

The Reason Jesus Gave Signs

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As we all know, during Jesus Christ's ministry He performed quite a number of miracles. Specifically, as signs to show people that His claims of being the Son of God, of being the Messiah were legitimate and true. It's easy for anyone to come and make wild claims and say, "I'm the Son of God, I'm the Messiah." There have been a lot of people that have made those types of wild claims. It legitimizes it when you can perform numerous, supernatural miracles that get people's attention. Christ did, throughout His ministry, perform quite a number of miracles as signs that He was who He said He was. He wanted all of us to believe in Him, not only those who witnessed it in person, but also those who would read about the accounts in the gospels. To see this as evidence that He really is Who He says He is. He wanted this knowledge—this realization—to be much more than an intellectual, *"I believe that Christ is the Son of God and He died for the sins of mankind."*

In today's world that is a popular idea, that you just accept Christ as your Savior and believe He is who He says He is and have a warm, fuzzy feeling in your heart and that's all there is to it. There was a lot more to this because Christ gave numerous signs so that we would believe in Him. But there was a reason why He did this. He wanted us to have that realization of who He is, but He wants that realization to be a life changing experience for us. For us to realize our need for a savior. To realize who He is and who we are and how flawed we are as human beings and how we need Him to reconcile us to the Father. To give us a chance to have a relationship with the Father and potentially receive eternal life. That's the reason He did all of these signs.

What we are going to do in this sermon is look at the number of signs that Christ did to prove who He was, with a focus on the reason for this. The life changing experience He wanted this to be, for this realization for our individual lives. If you would like a title, it's:

The Reason Jesus Gave Signs

He gave numerous signs through miraculous things that He performed, but there was a major purpose behind all of this. It should be a life changing realization for all of us, because that's the real point. To start off, I'd like to address a common misunderstanding that I've heard through popular Christianity throughout all my life and even stated in the church of God. It's the idea that Christ only gave one sign that He was the Messiah and that's the sign of Jonah. As we're going to see, that's an obvious misunderstanding of a statement that Christ made when He was asked about giving a sign. Let's start off turning Matthew 12 and look at this famous account. He does make a statement here that if we don't take the full context into consideration—and all the other evidence in scripture—you can try to interpret this as there is one and only one sign that He's the Messiah. But as we're going to see, the Bible very clearly states He did a lot of signs to prove who He was. To cover this account, go to Matthew 12:38.

Matthew 12:38 *Then some of the scribes and Pharisees answered, saying, "Teacher, we want to see a sign from You." (NKJV)*

What we're going to see from here, from Christ's response, they are not sincerely asking to see a sign and if You show us sufficient evidence, we might seriously consider and believe what You're saying. They are really just trying to pick a fight with Him. And He realizes they are just trying to pick a fight and He refuses to play the game. That's key to understanding how He responds to this.

39) But He answered and said to them, "An evil and adulterous generation seeks after a sign, and no sign will be given to it except the sign of the prophet Jonah. (NKJV)

He's not saying: *"This is the one and only sign that I give, that I am Who I say I am."*

He's saying: *"You don't want a real sign; you're not interested in the truth. You're trying to pick a fight and I'm not going to play your game."*

That's basically what He is telling them, because read the next couple of verses.

40) For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish, so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. (NKJV)

He's giving a particular sign, but notice the next couple of verses where He makes it very clear, you're not interested in the truth.

41) The men of Nineveh will rise up in the judgment with this generation and condemn it, because they repented at the preaching of Jonah; and indeed a greater than Jonah is here.

42) The queen of the South will rise up in the judgment with this generation and condemn it, for she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and indeed, a greater than Solomon is here. (NKJV)

He's telling them: *"You're not really interested in the truth so I'm not going to play your game; you're just looking for a fight."*

It's also important to realize that He is setting them up, baiting them and playing them like a fiddle. He knows they are not sincere and don't really want the truth.

He says: *"Here's a sign for you, I'm going to rise from the dead after 3 days and 3 Nights."*

Throwing this bait out there, knowing they are just adversarial and wanting to pick a fight with them, he's baiting them. And now they are going to go to great effort to try and

disprove this sign which is going to play right into His hand. It's going to legitimize and prove all the more that He truly did rise from the dead. In Matthew 27 He threw this out as a challenge. *After 3 days and 3 nights, I'm going to rise from the dead.* They remembered this one and now they are going to make sure that there is no way that anyone can fake that He actually fulfilled this. That makes the evidence all the stronger that He legitimately rose from the dead.

Matthew 27:62 *On the next day, which followed the Day of Preparation, the chief priests and Pharisees gathered together to Pilate, 63) saying, "Sir, we remember, while He was still alive, how that deceiver said, After three days I will rise." (NKJV)*

They remembered the challenge He laid out for them.

64) Therefore command that the tomb be made secure until the third day, lest His disciples come by night and steal Him away, and say to the people, 'He has risen from the dead. So the last deception will be worse than the first.' 65) Pilate said to them, "You have a guard; go your way, make it as secure as you know how." So they went and made the tomb secure, sealing the stone and setting the guard. (NKJV)

They've sealed the tomb to make sure that if anything is tampered with, it will be obvious. They set guards out there and now there will be eye witnesses that said we stood guard the whole time, nobody could have faked this, so when He disappears there is absolute evidence now. There's no way this could be fraud. This guy really rose from the dead. He was playing them like a fiddle. Let's notice in Chapter 28:1.

Matthew 28:1 *Now after the Sabbath, as the first day of the week began to dawn, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary came to see the tomb. 2) And behold, there was a great earthquake; for an angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat on it. 3) His countenance was like lightning, and his clothing as white as snow. 4) And the guards shook for fear of him, and became like dead men. (NKJV)*

Now the guards that they put there to make sure no one could tamper with it, are now eye witnesses to all of this taking place.

