

Program Transcripts

For September 2016



IN
SEARCH
OF THE LORD'S WAY[®]

SEARCH PROGRAMS

September 2016

Topics subject to change without notice

SEPTEMBER 4 – THE HEART OF JESUS

If you really want to know someone, look into his heart. If you want to know the Lord Jesus, look into the Word of God where His heart is revealed. You'll find there someone who loves you and whom you cannot help but love.

SEPTEMBER 11 – HOW GOD SPEAKS TODAY

Where do you turn for spiritual truth? Many people think God speaks to them through their thoughts and feelings. Can you trust your feelings or is there something more certain? In this program we're going to explore how God speaks to us today.

SEPTEMBER 18 – PEOPLE CAN CHANGE

Have you ever heard someone say, "Well, that's just the way I am; and I can't change"; or "you can't teach an old dog new tricks." Or "It's genetic; I was born that way." Can people change, or are they forever destined to be a certain way?

SEPTEMBER 25 – GET MORE FROM YOUR BIBLE

How do we study the Bible? What can we do to get more from God's Word to help us in our day to day lives? God nourishes our souls and guides our path through His Word. We need God's Word in our lives.

The Heart of Jesus

If you want to know someone, look into his heart. We're here to search God's Word for the Lord's Way. 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.

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. 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. 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 9:36-38, the Bible reveals the heart of Jesus. It says, "seeing the people, He felt compassion for them, because they were distressed and dispirited like sheep without a shepherd. Then He said to His disciples, 'The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. 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 1:4 says 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." 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.

Our reading today comes from Paul's letter to the Philippians 2:5-8. "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.

Jesus has always existed in the form of God. He is indeed Divine. 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 1:1-3 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." 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. John 1:15 says. "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.'"

In His prayer to His Father, Jesus spoke of His existence before creation. He said, "And now, Father, glorify me in your own presence with the glory that I had with you before the world existed" (John 17:5). 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. 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. 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. One might ask why.

Hebrews 2:14-15 answers that question. “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.” 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. 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, “the Son of Man didn't come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many” (Matthew 20:28). 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. 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; 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. Second Corinthians 8:9 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, “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” (Philippians 2:3-4). Jesus never taught anyone to think of himself as better than others, or to be

selfish, or to be conceited. Paul once asked, "What do you have that you did not receive?" (1 Corinthians 4:7). 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, "If anyone would be first, he must be last of all and servant of all" (Mark 9:35). 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 5:8-9 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 11:28-29. "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. the Lord Jesus never sinned, but He was not afraid to stoop down and lift up the fallen, broken people.

Hebrews 4:14-16 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, but One who has been tempted in all things as we are, yet without sin. 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."

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.

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. First Peter 2:24 says, "He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness, for 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. Second Corinthians 5:21 says 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.

Jesus didn't merely die for us and drop us. People ask what is Jesus doing today. The Scriptures reveal that Jesus is still helping us today. Jesus is interceding for God's children. Hebrews 7:25 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.” He’s pleading the case for your salvation before the Father who is in Heaven. In 1 John 2:1-2 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 (atoning sacrifice) for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world.”

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. 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 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” (Ephesians 3:18-19).

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. 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?

Because Jesus humbled Himself, God has exalted Him. Philippians 2:9-11 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.

We need hearts like the Lord’s heart. “Have this mind in yourselves, which was also in Christ Jesus” (Philippians 2:5). 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.” 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. 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. 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 22:16; and Romans 6:4-7). That’s why we need to take the necessary step of being baptized into Christ. That’s when you’ll receive the forgiveness of sins. My friend, today is the best day for you to get right with God.

How God Speaks Today

Where do you turn for spiritual truth? Many people think that God speaks to them through their thoughts and feelings. Can you trust your feelings or is there something more certain? Today, we're going to explore how God speaks to us today. We go to the Holy Scriptures, because we know that they are from God and are utterly true.

If you listen to religious radio or TV, you've probably heard someone say, "The Lord spoke to me and said..." or they'll say "let God speak to your heart..." suggesting that God speaks directly to people today. Other people feel that the feelings they possess are evidence of God's will for their lives.

We're asking, how does God speak to us today? Is it through voices, or through feelings, or through councils and creeds, or maybe through the living church? We believe the Bible is God's revelation of truth to us today. The Word of God says, "God, after He spoke long ago to the fathers in the prophets in many portions and in many ways, in these last days has spoken to us in His Son, whom He appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the world" (Hebrews 1:1-2). God gave all authority to Christ, who promised the Holy Spirit to the apostles and prophets to guide them into all the truth. They wrote this truth into the pages of the New Testament. If we want to know the truth that sets us free, we must go to the Word of God found in the New Testament.

Our reading today comes from the lips of Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount from the Gospel According to Matthew, chapter 7, verses 24 to 27. "Therefore everyone who hears these words of Mine and acts on them, may be compared to a wise man who built his house on the rock. And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and slammed against that house; and yet it did not fall, for it had been founded on the rock. Everyone who hears these words of Mine and does not act on them, will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand. The rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and slammed against that house; and it fell—and great was its fall." Those are Words of Jesus, Words to be listened to.

