

Jesus, The Way



**Sermon Outlines
Presenting Jesus As
The Way To Various Blessings**

MARK A. COPELAND

Jesus, The Way

Table Of Contents

Introducing Jesus As The Way	3
Jesus, The Way To A Better Life	6
Jesus, The Way To Forgiveness	9
Jesus, The Way To God	13
Jesus, The Way Out Of Religious Confusion	16
Jesus, The Way To Eternal Life	20
Finding Jesus, The Way	23

Note: These sermon outlines are based upon an excellent Bible correspondence course program entitled “**Jesus, The Way**”, by Sewell Hall.

This material is from **ExecutableOutlines.com**, a web site containing sermon outlines and Bible studies by Mark A. Copeland. Visit the web site to browse or download additional material for church or personal use.

The outlines were developed in the course of my ministry as a preacher of the gospel. Feel free to use them as they are, or adapt them to suit your own personal style. To God be the glory!

Executable Outlines, Copyright © Mark A. Copeland, 2002
MarkCopeland@aol.com

Jesus, The Way

Introducing Jesus As The Way

INTRODUCTION

1. As we begin this series of studies, ask yourself these questions...
 - a. Do you have problems?
 - b. Are you confused in things pertaining to life itself?
 - c. Do you feel lost, with a sense of despair?
2. If you do, don't feel like you are alone...
 - a. About the time of Abraham, a person who was experiencing a great deal of suffering said: "Man who is born of woman is of few days and full of trouble. He comes forth like a flower and fades away; He flees like a shadow and does not continue." - **Job 14:1-2**
 - b. Job's words, spoken nearly four thousands years ago, express the sentiments of millions today
3. Now, however, there is a way out: **Jesus Christ...!**
 - a. As He Himself said: "I am the way, the truth, and the life..." - **Jn 14:6**
 - b. Yes, to everything that truly good, both in this life and the one to come, **Jesus Christ is the way!**

[In this study, I want to introduce several areas in which Jesus is truly "**The Way**". Succeeding lessons will expand on these themes, but for now I simply wish to whet your appetite. For example, Jesus is...]

I. THE WAY TO A BETTER LIFE

A. JESUS OFFERS AN ABUNDANT LIFE...

1. On one occasion, Jesus stated His purpose in coming to this earth - "...I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly." - **Jn 10:10**
2. This "abundant life" Jesus offers is more than simply life in the "hereafter"
3. Though He does not promise wealth or luxury, He does assure us of...
 - a. A loving Father in Heaven, Who cares for His children - **Mt 6:31-33**
 - b. More than sufficient provision for those who are willing to follow Him - **Mk 10:29-30**

B. THOSE WHO RECEIVE THIS LIFE ARE BLESSED...

1. The happiest people in the world are those who truly commit themselves to following Jesus as "**The Way**"
2. Even though living in the most adverse circumstances, such as:
 - a. Paul, while living under house arrest - **Ph 4:11-13**
 - b. Christians being persecuted in Asia Minor (Turkey) - **1 Pe 1:6-8**

[Jesus is also...]

II. THE WAY TO FORGIVENESS OF SINS

A. JESUS IS THE SOLUTION TO A SERIOUS PROBLEM...

1. He is the **only** solution to a very serious problem
 - a. The most serious threat to our well-being that we face: **Sin!**
 - b. This is because everyone of us is guilty of sin - **Ro 3:23**
2. Sin is not without its consequences
 - a. Often physical, but always spiritual! - **Ro 6:23**
 - b. Unless the problem of sin is resolved, the **ultimate** consequence is eternity in hell!

B. THROUGH JESUS, GOD PROVIDES FORGIVENESS...

1. Out of love, God offered Jesus as the propitiation for our sins - **1 Jn 4:9-10**
2. Through His blood shed on the cross, Jesus provides forgiveness for our sins - **Ep 1:7**
3. After His sacrificial death for us, Jesus explained how those lost in sin could be saved
 - a. It involves repentance - **Lk 24:46-47**
 - b. It also involves faith and baptism - **Mk 16:16**

[But to be truly happy, we need more than just the forgiveness of sins; we need to be restored to the close union with God which we lost by our sins. In this also, Jesus is our answer, for He is...]

III. THE WAY TO GOD

A. JESUS CAME TO RECONCILE US TO THE FATHER...

1. Many religions, claiming to be Christian, are almost totally silent about the new relationship Jesus provides with God, the Father
 - a. About all they seem to talk about is “Jesus” or “Holy Spirit”
 - b. Could this indicate a lack of real understanding of Jesus’ purpose?
2. Jesus came to this world to reconcile man back to God the Father
 - a. God sent Him for that purpose - cf. **2 Co 5:17-20**
 - b. This is what Jesus claimed to be - **Jn 14:6**

B. A RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD IS IMPORTANT...

1. One does not truly experience what it means to have “eternal life” without having an intimate relationship with the Father, as well as with the Son
2. Which is exactly what Jesus has to offer us! - cf. **Jn 17:2-3**
3. Yes, that eternal life Jesus offers to us includes “knowing” the Father as well as the Son!

[The way to a better life, the way to forgiveness of sins, the way to God...what wonderful blessings! But there is more. Jesus is also...]

IV. THE WAY OUT OF RELIGIOUS CONFUSION

A. THE DILEMMA MANY FACE TODAY...

1. Consider the plight of many who wish to follow Jesus
2. They are confused and even repelled by the multitude of different churches and conflicting doctrines being offered by those who profess to be His church.