5) But the angel answered and said to the women, "Do not be afraid, for I know that you seek Jesus who was crucified. 6) He is not here; for He is risen, as He said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay. 7) And go quickly and tell His disciples that He is risen from the dead, and indeed He is going before you into Galilee; there you will see Him. Behold, I have told you." 8) So they went out quickly from the tomb with fear and great joy, and ran to bring His disciples word. (NKJV)

Skip down to verse 11 and we'll see their reaction. As I mentioned, these guys were not interested in the truth. Even the most skeptical, hard-headed person, if you're even remotely interested in the truth, when a guy claims that: *After 3 days and 3 nights, I'm going to rise from the dead*, you seal the tomb, you put guards around it to make sure it's absolutely impossible to fake it and the guy disappears from the tomb just like He said He would. At that point, if you are even remotely interested in the truth, you would say, maybe we should reconsider what this guy had to say. There's no way He could have faked it, so we have no choice but to accept He is legit. That is what any reasonable person who cared at all about the truth would start to think. That would get through the most hard-headed person in the world to start paying attention. That's not what they do.

11) Now while they were going, behold, some of the guard came into the city and reported to the chief priests all the things that had happened.

12) When they had assembled with the elders and consulted together, they gave a large sum of money to the soldiers,

13) saying, "Tell them, His disciples came at night and stole Him away while we slept."

14) And if this comes to the governor's ears, we will appease him and make you secure."

15) So they took the money and did as they were instructed; and this saying is commonly reported among the Jews until this day. (NKJV)

They knew because they sealed the tomb and put the guards there, that this was a lie. Now the only way that they can still be against them is to bribe them and tell them to lie about it. They know that they are lying about it, they know the guy really rose from the dead because they made it impossible for Him to fake this. The whole lesson here is, they weren't interested in the truth. Even the Pharisees themselves openly admit that Christ did numerous signs to prove who He was. In John 11 we see a direct admission to this. We're going to break into a context here. This is right after Christ raises Lazarus from the dead. We're going to come back later in this sermon and look at that particular sign and miracle that He performed, but just understand the context that Lazarus had been dead for 4 days and was already starting to stink. Christ goes and raises Him from the dead and brings Him back to life. When a guy has been dead for that long, his decomposing body is already starting to smell, there is no way to deny what took place. You can't claim he was just in a coma and got better and it just happened on its own. No, if his body is decomposing and you brought him back from the dead, there is no way to deny what has taken place. It's blatantly obvious what has taken place. That's the context here.

John 11:45 *Then many of the Jews who had come to Mary, and had seen the things Jesus did, believed in Him.*

46) But some of them went away to the Pharisees and told them the things Jesus did.

47) Then the chief priests and the Pharisees gathered a council and said, "What shall we do? For this Man works many signs. (NKJV)

They openly admit that He has performed many signs that we have taken note of, to prove who He is. But notice their response to this. They aren't paying attention to it and respond accordingly to it; they are just trying to cover it up because they see Him as a threat their power.

48) If we let Him alone like this, everyone will believe in Him, and the Romans will come and take away both our place and nation." (NKJV)

They don't care about the truth, He's just a threat to our power. That's all they really care about.

*49) And one of them, Caiaphas, being high priest that year, said to them, "You know nothing at all,
50) nor do you consider that it is expedient for us that one man should die for the people, and not that the whole nation should perish."
51) Now this he did not say on his own authority; but being high priest that year he prophesied that Jesus would die for the nation,
52) and not for that nation only, but also that He would gather together in one the children of God who were scattered abroad.
53) Then, from that day on, they plotted to put Him to death. (NKJV)*

They are flat out admitting that He is Who He says He is but are still plotting to kill Him.

*54) Therefore Jesus no longer walked openly among the Jews, but went from there into the country near the wilderness, to a city called Ephraim, and there remained with His disciples.
55) And the Passover of the Jews was near, and many went from the country up to Jerusalem before the Passover, to purify themselves.
56) Then they sought Jesus, and spoke among themselves as they stood in the temple, "What do you think—that He will not come to the feast?"
57) Now both the chief priests and the Pharisees had given a command, that if anyone knew where He was, he should report it, that they might seize Him. (NKJV)*

They openly admitted that He did a lot of signs, everyone is taking notice and they aren't thinking, maybe we should consider believing in Him too because the evidence is blatantly obvious and hard to deny. They aren't thinking about that, they just don't want everybody else to take notice of the obvious evidence, because that is a threat to their power and that is all they are concerned about. We need to take that into consideration when we think of this statement of just the sign of Jonah. He's not saying there was only one sign that He was the Messiah. He's just basically giving a dismissive answer and setting up the Pharisees to confirm that this sign of Jonah is what He's doing.

If we look in the book of John, the book of John in particular records a series of miracles that Christ performs specifically as signs that He is the Messiah. The book directly tells us this. We're not going to look at every single one of them but if you go through the book of John, you can number at least 7 or 8 or more of specific signs that it lays out. As we're going to see today, the first couple of them are literally numbered. The first one He does He says, this is the first sign He performed. The second one says, this is the second one He performed and there are numerous others. At the end of the book, we'll start reading in John 20:30, this is after Christ's resurrection, He has appeared to the apostles and shown that He is still alive. He's even appeared before doubting Thomas who didn't believe the other apostles that they had seen Christ. Thomas comes up and sticks His hand in Christ's wounds and realizes this is really Christ, He's back alive again. This is another sign to prove Who He was. Notice the comment here.

John 20:30 *And truly Jesus did many other signs in the presence of His disciples, which are not written in this book;*

31) but these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name. (NKJV)

Notice He is saying, Christ gave lots of signs so people would believe in Him, but that was more than just believing that He is Who He says He is, this was to change your life. This information was to change how you live, how you see yourself, how you behave and pursue your life—that's the point of all of this. That's what we are supposed to learn from all of it.

To look at some of these signs, look at John 2. As I mentioned, the book of John articulates some of this and we will see in Chapter 2, it describes what takes place. It even says this is the beginning of the signs that He did. Then we'll see a couple of chapters later, it's going to give us another miracle He performed and it will say this is the second sign. It's literally articulated numerically for you. We're not going to look at all of them, but we will look at 3 particular miraculous signs He did.

