

"Mack Lyon"

Hello, I'm Chris Lyon, and this is a Bible study "In Search of the Lord's Way." As many of you know my father Mack Lyon, founder of Search, left this life on August the 5<sup>th</sup>, 2015. Today this special program will remember him and honor his request to preach for us one more time. We will be sharing some of his lessons that have made a difference to millions of people over the many years of his ministry. We hope you'll stay with us as we remember Mack Lyon.

Welcome to In Search of the Lord's Way! We're excited to have you join us for this special program looking back over Mack Lyon's television ministry. As always, we're here to search the Scriptures for God's will. From my earliest days as a Christian, I saw the need to follow the Scriptures and to be a New Testament Christian. Without the New Testament, we wouldn't know what the Lord Jesus is like, what He expects from us, and how we can have eternal life in heaven. Without the New Testament, we wouldn't know how the church is to worship or be organized. Without the New Testament, we wouldn't know how wonderful and glorious is the grace of God. The New Testament provides for us what we most need to know in order to please God and to enjoy His grace, His mercy, and His blessing. That's why we go back again and again to Scripture. Thanks for taking time with us today. We want to be a part of your life each week.

For more than thirty years you were able to hear Mack Lyon preaching the unsearchable riches of Christ on this program. And as we mentioned, he went home to the Lord on August 5<sup>th</sup> at the age of 93. We miss him, and we know that you miss him too! He was indeed a great soldier of the cross who loved the Lord and His cause. Mack loved to preach the gospel. And in recent years Mack suffered from Parkinson's disease, which prevented him from being able to preach. Well earlier this year, Mack told me that every night he dreamed of being able to preach again.

Since many of you wanted to hear Mack again, we selected some clips from our library to share with you today. We have sections of three sermons. The first will be from 1984, some of the early days of the Search program. He'll speak about the power of the resurrection. The second section from 1998 speaks of the need to glory in the cross. Our third clip comes from 2010 and reveals the need for a standard.

Well, we offer this program free to those who ask. And if you'd like a CD of our study and you live in the United States, please mail your request to In Search of the Lord's Way, P.O. Box 371, Edmond, OK 73083 or send an e-mail to [searchtv@searchtv.org](mailto:searchtv@searchtv.org). Or you can call our toll-free telephone number. That number is 1-800-321-8633. We also have materials free on our website at [www.searchtv.org](http://www.searchtv.org).

The Edmond church will now worship in song, and we'll be right back to hear from Mack Lyon.

As we mentioned, we're presenting three sections of programs Mack Lyon delivered. This first section comes from 1984, when Mack was only on a few stations in Oklahoma and the surrounding states. Early on, Mack dreamed of reaching the entire state of Oklahoma. Well God opened doors and ultimately he reached the whole nation. In this section, Mack will be discussing the power of the resurrection. Listen with me.

The essential elements of the Christians faith are all confirmed by historical evidence. The birth of Jesus Christ is a matter of historical fact. His life and the fact that He also secured a great following of people during His personal ministry, in so short of time is a matter of history. His influence upon all of that part of the world can be attested by history. It can be proven by historical evidence. Not only so, but the fact that Jesus Christ was crucified on a Roman cross outside the city walls of Jerusalem that day, is also an historical fact. And that His grave was empty the next Sunday morning, is a matter of

history as well. The Bible says in Luke the 24<sup>th</sup> chapter, beginning at verse 1, that when the disciples came there that day the tomb was empty. The Bible says “now upon the first day of the week, very early in the morning, they came unto the sepulture bringing the spices which they had prepared, and certain others with them. And they found the stone rolled away from the sepulture and they entered in and found not the body of the Lord Jesus. And it came to pass as they were much perplexed there about, behold two men stood by them in shining garments, and as they were afraid and bowed down their faces to the earth, they said unto them, ‘why seek ye the living among the dead? He is not here, but is risen. Remember how He spake unto you when He was yet in Galilee saying. The Son of man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men and be crucified. And the third day rise again.’ And they remembered His words, and returned from the sepulture, and told all those things unto the eleven. And the all the rest. Reading through verse 9.

The grave really and truly was empty. The body was gone, but how do you explain it. Well various attempts have been made to explain away the disappearance of the body of Jesus in that three day period. Some have said that the enemies of Jesus came and stole away the body. But surely had that been true, they would have delivered the body. When only about seven weeks later, the Apostles began to preach that Jesus Christ was raised from the dead by the power of God, and therefore was the Son of God. They would have produced the body of Jesus, and would have silenced those Apostles once and for all. And Christianity never would have been born. The Jews then would had the victory over the claims of Jesus Christ, merely by having presented the body which they were have supposed to have stolen.

And somebody has said, “well, the enemies didn’t steal away the body, but we don’t know who stole it away, because the guard said that somebody stole the body while they slept.” Well, doesn’t that sound a bit ridiculous to you. If the guards were so sound asleep at the grave of Jesus, that somebody could come in and roll away that huge stone and then remove the body, that how would they know who it was that stole it? How would they know that somebody had come there and stolen the body of Jesus. Well the truth of the matter is they couldn’t testify as to what happened. They wouldn’t be very good witnesses.