B. ONE DOES NOT HAVE TO BE A PART OF THIS CONFUSION...

1. Jesus certainly does not approve it
 - a. He taught the harm of division - **Mt 12:25**
 - b. He prayed for His followers to be united - **Jn 17:20-21**
2. Jesus promised to build His church - **Mt 16:18**
 - a. Despite the efforts of man and Satan to destroy it, or otherwise change it, they shall not prevail!
 - b. Even today, when someone obeys the words of Jesus Christ, they are added by the Lord **Himself** to His church - **Ac 2:47**
 - c. In His church, we can enjoy the unity of which Paul wrote - **Ep 4:4-6**

[But finding His church and enjoying this unity is experienced only as we follow Jesus as the way out of religious confusion. Finally, let me point out that Jesus is...]

V. THE WAY TO ETERNAL LIFE

A. DEATH IS INEVITABLE...

1. It is appointed for men to die once - **He 9:27a**
2. After death, then comes the judgment - **He 9:27b**
3. Death becomes the door, either to eternal life or to eternal condemnation - cf. **Mt 25:46**

B. JESUS OFFERS ETERNAL LIFE...

1. To die in Jesus is to die in the way to life eternal! - **Jn 6:27; 11:25**
2. As the apostle John wrote in the book of Revelation - **Re 14:13**

CONCLUSION

1. I hope that I have sparked your interest in wanting to learn more about Jesus as “**The Way**”
2. As mentioned at the outset of this study, the remaining lessons will elaborate upon these great blessings provided only through Jesus
3. My purpose in this series is twofold...
 - a. For those who are Christians
 - 1) To increase their appreciation of Jesus as their Lord and Savior
 - 2) So they will want to serve Him with greater zeal
 - b. For those who are not Christians
 - 1) To encourage them to let Jesus be **their** way to everything that is truly good
 - 2) Both in this life and in the life to come!

Jesus, The Way

Jesus, The Way To A Better Life

INTRODUCTION

1. In the preceding study, we introduced the theme of “**Jesus, The Way**”
2. Now we shall concentrate our attention on the subject “**Jesus, The Way To A Better Life**”
3. The popular goal of our generation is “the good life”...
 - a. This dream is not new
 - b. It has been the desire of every age and every walk of life -- of teachers and philosophers, of kings and common men

[But to the truly good life, **Jesus is the way!** To see how this is true, consider first that...]

I. JESUS CORRECTS OUR MISCONCEPTIONS

A. WHAT “THE GOOD LIFE” MEANS TO MANY...

1. Material prosperity
2. Pleasure
3. Popularity

B. WHY MANY THINK THIS WAY...

1. Nearly everyone would agree that two words sum up what “the good life” is all about: **happiness and peace**
2. Many suppose material prosperity, pleasure and popularity will bring us these things
3. But even a cursory observation reveals that most wealthy, high-living, famous people are extremely unhappy and lacking inner peace

C. JESUS CORRECTS THIS MISCONCEPTION...

1. He taught there is more to life than material possessions - cf. **Lk 12:15**
2. He offers a peace which things of the world cannot give, and a joy which is complete and full - **Jn 14:27; Jn 15:11**

[What the world cannot give, Jesus can. How does He do it...?]

II. JESUS LEADS THE WAY TO A BETTER LIFE

A. BY IDENTIFYING AND REMOVING THE REAL PROBLEM...

1. What is the cause of so much unhappiness? What deprives so many of inner peace?
 - a. Is it not things like immorality, theft, murder?
 - b. Is it not things like coveting, deceit, envy and pride?
 - c. Such things destroy families, friendships, and property

2. What then is the cause of these things?
 - a. Jesus declared the source to be the sinful hearts of men - **Mk 7:21-23**
 - b. James, the Lord's half-brother in the flesh, concurred with His diagnosis - **Ja 4:1-2**
3. What has Jesus done to remove this problem? - cf. **Ti 3:3-7**
 - a. Out of kindness, love, mercy and grace, God through Jesus Christ has saved us and made us righteous in His sight!
 - b. This took place when we experienced the “washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit” (a reference to the act of baptism, in which one who believes in Jesus is truly born again of water and Spirit! - **Jn 3:5**)
 - c. I.e., In other words, Jesus removes the problem of unhappiness and lack of inner peace by first removing the cause: **Sin!** But there is more...

B. BY TEACHING US TO SEEK NEW GOALS IN LIFE...

1. He warns of the folly of seeking after riches - **Mt 6:19**
 - a. They are perishable
 - b. They are open to theft
2. He teaches us to put our treasure in heaven - **Mt 6:20**
 - a. Where it is imperishable
 - b. Where it is secure - cf. **1 Pe 1:3-5**
3. How does one go about laying up treasure in heaven?
 - a. By living for Jesus, even under the most adverse conditions - **Lk 6:22-23**
 - b. By following His teaching - e.g., **Lk 6:35**

C. BY GIVING US WHAT WE DO NOT EXPECT...

1. Once we learn not to make material things, pleasure, and fame our goals in life, but to instead make following Jesus and His teachings our goal, He then provides us an unexpected portion of these very things!
 - a. Material things for those who put God first - **Mt 6:31-33; Mk 10:28-30**
 - b. Pleasure that is full and inexpressible - **Jn 15:11; 1 Pe 1:8**
 - c. Fame that lasts forever - **Co 3:4; 2 Th 1:10-12; 2:14**
2. In the very exercise of living for Christ and following His example
 - a. We find peace and happiness - cf. **Jn 13:12-17; Ac 20:35**
 - b. Note the word “blessed” (truly happy) in these verses

CONCLUSION

1. The world sets before us goals which many people cannot achieve, and even if achieved, often do not satisfy - cf. **Ecc 5:10**
2. But Jesus places before us goals which **can** be achieved, and that **do** satisfy...
 - a. **All** can store up treasure in heaven
 - b. **All** can live for Jesus
3. If there is any doubt that doing this brings lasting happiness and a much better life even now, just look any individual you may know who is **truly** following Jesus...
 - a. Outwardly they may be suffering persecution, social ostracism, or physical illnesses

- b. But even then they still have that joy that is full, that peace which is unspeakable
- 4. If you are not happy, if you are not at peace in your heart, if you are looking for a better life, why not let Jesus be **“The Way”** for you?
- 5. Let Him take care of your problem of sin, which is the true cause of unhappiness in life...!
 - a. Let Him be your guide in giving you new direction in this life!
 - b. Let Him be your key to “the good life”!

