

# BIBLE EMPOWERED TEACHING

Series: Jesus Christ The Son Of God

Lesson 2

## JESUS IS THE CHRIST

What the Jews did not expect was that the Messiah was destined to be crucified. For those who believed in Jesus as the Messiah, what to them would be the saddest day in their lives, would later become the greatest event of all history. It would change their lives and the world forever.

All Christians today are the product of the greatest historical event that has ever occurred in human history. We must recognize that we as Christians are part of a heritage that is based on the Christ of the cross, and not on a catechism of doctrine. Christians are Christ-called people, not law-called. This was the foundation of faith that Jesus had in mind when He made the statement, *“And I, if I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all men to Me”* (Jn 12:32). And this was the background of Paul’s statement in Romans 6:14: *“You are not under law, but under grace.”*

Jesus did not draw us unto Himself because His teachings were better than the other religious leaders—though they were. The religions of men draw people unto their faith through religious rites, principles of behavior, and catechisms of law. But Christians are drawn by faith to the person of Jesus Christ and His atonement for our sins. This same drawing power of grace continues today.

Many religious teachers have passed through history and established great followings of people. Many people have been drawn to these leaders because of their great teachings, and often dynamic charisma. But this was not the primary focus of Jesus in drawing people unto Himself. Jesus draws people to Himself through the atonement of the cross for their sins. We are drawn to Him because of our redemption from the bondage of sin. We desire through Him to establish a relationship with the Father. All men seek to be reconciled to the God of their faith, but they honestly know that they cannot get there on the basis of their own meritorious religious ceremonies, or isolation as monks from society. It is for this reason that when the early evangelists went forth into all the world, they did as Paul wrote, *“For I determined not to know anything among you except Jesus Christ and Him crucified”* (1 Co 2:2).

In a world that seeks to be successful, to be glamorous, and in possession of the most recent electronic device, the cross calls for that which is often contrary to what we consider most important of life. The cross represents sacrifice, discipline, commitment and humility. This is the nature of the discipleship unto which Jesus calls us: *“If anyone will come after Me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow Me”* (Lk 9:23). Discipleship of the One who was lifted up is contrary to that which the materialistic world calls on us to do in order to be successful. Instead of lifting ourselves up to be successful in a world of accomplishments, the Christ of the cross calls on us to humble ourselves before others. It is then that He will lift us up (See 1 Pt 5:6).

Since Jesus is the crucified Christ (Messiah), there are many salvational offerings of Jesus that call us to be drawn to Him. Again, we would form an acrostic of the term CHRIST in order to identify some of what Jesus offers:

**C**rucified  
**H**umiliated  
**R**edemption  
**I**ntercession  
**S**avior  
**T**eacher

The following points define what Jesus accomplished during His past and present ministries on our behalf, which ministries were validated at the cross. These are ministries that draw us unto Him:

### A. Crucified:

The cross meant sacrifice for our sins, and thus this was the message that went forth from Calvary into all the world. It was as Paul wrote, *“We preach Christ crucified, to the Jews a stumbling block and to the Gentiles foolishness”* (1 Co 1:23). This was the central message of the Suffering Servant about whom Isaiah had prophesied over six hundred years before (See Is 53:5). The Suffering Servant was all of the following:

**1. Sin offering:** Since the blood of animals could not remit sins, it was necessary that an eternal offering be made of the incarnate body of an eternal Deity. Atonement for sin could only be accomplished through that which was eternal (Hb 10:1-4). No created animal could be sacrificed for a problem that had existed between God and man since the days of Adam and Eve. In order to solve the problem of separation from God through sin, an unblemished Lamb of God had to be made available through incarnation.

Only an eternal sacrifice on the part of God could deal with sin that had eternal consequences. *“For He has made Him who knew no sin to be sin on behalf of us”* (2 Co 5:21). The result of the offering of the Christ resulted in the promise that God makes to everyone who obeys the gospel of the Christ: *“And their sins and iniquities I will remember no more”* (Hb 10:17). “No more” was a statement that did not refer to the yearly day of atonement under the Sinai law wherein a sacrifice was made for the sins of the people of Israel. At and after the cross, “no more” referred to eternity. There would never again be the need for a sacrifice to be made for sins. The Hebrew writer reminds us:

*Who [Jesus] does not need daily as those high priests [of the Sinai covenant], to offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins, and*

then for the people's, for this He [Jesus] did once for all when He offered up Himself (Hb 7:27).

