

JESUS: HUMBLED AND EXALTED



We examine the life of Christ in two phases.

WHAT a wonderful plan it was which God prepared to save mankind after its fall into sin! This plan gives sinners the world over reason to thank and praise their gracious God. It is not the plan we would have chosen. By our human standards, we would have expected a just God to condemn Adam and Eve forever. After all, in this world "you get what you pay for"; if you want something good to happen to you, you have to earn it. But thankfully, the God of love didn't follow that rule!

1. In I Corinthians chapter 2, the Apostle Paul speaks of this wonderful plan of God to save mankind. Read especially verses 7-10. *From verse 9, what would the limited mind of man never have been able to guess?*




2. *From verse 10, what is the only way for human beings to understand God's plan of salvation?*

3. In Genesis 3:15, God promised that the "Seed of the woman" (Jesus) would take away the power of the devil, which is unforgiven sin. As time went by, God through His Old Testament writers made it clearer and clearer what the Messiah would come to do. Read Isaiah 53:4-6. *What does God promise us in these passages?*

We can study Jesus' life in two different phases. The first phase includes His conception in the womb of Mary through His life, and His death. We call this phase Jesus' *humiliation*, because during this part of His life he set aside the full use of His powers as God. The second phase - from His resurrection through His ascension into heaven and His sitting on the right hand of God - we call His *exaltation*. This is because during this time Jesus was glorified, and once again assumed the full use of His powers as God. In this lesson and the next, we will examine both of these parts of Jesus' life in detail.



ICON KEY

-  Introduction
-  Important point
-  For further reading

Our Humble Savior

4. Look up Philippians 2:5-11. Here the Apostle Paul urges Christians to have the same humble attitude that Christ had. Even though Jesus was true God (verse 6), and would have had every reason to be proud, *what did He do instead (verse 8)?*

What a spectacle! The holy Jesus left the splendors of heaven and came to earth to be our Servant, in order to redeem us from our sins! He humbled Himself, even to the point of allowing Himself to be put to death on a cross - a very humiliating way to die.

5. The first four books of the New Testament - Matthew, Mark, Luke and John - are four separate accounts of the life of Christ. Read again the story of Jesus' birth in Luke 2:1-20. **From verse 11, who was and is this baby?**

6. **From the same verse, FOR WHOM was He born?**

7. In the first chapter of Matthew, we hear the angel telling Joseph of the miraculous birth that was to occur. Read Matthew 1:21. **What would be Jesus' holy work on earth?**

8. Read Luke 2:40-52. Interestingly, this is the only account in the Bible from the boyhood of Jesus. **What does verse 40 tell us about how the boy Jesus developed?**

9. From verse 52, **what three things are told us about the Jesus as He grew up?**

10. Look up and read John 1:1-14. Here the Son of God is referred to as "the Word." **From verse 1, WHAT WAS "the Word," even before the beginning of time?**

11. **What do verses 4-5 tell us about "the Word"?**

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12. From verses 6-8, *which person had the special job of bearing witness that "the Word" and "the Light" had arrived on earth?*

13. Read verses 9-13. From verse 12, *what "right" (privilege) does "the Word" give to all who receive Him?*

14. From verses 12-13, *are children of God "born" of their own free will? (Who decides when a person becomes a believer?)*

15. From verses 14 and 17, *WHO IS THE PERSON referred to as "the Word" and "the Light of the world"?*

16. Read John 1:15-34. John the Baptist signaled the start of Jesus' public ministry at age 30 *when he pointed to Jesus and said:*

" _____ "



At this point you, the reader, would benefit from an overview of the life of Christ, especially the whole account of His suffering and death. The best way is to take the time, even if a few days are needed, to read the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John from beginning to end. You are urged to do so before you go on.

17. Why did Jesus Christ, who lived a life without sin, permit Himself to be crucified? The Bible answers this question quite clearly. Read Isaiah 53:5. *For what purpose did Jesus allow Himself to be wounded?*

18. Look up Romans 5:19. *What was the result of Adam's DISOBEDIENCE?*

19. From the same passage, *What was the result of Christ's OBEDIENCE?*

20. Read II Corinthians 5:21. God laid the sins of the world on Jesus. He literally made Jesus "become sin" for us. *WHY?*

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21. Read II Timothy 1:9-10. Through His perfect life, and His innocent suffering and death, *what has our Savior Jesus Christ accomplished for us?*

22. Read I John 3:8. To put it another way, *the Son of God came to earth so that He might...*

23. Some people say that Jesus died only for the believers. This causes many troubled believers to look to themselves and wonder whether they really *are* Christians after all. But the Bible says otherwise. According to Scripture, *FOR WHOM did Jesus Christ live and die?*



Answer from II Corinthians 5:19:

Answer from John 3:16:

Answer from I John 2:2:

Our Exalted Savior

As you have learned, Jesus humbled Himself - even to the point of dying on a criminal's cross - in order to redeem the world from sin. Then, after Jesus finished His work, God exalted Him and gave Him a name which is above every name, before whom all will bow.

Jesus' exaltation began with a short visit to hell. What happened there, and what was the purpose for that visit? Several theories have been advanced to answer that question. Let's see what the Bible has to say.

24. Read I Peter 3:18-20. *According to verse 19, what did Jesus DO during His visit to hell?*

25. Some people say the word "preached" in that verse indicates that Jesus *preached the Gospel* to the souls in hell, in order to give them another chance to repent and be saved. But read Revelation 14:13. *WHICH PEOPLE ONLY are "blessed" from the moment of their death on into eternity?*

26. Also on this point, look up Hebrews 9:27. *What comes after death? Another chance to repent and be saved?*

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27. Some teach another doctrine: that Jesus descended into hell in order to continue His suffering for us. But read John 19:30. *What did Jesus say from the cross about the work He had come to do for us?*

28. Now we come to the *real* reason for Christ's visit to hell. Look up Colossians 2:13-15. According to verse 15, *what did Jesus do after He paid for our sins on the cross?*



Thus, when this visit of Jesus in hell is described in I Peter 3:18-20, we understand that He went there to "preach" - or to "proclaim Himself" to be the Victor over Satan and hell.

We now come to what is for the Christian the single most important event in history - the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead on Easter Sunday. This event is significant for at least several crucial reasons.

29. Read Romans 1:4. Complete the sentence: *"The resurrection declared to the world that Jesus really was..."*

30. Read Romans 4:25. *When Jesus was raised again, what did it show was complete?*

31. Read through I Corinthians 15:17-23. The Apostle Paul says that, if Jesus didn't really rise, then we would still be in our sins. *But Jesus HAS risen, and that means...*

32. In the same chapter, verses 20 and 23 call Jesus "the *firstfruits*" of those who have died. *That means that, if Jesus was the FIRST to rise from the dead, then...*

33. In John 11:25-26, *our Lord Jesus promises us...*

34. In John 14:19, Jesus puts it even more simply. *This passage says that, because JESUS rose to eternal life...*

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Easter Sunday is the most important holiday in the Christian church year, and for good reason. Jesus' resurrection reminds us that 1) He was who He said He was: true God, and the Savior of the world, 2) our sins truly have been atoned for, and we have been completely justified in the eyes of God, and 3) that, through faith in Christ, we will one day rise to eternal life just as He did.



Additional Bible Readings

For additional reading, please see chapters 26-28 of the Gospel of Matthew; Mark chapters 14-16, Luke chapters 22-24, John chapters 18-21, Acts 1:3 and 10:40-41, and I Corinthians chapter 15.