Because God speaks through His Son, we need to recognize the Lord Jesus as the one and only authority in religious matters. He has more authority than anyone, any group, or any church. He is the Son of God. Paul said God "raised Him (that is, Jesus) from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly *places*, far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the one to come. And He put all things in subjection under His feet, and gave Him as head over all things to the church, which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all" (Ephesians 1:20-23). The church is subject to Jesus, not to any man or any council.

Jesus said before He ascended into heaven, "All authority has been given to me in heaven and on earth" (Matthew 28:18). Jesus doesn't need a representative on earth, because He himself is the one and only head of His church on this earth. John the Baptist said of Jesus, "The Father loves the Son and has given all things into His hand. He who believes in the Son has eternal life; but he who does not obey the Son will not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him" (John 3:35-36). There's no person in all the earth that's not subject to Jesus Christ. God has given all things into His hands. Jesus is Lord of all, and we need to listen to Him very closely.

We shall be judged one day by the Words of Jesus. Jesus said, "He who rejects Me and does not receive My sayings, has one who judges him; the word that I spoke is what will judge

him at the last day. For I did not speak on My own initiative, but the Father Himself who sent Me has given Me a commandment as to what to say and what to speak” (John 12:48-49).

We're not going to be judged by opinion polls, by the creeds of men, or by some denomination's beliefs. We will be judged by the Words of Jesus found in the New Testament, so we truly need to know what the Bible says; don't we?

Jesus, by the Holy Spirit, gave His apostles the Word that His Father had given to Him. In John 14:25-26, Jesus told the apostles, “These things I have spoken to you while abiding with you. But the Helper, that is the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you (that is, the apostles) all things, and bring to your remembrance (that is, you apostles) all that I said to you.” God determined that the Words that He had given Jesus would be taught by the Spirit to the apostles for their time and for all time. The words of Jesus were not merely for the first century, oh no; but for every century as long as this world stands! God “in these last days has spoken to us in His Son.” God is speaking to us in the Bible!

Jesus promised His apostles this, “I have many more things to say to you (that is, you apostles), but you cannot bear them now. But when He, the Spirit of truth, comes, He will guide you (apostles) into all the truth; for He will not speak on His own initiative, but whatever He hears, He will speak; and He will disclose to you what is to come. He will glorify Me, for He will take of Mine and will disclose it to you. All things that the Father has are Mine; and therefore I said that He takes of Mine and will disclose it to you” (John 16:12-15). The apostles knew the truth of God—the whole truth of God. They were the spokesmen for God in their own day and really for all time.

Jude, the brother of Jesus, wrote, “Beloved, while I was making every effort to write you about our common salvation, I felt the necessity to write to you appealing that you contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all handed down to the saints” (Jude 3). Jude, who wrote sometime between 65 and 80 AD, was already speaking of “the faith,” that is, that body of doctrine, which was “once for all time” handed down to the saints. What the Word said in the first century, it also says and means today in the 21st century. Jude wanted Christians not only to believe that faith but also to “contend” for it, to uphold it and to keep handing it down.

Paul told Timothy, his true son in the faith, “The things which you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses, you entrust these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also” (2 Timothy 2:2). Paul wanted the truth to be passed down from generation to generation. This is why Paul said, “There is one body and one Spirit, just as also you were also called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all who is over all and through all and in all” (Ephesians 4:4-6). There is indeed just one faith, and we are to contend for it. When people get away from the one faith, they abandon the revealed will of God.

The writers of the New Testament spoke with the authority of God. In 1 Corinthians 2:12-13, Paul said, “Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, so that we may know the things freely given to us by God, which things we also speak, not in words taught by human wisdom, but in those taught by the Spirit, combining spiritual thoughts with spiritual words.” Paul said what he taught didn't come from men but from the Holy Spirit. God was behind his teachings and his writings. That's why we can say whatever Paul said, we can also say God said it, because both statements are true. God moved Paul to say the things he taught.

Later in his epistle, Paul deals with women speaking out in the church. Paul said, “The

women are to keep silent in the churches; for they're not permitted to speak, but are to subject themselves, just as the Law also says... it's improper for a woman to speak in church. Was it from you that the word of God first went forth? Or has it come to you only? If anyone thinks he is a prophet or spiritual, let him recognize that the things which I write to you are the Lord's commandment. But if anyone doesn't recognize this, he is not recognized" (1 Corinthians 14:34-38). Paul would not be ignored; he had spoken the Lord's commandment.

On another occasion, Paul defends himself by explaining where he got his gospel. Paul said, "For I would have you know, brethren, that the gospel which was preached by me is not according to man. For I neither received it from man, nor was I taught it, but I received it through a revelation of Jesus Christ" (Galatians 1:11-12). It was because of this that he could be so sure about his gospel—that his gospel was true and right! It was actually the gospel of God! In fact, the apostle Paul warns everyone to stay with his gospel and not change it. Anyone who changes his gospel risks losing his soul and the souls of those he teaches.