There is another observation you can make from this. There is kind of an escalation of them, you might say. We're starting off with the first one where He turns water into wine, which is miraculous, but some might look at it as a magician's trick. I'm not saying that's what it was, but He starts off with more minor miracles. Later we're going to see He heals a guy on the brink of death and then He brings Lazarus back from the dead. It starts to become more and more dramatic and more and more hard to deny. As we know it ultimately culminates with, He's resurrected from the dead Himself. They just get more and more hard to deny and more and more in your face and you can't deny who this guy is.

John 2:1 *On the third day there was a wedding in Cana of Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there.*

2) Now both Jesus and His disciples were invited to the wedding.

3) And when they ran out of wine, the mother of Jesus said to Him, "They have no wine."

- 4) *Jesus said to her, "Woman, what does your concern have to do with Me? My hour has not yet come."*
- 5) *His mother said to the servants, "Whatever He says to you, do it."*
- 6) *Now there were set there six waterpots of stone, according to the manner of purification of the Jews, containing twenty or thirty gallons apiece.*
- 7) *Jesus said to them, "Fill the waterpots with water." And they filled them up to the brim.*
- 8) *And He said to them, "Draw some out now, and take it to the master of the feast." And they took it.*
- 9) *When the master of the feast had tasted the water that was made wine, and did not know where it came from (but the servants who had drawn the water knew), the master of the feast called the bridegroom.*
- 10) *And he said to him, "Every man at the beginning sets out the good wine, and when the guests have well drunk, then the inferior. You have kept the good wine until now!"*
- 11) *This beginning of signs [this is just the start of the signs] Jesus did in Cana of Galilee, and manifested His glory; and His disciples believed in Him. That's the whole point of getting people to take note and to believe who He says He is.*
- 12) *After this He went down to Capernaum, He, His mother, His brothers, and His disciples; and they did not stay there many days. (NKJV)*

It says He did this so they would believe in Him. It's easy for someone to come making big claims. Just to use a modern-day example, as most of you know I've been in the church of God all of my life, since birth, and I have lost count of how many times I've heard people make the claim that "I'm one of the two witnesses. I've been called to fulfill this prophetic office, look at me I'm one of the two witnesses". There's been way more than two of them. It's happened numerous times throughout out my life time. I've yet to see anyone perform the miracles in Revelation 11 that it says the two witnesses will perform. A lot of guys beating their chest and making big claims, but not seeing anybody calling down fire from heaven, stopping the rain and turning the water into blood. If someone did that, you would say, maybe they are the two witnesses because they are actually doing the things that the two witnesses are supposed to do. Anyone can come and beat their chest and say, "*Look at me, God chose me to be one of the two witnesses, aren't I so great?*" Anyone can come and say, "*I'm the Son of God, I'm the Messiah.*" But Christ performs all of these miracles and they think, that maybe there is something to this guy. He's not just beating His chest and telling us how great He is, He's performing these supernatural miracles that physical human beings just couldn't pull off. We have to pay attention to this guy. That was the whole point here.

In John 4 we'll see where this specifically tells us that this is the second miracle that He performs. You'll also notice there is an escalation as He goes through these. He starts off with water to wine. Now He heals a guy who is on the brink of death.

John 4:46 So Jesus came again to Cana of Galilee where He had made the water wine. And there was a certain nobleman whose son was sick at Capernaum.

47) When he heard that Jesus had come out of Judea into Galilee, he went to Him and implored Him to come down and heal his son, for he was at the point of death.

48) Then Jesus said to him, "Unless you people see signs and wonders, you will by no means believe." (NKJV)

He realized that for the carnal human beings to believe what He was telling them and who He was saying He was, He had to perform these miracles so they could see something out of the ordinary to pay attention.

49) The nobleman said to Him, "Sir, come down before my child dies!"

50) Jesus said to him, "Go your way; your son lives." So the man believed the word that Jesus spoke to him, and he went his way.

51) And as he was now going down, his servants met him and told him, saying, "Your son lives!"

52) Then he inquired of them the hour when he got better. And they said to him, "Yesterday at the seventh hour the fever left him."

53) So the father knew that it was at the same hour in which Jesus said to him, "Your son lives." And he himself believed, and his whole household.

54) This again is the second sign Jesus did when He had come out of Judea into Galilee. (NKJV)

John is numbering them. He doesn't number all the others in the same fashion, to numerically layout every one of them. This makes it very obvious that Christ did way more than one sign. He did a lot of signs and they are all for the purpose of getting people to take notice and to get undeniable evidence of. We just have to take note of the fact that this guy isn't just some crazy guy beating His chest, making loud claims saying I'm the Messiah. He couldn't pull this off if He was just some crazy guy making loud claims. We have to pay attention to Who this guy is. This just becomes undeniable. He goes from this—we're going to skip over some of the other miracles He did—to where He heals a guy who is about to die and later, He resurrects a guy who is already dead. It becomes undeniable, because you could claim with someone who is healed and He tells them, "You're going to get better or stand up and walk" or things of that nature and rationalize that it's a placebo effect or they would have gotten better on their own. When a guy is dead to the point he is starting to stink, and he gets up and walks and is alive, there is no way to deny that one. John 11:28 is the account where we skipped over before. We're reading the Pharisees reaction when they heard reports of Lazarus being resurrected from the dead. This is the actual account where that takes place. If you notice, what they are going to say to Christ is, "If you had come earlier, He wouldn't have died." I think obviously Christ specifically waited until He was dead so He could perform a miracle that nobody could deny. Again, if He had shown up and healed Lazarus before he died, people could say that he would have gotten better on his own.

It just happened by natural causes. The guy is dead and he's starting to stink—you can't deny what is taking place. It's not even rational.

John 11:28 *And when she had said these things, she went her way and secretly called Mary her sister, saying, "The Teacher has come and is calling for you."*

29) *As soon as she heard that, she arose quickly and came to Him.*

30) *Now Jesus had not yet come into the town, but was in the place where Martha met Him.*

31) *Then the Jews who were with her in the house, and comforting her, when they saw that Mary rose up quickly and went out, followed her, saying, "She is going to the tomb to weep there."*

32) *Then, when Mary came where Jesus was, and saw Him, she fell down at His feet, saying to Him, "Lord, if You had been here, my brother would not have died." (NKJV)*

"If you had been here ahead of time, we could have avoided all of this." I fully believe that Christ knew that and He purposely waited to resurrect him because He wants to really get people's attention because He wants them to understand that He is the Messiah and for them to have that realization.

