs some sort of guidance as he lives in this world and at the same time lives in the presence of God.

In the same way, he needs companionship. And so far as man is concerned, "it is not good for man to be alone." No matter how much argument he hears and how much encouragement he has, he can go just so far until he feels that he is almost presuming upon God by coming into His presence. So also he needs an eternal home. He needs some place that he knows he is going to go where he will be safe and where he will be comforted, a place that never will be taken away. In other words, he needs to know about the glory of God which is in the face of Jesus Christ.

Such blessings are available to man from God; but they come in by and through Jesus Christ. The forgiveness of sins, the resurrection, the grace for living, guidance in our daily affairs, companionship so that we won't faint and get discouraged, an eternal home as our glorious prospect for us, and the glory of God shining all round about us – these are the blessings that are available from God in Jesus Christ.

If I have described them with any degree of adequacy I will have given you the impression that these things are available through Jesus Christ, and through Him alone. However, perhaps the matter can be set out a little bit more clearly. For instance, we will say several different things about the Lord Jesus Christ to see how He is offered to us. We have at different times spoken of Jesus of Nazareth as the Christ; and when we use that term, we are using the title that was given to Him as the *Anointed One*. He was the *Chosen One* of God and the Old Testament called Him *Messiah*. The New Testament called Him *Christ*. Sometimes we call Him the *Redeemer*. We always think of Him as the *Deliverer*. All of these titles, all of these various ways of referring to Him, are to say that through Him we receive salvation. And when this expression, "I am the door," comes to mind, it would be that He is *the door of salvation*. It is this particular aspect that I hope you will keep in mind.

"By me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture." Going in and out actually means that the believer will live in the awareness of Christ. He will live day in and day out in the blessing and in the grace that comes to him because Jesus Christ is his Savior. When I say that the Lord Jesus Christ is my Savior, I mean more than that He died to reconcile me to God. I mean more than that He paid for my sins and expiated them in His own sacrifice on Calvary's cross. I mean that He exercises over me day in and day out, constantly, a saving grace. Every day I am saved in Him. Every day I come into His presence and He forgives me. Every day I am drawing my new life from Him. Every day I get guidance from Him. Every day I have companionship with Him. Every day I am conscious of the fact that I belong to Him and He belongs to me. This is the significance when we say He is the *Chosen One*. He is the One who brings to me the blessing of God and brings me into the very favor of God. *He is the Christ*. He is the door and by Him I enter in and am saved.

We read that He actually went through the experience of the cross because He was thinking of the joy that was before Him: "Who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame." If you want to know what the joy was for Him, the Scriptures as a whole will bring you this thought: that the joy before Him was to be in the presence of His Father with all the believers – all the saved – so that "He might be the firstborn among many brethren."

We also say about Him that He is the Son of God, and God committed all judgment unto the Son. That judgment is being exercised every day. God "hath given to the Son to have life in Himself," and because our Savior is the Son of God, you and I can have the life of God in us, not some day, not only everlastingly and eternally in the future, but now, day by day by day. This is the very heart of the gospel.

We are to understand that when we come to Christ Jesus we can receive the blessing of God, the life of God, and it is made available for us in the Lord Jesus Christ. So when He says, "I am the door," then no other way is valid. It's "I am *the* door." It's not "I am *a* door." Coming to Him is the direct route to blessing. Coming through Him is the direct route to blessing.

This relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ is not a one way street. It isn't a question of just coming in and going to heaven through Him. It's coming in and going out. It's living. It's true freedom. It's coming into the presence of God and going out into life. It is coming into heavenly things and then being able to live "godly in this present world." It's opening the door to eternal life, and you come out from there living in the Lord.

This is the wonderful truth which the Gospel of John presents to us about the Lord Jesus Christ: He came to make salvation available, but in making it available, He then manifests His life in us. There isn't any such thing as giving eternal life to us and then letting us go ahead and muddle along, doing only the best we can. True life, true guidance, true wisdom, true blessing are made available for us in Him.