Galatians 1:6-10 says, "I am amazed that you are so quickly deserting Him who called you by the grace of Christ, for a different gospel; which is really not another; only there are some who are disturbing you and want to distort the gospel of Christ. But even if we, or an angel from heaven, should preach to you a gospel contrary to what we have preached to you, he is to be accursed! As we have said before, so I say again now, if any man is preaching to you a gospel contrary to what you received, he is to be accursed! For am I now seeking the favor of men, or of God? Or am I striving to please men? If I were still trying to please men, I would not be a bond-servant of Christ."

God's written Word is sacred and unchangeable. When you get away from the Bible, you also leave God! Paul spoke well of the Thessalonians because of their faith and obedience. He said, "For this reason we also constantly thank God that when you received the word of God which you heard from us, you accepted it not as the word of men, but for what it really is, the word of God, which also performs its work in you who believe" (1 Thessalonians 2:13). God's Word can work in our lives, when we are willing to listen to it and apply it to our lives. Unless we humbly obey God's message, we cannot receive its blessings.

God said, "So then, brethren, stand firm and hold to the traditions which you were taught, whether by word of mouth or by letter from us" (2 Thessalonians 2:15). God has always demanded his people to stay with what they have learned from Jesus and his apostles, not moving from those things or getting involved in human traditions or human ideas. There truly is but one gospel, so please, please hold to it!

With so many voices, so many denominations, so many non-denominational community churches saying so many different things, do they all speak for God when they contradict each other? When they contradict themselves and argue with each other, are they really from God?

The Lord Jesus Himself distinguishes people, and here's how He does it. He does it by how they listen and follow His Word. He said to the Jews, "If you continue in My word, then you are truly disciples of Mine; and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free" (John 8:31-32). To continue in Jesus' Word means to remain, abide, or stay there. Jesus said "true" disciples do that. Some people say that they're disciples, but they go outside to other sources of information. Some believe they hear from God directly; some trust in their feelings; some merely look to whatever is popular and "happening." The unfortunate thing is that when they get away from the Word, they leave God, too.

The Lord Jesus said, "Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom

of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father who is in heaven will enter. Many will say to Me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, didn't we prophesy in Your name, and in Your name cast out demons, and in Your name perform many miracles?' And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness'" (Matthew 7:21-23). It's not speaking religious language or doing religious things that make us right with God, no! A true Christian is one who hears and one who does the will of the Father who is in heaven.

These people talked and acted like good, religious people, but Jesus rejected them because they did not follow what God wanted and commanded. They stepped outside the will of God; and they were lawless. They did what they wanted to do; they did what they thought was popular. God was not subject to the cultural whims of anyone, and He's not subject to the cultural whims of people today. A thousand people can say something different than what God says, but what God says is true; and they will find themselves building their house upon sand if they make up stuff, and change or try to change the will of God. God hasn't changed, and you can't change Him.

If the "true" disciples remain in the Word, how do you rate the church that you attend? Let me ask you, does your church stay with the Bible or does it vary from the Bible? There are an awful lot of preachers this day and time that tell an awful lot of stories and do all kinds of things, and maybe throw in one verse at the end. Let me tell you, if you've got a preacher like that, he's not a preacher! There are a lot of churches today that have preachers that will not preach against sin. Let me tell you something, if you've got a preacher like that, he's not a preacher of the gospel, because the gospel speaks about sin, and the answer to sin. You and I, one of these days are going to be judged by the Words of Jesus, not by how we feel about things. The only standard we have is the Word, the written Word of God, found in this book, the Bible. So let's stay with what we know to be true and right. We have no promise, no blessing when we substitute our own ways for the Word of God. We truly become "lawless" because we aren't listening to God but to our own desires. The very best thing we can do is to read God's Word every single day and see whether or not the things we're hearing are so. Don't be fooled by religious people who are not giving you God's Word, but their own opinions. Stay with the Bible, and stay with God!

The Bible taught in the first century some things we too need to hear. Hebrews 2:1-3 says, "For this reason we must pay much closer attention to what we have heard, so that we do not drift away from it. For if the word spoken through angels proved unalterable, and every transgression and disobedience received a just penalty, how will we escape if we neglect so great a salvation?" It's very easy to become neglectful and drift away from the things we have heard from the Scriptures. That's where the truth is! Not in our feelings, not in what makes us happy, not in some council or creed or human tradition. Go to the Word for the Truth!

Feelings can deceive and men can be wrong, but God's Word has stood true for centuries. It says today what it said from the beginning. You can trust it. Why not trust it and become a Christian? You do that by trusting and loving the Lord; by turning away from sin in repentance; by confessing Jesus, your faith in Jesus, as the Son of God before all; and by being baptized into Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. When you're baptized in water, God will wash away your sins; He'll add you to His church. So keep studying and growing in the Word every day of your life. My friend, do you have a close, peaceful, loving relationship with God? The greatest need of our time is to know God and to draw close to Him again by listening and obeying His Word. Won't you do that?