33) *Therefore, when Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews who came with her weeping, He groaned in the spirit and was troubled.*

34) *And He said, "Where have you laid him?" They said to Him, "Lord, come and see."*

35) *Jesus wept.*

36) *Then the Jews said, "See how He loved him!"*

37) *And some of them said, "Could not this Man, who opened the eyes of the blind, also have kept this man from dying?" (NKJV)*

So, they are all focusing on how He could heal him but they don't realize He could raise him from the dead as well.

38) *Then Jesus, again groaning in Himself, came to the tomb. It was a cave, and a stone lay against it.*

39) *Jesus said, "Take away the stone." Martha, the sister of him who was dead, said to Him, "Lord, by this time there is a stench, for he has been dead four days." (NKJV)*

The evidence that the guy is dead is undeniable at this point. Anyone who sees this can't rationalize that somehow, he was sick and was in a coma and came out by natural causes—there's no way to make that argument.

40) *Jesus said to her, "Did I not say to you that if you would believe you would see the glory of God?"*

41) *Then they took away the stone from the place where the dead man was lying. And Jesus lifted up His eyes and said, "Father, I thank You that You have heard Me.*

42) *And I know that You always hear Me, but because of the people who are standing by I said this, that they may believe that You sent Me."* (NKJV)

This whole thing was orchestrated to get people's attention so they would look and say, "We just have to consider that this guy is who He says He is." He raised a guy from the dead who has been stinking—he's been dead for 4 days. There's no way to explain this any other way. He has to be Who He says He is.

43) *Now when He had said these things, He cried with a loud voice, "Lazarus, come forth!"*

44) *And he who had died came out bound hand and foot with graveclothes, and his face was wrapped with a cloth. Jesus said to them, "Loose him, and let him go."* (NKJV)

This just makes dramatic evidence that people have to pay attention. If they are at all sincere, they have to say there is something to this guy because you just can't do this otherwise. You can't fake all of this. This is what makes the Pharisees behavior so blatant, because they openly admitted that they had seen a lot of signs of Him. It's not like they didn't see sufficient evidence to grasp that there has to be something to this. This guy just can't be a fraud because He's done too much; we can't deny it. That was the whole purpose of this.

The important thing for us to realize is, this is a lot more—a much deeper significance here—than just looking at this and saying, "Yes, I believe this guy described in the Bible is the Son of God. He died for the sins of mankind." You know there are a lot of people today in our popular culture who will mouth those words. They will mouth those words, saying "Yes I believe Jesus is the Son of God, I believe He died for the sins of mankind." but that is about as far as it goes. It's just a profession, an intellectual proclamation and acknowledgement of it, but it doesn't change who they are. It doesn't result in a life of obedience; it doesn't result in a humility. We're going to see as we go through this sermon, it's one of the big things we should get out of it. It's not just to realize that yes, this guy is Who He says He is. The implication of that is, if He needs to die for the sins of all of us, that tells us something that we should realize about ourselves. If we're so flawed that we need a savior, that we need a God Being to come down and be tortured and murdered and die to cover our sins, so that we have a chance to be reconciled to the Father because we aren't capable of doing anything on our own to earn that opportunity—that realization should create a deep humility in ourselves and make us see ourselves as small in our own eyes and realize the significance of that. Without that realization, we can't have the life changing event that this is supposed to be. That should humble us before God and help us realize how flawed we are. To realize that the greatest problem in our own lives is us. It's like the old pogo cartoon: *We have seen the enemy and the enemy is us.* It's realizing that part of what we get out of that realization is much more than just I believe in Jesus and He's

the Son of God and He died for the sins of mankind. A lot of people profess that but it doesn't change their lives. In John 3 we'll see a verse that is very often quoted, particularly in popular Christianity. Oftentimes it's just at an intellectual level. It's just an acknowledgement of saying, yes Jesus is Who He says He is and that's correct, saying He died for the sins of mankind and again that is correct, but it doesn't go any deeper than that.

John 3:16 *For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.*

17) For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved. (NKJV)

There's a purpose that it's going to be a life changing event. Accepting Him as our Savior is not just going to be an intellectual profession we're going to do. It's not just something that we say, that we intellectually acknowledge, it's something that we live in our actions. As we're going to see, faith in God and Christ is more than just acknowledging and saying they are who they say they are. That's step one but it has to actually change who we are and how we live our lives.

Faith is defined in James 2. In popular Christianity these days it's just, just have faith and that's all that is required of you. As long as you say you believe in Jesus and He died for your sins, that's all that is required of you. That's not how the Bible defines this. As we're going to see, the Bible tells us in this section of scripture that even the demons recognize Who God the Father and Christ are. They can correctly state Who they are and are not confused by that. Right after this verse we're going to look at an example of demons interacting with Christ and immediately address Him as the Son of God. They have no confusion as to Who He is, but it doesn't change their behavior. It's not a life changing event for them. They correctly understand it, but it doesn't change how they live. Let's understand how the Bible defines faith.

James 2:14 *What does it profit, my brethren, if someone says he has faith but does not have works? Can faith save him?*

15) If a brother or sister is naked and destitute of daily food,

16) and one of you says to them, "Depart in peace, be warmed and filled," but you do not give them the things which are needed for the body, what does it profit?

17) Thus also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead.

18) But someone will say, "You have faith, and I have works." Show me your faith without your works, and I will show you my faith by my works.

19) You believe that there is one God. You do well. Even the demons believe—and tremble! (NKJV)

We're going to look at an example in the gospels in a moment. It's just that the demons know about God the Father and tremble with that knowledge, they recognize Christ as the Son of God as well. They directly address Him as such—there's no confusion about that at all but it doesn't change how they behave and live.