Others have tried to explain away the empty tomb, by saying that the friends of Jesus came and stole away the body. And then went out and said that He was raised from the dead by the power of God. But that isn’t reasonable either, is it? Because in reality now, these men suffered severe persecution for preaching the resurrection of Jesus. Some of them were beheaded, some of them were crucified, some were crucified head downward, some were exiled. They were persecuted even to death. And don’t you know that while they were being persecuted, and while they were enduring all of this suffering, if they knew in their own hearts that they were propagating a falsehood, that they had actually stolen the body of Jesus themselves, and they were only propagating the doctrine, a false doctrine that He had been raised from the dead, that they would have renounced that? They wouldn’t have continued that even to the point of death.

In this second section from 1998, Mack Lyon reveals his love for Jesus Christ and the importance of the cross in the life of a Christian. The Lord Jesus said in John 12:32, “And I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto Me.” We’ve got to look to Christ and His cross, if we would be right with God. Let’s hear what Mack Lyon has to say.

The cross of Christ, the message of Christ’s crucifixion, His burial and His resurrection from the dead is the very heart and the soul of the Christian message. This great man of God wrote to the

Corinthian Christians also, and He said, "I brethren, when I came to you, came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God." He had not appealed to the vanity of their great wisdom, not had he exhibited great oratorical skill before them, for he continued "I determine not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ and Him crucified." It isn't that He never mentioned the church, or obedience, or baptism, or worship, or judgment, or heaven, or hell, or whole host of other Bible subjects. But that whatever He taught them, had meaning only in the light of the cross of Jesus Christ. And He said, "I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling, and my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the spirit and the power, that (oh now that word that means that here is a statement of purpose) that your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God."

Oh for more preaching like that today, that your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God. The cross of Jesus Christ packs power into the sermon. The preacher that thinks he has something better on which to build your faith, is blinded by his egotism and pride. God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of Jesus Christ. The cross, the story of the crucifixion of Jesus, His burial and His triumphant resurrection is the firm immovable foundation, the truth on which the Church would be built. How audacious, how outrageously vain, how conceited, how very prideful and deceitful of any man to start a church of his own and to dare to compare it with the one that Jesus, the Son of God, built upon the firm foundation of His blood stained cross. Upon this rock He said to Peter, "I will build my church," (Matthew 16:18) It wasn't that He was building a stone, like the impetuous sometimes wavering Peter. The church was to be built upon Jesus Christ, who by His death, and burial, and resurrection fulfilled God's plan for human redemption. And proved himself to be the Son of God, by His resurrection from the dead (Romans 1, verse 4). Jesus, keep you church near the cross.

The church is important to the world only as long as it relates to the cross. The church simply must not permit itself to lose sight of the Cross. God forbid that the church should glory, save in the Cross of Jesus Christ. Religious traditions are vain (Matthew 15, verses 1 to 10), except as they relate to the cross of Christ. 2 Thessalonians 2:15 declares that also. Religious rites and ceremonies are meaningless, save as they relate to the cross of Christ. Likewise, innovative changes in church teaching or doctrine, in the worship, in the agenda of the church, all of that are but glitter except as they draw us near to the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ. God forbid that the church should glory in any of that, but only in the Cross as our Lord Jesus Christ.

In this last section, Mack Lyon says, "Give Me a Standard." He reveals the need to go to God's standard in the New Testament in order to obey the Lord the way the Lord wants to be obeyed. How desperately our world needs to turn away from pluralism and come back to the teaching of Christ. Let's listen again:

We need a standard. A truth that will be truth everywhere and always to all people. A standard by which all of us can determine what's right and what's wrong, and what will be right and what will be wrong everywhere and with all people wherever we go. The pluralism of the prevailing post-modern thought is just not working friend. It's wreaking havoc on our national faith and morals. Like the merchant who carefully balanced the sack of coffee in his hand until it felt like a pound. Many people do what they do in religion simply because it feels right to them. Or they feel led to do it. They seem not to be aware of the truth of which the Bible speaks. There is a way that seems right to a man, but to end of their ways are death (Proverbs 16:25). Chaos and confusion abound everywhere. Anarchy reigns, and we cry "O God give us a standard."

Well like the old time merchant who measured out his yard of gingham between two notches out, cut in the counter by his grandfather or grandmother. He knew full well that his grandfather was honest and would never cheat a customer, though he really might have been doing it all along without even knowing it. So, many people today are clinging to the religious beliefs and their practices and of their honest and good fore-parents. They have no other reason for being what they are, or doing what they do, but that their grandparents were that, and that's the way they did.

Oh, how we do need a standard. Something by which everyone can live and be certain he's doing and believing what's right. Just as it was before we had a Bureau of Standards of Weights and Measures. When each state had its own. In religion today, there is no standard. Each group has its own authoritative council or maybe it's a creed that defines truth for them. What's said to be right for one group, is not right for others. Each one does what is right in its own eyes. The result is confusion and chaos, even unbelief. Just as Jesus said it would be in John 17, verses 20 and 21. Oh how we do need a standard.