**2. The Passover Lamb:** The metaphor of the "Passover lamb" finds its root meaning during the last plague that God brought upon the Egyptians when He was delivering Israel from Egyptian captivity. The Israelites were to sprinkle animal blood on their doorpost in order that the firstborn child of the family be spared from death (See Ex 12). In order that blood be provided, a lamb had to be sacrificed. This was the Passover lamb. The offering of the Passover lamb became a yearly offering in Israel for God's deliverance of the people from bondage.

When applied to Christ, Jesus became the sacrificial Passover lamb that was offered in order to spare us from death. Paul wrote, "*For indeed, Christ our Passover was sacrificed*" (1 Co 5:7). The prophesy of Isaiah 53:7 was fulfilled in Him: "*He is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so He did not open His mouth.*"

**2. The blood of the covenant:** Animals died and blood was offered in order to sanctify the covenant that God made with the nation of Israel (Ex 24). Again, animals died in order that the Sinai covenant be ratified with Israel. In the same way, the incarnational Son of God offered His blood in order to ratify a new covenant between the God of heaven with those who would obey the gospel on earth.

During His last Passover feast with His disciples, Jesus held up a cup of the fruit of the vine and proclaimed, "*For this is My blood of the covenant that is shed for many for the remission of sins*" (Mt 26:28). The Jewish disciples who were present when Jesus made this statement did not fully understand what He was saying at the time. Nevertheless, in a few weeks after the Passover they would fully understand the concept of the "blood of the covenant." At the time, they did understand the "blood of the covenant" that existed between God and Israel that was instituted at Mount Sinai. But a new covenant was about to be established. It was with their forefathers that blood was used to ratify a covenant with the nation of Israel. But as the disciples sat there with Jesus during His last Passover, they were wondering what was about to be when blood again would be poured out to ratify the covenant about which He spoke.

In reference to the blood offering of the Christ, every word of Frances R. Havergal's song, *I Gave My Life for Thee*,<sup>1</sup> is true:

I gave My life for thee,  
My precious blood I shed,  
That thou might'st be ransomed,  
And quickened from dead.

The crucifixion of the Christ will be realized fully when the saints stand unblemished before the throne of God with blood-washed souls. It is then that we will realize the significance of Revelation 7:14 concerning ourselves: "*These are those coming out of the great tribulation. And they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.*"

So if we lack some confidence in the cleansing power of the blood, it would be good to answer the following ques-

tion that was posed by the Hebrew writer:

*How much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without blemish to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God? (Hb 9:14).*

## B. Humiliated:

When reading of things concerning the venture of the Son of God into our realm of physical existence, we often read concepts about which we have little understanding. For example, what earthly being could ever fully understand the following statement? "*He made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant and being made in the likeness of men*" (Ph 2:7). How could we ever, as earthbound finite beings, possibly understand that "*in the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God ... and the Word was made flesh*" (Jn 1:1,14)?

These are incomprehensible concepts for humans to understand fully. We read the words, but the words speak of God becoming flesh. This is a case in biblical interpretation when we must accept the words by faith that it actually happened. By trusting in the testimony of those who personally experienced the incarnate God, we approached the written record of their testimony in order to grow in faith.

By faith, we accept their testimony as true, for we believe the witness of those who first encountered the incarnate Son of God. We believe the personal witness of one as John who encountered the incarnate God about whom he wrote, "*For the life was manifested and we have seen and bear witness and show to you that eternal life that was with the Father and was manifested to us*" (1 Jn 1:2). John said that it was this Word of life "*that we have heard, that we have seen with our eyes, that we have looked upon and our hands have handled*" (1 Jn 1:1).

So to what extreme in humiliation would God go in order to come for us? The first extreme was incarnation. But what was so important that God would incarnate in the flesh for us? We incomprehensibly struggle through revelations of this divine journey as recorded in Philippians 2:5-8. As we read, our minds are overwhelmed with the humbling reality that this incarnate God would become "*obedient unto death, even the death of the cross*" in order that we be with Him forever (Ph 2:8). His ultimate extreme beyond incarnation was to suffer our physical death.