- 20) *But do you want to know, O foolish man, that faith without works is dead?*
21) *Was not Abraham our father justified by works when he offered Isaac his son on the altar?*
22) *Do you see that faith was working together with his works, and by works faith was made perfect?*
23) *And the Scripture was fulfilled which says, "Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness." And he was called the friend of God.*
24) *You see then that a man is justified by works, and not by faith only.*
25) *Likewise, was not Rahab the harlot also justified by works when she received the messengers and sent them out another way?*
26) *For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also.*
(NKJV)

Notice the two examples that it points to. It's pointing to Abraham sacrificing Isaac and Rahab and how she had to protect the spies who were spying out the land. They conquered the area and she ends up joining Israel after they conquered the city where she is at. Think about both of these cases. They were not situations where people profess their faith and they make claims and had a warm, fuzzy feeling in their heart and that's all there was to it. These were gut wrenching situations that these people had to go through. Imagine Abraham who had to sacrifice his son. I would imagine he would rather have had faced death himself than to have to deal with the idea of having to sacrifice his son. This son he waited all these years to have. Finally, to have a son who can be an heir, grows up into adulthood and now he had to sacrifice him. That had to be an absolutely gut-wrenching trial for him to go through. Similarly, in Rahab's case she was risking her life. If this didn't go the way she was anticipating and the Israelites didn't win the battle, she could be killed for corroborating with the enemy. She was risking her life in doing this. These are people who we say in popular culture today, "they put their money where their mouth is". They proved with their actions; they didn't just make claims. It wasn't just an intellectual profession and a warm, fuzzy feeling in their heart, it was much deeper than that. That's what it has to be for us.

As we read through this, one of the things I noted was it talking about *you believe in one God, well even the demons believe that*. The demons believe that Christ is the Son of God as well. In Matthew 8 we'll see an example of this. Notice where Christ encounters some individuals possessed by demons. The demons immediately acknowledge Him as the Son of God—there's no confusion there, they are not debating that subject. They immediately recognize Who He is. They're not confused about it. You can see, this hasn't changed their behavior. This isn't a life changing event for them. Realizing Who He is and who they are and how that should dictate how they behave. No, they acknowledge it but it doesn't faze how they behave.

Matthew 8:28 *When He had come to the other side, to the country of the Gergesenes, there met Him two demon-possessed men, coming out of the tombs, exceedingly fierce, so that no one could pass that way.*

29) *And suddenly they cried out, saying, "What have we to do with You, Jesus, You Son of God? Have You come here to torment us before the time?"* (NKJV)

Notice again, no confusion whatsoever. They acknowledge Him right off the bat,

"You are the Son of God, you're the guy who is going to destroy us later, we know what the future is and are not confused about that. It doesn't change how they behave.

30) *Now a good way off from them there was a herd of many swine feeding.*

31) *So the demons begged Him, saying, "If You cast us out, permit us to go away into the herd of swine."*

32) *And He said to them, "Go." So when they had come out, they went into the herd of swine. And suddenly the whole herd of swine ran violently down the steep place into the sea, and perished in the water.*

33) *Then those who kept them fled; and they went away into the city and told everything, including what had happened to the demon-possessed men.*

34) *And behold, the whole city came out to meet Jesus. And when they saw Him, they begged Him to depart from their region.* (NKJV)

Notice they just witnessed that this guy cast out demons. Obviously, these guys had to have been a thorn in the side of those around them because they're just insane as someone who was demon possessed would be. He solves this problem and they notice this but it's not, "Maybe this guy is the Son of God." It's, "Get out! We don't want anything to do with you." They see the signs but their behavior is not a life changing event for them of how we should change and listen to this guy, because He is Who He says He is. That's the whole key and the point we need to learn from this.

What we're going to do through the rest of this sermon is to look at the example of Apostle Peter. His life teaches us some interesting lessons about this whole subject. As you know, as the apostles first start working with Christ, it's obvious from their behavior and exchanges, they don't really realize Who He is. He is the Christ, the Son of God—it takes them a while to grasp that concept and have it sink in. Then they reach a point where Christ directly asks them—He asks Peter—and asks "*Who do you think I am?*" Peter gives Him the right answer saying, "*You're the Son of God.*" And Christ confirms that he got it right. He even says that God the Father has revealed this to you. It takes it awhile for that to sink in beyond the intellectual awareness for Who Christ is; of being able to say the right words and say it correctly to where it's really changing his heart and his behavior and how he lives his life and sees himself. One of the realizations that comes from realizing Christ is the Son of God—the sacrifice that saves us all—is more than an intellectual awareness. What should come from this is, this guy had to die to save me. It's not just that He had to die to save mankind. He had to die to save me because I'm so flawed inside, I'm such a sinner and so weak that I needed that to cover my sins. I need that help to carry me so that my life can become something more worthwhile. Realizing that humility that we should have, is key of what this knowledge should do for us. What we're going to see is, there is a period in Peter's life where he

can answer the questions correctly and tell you the right answer but it's not changing how he behaves. Let's go to Matthew 16:13.

Matthew 16:13 *When Jesus came into the region of Caesarea Philippi, He asked His disciples, saying, "Who do men say that I, the Son of Man, am?"*

14) *So they said, "Some say John the Baptist, some Elijah, and others Jeremiah or one of the prophets."*

15) *He said to them, "But who do you say that I am?"*

16) *Simon Peter answered and said, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God." (NKJV)*

Notice that is absolutely the right answer and notice that when Christ responds to this He says, you got it right and God the Father has revealed this to you.

17) *Jesus answered and said to him, "Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah, for flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but My Father who is in heaven. (NKJV)*

Peter has the awareness now. He at least intellectually understands the information and can articulate it and Christ verifies that yes, he got it right. But as we're going to see, it takes a while and Peter has to go through some painful lessons before it really sinks in of what that should mean for his life. Of how he should see himself as a weak, frail individual in need of a savior to cover his own sins and to give him the strength to overcome. That's not what he is thinking. Peter is still relying upon his own strength; he still thinks he's big and bad and going to impress everybody. It takes a while for this to sink into the reality of what this information should do for his life and how he sees himself. In Luke 22 we'll see an example of this. We're going to pick up the account in verse 24. To set the scene so you understand the full context of this, the account we are about to read takes place the night that Christ institutes the New Covenant Passover. He has explained to them the symbols of the bread and wine and what all this means. He explained that this is My body that is broken for you, this is My blood that had to be spilled for you. He's explaining that He has to die for them. This is to cover the sins of you guys and everyone else. You would think with just the basic awareness of this they would start to grasp a little and be a little humbled by this. If nothing else, realizing what their good friend that they've spent all this time with is telling them. He is about to get murdered. "I'm about to get beat up and lose my life" and that they would be sobered by this. That's some pretty heavy information for someone to be sharing. Then to have any awareness that this guy is going through this because of me, because of my sins and how frail and weak I am. But that's not what they are thinking. Notice there is an ongoing problem with the apostles.