People Can Change

When you look in the mirror spiritually, do you like what you see? Today, we're wondering if we can change our hearts and lives, or are we stuck with what we have? We want you to know the Lord and to live with Him forever. Your friends, members of some churches of Christ in the area served by this station, sponsor this program; and they would love to have you attend Bible study and worship with them. When you walk through the door, you'll feel welcome and wanted.

The best lessons of life come from God's Word, the Bible. I don't know about you, but I need a lesson now and then. Lessons teach us, so we might not make the same mistakes that we've made in the past. Lessons open an opportunity for us to change our lives and to do better. Because they point to something better, we have hope for the future. I thank God for the lessons of the Bible; they protect me and help me to go in the right direction and avoid the hazards of life. Some people think that people cannot change. Have you ever heard someone say, "Well, that's just the way I am"; or "I can't change"; or "You can't teach an old dog new tricks." Or maybe, "Well it's genetic; and I was born that way."

When I hear people say such things, I have to ask, "Is that really true?" Are we born with no ability to make changes in our spiritual or moral lives? Are we unable to repent? I have to admit that that concept really doesn't square with what I've seen in people or with what I read in the Bible. Through the years, I've seen all kinds of people make serious changes in their thinking, and in their lives. I believe you can too!

Our reading today comes from the most famous story ever told, the story of the Prodigal Son, Luke 15:17-24. "But when he came to his senses, he said, 'How many of my father's hired men have more than enough bread, but I'm dying here with hunger! I will get up and go to my father, and will say to him, "Father, I have sinned against heaven, and in your sight; I am no longer worthy to be called your son; make me as one of your hired men."' So he got up and came to his father. But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and felt compassion for him, and ran and embraced him and kissed him. And the son said to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and in your sight; I am no longer worthy to be called your son.' But the father said to his slaves, 'Quickly bring out the best robe and put it on him, and put a ring on his hand and sandals on his feet; and bring the fattened calf, kill it, and let us eat and celebrate; for this son of mine was dead and has come to life again; he was lost and has been found.' And they began to celebrate." What a marvelous story. Let's pray together. O Father, we're thankful for the love and grace that's found in Your Son, Jesus. And how He opens His arms for us when we're willing to change. Help us to make those changes. May Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Making changes in our lives is challenging, because the temptation to continue doing what we used to do remains strong. An alcoholic may stop drinking, but the temptation to drink will return over and over. The alcoholic must keep his heart strong and remind himself why he won't drink. He has to fight the battle over and over, but he can win. There are thousands, thousands who have overcome the temptation. An alcoholic will always be challenged, but he can break the habit of drunkenness. Can people change? Of course, they can!

Many times, it's not so much a question of whether a person can change as it is "do they want to change?" Many people make the excuse they cannot change, when the truth is they don't want to change. People start sinful practices and become addicted. They don't plan to be controlled by their appetites, but they become slaves. The Lord Jesus said, "Truly, truly, I say to you, that everyone who commits sin is a slave to sin" (John 8:34). That's a harsh reality. No one likes to be

controlled. But because of Christ, it is not the end of the story. My friend, I tell you, there is hope for you! There is a way to overcome the past.

Two verses later, in verse 36, the Lord promised, “So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed.” Jesus can set us free from sin and its control over our lives. Jesus helps the Christian to rise above the failures and moral stains of the past. God can help us become a new person, freed from the old and born again. The Bible says, “Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation—or creature. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come” (2 Corinthians 5:17).

The apostle Paul explains this in God’s Word. “Put to death therefore what is earthly in you: sexual immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry. On account of these the wrath of God is coming. And in these you too once walked, when you were living in them. But now you must put them all away: anger, wrath, malice, slander, and obscene talk from your mouth. Do not lie to one another, seeing that you’ve put off the old self with its practices and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge after the image of its creator” (Colossians 3:5-10). If people cannot change, why would God demand it? God’s not cruel. He doesn’t expect us to do what we cannot do! But God knows what we can do, and He knows that we can change our thinking, our behavior, and our lives.

The Lord told a story about a young man who changed in Luke 15:11-24. Perhaps you remember the story. “There was a man who had two sons. The younger of them said to his father, ‘Father, give me the share of property that is coming to me.’ And he divided his property between them. Not many days later, the younger son gathered all that he had, he took a journey into a far country, and there he squandered his property in reckless living. And when he had spent everything, there was a severe famine that arose in that country, and he began to be in need. And so he went and hired himself out to one of the citizens of that country, who sent him into his fields to feed pigs. And he was longing to be fed with the pods that the pigs ate, and no one gave him anything. But when he came to himself, he said, ‘How many of my father’s hired servants have more than enough bread, but I perish here with hunger! I will arise and I’m going to go to my father, and I’m going to say to him, ‘Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you. And I’m no longer worthy to be called your son. Treat me as one of your hired servants.’ And he arose and came to his father. But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and felt compassion, and ran and embraced him and kissed him. And the son said to him, ‘Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you. And I am no longer worthy to be called your son.’ But the father said to his servants, ‘Bring quickly the best robe, and put it on him, put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet. And bring the fattened calf and kill it, and let us eat and celebrate. For this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found.’ And they began to celebrate.”

