

"The Heart of Jesus"

If you want to know someone, look into his heart. Hello, I'm Phil Sanders, and this is a Bible study In Search of the Lord's Way. And if you want to know the Lord Jesus, well look into the Word of God, that's where the Lord's heart is revealed. So get your Bible and stay tuned.

Welcome to In Search of the Lord's Way. We're here to search God's Word for the Lord's Way. And you know the Bible opens that way up for us so that we can know the Lord. We don't rely on opinions, or polls, or hunches. We know the Bible teaches the truth, so we focus on God's Holy Word. Thanks for spending this time with us. We want to be a part of your life each week.

This week marks the beginning of our 37th year of broadcasting In Search of the Lord's way. It began 36 years ago this week when Mack Lyon began preaching from KTEN in Ada, Oklahoma. And we plan to keep on preaching the truth in love from Scripture; preaching what God says that we need to hear, not just tickling ears. We're grateful to our viewers from every state and many other countries.

Jesus loved people. And God sent Him into this world, because the world needed Him so very badly. Jesus cared about people and fed the hungry, healed the sick. He invited people to cast their cares upon Him. But, more than anything, He cared about their souls. He preached repentance, because He wanted everyone to be right with God.

In Matthew 9 verses 36 to 38, there the Bible reveals the heart of Jesus. It says, "seeing the people, that He felt compassion for them, because they were distressed and dispirited like sheep without a shepherd. And then He said to His disciples, 'The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. And therefore beseech the Lord of harvest to send out workers into His harvest.'" Jesus knew what we needed, and that we needed His protection and guidance.

Galatians 1 and verse 4 says that Jesus "gave Himself for our sins so that He might rescue us from this present evil age, according to the will of our God and Father." Now Jesus lovingly died for us so that we might be saved. Today we want to look at the heart of the One who cares. No one loves you more than Jesus.

Now we offer the information on this program free. And if you want a printed copy, or CD of our study, 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. Or, if you like, you can call our toll-free telephone number, 1-800-321-8633. Now we stream this program on our website at www.searchtv.org.

Larry Owsley will lead the Edmond church in song, we'll read from Philippians verses 5 to 8, and then we'll look into the heart of Jesus.

Our reading today comes from Paul's letter to the Philippians, chapter 2, verses 5 through 8. "Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus, who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, but He emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men. Being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross." That's the love of Jesus our Lord. Let's pray together. Oh Father we're thankful that You sent Your Son to this earth, and that He was willing to humble Himself and be obedient to Your will, and die in our stead. So that we might be have the forgiveness of sins. Father help us to do Your will always. May Your will be done on this earth just like it's done in heaven. In Jesus name, Amen.

Jesus has always existed in the form of God. Oh He is indeed Divine. Now some think of Jesus as a man and doubt His Deity. Some think of Him as a great prophet and only the Son of Mary. Still others

think that He was a great, moral teacher. The Scriptures, however, present Jesus as truly Divine. They argue that He's always existed.

John 1 verses 1 to 3 says, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. And all things were made through Him, and without Him was not anything made that was made." Well, in this passage "the Word" is a reference to Jesus Christ. He was in the beginning, He was with God, He was and is God, and creation took place through Him. In John 1:15 John bore witness about Jesus, and cried out, "This was He of whom I said, 'He who comes after me ranks before me, because He was before me.' "

Now in His prayer to His Father, Jesus spoke of His existence before creation. He said in John 17 verse 5, "And now, Father, glorify me in your own presence with the glory that I had with you before the world existed." Later in verse 24, Jesus prayed, "Father, I desire that they also, whom you have given Me, may be with Me where I am, to see My glory that you have given Me because you loved Me before the foundation of the world." The Lord Jesus has always existed.

Jesus was truly God before he became a human person. And then, without ceasing to be God, he was willing to lay aside the glory of being equal with God. He emptied Himself of divine privileges by becoming human. Philippians says that Jesus Christ was made in the likeness of men and found in appearance as a man. And He became something different than what He was before. He left His place in Heaven and took on flesh.

John 1:14 says, "And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only (begotten) Son from the Father, full of grace and truth." Jesus Christ was quite unique. John saw His glory, but that glory didn't come during His earthly ministry. It didn't come until He died on the cross and was raised from the dead. Jesus was God yet became flesh. Well one might ask why.