Luke 22:24 *Now there was also a dispute among them, as to which of them should be considered the greatest. (NKJV)*

Their concern, instead of realizing the significance of what this information should mean to them, they are arguing about who is the biggest and baddest. Who is the greatest of

the group, who is going to be the great alpha male in charge—that's their whole focus. To understand the full context of this—if you read through the gospels—this is a common theme with them. This particular issue comes up—these debates with each other, trying to out argue each other, who is the most impressive, who is going to be the big dog in charge—that's a common issue with them. To be totally fair with the apostles, we have to take into consideration the age demographics of where these guys are at. The reason I say that is, if we look at the church of God today—where the majority of the population is, it's typically more often generation X and older—an older population. The reason I mention that is just outside the issue of having the Holy Spirit—we expect the apostles don't get the Holy Spirit until Pentecost and we know naturally there is going to be a gap in their understanding of spiritual things just not having the Holy Spirit—but from a physical, carnal perspective, as people grow up into adulthood, most get beyond the issue of constantly blustering about who is the greatest. Saying *I'm going to be the alpha dog in charge, look at me I'm so impressive*. Most people as they advance into adulthood, grow beyond that and start seeing that as immature and ridiculous. They aren't deluded anymore that that impresses anybody. They realize it just makes you look immature and foolish and they don't want to engage in that behavior. So, it's to read through the gospels and ask why is this such an issue with these guys? If we understand the age demographics, it gives us a little insight into that.

The Bible doesn't really lay out the exact ages of where the apostles were at, but it gives us some good hints to look at. The Bible does give us some solid information as to where Christ was at. In Luke 3 it tells us that when He started His ministry He was around the age of 30. So we know, although it doesn't nail it down precisely, but we know He's around the age of 30—so we know during His ministry He's in His early 30's. There are multiple indications that the apostles are younger than Him. If you look at sources online, and historical sources that speculate where they are at, generally they are going to guess that they are anywhere from their late teenage years to their mid-20's. I'm sure there is a range there and there are 12 of them. So, they are ranging in that area. When you consider that these guys are late teen years to early 20's, now it makes more sense why they are always blustering about who is the biggest and the baddest and who is going to be in charge and be the greatest over everybody. That's just typical for young men in that age group. It's not unusual at all for men like that to be blustering about their egos and such. That's just the maturity level of men in that age group. Normally when we grow beyond that, people from a physical, carnal perspective, just mature beyond that and see it as silly and immature. If we understand their age demographics, we kind of get a feel for why it's such a challenge for them. Notice that Christ is about to call them all out for this kind of behavior. He particularly calls Peter out. What we're going to see as this evening plays out, multiple times Peter doubles down on it. Instead of realizing, I should stop this behavior because Christ points out how silly this is, he keeps doubling down and saying he really is the greatest and you just have to understand how great I am. He tries to prove this a couple of times until he gets a painful enough experience where he gets a little humility. Let's look at Luke 22:24.

Luke 22:24 Now there was also a dispute among them, as to which of them should be considered the greatest. (NKJV)

Now notice how Christ calls them out for this.

25) *And He said to them, "The kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them, and those who exercise authority over them are called 'benefactors.'*

26) *But not so among you; on the contrary, he who is greatest among you, let him be as the younger, and he who governs as he who serves.*

27) *For who is greater, he who sits at the table, or he who serves? Is it not he who sits at the table? Yet I am among you as the One who serves.*

28) *But you are those who have continued with Me in My trials.*

29) *And I bestow upon you a kingdom, just as My Father bestowed one upon Me,*

30) *that you may eat and drink at My table in My kingdom, and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel."* (NKJV)

Notice he particularly calls Peter out for his actions. The Bible doesn't specifically tell us that Peter was the biggest loudmouth in these debates, but again the fact that he gets called out individually certainly suggests that.

31) *And the Lord said, "Simon, Simon! Indeed, Satan has asked for you, that he may sift you as wheat.*

32) *But I have prayed for you, that your faith should not fail; and when you have returned to Me, strengthen your brethren."*

33) *But he said to Him, "Lord, I am ready to go with You, both to prison and to death."*

34) *Then He said, "I tell you, Peter, the rooster shall not crow this day before you will deny three times that you know Me."* (NKJV)

He's telling him that he is boasting about stuff he can't deliver. Notice Peter has been called out on claiming to be the greatest. He says, I really am the greatest—I'll show you—I'll follow you to prison and follow you to death. He finds out before the night is over, we're talking about real prison and death—the kind that hurts. By the time that that realization hits him, he is suddenly not so big and bad anymore. He's running for cover and he's hiding from the little girl that he is scared of. The reality of this hits. He is so focused on proving how great he is, he's not grasping the reality of what is being said to him. In John 18 we'll see an exchange where they actually come to seize Christ and take Him away. If you think through the context, Peter's actions don't make a lot of logical sense if you think through it. The reason is, he is so blinded by his ego and trying to prove how great he is, he's not really thinking rationally and logically. The reason I say that is, we know that the apostles don't receive the Holy Spirit until the day of Pentecost. So, we don't expect the apostles to have a full grasp of things from the spiritual perspective, because without the Holy Spirit you just can't do that. We think that's just a normal thing here. Let's also consider what Peter has witnessed with his own eyes. He can mouth the words that Christ is the Son of God and of course without the Holy Spirit, he's not going to fully grasp all the meaning associated with that. That

just comes with not having the Holy Spirit. But let's consider what he has personally witnessed.