As Jesus Himself said:

“I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.” - Jn 10:10

Our next study will discuss how Jesus deals with the problem of sin...

Jesus, The Way

Jesus, The Way To Forgiveness

INTRODUCTION

1. We have seen that Jesus is **The Way** to a better life, even here on earth
2. But much more importantly, Jesus is the way to forgiveness for our sins!

[To understand **why** we need forgiveness and **how** Jesus provides the way to forgiveness is the purpose of this lesson. It is important, then, that we begin by properly defining sin...]

I. THE DEFINITION OF SIN

A. SOME MISCONCEPTIONS OF SIN...

1. That it is nothing more than a violation of human relationships
2. That an action is sinful only if:
 - a. It is frowned upon by society
 - b. It violates their own conscience
 - c. It is harmful to someone else
3. This leads many to misunderstanding how the problem of sin can be corrected
 - a. E.g., some believe that correcting sin involves nothing more than making things right with other people
 - b. With this misconception, they think they are forgiven of all past actions if they simply change their behavior

B. THE BIBLICAL DEFINITION OF SIN...

1. The Bible defines at least three different types of sin
 - a. The direct violation of God's Law (sin of commission) - **1 Jn 3:4**
 - b. Failure to do what is right (sin of omission) - **Ja 4:17**
 - c. Violating one's own conscience - **Ro 14:23**
2. Sin is more than simply a violation of human relationships
 - a. Though it often involves that
 - b. It is a serious matter that involves God and His Will for us
3. How serious is sin? Consider the consequences of sin...
 - a. The wages of sin is death - **Ro 6:23**
 - b. This death is one involving everlasting torment - **Re 21:8**; cf. **20:10**

[Why is sin considered so bad that unforgiven sinners must experience such torment? To understand why, we must appreciate...]

II. THE NATURE OF GOD AND THE PROBLEM OF SIN

A. GOD'S NATURE...

1. God is supremely **holy**
 - a. His holiness makes any truce with sin impossible
 - b. Note what is written - **Psa 5:4-6; Isa 59:1-2**
2. God is supremely **just**
 - a. His justice demands sin be punished properly
 - b. This helps to explain God's actions
 - 1) In the case of Nadab and Abihu - **Lev 10:1-3**
 - 2) In the case of Moses and Aaron - **Num 20:12**
3. Since we saw that ultimate penalty for sin is eternal torment, this emphasizes:
 - a. How **holy** God must be
 - b. How **terrible** sin must be

B. SIN'S PROBLEM...

1. Sin places man in a terrible predicament
 - a. For all have sinned - **Ro 3:23**
 - b. And the very nature of God (both holy and just) demands:
 - 1) Separation of sinners from God
 - 2) Punishment for our sins
2. Man is unable by himself to do anything
 - a. There are no "works" that one can do to make himself innocent of the guilt of sin
 - 1) E.g., a man who commits murder is not made innocent of that crime by living the rest of his life by the law
 - 2) Yet many people think that they save themselves by balancing their good deeds against their sins
 - b. Sin of any kind is so repulsive to God's **holiness** that His **justice** requires punishment
 - 1) Look again at the sins referred to earlier in **Re 21:8**
 2. Whether the sin is fear, lack of faith, lying, or murder, the "second death" is reserved for those who are guilty
 - 3) Even if you commit just **one** sin, the nature of sin in the sight of a holy God is such that you are as guilty as one who broke every law - **Ja 2:10**

[Since we all sin (**Ro 3:23**), it appears we are all doomed to suffer God's justice! Is there any way that He can be both **holy** and **just** and yet allow sinful man to be "reconciled" to Him? Yes...]

III. JESUS, THE WAY TO FORGIVENESS OF SINS

A. HE IS THE PROPITIATION FOR SIN...

1. God has provided Jesus as a "propitiation" for our sins - **1 Jn 4:10**
 - a. The word "propitiation" originally referred to an act or sacrifice that a man offered designed to appease a god
 - b. As used in the Bible, it refers to that which **God** has done (not man)
 - c. I.e., what man cannot do for himself, God has done!
2. He has offered His Son Jesus on the cross as a means to appease His **justice**
 - a. Such was foretold by Isaiah nearly 700 years earlier - **Isa 53:5-6,10-11**
 - b. Note that by the act of Christ's suffering the punishment due us for our own sins, we are forgiven of them - **Isa 53:11**; cf. also **Ep 1:7**

- c. Through Christ's death on the cross, we can come back to God, having been forgiven of our sins!
- 3. In this way, God is able to:
 - a. Preserve **His holiness** when we are in His presence (for our sins have been forgiven by the blood of Christ)
 - b. Maintain **His justice** (for our sins have been properly punished by the death of Christ)
 - c. All the while demonstrating **His love, grace and mercy!**
- 4. And so, Jesus is **The Way** to forgiveness of sins, for He has been made a "propitiation" for our sins!

[But how does one receive the wonderful blessing of having Jesus as the propitiation for our sins...?]