Well that one short verse we read for our text aptly describes not only the conditions that existed in a period of some of the formative days of Israel's history, but it just as aptly describes the conditions in our own period of religious and moral decline in America. It was during the reign of the judges, and the times were difficult because God's will had been abandoned and the scripture says "every man did that which was right in his own eyes." My friend, God has given us a standard already. Yes He has. Even as He had then. But the people scorned it then as many do now. The Bible is God's word. When man rejects it and sets his own rules for life, he's on the downward course to disaster. Jeremiah, the old testament prophet who wept over the sinful and condemned state of Israel cried, "Oh Lord, I know the way of man is not in himself, it is not in man who walks to direct his own steps" (Jeremiah 10:23). It's an awesome truth that God has spoken and revealed His way to man. It's awesome I say, not only because it's inspired and inspiring and wondrous, but because it's fearful and appalling, and it makes a dreadful demand on man for an appropriate response. The only such response is obedience to it. It's irreverent and even blasphemous the way some people profess to speak for God, pretend such camaraderie with Him, as to carry on casual conversations with Him, at their own will and at their command. My friend, God does not come down and sit on the side of the bed and talk to these people like that. He never did. Even Moses was not permitted to do that. In Exodus 33:20 God said to Him, "You cannot see My face; for no one shall see Me and live" (Exodus 33 and 20). Nor, does God speak to us through the traditions of our ancestry, not even through the councils of the best-of-intentioned men, neither in the creeds written by the most scholarly of them, but through His word, the Bible. There's our standard!

And it says, "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work" (2 Timothy 3:16-17). The Bible, then, is here by the breath of God. And it's to be used for teaching doctrine, for reproofing the erring, for correcting the course of the misled life, for instruction in the things that are right, so that the man of God can be completely, and is completely supplied by the Scriptures with everything necessary to every good work. There's our standard. Oh my, we must get back to it!

Of course there have always been, in every generation, those who have given short weights and measures for ill-gotten-gain. They flourish and prosper in spite of the Bureau of Standards of Weights and Measures. And so it is in Christianity. There have always been, and always shall be I suppose, the Elmer Gantry's, who prey upon the unlearned and unsuspecting for profit. That's why the Scripture

says, "Be diligent (King James says, "study") to present yourself approved to God, a workman who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." (Some versions say, "handling aright the word of truth.") It's "the word of truth." Let's not forget that. Let us pray. Holy Father, thank You for the revelation, the translation, the preservation of Your holy word, a standard by which we can all live in unison. We pray Your blessings as we strive to walk in its light. In Jesus name we pray, Amen!

How we need to get back to the Bible, God's standard for our lives today. Most of the problems that people face today comes from their unwillingness to follow the Lord Jesus. You can't rebel against God and expect God to bless you. When we study the Bible, we must truly want to conform our lives and our faith to it and it alone as God's everlasting and unchangeable standard. We must always be on guard against imposing our opinions and prejudices on the word of God, and trying to use the Bible to justify our preconceived ideas or our selfish desires. We must follow the Lord. Faith in Christ means accepting everything the Lord says in His word, and conforming our lives to it. Now if you aren't willing to deny yourself, take up your cross daily, and to follow Christ, you are a Christian in name only. True disciples live their faith!

There is still but one standard gospel of Christ, and we must obey that gospel to be saved. To become a Christian believe in the Lord with all your heart. Out of love repent of every sin and turn your heart and thoughts to righteousness. Confess your faith that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, and be baptized into Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. Now baptism is an immersion in water that likens us to the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ. We don't sprinkle for baptism, because it's not God's standard, and we don't baptize babies because they aren't mature enough to believe and repent. The apostle Peter said in Acts 2 and verse 38, "Repent, and each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit." That's what we urge you to do today. Let the cross of Christ draw you to Jesus and follow His teaching.

We hope that today's study has stirred you to consider obeying what God says to do. If you live in the United States and want a free printed copy or a CD of this message, mail your request to In Search of the Lord's Way, P.O. Box 371, Edmond, OK 73083 or send an e-mail to [searchtv@searchtv.org](mailto:searchtv@searchtv.org). Or you can call the Search office toll-free at 1-800-321-8633. Now you can download these lessons or a newsletter online at our website: [www.searchtv.org](http://www.searchtv.org). There's also a schedule of our programs and a map with the location of churches in your area. We also offer free Bible Correspondence courses. Now don't worry, we're not here to exploit you. We're here to help you get to heaven.

Please get involved with a church of Christ. And if you're looking for a healthy, Biblical church home, we'll be happy to help you find one. So keep searching God's Word with us and tell a friend about this program. And now a final word from Mack Lyon:

Say! We're so glad that you were with us today. We pray you've been blessed. And, we hope you will join us again next week. God bless you now. We love you.