

## "Because of Jesus"

If Jesus had not come into this world, life would certainly be tragic. Hello, I'm Phil Sanders. This is a Bible study, "In SEARCH of the Lord's Way." The brightest spot in all of history is the day Jesus came into this world.

Welcome to In Search of the Lord's Way. We're here to search God's Word for the Lord's Way. The Lord Jesus is our hope and our joy. He's the Way, the Truth, and the Life. The greatest gift ever given to mankind was our Lord Jesus Christ. All our hopes and dreams, all our blessings and joys they come from Him. He created us, provides for our needs, forgives our sin, and gives us eternal life. We must know all we can about Him. We must love and follow Him, and so we open the Bible each day and study His words. Only Jesus has the words to eternal life. He is the one Lord for all. Thanks for studying with us today. We want to be part of your life each week. And be sure to tell a friend about our program.

Can you imagine how different this world would be if Jesus had not come? Our lives would be much poorer and sadder without Christ. Jesus utterly transformed individual hearts and lives, but He also touched entire nations. Western culture enjoys the fragrance of His purity and kindness. Many advances in society have come from the mindset and heart of Christ. Christians through the ages took a stand against sinful practices, and their Christian love ended the bloody games of the gladiators, stopped much slavery, ended the exposure and death of unwanted babies that was popular in ancient times, lifted women to a higher status, proclaimed respect for the elderly, and proclaimed the sanctity of life. Christian love teaches us to love our enemies, to feed the hungry, clothe the poor, and to care for those who are sick. The New Testament teaches us to work for our keep and not steal from others. Yes, our world has become richer, kinder, purer, and more loving because of Jesus.

Now if you want to study more about the influence of Christ, we offer the information on this program free. If you'd like a printed copy of our study and live in the United States, 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. Now if you live outside the United States, we have materials free online, and you can stream this program on our website at [www.searchtv.org](http://www.searchtv.org) or on YouTube.

The Edmond church will now worship in song, we'll read from John 1:14 to 18, and examine our blessings in Christ.

Our reading today comes from John chapter 1 verses 14 to 18. And here John the writer by the Holy Spirit, tells about the importance of Jesus coming into the world.

And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we saw His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth. John testified about Him and cried out, saying, "This was He of whom I said, 'He who comes after me has a higher rank than I, for He existed before me.'" For of His fullness we have all received, and grace upon grace. For the Law was given through Moses; grace and truth were realized through Jesus Christ. No one has seen God at any time; the only begotten God who is in the bosom of the Father, He has explained Him.

That's the reading from God's holy word. Let's pray together. Heavenly Father we're thankful that Jesus Christ came into the world and because of we can know You our Father in heaven. And Father we're thankful that He brought the truth and that He brought grace. Help us to believe the true and to fall into Your grace and to love You with all our heart and soul. In Jesus name, Amen.

No event in all of history compares with the coming of Jesus into this world. He is God's gift of hope and blessing for every person. The birth of Jesus came with a star. Interestingly, in 1991, The Quarterly Journal of the Royal Astronomical Society noted that Chinese astronomers had observed a long-tailed, slow-moving comet in their skies during March of 5 B.C. This "star," hung in the Capricorn region for more than seventy days. This same comet would have been visible in the skies over Persia, home of the Magi or wise men, in the hours just before dawn. Due to the earth's orbital motion, the comet's light would have been directly in front of the Magi during their journey— hence, they truly followed the star.

When the wise men entered Jerusalem and asked Herod where the child was to be born, the priests knew that it was Bethlehem. They knew the prophecy written in the eighth century B. C. and found in Micah 5 and verse 2, "But you, O Bethlehem Ephrathah, who are too little to be among the clans of Judah, from you shall come forth for me one who is to be ruler in Israel, whose coming forth is from of old, from ancient days." Jesus was indeed born in Bethlehem, just as God predicted through His prophet.

An angel told shepherds who were watching their flocks by night in that region in Luke 2 verses 10 to 14, "Do not be afraid, for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy which will be to all people. For there is born to you this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. And this will be the sign to you: You will find a Babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger." And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying: "Glory to God in the highest, And on earth peace, goodwill toward men!"

Indeed the Lord has brought peace and the favor of God to mankind. Now no one in all history has done so much to bring light and life to people. We don't know specifically when Jesus was born. We don't know the specific year or even the month of His coming with certainty. We don't. We don't need to know those things. We do know that His coming fulfilled God's plan from the beginning and has made all the difference.