It was only hours before the humiliation of the cross that the Son of God who created us (Cl 1:16) prayed to the Father who remained in spirit, "*Father, if You are willing, remove this cup from Me*" (Lk 22:42). The cup was the humiliation and suffering of the Christ on the cross. But the cup could not be removed. It could not because of us. Our sins sent Him there. And so, from the time of the preceding agonizing prayer request, began the humiliating journey of the incarnate Son of God to the cross of death.

When we think of the humiliation of the incarnate Son of God on the cross, we must never forget that we put Him there because of our rebellion against God. Every sin that we commit caused the humiliation of the Son of God to our physical death which we fear so much (See Hb 2:14,15).

And unless we forget, it would be good to remind our-

selves of the humiliation that the incarnate Son of God went through for our sins. The men who arrested the Christ “*began mocking and beating Him*” (Lk 22:63). “*They spit on Him, and took the reed and struck Him on the head again and again*” (Mt 27:30). “*And they stripped Him [naked] and put on Him a scarlet robe*” (Mt 27:28). They “*twisted a crown of thorns,*” and then “*they put it on His head, and a reed in His right hand. And they bowed the knee before Him and mocked Him, saying, ‘Hail, King of the Jews!’*” (Mt 27:29). And then they led Him away to be crucified as, and with, common criminals. And truly, the prophecy of Isaiah was fulfilled at Calvary outside Jerusalem:

*He has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows. Yet we esteemed Him stricken, smitten by God and afflicted. But He was wounded for our transgressions. He was bruised for our iniquities. The chastisement of our peace was upon Him. And with His stripes we are healed.* (Is 53:4,5).

Once the humiliation of the physical body of the Son of God was ended, the world would turn to humiliating His spiritual body. “*Yes and all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution*” (2 Tm 3:12). This should come as no surprise in our discipleship of the One who was humiliated on the cross on our behalf. When the Christ was lifted up, we were drawn to Him because He was lifted up for our sins. Peter explained, “*For to this you were called, because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example that you should follow His steps*” (1 Pt 2:21). Those who are drawn to the cross must also be willing to be drawn to His suffering.

But in the heat of humiliation, the drawn body of believers must always remember the encouraging words of Peter: “*If you are reproached for the name of Christ, blessed are you, for the spirit of glory and of God rests on you*” (1 Pt 4:14). Therefore, “*If anyone suffers as a Christian, let him not be ashamed, but let him glorify God in this name*” (1 Pt 4:16). Therefore, “*blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness’ sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven*” (Mt 5:10).

### C. Ransomed:

We do not forget what all the suffering and humiliation was about in reference to our salvation. Our salvation involved being bought out of the captivity of sin. Our redemption with the price of His sacrifice finds its definition in what God did for the nation of Israel. The people of Israel were redeemed literally out of the captivity of Egypt (Ex 6:6). They could not escape from their own bondage. Someone other than themselves had to redeem them.

In the slavery of the day of the cross, a slave of the Roman Empire could be bought out of his bondage by another. Both the children of Israel and slaves were in the same predicament in reference to bondage. Redemption had to come from somewhere outside themselves. In deliverance from the physical bondage of Israel and slaves, the metaphor “redemption” finds its earthly meaning in the bondage in which we find ourselves in sin. We could not redeem ourselves through law-keeping, for the lack thereof was what brought

us into bondage. We could not keep law perfectly, and thus, we were all condemned as lawbreakers (Rm 3:9,10,23). We could not atone for our sins through good works. We were thus doomed because of our own wrong doing. We were hopeless in sin, and thus, needed Someone outside ourselves to redeem us from bondage.

Paul reminded the Ephesian disciples, “*In Him [Christ] we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins according to the riches of His grace*” (Ep 1:7). “*Through His blood*” refers to the cross. With the sacrificial offering of the incarnate Son of God, there would have been no purchase made for those in bondage. For this reason, “*the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many*” (Mt 20:28). Jesus ransomed Himself in order to redeem us from that from which we could not redeem ourselves. Therefore, we “*have been bought with a price*” (1 Co 6:20). And that price was the eternal sacrifice of the Son of God. As the Christ, Jesus paid the ransom price for our freedom from the bondage of our own sin.