## I Am The Lord

"I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, and in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord." These are the familiar words at the beginning of the Apostles' Creed, and I want you to notice the reference to the Lord Jesus Christ: ". . . in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord." Here we are brought face to face with the term Lord. This word Lord, referring to the Lord Jesus Christ, is not just some title of honor; it describes an actual function that He performs in relation to us when we call Him our Lord, and thereby acknowledge Him as our Master.

The Gospel of John is written to show us the Lord Jesus Christ. John said, "Many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book: but these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name." We are reminded of the words that are quoted in the Gospel of Matthew, when we read with reference to Bethlehem: "Out of thee shall come a Governor, that shall rule my people Israel." Here is a wonderful truth in the whole understanding of the gospel and in understanding the work of the Lord Jesus Christ. God is going to bring us blessing; and this blessing from God is brought to us through the Lord Jesus Christ who – in being our sacrifice and dying as the *Lamb of God*, and in being our Keeper and Sustainer as the *bread of life*, and in being the *Door* through whom we are brought to God and made free to go in and out – is also our Director. He is the One who controls our activity. He is the One who moves us along in the life that we live and the service that we render. For this reason, we speak of Him as *the Lord*.

There is a reason why He is the One who is in control. It is because He is the Son of God. It is true that He was born into this world as a child; that He accepted the body that was prepared for Him; that He humbled Himself in this body, becoming obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. But He always was the Lord. It was no mere man who died on Calvary's cross. It was the Lord Himself in the person of Jesus of Nazareth, in the form of man, who died there. His coming into this world was actually planned by Almighty God as the way in which to bring Himself God into our lives. This idea of bringing Almighty God into our lives is the way of salvation. This is what "being saved" means.

When we talk about being saved, it is riot the idea that we are going to be patched up and then turned loose to do as best we can. It isn't a matter of our being forgiven the past and being strengthened and healed and then restored to our full function and turned out to do better than we did before. We are being brought under the leadership and dominion of God.

One of the ways in which this is referred to in the New Testament is that "we enter into the kingdom of God." Receiving Jesus Christ as Savior means that I now become related to God forever as a member of Christ's body, as being in the Lord Jesus Christ and God having His way in me. Life is more meaningful. I am much better off walking with the Lord, serving Him and living in His will than I would be on my own. If I were to live my life by myself and do as I please according to my strength, carrying out my own ideas as far as I can, it would be a much poorer life than I have when I am trusting in the Lord Jesus Christ. Eternal life, the life of God in us, is marked by active, constant, total obedience to the living will of our Infinite God. Eternal life means that the person who has it will simply do the will of God, committed entirely to the will of God. When the Lord Jesus Christ was here His whole life was in terms of His being the willing Son of His Father who is in heaven. The one thing He wanted was to do the will of His Father.

This is a good place for us to stop and consider the whole matter of becoming a Christian and being born again. What we need to remember in our understanding of all this is that the natural man is willful.

If you wonder whether or not this is true for everybody, you could watch any baby that you've ever seen. If your baby is healthy and well and is a normal baby, I can tell you that your baby is going to do as



it pleases; and if it can't do as it pleases, it is going to cry and make all kinds of disturbance. Any growing child will manifest this trait as you will see. No matter how you treat children, no matter how nice you are to them, no matter how you bring them up, they come sooner or later to the place where they want to have their own way.

Let me say to you as gently as I can, and without being mean about it at all, that the expression of our human nature is not like the Lord Jesus Christ; therefore, it is not godly and therefore it actually is sin. This is the thing you want to get away from. The Lord Jesus Christ was exactly the opposite of that.

The Lord Jesus Christ came to do the will of His Father perfectly; and when we receive Him as our Savior and Lord, He does the will of God in us. "He that doeth the will of God abideth forever." Any attempt on our part to do the will of God in our own strength will be found to be inadequate and unsatisfactory in the presence of Almighty God. Only one Person ever fully did the will of His rather and Almighty God said about Him, "This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased." That was the Lord Jesus Himself. When I receive Him into myself, I am receiving into myself – in the life of the Lord Jesus Christ – the inward disposition to want to do the Father's will.

Let us look at Him again as we see Him as the Lord when He was here upon earth. His life that He lived was a life that was lived in power and filled with glory because God was working in Him. The mighty works that He performed were none other than the works of Almighty God carried out through Him. He says that the Father showed Him all things whatsoever the Father was doing, and He was able to obey the Father and walk along with Him. The mighty works that He performed and the miracles that He performed were simply the works of God that were being done through Him.