Well Hebrews 2 verses 14 and 15 answers that question. It says, "Since therefore the children share in flesh and blood, he himself likewise partook of the same things, that through death he might destroy the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil, and deliver all those who through fear of death were subject to lifelong slavery." Now the devil possesses the power of death in that "he tempts people to sin and to come under sin's penalty, which is spiritual death."

Jesus took on flesh so that through dying He could take control of death. He shed his blood on the cross to set men free from sin and from the consequences of sin. He conquered death when He arose from the dead. The Christian, then, who faithfully follows the Lord, does not have to fear death or the judgment. He knows there is the promise of heaven awaiting him.

By leaving heaven and coming to earth the Lord Jesus emptied Himself, taking the form of a servant, literally a slave. Now Jesus didn't empty Himself of His Deity but of His glory. His focus was not on being equal with God but of taking the form of God's servant or slave on earth. The Lord Jesus said in Matthew 20 verse 28, "that the Son of Man didn't come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many." Jesus was and is the Lord of Glory, but He walked upon this earth like a common man.

Jesus was born in Bethlehem in the place where the animals stayed, "because there was no room for them in the inn." He was wrapped in swaddling clothes and laid in a manger. Now He worked most of his life in Nazareth in a carpenter's shop. While Joseph and Mary knew of his miraculous birth, his neighbors in Nazareth took offense at His claim to be the Messiah and sought to kill Him. To them Jesus was just the carpenter's son.

Jesus never did any of the worldly things that people associate with earthly greatness. He never led an army, never ruled an earthly kingdom, never owned any land or built a great house, never

possessed great wealth, never wrote a book, and never traveled far and wide. He never married or raised a family. He didn't come to glorify Himself, no; He came to glorify the Father and to do His will.

The Lord Jesus left everything holy and good to come and rescue sinful mankind from this present evil age. 2 Corinthians 8 verse 9 says, "For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich, yet for your sake He became poor, so that you through His poverty might become rich."

Paul used the example of Jesus' servant attitude to speak to the church. The Bible says in Philippians 2 verses 3 to 4, "Do nothing from rivalry or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves. Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others." Jesus never taught anyone to think of himself as better than others, or to be selfish, or to be conceited. Paul once asked in 1 Corinthians 4 and verse 7, "Well what do you have that you did not receive?" Everything we have, everything we are, everything we hope to be comes by God's providence. When we consider the grace and the providence of God, we have no reason to be arrogant.

The Lord Jesus practiced and taught humility. Jesus taught his disciples in Mark 9 verse 35, "that if anyone would be first, he must be last of all and servant of all." He was saying, "You don't become great by putting yourself before everyone else. You become great by putting yourself last, by serving other people." God doesn't want arrogant people; He wants people who greatly humble themselves.

Jesus humbled himself by becoming obedient. Servants and slaves obey.

A humble person has no arrogance and realizes His dependence on his God. Humble people aren't concerned with prestige. Jesus was Divine but He stooped down in humility for our sake. Hebrews 5 verses 8 and 9 says, "Although he was a son, he learned obedience through what he suffered. And being made perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation to all who obey him." The humble obedience of Jesus opened the door for your obedience and your opportunity for eternal life.

The Lord described His humility in Matthew 11 verses 28 to 29, He said "Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls." Jesus Christ was approachable by the common Jew, even by those who felt weary and burdened. The downtrodden and the sinner could find a friend in Jesus. They found rest for their souls in Jesus. And the Lord Jesus never sinned, but He was not afraid to stoop down and lift up the fallen, broken people.

Hebrews 4 verses 14 to 16 says, "Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. For we do not have a high priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses (oh no), but One who has been tempted in all things as we are, yet without sin. And therefore let us draw near with confidence to the throne of grace, so we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need."

Now many people shy away from God when they sin, but we have a high priest who understands all of our weaknesses and knows what it is to be tempted. Rather than shy away from God when we're tempted, we should draw close and pray for help. The Father understands and will help us through temptations and struggles. We can receive mercy and find grace to help in that time of need.

Now Jesus was obedient, and He did it to the point of death on a cross, not an easy thing. Many have been crucified, but none compares to His: there He bore our sins, taking our place and enduring the wrath of God that we should have received. The death of Christ was nothing less than Christ experiencing punishment for sin, so we would not have to bear it ourselves.