This touching story reminds us of the fact that people can wake up to the life that they’ve been living, and can come home to the Father. God meets every one of his children just like He did the prodigal son. He runs to them with open arms and He celebrates their return. The lost can be saved, and the dead can become alive spiritually. Change can and does take place! People don’t have to remain the way that they’ve always been. They can change their lives. Repentance is a change of heart that leads to a change of life. God made us people who can change our thinking. We can control our thoughts, and we can control the focus of our lives.

The Bible says: “The soul who sins shall die. The son shall not suffer for the iniquity of the father, nor the father suffer for the iniquity of the son. The righteousness of the righteous shall be upon himself, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon himself. But if a wicked person turns away from all his sins that he has committed and he keeps all my statutes and does what is just and right, he shall surely live; he shall not die. None of the transgressions that he has

committed shall be remembered against him; for the righteousness that he has done, for that he shall live. (Then God says) Have I any pleasure in the death of the wicked, declares the Lord God, and not rather that he should turn from his way and live?" (Ezekiel 18:20-23). God wants everyone to turn to Him, to change and do what is right that they may live with him eternally. Regretfully not everyone will change, and that brings us a heartache.

I want to tell a true story of forgiveness and freedom. In 1935, a family in Oklahoma with eight children lost their father. The mother went to work as a nurse to feed the family, and the children had to spend much time raising themselves. The youngest boy, as time went by, got into the wrong crowd and began to do all the wrong things that rebellious teens do. He often drank and committed crimes. He would rather steal than pay for anything, even when he had money in his pocket. As a young adult, he spent many nights in jail. He was a strong, young man; and if he had been drinking, he would tear up his jail cell. He was wanted for theft and burglary in several states. Once, when he came home to visit family in the 1950s, he stole a check-writing machine; he was caught and went to prison for four years. This got his attention. While he was there in prison, his oldest sister and her husband came to visit him and talk about the Bible and his soul. Some fellow prisoners were also Christians, and they taught him what he should do to be saved. He learned he had never been baptized according to the teaching of the Scriptures and he needed to be baptized.

He served his time and came out of jail in 1962 shortly before his mother died. At first, he was humble and spiritually motivated, but before long, he returned to a rough life out in the oil fields of Oklahoma. He was often drunk and took illegal drugs. His mouth was foul and his behavior very obnoxious. For more than twenty years, he forgot the promises he made to God while he was back in prison. In 1985, he attended my father's funeral and was very obnoxious; I said in my heart that I didn't care if I ever saw him again. I regret saying that now.

But the Lord had something more in store for him. In 1987, he had gained a lot of weight and the doctors told him that his heart was enlarged, like a cow's heart. They said he would soon die if he didn't change his ways. Many nights he would hunt raccoons and get drunk. He sometimes woke up in a ditch, not really knowing where he was. The doctor's words, though, hit home. He remembered all the promises he had made to God and to his older sister while he was in prison. Frantically he approached every preacher in town to find spiritual help. But none of them had time for him. One even threatened to call the law.

Then he remembered the two family members who taught him in prison. He called me one Friday night and asked me to come to his house and teach him about baptism. The next morning, I was there and I had my Bible. He knew that he hadn't been baptized according to the Scriptures and he wanted to know the truth. So I began with Matthew 3 and told him how Jesus fulfilled all righteousness and was baptized by John. I showed him that the one who believes and is baptized will be saved (Mark 16:16). We learned that the baptism of Christ was the new birth of water and the Spirit (John 3:5); and a person must be born again, verse 7. We also learned that we needed to repent and to be baptized for the forgiveness of sin (Acts 2:38). In baptism, we also learned that you go down into the water and you come up out of the water - Acts 8:38-39, and that baptism is an immersion, it's a dipping or plunging in the water. We also learned that when we're baptized it is at that time that our sins are washed away (Acts 22:16). We learned that baptism is into Christ; that's how you get into Christ, and it's also how you get into the death of Christ; that we're baptized into His death, that we're buried with Him in Baptism, and raised with him in baptism to walk in newness of life (Romans chapter 6). We also saw that our old man of sin was crucified with Him in baptism so that we can be free from sin (Romans 6:3-7). We learned many other things about baptism that day; that is, that baptism doth also now save us (1 Peter 3:21). And that

He saved us by the washing of regeneration, the renewing of the Holy Spirit – Titus 3:5. After we had finished about three hours of study, five precious souls went down into that large pond behind their house, and they were baptized.