### D. Intercession:

Not only did the Christ pay the ransom price for our deliverance from the bondage of sin, He also continues to intervene for us at the right hand of God. “*For there is one God and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus*” (1 Tm 2:5). Christ “*is even at the right hand of God, who also makes intercession for us*” (Rm 8:34). The Christ was resurrected, and subsequently, was “*seated at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens*” (Hb 8:1). At the right hand of God “*He is able also to save those to the uttermost who come to God through Him, seeing He always lives to make intercession for them*” (Hb 7:25). In reference to the intercession ministry of the Christ, the Hebrew writer concluded with the following words of comfort:

*For Christ has not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us* (Hb 9:24).

### E. Savior:

As the Christ who intercedes for us, Jesus saves “*His people from their sins*” (Mt 1:21). The Greek word for “savior” means “to deliver” or “to preserve.” Jesus as the Christ delivered us from the bondage of sin, and through His continual cleansing blood, preserves us unto His final coming (1 Jn 1:7).

Through His ministry of sacrifice and redemption, Jesus was proclaimed to be the Savior of the world. The Samaritans believed that Jesus was “*indeed the Savior of the world*” (Jn 4:42). From the seed of David “*God raised up for Israel a Savior, Jesus*” (At 13:23). “*He is the Savior of the body*” (Ep 5:23). Jesus Christ has appeared as the only Savior of the world (2 Tm 1:10). He is the “*Lord Christ Jesus our Savior*” (Ti 1:4). Therefore, we are all “*looking for the blessed hope and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Christ Jesus*” (Ti 2:13). Therefore, only through Jesus is there salvation, for He is the only Savior who has been sent into the world to redeem us from our sins (At 4:12).

## F. Teacher:

But until our Savior Christ Jesus appears, He continues to teach us through His word in order that we continue to walk in the light (1 Jn 1:7). Based on what Jesus revealed during His ministry, it is imperative that we be instructed by His word.

*He who rejects Me and does not receive My words, has one who judges him. The word that I have spoken, the same will judge him in the last day (Jn 12:48).*

At the beginning of Jesus' ministry, a certain scribe made the correct conclusion in reference to Jesus: "Teacher, I will follow you wherever you go" (Mt 8:19). And this should be the determination of everyone who would prepare himself until the Christ comes again. We should be willing to ask Jesus, "Teacher, what good thing must I do so that I may have eternal life?" (Mt 19:16). And when the Teacher replies with instructions, we must not respond as the rich young ruler who asked the preceding question. He went away sad because he could fulfill the commitment unto which Jesus called him (Mt 19:22).

The word "teacher" in reference to Jesus is used about seventy times in the New Testament. And indeed, He was a master teacher. Though the word "teacher" was used in the New Testament times to refer primarily to one who was a leader by what he taught, Jesus was identified as a leading teacher. He was identified as such, not only because of His function as a teacher in society, but also because of what He taught. As an effective communicator of His teachings, the methods of good teaching that He employed have been used throughout the world unto this day.

In order to lead the people to His desired goal, Jesus resorted to a great deal of teaching. "And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues ..." (Mt 4:23). "And seeing the multitudes ... He opened His mouth and taught them" (Mt 5:1,2). At the end of His ministry, Jesus said to the multitudes, "I sat daily with you, teaching in the temple ..." (Mt 26:55).

In order to change the course of the faith of the Jews, Jesus taught a great deal in reference to where He was taking them. What the people were taught would determine the direction of their behavior and their acceptance of Him as the Messiah. In this way, the following are some of the teaching principles that Jesus used to lead the people to His kingship and the new world order that would fall under His kingship:

**1. Jesus was prepared to teach.** From childhood, Jesus "grew and became strong, filled with wisdom" (Lk 2:40). He associated Himself at an early age with the teachers of Israel (Lk 2:46). And even at a young age "all who heard Him were astonished at His understanding and answers" (Lk 2:47). So during His growing years, "Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man" (Lk 2:52).

When it came time to begin His teaching ministry, Jesus was prepared (See Lk 3:23). He taught both publicly and from house to house. On many occasions the following happened: "It came to pass on another Sabbath that He entered into the synagogue and taught" (Lk 6:6). It would be correct

to conclude that Jesus continually taught the people throughout His three and a half year ministry. We have recorded in the New Testament all the truth of His teachings, which truth was taught in different ways during His teaching ministry.