Peter has watched Christ walking on water. He has watched Christ go up to paraplegics and say stand up and walk and they stand up and walk. He has watched Him command storms to stop; where the apostles say, this guy commands the wind and seas and they obey Him. Who is this guy? He has watched miracle after miracle that Christ has performed. He knows Christ has done some incredible feats. Whether he grasped the full spiritual significance of this or not, he doesn't have to take anybody's word for this, he has had a front-line seat, right on the front row, to watch all of this taking place. He has seen it with his own eyes.

If logically, with all the soldiers coming to take Christ, if he is just thinking logically based upon his own experience, he should think that if anybody is going to be the one to handle this situation, it's probably the guy who can walk on water. It's probably the guy who raised someone from the dead, who had been dead for four days and stinking already. I think if anybody could handle the situation, it's probably that guy. That's what would make sense. If Christ is not doing this, how logical is it for Peter whipping out his sword and he's going to solve the problem and protect everybody. It's not even logical, even if you get outside the issue of a lack of a spiritual understanding from the Holy Spirit, this doesn't logically make sense just based upon what Peter has witnessed with his own eyes. Peter is in the delusion of his own ego. He's trying to prove that he really is the greatest. He's trying to showboat and show off that he is the greatest. He's trying to prove that and why his actions don't make a lot of sense. After this, we're going to see when he realizes we're talking real prison and real death, now he's scared and running from a little girl. Let's read the account in John 18.

John 18:1 *When Jesus had spoken these words, He went out with His disciples over the Brook Kidron, where there was a garden, which He and His disciples entered.*

2) And Judas, who betrayed Him, also knew the place; for Jesus often met there with His disciples.

3) Then Judas, having received a detachment of troops, and officers from the chief priests and Pharisees, came there with lanterns, torches, and weapons.

4) Jesus therefore, knowing all things that would come upon Him, went forward and said to them, "Whom are you seeking?"

5) They answered Him, "Jesus of Nazareth." Jesus said to them, "I am He." And Judas, who betrayed Him, also stood with them.

6) Now when He said to them, "I am He," they drew back and fell to the ground.

7) Then He asked them again, "Whom are you seeking?" And they said, "Jesus of Nazareth."

8) Jesus answered, "I have told you that I am He. Therefore, if you seek Me, let these go their way,

9) that the saying might be fulfilled which He spoke, "Of those whom You gave Me I have lost none."

10) *Then Simon Peter, having a sword, drew it and struck the high priest's servant, and cut off his right ear. The servant's name was Malchus.*

11) *So Jesus said to Peter, "Put your sword into the sheath. Shall I not drink the cup which My Father has given Me?" (NKJV)*

Peter thinks he is going to whip out a sword and protect the guy who walked on water. The guy who resurrected people from the dead. The guy who commanded the storms. Peter is caught up in his own ego and trying to prove how great he is. He's not logically thinking through any of this. He swings at this guy with his sword and cuts off his ear. Most logically—the Bible doesn't state this—but if you logically think it through, most likely what happened was he was swinging to try and cut the guy's head off and the guy ducks and he just cuts his ear off.

This particular account doesn't record this detail but if you look in some of the other gospel accounts, Christ has to do some damage control for Peter's actions. Christ picks up the guy's ear, heals it and puts it back on him and tells Peter to put his sword away. Tells him he doesn't know what he's doing and to stop this and start acting more maturely. Then Christ goes along and voluntarily submits to what is about to happen to him. If Peter had been paying attention and listening, Christ has been telling him all along, I'm going to be taken prisoner, beaten and killed. It's a reasonable expectation that that's what is going to happen. But Peter, so big in his own mind, that he thinks he is going to show them that he is the greatest. He thinks he's going to change all of this—it's a delusional thought. Being caught up in all of this, boasting that he will follow Him to prison, I'll follow you to death and show you how great I am. Now when Christ gets carried off to real prison and real death, Peter realizes that he's playing in the big leagues now. This is the real world where it actually hurts and now everything changes. In Mark 14 we'll see what happens later that night when the reality is this is a real, life-threatening situation. Now he's not such a big bragging guy anymore. When reality hits and it's time to deliver on this, he realizes his egotistical, boasting claims—he's not as big and bad as he thought he was.

Mark 14:66 *Now as Peter was below in the courtyard, one of the servant girls of the high priest came.*

67) *And when she saw Peter warming himself, she looked at him and said, "You also were with Jesus of Nazareth."*

68) *But he denied it, saying, "I neither know nor understand what you are saying." And he went out on the porch, and a rooster crowed.*

69) *And the servant girl saw him again, and began to say to those who stood by, "This is one of them."*

70) *But he denied it again. And a little later those who stood by said to Peter again, "Surely you are one of them; for you are a Galilean, and your speech shows it."*

71) *Then he began to curse and swear, "I do not know this Man of whom you speak!" (NKJV)*

Now he realizes we're talking about real prison and death—the kind that hurts. And now he's running scared.

72) A second time the rooster crowed. Then Peter called to mind the word that Jesus had said to him, "Before the rooster crows twice, you will deny Me three times." And when he thought about it, he wept. (NKJV)

Now things start to change. As we're going to see, this is the life changing moment for Peter when all of a sudden humility starts going into the equation. This is where Peter's life starts to take a turn. He starts blustering about his ego and starts getting some humility and is what turns his life around. As we know, he turns out to be one of the heroes of the Bible and writes some of the books of the New Testament. His story turns out very positively. Let's just notice that he realizes what he has done and he feels very guilty, realizing he messed up. Let's quickly contrast this with Judas' reaction. Judas' reaction is a lot more blatant than Peter's. Peter wasn't trying to maliciously betray Christ, he's just all caught up in his ego and trying to impress everybody, making claims beyond what he can follow up and deliver on. Judas was much more malicious, where he knowingly takes money to betray Christ. He comes to a similar realization at the end, realizing he sinned and messed up but his reaction is very different. This is in Matthew 27:1.

Matthew 27:1 *When morning came, all the chief priests and elders of the people plotted against Jesus to put Him to death.*

2) And when they had bound Him, they led Him away and delivered Him to Pontius Pilate the governor.