From that very day, my uncle never drank again. He began attending church every time the doors were open. His language was godly and his attitude was one of love and faith. He opened his big old heart to everybody, loved everyone, and helped many, many prisoners. He began reaching out to the prisoners at the county courthouse, and soon many of them were being baptized. Then he went to other county jails, and it wasn't long until people there were being baptized as well. Soon he went to the Oklahoma state prisons where he taught young men who had fallen into the same sinful traps he himself had known in times past. He would speak straight to them about sin but with lots of love, and they responded to it. From 1987 onward, he baptized more than a thousand souls into Christ with his own hands. My friends, I have to tell you, never, never had I seen such a great change in a man.

That kind of change is not so unusual for people who come to Christ. The Bible says, "Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Don't be deceived: neither the sexually immoral, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor men who practice homosexuality, nor thieves, nor the greedy, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God. And such were some of you (that is, in the Corinthian church). But you were washed (God cleaned you up), you were sanctified (God made you holy), and you were justified (God declared you innocent) in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God" (1 Corinthians 6:9-11). God helped them change from sinners to saints, and they made that change. Let's pray together. O Father, we're thankful that through Your love and through Your goodness You can help us to become the kind of people that You want us to be. Father, we love You and we're thankful to You. And we pray that Your Will will be done on earth as it is in heaven. In Jesus name, Amen!

You probably know people who've left a sinful lifestyle and have come to Christ. They made real changes in their moral and spiritual lives. When you come to Christ, you become a new person. You have a new start! You're born again! If God could make a difference in the life of my dear uncle, He can make a difference in people that you know too. If He could make a difference in those Corinthians, He can make a difference in your life if you let Him. He can help you overcome every sin and become the kind of person that you want to be.

My favorite saying is, "I'm not all I ought to be; I'm not all I want to be; I'm not all I'm going to be; but, thank God by His mercy and grace, I'm not what I used to be." God can help each of us become the godly person that He intended for us to be. You can win over sin by giving yourself to the Lord. He'll help you overcome every sin and struggle that you face. Faith truly is the victory that we have in Christ our Lord. So are you willing to come to Him?

To become a Christian, believe with all your heart that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God. And out of faith and love, love for Christ, then turn away from what the Bible calls sin, take up your cross and follow the Lord Jesus. That change of heart, that change of life is what repentance is all about. The Bible everywhere teaches that people can repent. And after repenting, confess your faith and be baptized into Christ. Yes, baptism is an immersion in water in the name of Jesus Christ so that your sins can be washed away. And when you're baptized, the Lord will cause you to be born again, a new creature. God will add you to His family, the church of Jesus Christ, the church of Christ; and you'll be His child, an heir of heaven. Won't you make that change and become a Christian?

Get More from God's Word

What can we do to get more from God's Word to help us in our day to day lives? We're going to explore how to study God's Word. God nourishes our souls and guides our path through His Word. We need God's Word in our lives. The Bible is a sacred treasure because it comes from God and teaches us the truth. That's why we go to it again and again.

According to a recent Pew Forum Religious Knowledge Survey, people who identify themselves as Christians could only answer six of the twelve questions about the Bible and Christianity. Even many who went to church and were involved in spiritual training as teens could only answer half the questions. For instance, barely more than half knew the Golden Rule, "So whatever you wish that others would do to you, do also to them, for this is the Law and the Prophets," that's not one of the Ten Commandments, it's in the New Testament. Less than half knew the four gospels are Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John.

The Survey also revealed that 37 percent of Americans say that they read their Bible at least once a week, not counting worship services. Reading God's Word is essential to a strong spiritual life, so we need to dig deep into the Word of God. We need to study diligently what God says. Acts 17:11 says the Bereans, "were more noble-minded than those in Thessalonica, for they received the word with great eagerness, examining the Scriptures daily to see whether these things were so."

God regarded the Bereans as noble because they eagerly listened to the truth and compared Paul and Silas' message with the Scriptures. They knew the Scriptures well enough to distinguish the truth from a false doctrine. Do you know the Scriptures that well? Or do you swallow anything that you hear, or do you go to the Bible to see whether the teaching is so? There's a real need to study God's Word.

Our reading today is a Psalm of David, Psalm 19:7-11. "The law of the LORD is perfect, restoring the soul; The testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple. The precepts of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart; The commandment of the LORD is pure, enlightening the eyes. The fear of the LORD is clean, enduring forever; The judgments of the LORD are true; they are righteous altogether. They are more desirable than gold, yes, than much fine gold; Sweeter also than honey and the drippings of the honeycomb. Moreover, by them Your servant is warned; And in keeping them there is great reward." What a wonderful reading from God's Word.

We need to follow God's teaching which says, "Be diligent to present yourself to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, accurately handling the word of truth" (2 Timothy 2:15). We need to make every effort to be the kind of Christian worker that God accepts rather than one who is ashamed when God inspects his work. Timothy was a preacher of the gospel, and God expected him to correctly explain the word of truth.