The Bible speaks of how personal this death was for Jesus. 1 Peter 2 and verse 24 says, that "He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. And by

his wounds you have been healed.” Jesus’ death was a deeply passionate and personal, personal sacrifice for our sins, so that we could find forgiveness and spiritual healing. 2 Corinthians 5 and verse 21 says, that God made Jesus “who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.” Jesus was entirely selfless in dying on the cross, so we might be blessed.

Now Jesus didn’t merely die for us and drop us. People ask well what is Jesus doing today. Well the Scriptures reveal that Jesus is still helping us today. Jesus is interceding for God’s children. Hebrews 7 and verse 25 says, “Consequently, he is able to save to the uttermost those who draw near to God through him, since he always lives to make intercession for them.” Oh, He’s pleading the case for your salvation before the Father who is in Heaven. In 1 John 2 verses 1 and 2 the Bible says, “My little children, I’m writing these things to you so that you may not sin. But if anyone does sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous one. And He is the propitiation (that is the atoning sacrifice) for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world.”

I tell you, the One who prayed for the forgiveness for those who nailed His hands and feet is also interceding with the Father today on your behalf, if you’re a faithful Christian. Jesus never stops loving us as long as we strive to follow Him. He’s constantly taking up our defense with the Father in Heaven. The One who died for us is now pleading for our continued forgiveness. And even when Christians fail the Lord, He’s willing to go to the Father on our behalf. I must confess to you: when I consider the cross of Jesus and His constant loyal defense before the Father, I cannot fully grasp such great, great love.

My prayer is like Paul’s in Ephesians 3. Paul wanted the church to comprehend the love of God, which is to some extent beyond our ability to comprehend. He prayed in Ephesians 3 verses 18 and 19 that they “may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ which surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled up to all the fullness of God.”

Can you imagine the changes that you’d make if you really grasped how deep and wide the love of God is for you? We often take the love and the blessing of God for granted. We forget all He has done and all that He’s doing for us. We get so caught up in our own little world and our desires, that we lose sight of the heart of Christ and His devotion to us. Oh we desperately need the heart of Christ to be in our own hearts. It’ll make a difference. Do you have the heart of Christ? Let’s pray together. Oh Father, help us to love others and to love You with all our heart, and soul, and mind, and strength. And Father help us to be obedient to Your will. May Your will be done on this earth as it is in heaven. In Jesus name, Amen!

Because Jesus humbled Himself, God has exalted Him. Philippians 2 verses 9 to 11 says, “Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of the Father.” God blesses those who humbly obey Him.

Now we need hearts like the Lord’s heart. “Have this mind in yourselves, which was also in Christ Jesus” (Philippians 2 verse 5). We too must humbly obey God and sacrifice ourselves out of love. Instead of challenging the Lord with our beliefs and our opinions, we need to humbly step back and hear what God has to say, and obey the Lord. Love and grace do not excuse us from the need for repentance or the need for obedience. Love and grace make us all the more willing to do His will, all the more willing to repent, all the more willing to obey. Jesus said, “If you love me, you will keep my commandments.” You see love moves us to do whatever He asks and to live every single day in His service.

Love for God moves us to trust Him, to confess to the whole world that we believe Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God, that's what He is. And so we gladly acknowledge Jesus as our Lord and we belong to Him. Love also moves us to think of sin differently. We realize that sin will ruin our lives and so we repent of sin and we turn to the Lord. Oh put on Christ in baptism. Baptism is when we're going into the death of Christ, we're baptized into the death, His death according to Romans 6:3. It's where Christ shed His blood, in His death. In baptism God then washes away our sins and it gives us newness of life (Acts 22 verse 16; and Romans 6 verses 4 to 7). And that's why we need to take the necessary step of being baptized into Christ. And that's when you'll receive the forgiveness of sins. And my friend today, today, today is the best day for you to get right with God.

We truly hope you've been blessed by today's study of the heart of Jesus. If you want a free printed copy or a CD of this message or, 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.

Or, you can call the Search office toll-free at 1-800-321-8633. Now our programs appear on our website at www.searchtv.org. And you can download them in a printed, audio, or video format. We also offer free study sheets to go along with our programs and a free Bible Correspondence Course. Now these things will help you learn more about God's Word. And if you're looking for a church home, let us help you find that sound church, that one that stays with the Bible, a church of Christ that's near you.

We ask that you please attend worship with one of the churches of Christ in the area served by this station. They love guests, and they'll be glad that you visited. Well we'll be back next week, Lord willing. So keep searching God's Word with us and tell a friend about the program. God bless you and we love you from all of us at In Search of the Lord's Way.