B. RECEIVING JESUS AS THE WAY TO FORGIVENESS...

- 1. After His death for our sins, and following His glorious resurrection from the dead, Jesus charged His apostles with the commission to spread the good news - **Mk 16:15-16**
- 2. We read in Acts how this **Great Commission** was carried out
 - a. In chapter two, we find Peter proclaiming the gospel for the first time
 - 1) After presenting evidence that Jesus has truly risen from the dead and ascended to the right hand of God, Peter comes to climax of his sermon - **Ac 2:36**
 - 2) Evidently many people believed what Peter said - **Ac 2:37**
 - a) **"What shall we do?"**, they cried
 - b) What can anyone do, who has realized that they are in need of salvation?
 - 3) What Peter told them is what we should tell anyone today - **Ac 2:38**
 - 4) Peter told those believed that they needed to repent and be baptized
 - b. Likewise, in the case of the conversion of Saul (Paul)
 - 1) Who had seen Jesus on the road to Damascus
 - 2) Yet after praying and fasting for three days was told to be baptized - **Ac 22:16**
- 3. Just as Jesus commanded in **Mk 16:16...**
 - a. When someone wanted to be saved through the blood of Jesus Christ
 - b. They were told to be baptized for the remission (forgiveness) of their sins upon their believing in Jesus and repenting of their sins
 - c. Faith (which includes confessing Jesus as Lord, **Ro 10:9-10**), repentance and baptism were the conditions by which one could receive Jesus and enjoy the forgiveness of sins!
- 4. Receive Jesus in baptism?
 - a. Yes, note carefully what Paul wrote to the Galatians - **Ga 3:27**
 - 1) **"as many of you"** (no more and no less)
 - 2) **"as have been baptized into Christ"** (as Jesus, Peter, etc., commanded)
 - 3) **"have put on Christ"** (have received Jesus and all the blessings He offers).
 - b. Thus, in obedience to the Lord in faith, repentance and baptism, we can receive the wonderful grace of God, who offered Jesus for our sins! - cf. **He 5:9**

CONCLUSION

- 1. I leave with you the fact that Jesus is **The Way** to forgiveness...
 - a. Indeed, **He is the only way**
 - b. For God has offered no other way whereby we can be reconciled to Him

- c. As Jesus said: “I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.” - **Jn 14:6**
 - d. No other way solves the dilemma between man’s sin and the holiness and justice of God!
2. Have you accepted Jesus in the way He commanded and His apostles taught...?
- a. Have you trusted in Him for salvation (**faith**)?
 - b. Have you made the decision to turn from your sins (**repentance**)?
 - c. Have you been immersed for the forgiveness of your sins (**baptism**)?

If not, why not? Let Jesus be your way to forgiveness today!

Jesus, The Way

Jesus, The Way To God

INTRODUCTION

1. In the last lesson, we saw that by His death on the cross, Jesus made possible the forgiveness of our sins
2. When our sins are forgiven, we are no longer the objects of God's wrath - **Ro 5:9**
3. As wonderful as being justified by the blood of Jesus may be, we need more than this...we need the kind of close friendship that existed between God and Adam before the "Fall"
4. But if a close relationship is to exist between God and ourselves, we must understand God and feel comfortable in approaching Him

[When we contemplate the difference between God and man, we can see that this is not easy...]

I. THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN GOD AND MAN

A. CONSIDER THE DIFFERENCE...

1. When we consider **the nature of God** as revealed in the Bible and nature, we see:
 - a. One with unlimited **power**, unlimited **wisdom**, unlimited **holiness**
 - b. One who is the **creator** of all things, the **sustainer** of all things, the **knower** of all things
 - c. One who is **eternal**, **immortal**, and **invisible**
 - d. Indeed, this **Supreme Being** fills the entire universe with His presence - **Jer 23:23-24**
2. On the other hand, man is...
 - a. **Mortal**, **finite** in knowledge and understanding
 - b. The **created** one, sustained by God who supplies all his needs - cf. **Ac 17:24-28**

B. THE DIFFERENCE IS OVERWHELMING...

1. The difference between God and man is so great, it ought to overwhelm man with awe
2. Note the reflections of David as expressed in Psalms - cf. **Psa 139:1-12**
3. In the Bible, whenever man came even close to approaching God in His Glory, it was terrifying!
 - a. E.g., when God first spoke to Moses, he was afraid - cf. **Exo 3:6**
 - b. E.g., the Israelites at Mount Sinai were terrified - cf. **Exo 20:18-21**
4. How then can man hope to comprehend God and approach Him in a close relationship during this life?
5. This difficulty was experienced and expressed by Job - cf. **Job 9:32-33**

[But what may have been true in Job's day (that there is no "daysman", or "mediator") is no longer true today! **Jesus** is the means by which man can comprehend God and also approach Him in such a way as to enjoy a loving relationship with Him! Let's see how...]

II. HOW JESUS IS THE WAY TO GOD

A. BY HELPING US COMPREHEND GOD...

1. In coming to this earth, Jesus declared or manifested God to us - **Jn 1:18**
2. How was Jesus able to “declare” (manifest) God?
 - a. For one thing, **He came to this earth from God**, and is the only one who has truly seen Him - Jn 6:46
 - b. But also, **He is God Himself!** - cf. **Jn 1:1-2**
 - 1) Who is this “**Word**” that was with God and was God?
 - 2) The One who came in the flesh! - cf. **Jn 1:14**
 - 3) The “**Word**” was Jesus!
3. Therefore, it is in seeing Jesus that we are able to comprehend the Father
 - a. Just as Jesus told His disciples - **Jn 14:7**
 - b. In similar fashion, the apostles of Jesus proclaimed that He was the complete manifestation of God - **Co 2:9; He 1:1-3**
4. Yes, it is in **Jesus** that God is revealed in terms that mortal, finite man can comprehend and personally relate to
 - a. Therefore, as we study the gospels, we see Jesus and His attributes (power, wisdom, holiness, love, mercy, divine wrath)
 - b. As we see Jesus, we see God and His attributes!

[But Jesus also provides the way to God...]