**2. Jesus taught a specific direction to which He was leading the people.** He knew that the people needed to be taught to move in the direction that He was taking them. Generally speaking, He taught the fundamental scope of why He came into the world and where He was taking the people in order that they be able to go out of the world with Him: "And you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free" (Jn 8:32). And more specifically, He directed, "I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly" (Jn 10:10). Therefore, we would conclude that the scope of His teaching was made in His final prayer to the Father:

*And this is life eternal, that they might know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent. I have glorified You on the earth. I have finished the work that You gave Me to do (Jn 17:3,4).*

Jesus finished His teaching work, for the preceding statement was made **before** the cross. Therefore, throughout His teaching ministry Jesus brought the people to a knowledge of the "only true God."

Jesus came from the Father, and thus, only He could teach fully concerning who the Father was. Some people who desire to be teachers are always learning, but they are "never able to come to the knowledge of the truth" (2 Tm 3:7). If one teaches something about which he knows little, it is like speaking of a place one has never visited. In order to lead people in the direction of faith in Jesus, it is imperative to lead according to the word of God. If we would have a faith that is built on Jesus, then certainly we must know the word of Jesus (See Rm 10:17).

**3. Jesus was committed to His students:** Jesus' commitment to His students could be summed up in one statement: "I am the good shepherd. **The good shepherd gives His life for the sheep**" (Jn 10:11). Those who have committed themselves to the word of God, of necessity must also commit themselves to the ones they teach. It is the gospel that is preached to unbelievers (Mk 16:15). But it is the word of truth that is taught to believers (2 Tm 2:2). Paul was "appointed ... a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and truth" (1 Tm 2:7). He instructed that those who would desire to shepherd the flock of God, however, must be "able to teach" the flock (1 Tm 3:2). Those, therefore, who would be faithful leaders are exhorted with the following statement by the Holy Spirit:

*If you instruct the brethren in these things, you will be a good servant of Christ Jesus, nourished by the words of faith and of good teaching that you have followed (1 Tm 4:6).*

**4. Jesus used many methods of teaching.** He taught by using parables (Mk 12:12). He taught by asking questions that demanded a response from a questioning audience (Mt 16:13,15). He taught by being redundant in order to emphasize truths (Jn 21). He used visual aids on one occasion when He cursed a fig tree (Mk 11:20-24). He used all

methods of teaching that would communicate His message to the people.

The Palestine pathways were His classroom. As He walked with His disciples, He engaged them in conversation (Mt 16). His environment of teaching was much different than that which is commonly used today. Jesus' students never sat in a classroom, nor took a final example. The general principle of His teaching was through discipleship, that is, the students watched and listened, and then enacted His teachings in their lives when He sent them out on different preaching tours (Lk 10).

Henry Adams once said, "A teacher affects eternity; he can never know where his influence stops." We have no idea who wrote the following poem, but it was published in the *Christian Bible Teacher* over fifty years ago and offers an appropriate conclusion to this point:

I dreamed the pearly gates were opened wide,  
And I had entered in, for I had died;  
And now must give account of all my acts,  
I saw a book there opened with these facts.

I thought, "My role upon the earth was small,  
Just teaching a Bible school my call."  
For I saw all the saints of God up there,  
And mine was, at most, a meager share.

I heard the Master call for my report,  
I stood afraid, for mine ... was short;  
I trembled and felt I would not pass,  
Then whispered, "I just taught a Bible class."

And from the throne I heard His voice, "Well done,  
Come in and share eternal life, my son;  
Although your place was humble and obscure,  
You led the thirsty to the waters pure."

And then it seems that from eternal plains,  
There came the sound of voices in refrain,  
That rolled across the mighty sea of glass,  
There are the great ... the teachers of a class.

When I awoke I thought of those I taught,  
And in their lives, what glory God had wrought,  
I prayed to God, and all that I could say,  
"Make me a better teacher day by day."

And you who teach this Christian way to live,  
May feel sometimes you're asked too much to give;  
But someday you will reap eternal joys,  
Because you led to Christ these girls and boys.