Because of Jesus we can know God and His ways. When Jesus came into the world, Matthew 1:22 to 23 says, "Now all this took place to fulfill what was spoken by the Lord through the prophet: "Behold, the virgin shall be with child and shall bear a son, and they shall call his name Immanuel," which translated means, "God with us." Jesus is indeed God with us. He was and is always God. John 1:1 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. All things came into being through Him, and apart from Him nothing came into being that has come into being." Jesus has existed from all eternity past as God and was involved in creating everything that has been created.

Because Jesus became flesh, we can relate to Him and He to us. Hebrews 1 verse 3 says, "And He is the radiance of His glory (that is God's glory) and the exact representation of His nature, and upholds all things by the word of His power." Jesus makes the character of God known to us. The Lord Jesus said in John 14:7 that, "If you had known Me, you would have known My Father also; from now on you know Him, and have seen Him." We know about God's love, His kindness, His goodness, and His grace because of Jesus. When we get to know Jesus, we understand what kind of God we serve and learn what He desires from us.

Because of Jesus we can have salvation from sin. The angel Gabriel told Joseph in Matthew 1:21 that Mary "will bear a Son; and you shall call His name Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins." Jesus came into this world, because He knew how terrible and hurtful sin truly is. He knew people needed forgiveness and the opportunity to live righteously rather than wickedly. And so He

gave people the opportunity to be born again as children of God, to leave an old way of sin and death. And so we read in 1 Peter 2:24 that He bore our sins in His body on the cross so that we might die to sin and live to righteousness.

When John the Baptist introduced Jesus to his disciples, he said in John 1:29, "Behold, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!" Sin leaves its stain and ugliness on our souls. And though we may not think sin is any big deal, it's still a very big deal to God. God doesn't think like we do. Time and culture don't change the mind and heart of God. Romans 6:23 says "the wages of sin is death." Now sin is your greatest enemy and will rob you of a life with God for an eternity. Because Jesus loves you and knew the great danger that sin poses to your soul, He was willing to die for you. The Lord Jesus said in Luke 19 and verse 10, "For the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost." Jesus wanted to make a difference in our lives.

And by touching individuals, the Lord Jesus made a difference for everyone. Two thousand years have passed, and Jesus is still changing lives. And everyone who allows the cross of Christ to touch their hearts and is willing to serve the Lord becomes a new person. Paul wrote in Galatians 1 and verse 4 that Jesus "gave himself for our sins to deliver us from the present evil age, according to the will of our God and Father." The first century world was filled with pagan wickedness and selfishness. And Paul explained in Ephesians 2:1 to 3, "And you were dead in your trespasses and sins, in which you formerly walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, of the spirit that is now working in the sons of disobedience. (and then he said) Among them we too all formerly lived in the lusts of our flesh, indulging the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, even as the rest."

Our world needed saving from sin and needed a higher moral standard than the pagan world offered. Jesus gave us God's moral standard that touches our hearts and changes our behavior. Nothing compares to the standard Jesus taught in the Sermon on the Mount, found in Matthew chapters five through seven. The Lord Jesus said in Matthew 5:21 to 22 that, "You have heard that the ancients were told, 'you shall not commit murder' and 'Whoever commits murder shall be liable to the court.' But I say to you (Jesus says) that everyone who is angry with his brother shall be guilty before the court; and whoever says to his brother, 'You good-for-nothing,' shall be guilty before the supreme court; and whoever says, 'You fool,' shall be guilty enough to go into the fiery hell." The Lord knew we had to control our hearts to overcome hate and to keep from harming others.

Again the Lord said in Matthew 5:27 to 28, "You have heard that it was said, 'you shall not commit adultery'; but I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman with lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart." The Lord knew man could overcome his lust in his heart when he controlled his eyes. Jesus knew that "out of the heart come evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, slanders" (Matthew 15:19). Jesus loved us and He gave us reason to love what is good rather than evil, to love what is right rather than wrong. By changing our hearts, He changed lives; by changing lives, He changed communities; by changing communities, He changed nations; and by changing nations, He delivered us from the present evil age.