B. BY HELPING US APPROACH GOD...

1. This we touched upon in our previous lesson
2. How that by offering Himself as a propitiation for our sins Jesus has made it possible for a sinful man to approach God who is supremely holy and just
3. Jesus helps us to approach God in yet another way, as **our High Priest** in heaven
 - a. Though Jesus was truly God (as stated by John and Paul), by becoming man He fully understands our difficulties - **He 4:14-15**
 - b. With such a wonderful high priest, One who is both God and has been man, Jesus makes it possible for us to approach God with great confidence - **He 4:16**

[Yes, through Jesus we can both **comprehend** God and **approach** God, making it possible to have a close relationship with our Heavenly Father, enjoying all the blessings such a relationship provides!]

To better appreciate the beauty of this relationship available with God through Jesus, let's briefly notice some terms used in the New Testament to describe this relationship...]

III. TERMS USED TO DESCRIBE THOSE WHO ARE IN JESUS

A. A SPECIAL RELATIONSHIP WITH OUR HEAVENLY FATHER...

1. First, there are terms which proclaim a special relationship with our Heavenly Father
2. E.g., we are called **the “children” of God** - **Ga 3:26; 4:6-7**
3. Also, we are called **the “house” (family) of God** - **1 Ti 3:15**

B. A SPECIAL RELATIONSHIP WITH A HOLY, SUPREME BEING...

1. There are also terms which proclaim a special relationship with a Holy, Supreme Being
2. One describes us as a special dwelling place of God: **the “temple” of God - 2 Co 6:16**
3. Another speaks of our role in service to God: **a “royal priesthood” - 1 Pe 2:5,9**

CONCLUSION

1. Other terms might be considered, but these suffice to show that it is possible for those who were once lost in sin to enjoy a new, personal, intimate and fulfilling relationship with the Majestic God in heaven!
2. And what a wonderful relationship it is! One that offers promises that overwhelm you; for example, this one where God promises: “I will never leave you nor forsake you.” (**He 13:5**)
3. But let us be clear in our understanding...
 - a. Jesus is the **“The Way”**, the **only way** to God - **Jn 14:6**
 - b. Only those **in** Jesus have the assurance of enjoying this wonderful relationship with God!
 - c. How can we be sure that we are **in** Jesus, and as such the children of God?
4. By taking to heart and life the truth of God’s Word...!
 - a. E.g., **becoming** the children of God through faith and baptism - **Ga 3:26-27**
 - b. E.g., **remaining** the children of God by abiding faithfully in the teachings of Christ - **2 Jn 9**

Have you become a child of God by receiving Christ in faith and baptism? If not, why not today?

If you have, are you maintaining your relationship with both the Father and the Son by abiding in the doctrine of Christ? If not, why not be restored to God today (through repentance and prayer)?

Only in so doing can you let Jesus be **your way** to God!

Jesus, The Way

Jesus, The Way Out Of Religious Confusion

INTRODUCTION

1. Many people who wish to follow Jesus are repelled by the multitude of denominations and conflicting doctrines and practices taught by those professing to be Christians
2. Such distaste for denominational division is in keeping with the spirit of the New Testament...
 - a. Jesus prayed fervently for unity - **Jn 17:21**
 - b. Paul condemned religious division - **1 Co 1:10-13**
3. While some denominational leaders like to justify their existence, we know that religious confusion does not come from God...!
 - a. God is the author of peace, not confusion - **1 Co 14:33**
 - b. Religious strife is indicative of carnality, and a work of the flesh - **1 Co 3:3-4; Ga 5:19-21**
4. Even so, is it possible for people today to simply be Christians, and not a contributor to the denominational division of today?

[The answer is **Yes!** And Jesus shows us **The Way Out Of Religious Confusion!** Notice Jesus' own example in the religious climate of His day...]

I. THE EXAMPLE OF JESUS

A. NOTE THE RELIGIOUS CLIMATE OF HIS DAY...

1. When Jesus came to this earth, the Israelites were living under God's law given by Moses
2. In that law, God had not made any provision for the division of His people into religious sects or parties
3. Yet, by the time of Jesus, the Jews had formed several distinct religious parties:
 - a. **Pharisees** (somewhat conservative)
 - b. **Sadducees** (very liberal, the "modernists" of their day)
 - c. **Essenes** (radical isolationists)
 - d. **Herodians, Zealots** (political religionists)
4. It was assumed that all who were serious about religion would be associated with one of these groups

B. HE MAINTAINED A NONSECTARIAN RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD...

1. To which of these groups did Jesus belong? He belonged to **none** of these groups!
2. Instead, He maintained a "**nonsectarian**" relationship with God to the very end
 - a. As an Israelite, living at a time when the Law of Moses was still in effect, He was simply an "Israelite"
 - b. In addition, He encouraged all to live by the Law while it was still in effect - cf. **Mt 5:17-20**

- c. In other words, He encouraged all to simply be what the Law of Moses intended them to be (i.e., “Israelites”)

C. WHAT WOULD JESUS BE TODAY...?

1. Would He be a Baptist, or Catholic, or Presbyterian, or Methodist, etc.?
2. If He was simply an Israelite then, would He not simply be a “Christian” today?
3. That was certainly what His disciples came to be called - cf. **Ac 11:26**

[The example Jesus has set for us is clear: just be what God originally intended under the Law which is in effect. Since in the New Testament (the “law of Christ”, cf. **1 Co 9:21**) the disciples of Christ were called “Christians”, so we should be!

Not only should we be content with being “called” Christians, we should also be concerned with **“just being Christians.” Nothing more, nothing less!** But how can we be sure that we are simply Christians, members of the church we read about in the New Testament? It helps to see what the Bible tells us about ...]