We read that the Lord Jesus said that "the Father . . . hath committed all judgment unto the Son." But this is the judgment of God, completely His will, exercised through the Lord Jesus Christ. He also said that "the Father hath given to the Son to have life in Himself," so that the Son could share and give life to anybody whom He would. But this again was the will of God being done through Him. The Bible states that "the Son quickeneth whom he will." That is, He will bring to life again from the dead anybody whom He will. But the reason why the Lord Jesus Christ as the Son of God could bring back to life anybody whom He would was because it was God who was working in Him. It was the work of God that He was Himself doing. In that way, the Son raises the dead, and this is to be our privilege as we yield to Him.

You could think of a young woman whose family wasn't rich, but by some chance a wealthy young man fell in love with her and married her, making her his wife. From the moment that she becomes the bride of this wealthy young man she has a great deal of money at her command. She shares with him in what he has and immediately it looks as though she has a lot of money. And it's true in a way, but it's not her own. It's the money that belongs to her bridegroom and to herself *together*.

So with reference to the Lord Jesus Christ, when He was here upon earth, He was serving as *the Lord*, and He acted as the Lord. What we actually were seeing when we saw Him acting as the Lord was God working through Him.

His being *Lord* was shown in the works, the miracles, that He performed. Now these miracles simply witnessed publicly to all human beings concerning the relationship that existed between the Son and the Father. The Lord Jesus Himself performed the miracles, saying to the people: ". . . that you may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins, [then saith he to the sick of the palsy,] arise, take up thy bed and go unto thine house." The Lord Jesus wanted people to understand that the power He was exercising was not His own. It was the power of God which was available in Him, thereby teaching us that we could have the same power of God for our daily lives available to us as we put our trust in Him.

In the Gospel of John we see the Lord showing this power in various ways. When He made the water into wine, He did that because He had the power. When He fed the multitude – 5,000 people with just a little bit of food – it was because He had the power. When He was walking on the sea in a storm, it

was because He had the power. Even when He was riding the colt on the occasion of coming into Jerusalem at the time of His triumphal entry, that was an exhibition of His power over that animal. When He directed the men where to fish, saying, "Cast thy net on the right side," and they easily caught many fish, He showed control over nature. This control that He had over nature was the power of God that was being manifested through Him.

With reference to disease, John tells us of how He healed the nobleman's son without even going to the man's home. He just spoke the word and the son got well. Or we can think of the lame man at the pool of Bethesda and how the Lord Jesus asked him, "Do you want to be healed?" And the man intimated he did. Then He told him to just rise up and walk off because he would be well. We see Him at the time of the raising of Lazarus when He showed His power over death. He could say, "Lazarus come forth, and he that was bound with grave clothes came forth." Then we see Him exercising power in the cleansing of the temple when He cast out the money changers and drove out the cattle. Here again it was the power of God that was given to Him.

It was the same way with reference to His own career, so far as He lived His own personal daily life. Things weren't happening to Him that He couldn't help. He says Himself with reference to His death, "I lay down my life and I take it up again."

But His being *Lord* in this way and exercising the almighty power of God was not marked by personal choice or personal desire on His part. He was completely yielded to His Father, and we can see this when we look reverently at Him in the Garden of Gethsemane. Here He looked up to the Father and said, "Father all things are possible unto thee. If it be possible, let this cup pass from me." But after several hours of such praying He said, "O my Father, if this cup may not pass away from me, except I drink it, thy will be done."

This is *the Lord*, and He is Lord over many different things in many different ways. He is *the Lord* because He is the obedient Son who is carrying out the will of His Father. In all His public ministry here upon earth, He never shrank from the claim that He actually was the Lord.

He said to the disciples, "Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men." At the time of the last Passover which Jesus celebrated with His disciples, He told them, "Ye call me Master and Lord: and ye say well; for so I am." It is this same Lord Jesus who speaks to us and says, "As my Father sent me, so send I you." He is saying to each one of us, "Follow thou me." And when we do follow Him, then He is our *Lord*.