Because of Jesus, we know love. 1 John 4:19 says, "We love, because He first loved us." He's the reason for all the love we possess. He taught us love and He taught us how to love. The Lord Jesus said in John 13:34 to 35, "A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another. By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another." Our love is to be like His love, love that is willing to give everything in order to bless others. Jesus said in John 15:13, "Greater love has no one than this, that one lay down

his life for his friends.” Now Jesus didn’t merely talk love; He demonstrated it. He gave everything so we could be saved.

Loving others means we must learn to forgive. People often want to take vengeance and get even. Christians forgive, because He has forgiven us. The Lord Jesus taught us to pray in Matthew 6 verse 12, “forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors.” Because we know the value of being forgiven, we forgive others who sin against us. We put away our sword and leave vengeance to God. Wars and divorces take place when people have ceased to forgive.

Paul explained in Ephesians 4:31 to 32, “Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice. Be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving each other, just as God in Christ also has forgiven you.” If you know what it means to be forgiven, you can find the strength and the love to forgive those who hurt you.

Beyond all this, Jesus came to this world to teach us the truth. Our culture hasn’t given much value to the truth; some even deny there is any absolute truth. But the Lord Jesus provides for us an unchangeable and absolute basis for our faith, so we can distinguish what is true from what is false. John 1:14 says, “And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we saw His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth.” Jesus was indeed full of both grace and truth. His words are trustworthy and contain the standard by which every idea and doctrine is judged. Jesus said in John 14:6, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me.” Because the Lord Jesus delivered the truth to His apostles, we can trust the New Testament as the truth. Jesus promised in John 8 and verse 31 to 2 that, “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.” Ah we need the truth!

And now we can see why the coming of Jesus into this world matters. He’s brought life and light; He brought love and forgiveness; and He’s brought morality and truth to everyone. He’s lifted hearts out of wickedness and selfishness to make them noble and virtuous. He’s turned anger and hatred into love and kindness. He died upon a cruel cross so that we may become the kind of people that God desired from the beginning. And there’s one last thing! He gave us hope for life beyond the grave when God raised Him from the dead. Because of Jesus we have the promise of a resurrection at the end time and eternal life with God. Without Jesus, we are nothing and have no promise. We can do nothing greater, in this life, than following in His steps.

Let’s pray together. Heavenly Father help us to love You with all our hearts and soul and mind and spirit. And to follow in Your steps. This is our prayer in the name of Jesus, Amen.

If you want Jesus as your Savior, you must also accept Him as your Lord. You must trust Him and believe everything He says is true. If you cannot trust Jesus but think He’s mistaken in what He teaches on morals and doctrine, how can you trust His promises? You can’t re-write Jesus’ teaching, even on one point, and then trust in Him on another point. When you won’t follow Jesus on some point you don’t like, you aren’t treating Jesus as Lord. Instead, you believe in yourself and in your own wisdom. God wants us to trust in Jesus Christ in every step and decision we make. And when we do, His grace and truth surround us. Jesus is Lord of all, whether we recognize Him or not.

You’ll not find, however, a Lord so good as Jesus. You’re choosing everyday whom you will follow. Some choose sin and some choose self. These choices prove destructive and empty. They lead to chaos and misery. Why not choose the Lord? No one will ever love you and watch over you like He will. No one can bless you with eternal life but the Lord Jesus.

God loves each of us and wants to be in our lives. To become a Christian love and believe in Jesus Christ as the Son of God. Turn from all sin and start pleasing the Lord. Then, confessing your faith, be baptized into Christ. Now baptism into Christ is an immersion in water for the forgiveness of sins. And when you're baptized the Lord will wash away your sins and add you to His church, His family. According to John 3 and verse 5, you must be born again, and that takes place in baptism, to enter the kingdom of God. According to Acts 22:16, the Lord washes away our sins in baptism. So become a Christian today.

We hope that today's study about Jesus has stirred your heart to think about your soul. If you live in the United States and want a free printed copy 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 if you live outside the United States you can download our material or watch the program online at our website: [www.searchtv.org](http://www.searchtv.org). You can also get a free Bible Correspondence Courses or personal bible studies; just let us know you want one. Now don't worry, we won't ask you for money or put you on a list.

We do ask that you please get involved with a church of Christ. They love you and support our ministry. If you are looking for a healthy, Biblical church home, we'll be happy to help you find one. So please get involve with a Church of Christ in your area. They'll be glad you came. Well we'll be back next week, Lord willing. So keep searching God's Word with us and tell a friend. As always we say, God bless you and we love you from all of us at In Search of the Lord's Way.