II. THE LORD'S CHURCH

A. PROMISED BY JESUS...

1. Jesus promised to build **His** church - cf. **Mt 16:18**
2. The word “church” comes from the Greek word **ekklesia**, which means “a called-out group, an assembly, a congregation”
3. Jesus was promising to create His own group of people who have been **“called”**

B. ESTABLISHED THROUGH PREACHING THE GOSPEL...

1. How does this “calling” take place?
2. According to Paul, we are **“called”** by the gospel - **2 Th 2:14**
3. On the first Pentecost after the ascension of Christ, we see by preaching the gospel Peter “called out” those who were willing to express their faith in Jesus - **Ac 2:38-41**
4. Notice that those who gladly responded in faith, repentance and baptism were **“added”**
 - a. To what and by whom were they “added”?
 - b. We find the answer in verse **47**: **“And the Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved.”**
5. The day of Pentecost was the beginning of the Lord's church (His “ekklesia”)
6. This “called-out” assembly or group was created when the gospel was proclaimed and people responded to it

C. EXPANDED THROUGH PREACHING THE GOSPEL...

1. At first, the church existed only in Jerusalem
2. As the gospel spread, and people responded to it, groups of these saved people in various cities met together
3. Each group became known as a church in a **local** sense (in contrast to the church **universal** which is made up of all those saved throughout the world)
4. For example, during Paul's first missionary journey, many such churches were established - **Ac 14:21-23**

5. By simply teaching the gospel of Christ, a local church was formed when those who obeyed the gospel joined together in their work and worship

D. EDIFIED THROUGH THE APOSTLES' DOCTRINE...

1. Though united in Christ, these local churches were independent of any human association or federation of churches
2. Christ directed them through His inspired apostles, as they taught them how to worship and work together - cf. **Ac 2:42**
3. Sometimes this teaching by the apostles was done directly, other times by appointed emissaries - e.g., **1 Co 4:17**
4. Just as often, the teaching was done through the epistles or letters written by the apostles - cf. **1 Co 14:37; 1 Ti 3:14-15; 2 Th 2:14-15; 3:14**

[When we read what the Bible says us about the Lord's church, we learn that by responding to the gospel and paying close heed to the "apostles' doctrine" (cf. **Ac 2:42**), people in the first century were able to be Christians only, without all the confusion prevalent today.

Is it possible for us to do this today? Yes! Here is how...]

III. THE WAY OUT OF RELIGIOUS CONFUSION

A. ACCEPT THE CALL OF THE GOSPEL...

1. Remember, Christ calls us into His ekklesia (church) through the gospel
 2. Therefore, we can begin by obeying the same instructions that Peter gave on the Day of Pentecost - **Ac 2:38**
 3. Repenting of our sins, and being baptized for the remission of our sins, we then receive the same blessings as did the 3000 on that day: **salvation!**
 4. By being saved in this manner, we **know** that the Lord truly adds us to **His** church just as He added them - cf. **Ac 2:47**
- **What then...?**

B. FOLLOW THE EXAMPLE OF THE EARLY CHRISTIANS...

1. The early Christians continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine - **Ac 2:42**
 - a. They joined no other religious organization, and neither should we!
 - b. In Christ, we are automatically united with all others who are in Him!
2. As members of the Lord's church, we should study carefully the New Testament description of the church that continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine
 - a. This description is found in the Book of Acts and in the Epistles which follow it
 - b. It is here that we will find instruction from the Lord's apostles on **how**:
 - 1) To worship the Lord acceptably
 - 2) To be scripturally organized as local congregations
 - 3) To live and work together as Christians, spreading the gospel of Christ through word and example
3. Since the apostles were guided by the Holy Spirit, we may be sure their instructions were exactly what Jesus wanted them to be!
 - a. If we duplicate the early churches by following the apostles' instructions, we will simply

- be “Christians”, and we can be certain the Lord is pleased with us
- b. As Jesus said to His apostles about those who would receive or reject their instructions:
“He who hears you hears Me, he who rejects you rejects Me, and he who rejects Me rejects Him who sent Me.” - Lk 10:16

CONCLUSION

1. Simply being a Christian, and duplicating a New Testament congregation is not as difficult as one might think...
 - a. There are literally thousands of such congregations throughout the world
 - b. **There is likely one in your area right now!** (Feel free to contact me if you would like to try and locate the nearest one.)
 - c. There is also the option of starting a congregation in your own home
2. By following the example and teachings of Jesus, as revealed by His apostles, we can be led out of the religious confusion that dominates the religious world today!
3. Do you want to be simply a Christian, a member of the Lord's church we read about in the New Testament...?
 - a. If so, then I plead with you to first render obedience to the gospel of Christ as proclaimed by Peter and all the apostles - cf. **Ac 2:36-38**
 - b. You have the assurance of God's Word that you will then be added by the Lord Himself to His church - cf. **Ac 2:47**
 - c. Then, you have the responsibility to learn and follow the apostles' doctrine as you serve the Lord Jesus in your life - cf. **Ac 2:42**

If you have not yet responded to the commands of the gospel as put forth by Peter in **Ac 2:38**, why not let the reaction of those who did on the Day of Pentecost describe your actions today:

“Then those who gladly received his word were baptized; and that day about three thousand souls were added to them.” - Ac 2:41

Jesus, The Way

Jesus, The Way To Eternal Life

INTRODUCTION

1. We have considered how Jesus is truly **The Way** to many good things: He is **The Way**...
 - a. **To a better life** (by correcting misconceptions and teaching us to seek new goals)
 - b. **To forgiveness of sins** (by offering Himself as a propitiation, or sacrifice, for our sins)
 - c. **To God** (by helping us first to comprehend God, then to be able to approach Him in a close, personal relationship)
 - d. **Out of religious confusion** (through His own example, and by guiding us through His apostles' doctrine)

2. In this study, we shall see why we can also say Jesus is **The Way To Eternal Life**...
 - a. **Please Note:** In this study we shall be considering those passages which use the expression "eternal life" as a **future hope**, which will be realized after this life
 - b. In the writings of John, the expression "eternal life" is often used differently, referring to that "abundant life" which stresses a new relationship with God and Jesus, and is a **present possession** of those who have come to "know" them - cf. **Jn 17:3; 1 Jn 5:13,20**

[First, let's note several reasons...]