This means that what people believe and teach matters to God it should matter to your soul. In fact, Paul had warned Timothy earlier, "Pay close attention to yourself and to your teaching; persevere in these things, for as you do this you will ensure salvation both for yourself and for those who hear you" (1 Timothy 4:16). Only sound and healthy teaching can help us grow strong in our faith.

Paul warned Timothy to watch out for religious teachers who did more harm than good. The Bible says, "But avoid worldly and empty chatter, for it will lead to further ungodliness, and their talk will spread like gangrene. Among them are Hymenaeus and Philetus, men who have gone astray from the truth saying that the resurrection has already taken place, and they upset the faith of

some" (2 Timothy 2:16-18). If you don't know the truth, you can easily be deceived and follow error. God's Word provides an unfailing standard of truth by which we can test right and wrong.

This is not some small matter. Because God's Word is utterly true, we can trust it and we can rest our souls on it. Romans 10:17 says, "faith comes from hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ." If you want a deeper faith, then go to the Word, the Bible. If you want to know the truth, then go to the Word, the Bible. If you want to keep sin and error out of your life, then go to the Word, the Bible.

The Bible is a treasure that God freely gives to us; but the Bible won't do you any good if you leave it on the shelf. If you yearn to get more out of your Bible, then read it every day. Each verse holds a vast treasure, and you won't get it all at just one reading. Read it many times. Get so familiar with its words and ideas that its message cannot fail to saturate your heart. God wants His Word to be written on our hearts (Hebrews 8:10).

If you're weary of the corruption that's in our society, then set your heart on the Word of God. Paul advised Timothy, "But evil men and impostors will proceed from bad to worse, deceiving and being deceived. You, however, you continue in the things that you've learned and become convinced of, knowing from whom you've learned them, and that from childhood you've known the sacred writings which are able to give you the wisdom that leads to salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus" (2 Timothy 3:13-15).

Paul reveals the purpose and the value of the Bible in this same chapter, verses 16 and 17, "All Scripture is breathed out by God and it's profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, (why?), that the man of God may be competent (that is adequate), equipped for every good work." God's Word is complete and it's all-sufficient for our spiritual needs. It will teach us what is right and wrong, it will reprove us when we go astray, it will correct our path, and it will train us in righteousness. It fully equips us for every single good work.

That's the reason why we should "like newborn babies, long for the pure milk of the word, so that by it you may grow in respect to salvation, if you've tasted the kindness of the Lord" (1 Peter 2:2-3). Without the Word of God, you'll never grow spiritually as you should. It's sad that some Christians never mature spiritually because they never study the Bible.

When Paul said farewell to the elders of the church at Ephesus, his parting words in Acts 20:32 were, "And now I commend you to God and to the word of His grace, which is able to build *you* up and to give you the inheritance among all those who are sanctified." Oh, we need God's Word.

Now let's look at this book, the Bible. No book in the history of the world has been more loved or more studied than the Bible. It remains the all-time best seller. The Bible is unique. It's actually a library of 66 books, written by about 40 men over a space of 1500 years. It was written in many different places in the known world of ancient times, and not all the authors were Jews.

The Bible was originally written in three languages. Most of the Old Testament is in Hebrew, but parts of Daniel are written in Aramaic, a language similar to Hebrew. The New Testament is written in Greek.

What do we mean when we speak of the Old and New Testaments? The word "testament" is perhaps better described as a covenant. Generally speaking, the Old Testament contains the first covenant, which God made with the Israelites and the New Testament contains the second or new covenant made with Christians.

The word "covenant" describes a legal, binding relationship between two parties. The Mosaic Law was given in the form of a covenant that a Ruler would establish with His people. The Bible says, "Now we know that whatever the Law says, it speaks to those who are under the Law"

(Romans 3:19). In other words, the Old Testament is binding on Israelites with whom the covenant was made. However, the Old Testament is also valuable to us Christians as God's sacred Word.

While the Old Testament laws and the first covenant do not apply to Christians, its principles teach us truths about God and about His ways. The New Testament says this about the Old Testament, "For whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction, that through endurance and through the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope" (Romans 15:4).

Correctly understanding the Scriptures means that we must follow some basic rules. The Bible must speak for itself and should never be made to say things that were never intended by the writers. Solomon urges us to "Buy the truth and do not sell it, Get wisdom and instruction and understanding" (Proverbs 23:23).

1. *Familiarize yourself with the sixty-six books of the Bible.* Each book of the Bible is a treasure of itself, written in its own time and for its own purpose. The books of the Bible are written in different styles of literature: some are history, some are narratives, that is, stories, true stories, some are poetry, some are wisdom literature, some are prophetic, some are letters or epistles, and some are apocalyptic. Some books have a mixture of these literature forms. A good Bible student notices what kind of literature is found in each book and he reads those passages accordingly.

2. *Select some good Bible study helps.* Get a good Bible dictionary, a Bible atlas, a Bible handbook, and a concordance. The Bible was written many centuries ago in a foreign land. These tools will help you to comprehend the people, and the places and customs that may be unfamiliar to you. The concordance will help you find the passages, which have the key terms that you're studying. A good study Bible will often have all of these helps in one book.