I. WHY JESUS IS THE WAY TO ETERNAL LIFE

A. HE HAS PREPARED A PLACE FOR US...

1. As He told His disciples the night before His crucifixion
2. "for I go to prepare a place for you" - **Jn 14:2**

B. HE WILL COME AND RECEIVE US TO HIMSELF...

1. As Jesus told His disciples - **Jn 14:3**
2. As Paul wrote of this wonderful event - **1 Th 4:15-17**

C. HE WILL JUDGE AS TO WHO WILL ENTER LIFE ETERNAL...

1. As depicted in the final judgment scene - **Mt 25:31,41**
2. As described by Paul - **2 Co 5:10**

D. HE IS WHAT MAKES ETERNAL LIFE WONDERFUL...

1. Together with God, who will dwell with men - **Re 21:1-4**
2. They shall be the "temple" - **Re 21:22**
3. Jesus will be the "light" - **Re 21:23**
4. They shall be source of "the water of life" - **Re 22:1-5**
5. Jesus makes eternal life what it is, which explains Paul's aspirations - cf. **2 Co 5:8; Ph 1:23**

[When we understand all this, would there be eternal life without Jesus? **Not according to the Bible!**]

Jesus is truly **The Way** to eternal life! Since Jesus **is** the way to eternal life, should we not also consider what Jesus has to say about it...?]

II. WHAT JESUS TEACHES ABOUT ETERNAL LIFE

A. PREPARED FOR A PREPARED PEOPLE...

1. People are not going to stumble into it by “accident” - cf. **Mt 7:13-14**
 - a. The way to life is such that few find it
 - b. Lack of preparation is the reason!
2. Jesus taught several parables to stress this point
 - a. The parable of “The Wedding Feast” - **Mt 22:1-2,11-14**
 - b. The parable of “The Ten Virgins” - **Mt 25:1-13**
3. Also in His sermon on the mount - **Mt 7:21-23**
 - a. Being religious does not ensure eternal life
 - b. We must do the Father’s will!

B. THE ONLY ALTERNATIVE IS HELL...

1. Prepared for unprepared people - cf. **Mt 25:41,46**
2. A terrible place vividly described by Jesus - cf. **Re 20:10-15; 21:8**
3. The only place that people will “stumble” into accidentally!
 - a. Where most people will wind up (“many” as opposed to “few”) - **Mt 7:13-14**
 - b. Judgment reserved for those who “know not God” - cf. **2 Th 1:7-9**
 - 1) “Punished with everlasting destruction”
 - 2) What a terrible alternative to the eternal life Jesus offers!

CONCLUSION

1. God and Jesus have prepared a terrible fate for those who...
 - a. “know not God”
 - b. “obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ”
2. They certainly do not want people to experience this...!
 - a. God desires all men to be saved - **1 Ti 2:3-4**
 - b. Jesus is offered as a ransom for all - **1 Ti 2:5-6**
3. In order that “eternal life”, and not “everlasting destruction”, might be the destiny of all men...
 - a. God has provided the most precious thing to Him as the **Mediator** between sinful man and Holy God: **Jesus** - His Beloved Son!
 - b. God has provided Jesus as **The Way** to all that is good, both in this life and the one to come!
4. But if what one does not accept Jesus as the Way? Then he or she is destined...
 - a. To a life with little direction here on earth!
 - b. To die in their sins!
 - c. To be forever separated from God!
 - d. To go through life in religious confusion!
 - e. To go through eternity in eternal condemnation!

5. How much better to come to Jesus, and let Him be your **Way**...
 - a. To a better life!
 - b. To forgiveness of sins!
 - c. To a loving and close relationship with God!
 - d. Out of religious confusion!
 - e. To eternal life, with all its prepared glory!

If you haven't, obey the Lord Jesus and His gospel today! - cf. **Mk 16:15-16; Ac 2:38; 22:16**

Jesus, The Way

Finding Jesus, The Way

INTRODUCTION

1. In this series, I have attempted to present Jesus as **The Way** to many blessings; indeed, He is the source of **every** spiritual blessing that God has to offer - cf. **Ep 1:3**
2. But how can we be sure that we have found the **true** Jesus and are truly His disciples...?
 - a. Jesus made it clear that simply believing in Him does not constitute true discipleship - **Jn 8:31**
 - b. How can we be sure that we are not actually following some **caricature**
 - 1) A misrepresentation of Jesus, presented to us in error by others?
 - 2) By those sincerely mistaken themselves (such as our parents, preachers, churches)?
3. To be sure that we have truly found **Jesus, The Way**, we must begin with the only reliable source of information about Him: **The Bible!**

[Surprising as it may be to some, a good place to start is with the **Old Testament...**]

I. FINDING JESUS IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

A. IT CONTAINS MANY THINGS ABOUT JESUS...

1. Though completed hundreds of years before He came
2. As stated by Jesus on at least two occasions - **Lk 24:27,44-47**
3. It imparts wisdom that leads to salvation in Jesus - cf. **2 Ti 3:14-15**

B. WE SEE JESUS THROUGH THE EYES OF PROPHECY...

1. For example, from Isaiah we can learn things regarding:
 - a. The birth of Jesus - **Isa 7:14**
 - b. The suffering of Jesus - **Isa 53:4-6**
 - c. The sovereignty of Jesus - **Isa 9:6-7**
2. Many more prophecies could be taken just from Isaiah alone (one reason why he is commonly called "The Messianic Prophet")
3. Other prophets have much to say about Jesus
4. It has been estimated there are more than 300 prophecies about Jesus in the O.T.!

[So we should read the Old Testament in our efforts to find the true Jesus! But as important as it is in helping us to find Jesus, it's purpose was **predictive**, to **prepare** people for Jesus (cf. **Ga 3:24-25**). Therefore, to find Jesus more fully, we must also come to the gospels...]

II. FINDING JESUS IN THE GOSPELS

A. FOUR RECORDS WITH A SIMILAR GOAL...

1. Four accounts of His life...

- a. **Matthew** emphasizes the “teachings” of Jesus (especially in regards to the kingdom)
 - b. **Mark** features the “miracles” of Jesus, showing His power
 - c. **Luke** underscores the “humanity” of Jesus (without detracting from His divinity)
 - d. **John** stresses the “divinity” of Jesus (without detracting from His humanity)
2. The goal as expressed by John: **to create faith - Jn 20:30-31**
 - a. To see Jesus through the eyes of **fulfillment**
 - b. As they carefully document how He fulfilled prophecy

B. REVEALING WHAT HE ACTUALLY TAUGHT...

1. No one can know Jesus without reading these gospels carefully
2. We may often be surprised to find out how **different** the real Jesus is and what He actually taught, from the one imagined by many!
3. For example, many feel that they are going to heaven when they die
 - a. Jesus taught that most will not - cf. **Mt 7:13-14**
 - b. Many will be surprised at the Judgment Day - cf. **Mt 7:21-23**
4. Contrary to the “simple believism” many think is what is involved in following Jesus...
 - a. The real Jesus taught self-denial - **Lk 9:23-25**
 - b. The real Jesus expected disciples to “observe all things” - cf. **Mt 28:18-20**
 - c. Does this sound like the “Jesus” proclaimed by many today?

[By reading the gospels, then, we come much closer to finding Jesus. But Jesus **did not** reveal the complete truth while on earth (cf. **Jn 16:12-14**)! He left it up to the Holy Spirit to complete the work of guiding the apostles into all the truth. Therefore, to truly find Jesus and what His Will is for us today, we must also turn to the rest of the books of the New Testament...]

III. FINDING JESUS IN THE ACTS AND THE EPISTLES

A. IN THE BOOK OF ACTS...

1. We see the fulfillment of Jesus’ promise to send the Holy Spirit Who would guide them into all the truth - **Ac 2:4**
2. We see the Holy Spirit:
 - a. Guiding the apostles and early church in its formative stage - **Ac 13:2,4**
 - b. Guiding them into all the truth - e.g., **Ac 15:28**
 - b. Revealing things taught during Jesus’ ministry not recorded in any of the four gospels - cf. **Ac 20:35**

B. IN THE EPISTLES...

1. The words of the apostles (i.e., the epistles) were to be received as if from Jesus Himself!
 - a. As Paul wrote to the church at Corinth - **1 Co 14:37**
 - b. And to the church at Thessalonica - **1 Th 2:13**
 - c. As Jesus said it should be - cf. **Jn 13:20**
2. The Holy Spirit did in fact guide the apostles into **all** the truth - cf. **Jn 16:13**
 - a. I.e., with the gospels, the book of Acts and the epistles (including Revelation) we find the teachings of Jesus and about Jesus **completely, fully, and finally** revealed!
 - b. I.e., no more revelation is needed
 - 1) We have all that is needed to live godly lives - cf. **2 Pe 1:2-3**

- 2) We have all that is needed to be complete - cf. **2 Ti 3:16-17**
- 3) Not even an angel from heaven appeared with new doctrines - **Ga 1:8-9**
- c. Our task is to simply remain true to what has been revealed once and for all - **Ju 3**

[With the writings of the New Testament, we are able to see Jesus through the eyes of **completeness!** All we need to know to follow Jesus as **The Way** is there, for us to **learn it**, and **live it!** No other revelations are needed. Having said this, let me finally emphasize that we only find Jesus when we truly obey Him...]

IV. FINDING JESUS IN OBEDIENCE

A. AS EMPHASIZED BY JESUS...

1. We must abide in His word to be His disciples - **Jn 8:31,32**
2. Jesus abides with us as we keep His commandments - **Jn 14:21,23**
3. This is how we truly know Him - cf. **1 Jn 2:3-5**

B. AS ILLUSTRATED IN BAPTISM...

1. This is especially true when we come to Jesus in faith and repentance, and submit to His command to be baptized - cf. **Ga 3:27**
2. Having received (or “put on”) Christ in baptism, we are now in Christ, where all things are “new” - **2 Co 5:17**

CONCLUSION

1. Yes, all things are “new”, for in finding Jesus by keeping His commands we find...
 - a. A better life
 - b. Forgiveness for our sins
 - c. Reconciliation with God our Father
 - d. The privilege of being in the Lord’s church (and not some denomination begun by men)
 - e. The assurance of eternal life
2. Have you found Jesus, or are you following some cheap imitation of the real thing...?
 - a. Which at best is a misconception fostered by honestly mistaken people
 - b. Or at worst a slick promotion marketed by those seeking numbers rather than disciples?
3. You have truly found Jesus if you are heeding the implications of His “Great Commission”...
 - a. Accepting the authority (power) He has in heaven and on earth - **Mt 28:18**
 - b. Have been baptized (upon faith and repentance) as He commanded - **Mt 28:19**
 - c. Careful to observe **all** things that He commanded - **Mt 28:20**

Such are the only ones who have the assurance: **“I am with you always, even unto the end of the world.”** They are ones who have “found” Jesus!

Let **Jesus** be **your way** to everything that is truly good! Trust and obey Him today!