3. *Read each passage in its context.* Each book of the Bible has a context or background in which it should be understood. Many misunderstand the Bible because they've never taken time to investigate the background of the verses that they read. Ask these questions of the passage: First of all, who is writing the passage? To whom is the author writing? Not everything in the Bible is written to every person. The Old Testament was written to Jews, and the New Testament to Christians. When was the passage written? What was the author's intent and purpose in writing? What circumstances prompted the writer to say these things? What would this message mean to those to whom it was first written?

What historical and cultural circumstances are in the background of this passage? To interpret a passage and not even regard its context is to misinterpret it; to interpret it contrary to its context is to teach falsehood for truth. The meaning of a word or a phrase is best defined by its immediate context. Read the verses before and after the one that you're studying. The true meaning of any word comes from the way that it is used in its immediate context.

4. *Learn to draw out the meaning of a passage; don't read into the passage something that was not originally there.* Be careful not to read into a passage your own personal prejudices or concepts you think ought to be in the Bible. One must read God's Word with a humble mind that's open to learn what He has said and to understand the Bible for what it says for itself. You see, the Bible is always its own best interpreter.

5. *Let the Bible explain itself.* For instance, in Ephesians 4:4 Paul says there is "one body"; this body is defined as the church in Ephesians 1:22-23. Therefore we can say, there is one church. The Bible is its own best interpreter. A plain, clear passage should always be used to make the difficult passages clear. A difficult passage never, never defines or denies rather or contradicts the plain teaching of a passage.

6. *The Scriptures warn us not to add or take away from what is revealed.* Moses said,

“Everything that I command you, you shall be careful to do. You shall not add to it or take from it” (Deuteronomy 12:32). The Lord Jesus said, “If you abide in my word (that is, to remain or continue in My word), then you are truly my disciples, and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free” (John 8:31-32). True disciples listen to what the Lord has to say and to practice what they learn.

7. *Take all that the Scriptures teach on any subject.* All the truth on any one subject is not usually found in one passage. Something may be true but not the whole truth. For instance, John 5:24 says, “Truly, truly, I say to you, he who hears My word, and believes Him who sent Me, has eternal life, and does not come into judgment, but has passed out of death into life.” It’s true that we are saved by faith, but there’s more to be said. Faith apart from love or obedience will not save. John 3:36 in the New American Standard says, “Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life; whoever does not obey the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him.” Faith apart from repentance or baptism will not save (according to Luke 13:3; and Acts 2:38).

8. *Come to the Word of God with a right heart.* A love for God and humility are essential to good Bible study. The seed, and that’s God’s Word, has to be planted in a good and honest heart to bring forth fruit with patience (Luke 8:15). The Bible is no ordinary book; it’s God’s Holy Word and it contains the words of eternal life. So when you approach the Bible, approach it as you would approaching God himself. Why, because the Bible is God’s Holy Word.

Then number 9. *Let’s apply the message of the Bible to our lives.* Respond to what you read with an open heart and be willing to practice it. When you’re reading the Word of God, ask yourself, is this passage commanding something that I’m not doing? Does it suggest a change in my behavior? Does this verse encourage a spirit or an attitude that I’m not showing? Does this passage confirm a belief that I already hold, that’s good? Or does this verse challenge my beliefs? How would it change matters if I obeyed this command? What would Jesus do if He were in my place? Get more out of your Bible by putting more into your study, and it’ll bless you.

Study, study, study the Word. I have a friend who reads through the New Testament every month; he’s done that for years! How long has it been since you read the Bible? Love the Word. David said, “Oh, how I love your law! I meditate on it all day long” (Psalm 119:97). Obey the Word. James 1:22 says, “But prove yourselves doers of the word, and not merely hearers who delude themselves.” I tell you, God will bless you for it.

God gave us His Word to bless us, and we show our love by keeping His commandments. First John 2:3-6 says, “By this we know that we have come to know Him, if we keep His commandments. The one who says, ‘I’ve come to know Him,’ and doesn’t keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him; but whoever keeps His word, in him the love of God has truly been perfected. By this we know that we are in Him: the one who says he abides in Him ought himself to walk in the same manner as He walked.”

We need to walk as Jesus walked; live and love as He did. People claim they love the Lord, but you must study the Scriptures to know and love Jesus. Some serve an imaginary Jesus unfortunately, one that they’ve dreamed up, not the Jesus that’s actually found in the words of the New Testament. Loving Jesus requires loving and practicing what He teaches.

If you love Him, believe in Him as the Son of God, repent of your sins, confess Him as Christ and Lord, and be baptized according to the teaching of the Scriptures. Baptism into Christ is an immersion in water in the name of Jesus Christ so that your sins will be washed away (Acts 2:38 and 22:16). When you’re baptized, the Father will make you His child, He’ll give you the promise of eternal life. Today, today is the best day to obey Jesus Christ.