3) Then Judas, His betrayer, seeing that He had been condemned, was remorseful and brought back the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and elders,

4) saying, "I have sinned by betraying innocent blood." And they said, "What is that to us? You see to it!"

5) Then he threw down the pieces of silver in the temple and departed, and went and hanged himself. (NKJV)

Just like Peter, he realizes he has royally messed up but his reaction is totally different. Judas is not able to face himself. Just to illustrate the point, like the sheriff's story of something I heard about 30 years ago, I was doing a Master's degree in counseling and one of the subjects we were studying was addiction counseling. I got to hear a guy do a presentation who had gone through the Alcoholics Anonymous program and overcame his addiction to alcohol. This was a guy who you would say by worldly standards is a real tough guy. He had been to Vietnam, doing several tours of duty, had fought in combat where he's getting shot at, bullets are coming at him and he's facing the threat of death on a daily basis. He said he could go into that with confidence and it didn't really rattle him that much. After he got out of the military and his life descended into addiction, and he had to realize, he had to come realize his life was out of control and he had to face himself and take accountability for his life and face his own failings, admit that and deal with it. He said that was the most unnerving thing he had ever faced in his

life. He said he would rather have gone back to Vietnam and fought in tours of duty in combat than to have to deal with that and face who he was. He said it was the most unnerving things in the world. Oftentimes, that can be one of the most difficult things in life, just facing ourselves—facing who we are.

Fortunately, in Peter's situation, he was willing to have some humility to go back to Christ and admit that he wasn't as big and bad as he thought he was and to turn his life around. This is why his story ends so much better. In John 21 we'll see an exchange where he starts to get this point. The exchange that is taking place here is after Christ has been resurrected and He's back to life. The apostles are all back together as a group with the exception of Judas because he is dead. If you read the verses just prior to this, you'll see this is an account where Christ and 11 of the apostles are back together as a group. It's important to understand who is there as you read this account. There's another detail in this account that if you read through this in English, it will often go right over your head because the English doesn't show you the significance of what is happening in the conversation. The reason I say this is because Christ uses the word *love* and Peter uses the word *love* but they are using totally different words. In the Greek that this is translated from, when Christ uses the word *love*, He is using the word "agape". The spiritual version of *love* as defined by 1 Corinthians 13. When Peter responds and says *love*, he's just using *philia*—a more human affection term. There's a reason why he's using that and we'll see that in a minute.

John 21:15 *So when they had eaten breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Simon, son of Jonah, do you love Me more than these?" (NKJV)*

"Do you agape me more than these?" Keep in mind who the "these" are. This is the group of the apostles who are together. Christ isn't asking him, *"Do you love me more than anything else in your life?"* He's basically doing a sarcastic jab here at Peter, saying, *"Are you going to bluster about how you are greater than all the others at this point? The night of Passover, you were telling us that you were the greatest and were going to do everything, show everybody up. Have you learned anything or are you still going to bluster about being better than all the others?"* Notice as this exchange goes out, two things; Peter never makes any statement about being better than the others because he has humility now and has learned his lesson. He doesn't claim to have agape love either. We're going to see why he says that. He realizes he doesn't meet the 1 Corinthians definition. Pick up in the middle of verse 15.

15 continued) ... He said to Him, "Yes, Lord; You know that I love You." [In other words, I philia you; he's not claiming to have agape love] He said to him, "Feed My lambs." (NKJV)

What Christ is saying to him is, ""

16) He said to him again a second time, "Simon, son of Jonah, do you love [agape] Me?" He said to Him, "Yes, Lord; You know that I love [philia] You." [He's not claiming to have agape love] He said to him, "Tend My sheep." (NKJV)

The lesson: just show it in the fruits of your actions. Don't be blustering and bragging and telling us all that you're the greatest, just demonstrate it in the fruits of your action and over time everyone will notice.

17) He said to him the third time, "Simon, son of Jonah, do you love Me?" Peter was grieved because He said to him the third time, "Do you love Me?" (NKJV)

Peter knows what is happening, that Christ is calling him out and jabbing him for this. Are you getting the point Peter?

17 continued) ... And he said to Him, "Lord, You know all things; You know that I love You." Jesus said to him, "Feed My sheep. (NKJV)

Just demonstrate it in the fruits of your actions, that's the key. Turn over to 1 Corinthians 13. I mentioned a couple of times Peter is not claiming to have agape love and there's a reason why. Let's notice a couple of verses that define *agape* love. We'll see the point that is being made.

1 Corinthians 13:4 *Love suffers long and is kind; love does not envy; love does not parade itself, is not puffed up;*

5) does not behave rudely, does not seek its own, is not provoked, thinks no evil;

6) does not rejoice in iniquity, but rejoices in the truth;

7) bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.

(NKJV)

Peter knows, from his actions, he can't claim he wasn't puffed up and parading himself; that's all Peter was doing, was being puffed up and parading himself and claiming how great he was. He can't claim that he suffered long and endured all things. When he realizes that this was real prison and death, he ran scared. That's why he isn't claiming any of that. He can't claim how great he is. He has learned a lesson here. Turn back to John 21, we can see how Christ ends this exchange. He tells Peter the key of what he needs to learn.

John 21:18 *Most assuredly, I say to you, when you were younger, you girded yourself and walked where you wished; but when you are old, you will stretch out your hands, and another will gird you and carry you where you do not wish."*

(NKJV)

In other words, if you have humility and rely on the Father, We will carry you. We'll give you the strength to do what you need to do and We're going to carry you to some places you really don't want to go. You know that claim that you're willing to die for Us? You're going to get to do that.

19) This He spoke, signifying by what death he would glorify God. And when He had spoken this, He said to him, "Follow Me." (NKJV)

In other words, He said, Peter you know how you said you would follow Me to death, you're going to get a chance to make good on that, you're going to get martyred. History tells us that he was crucified himself. He had the strength to do all of this by gaining some humility and realizing that he needed a savior. It wasn't about him blustering about how great he is and he's so strong and going to show everybody how it's done. He had to realize that *Christ died for me. I need a savior to cover my sins because I am so flawed as a person inside that I need a savior to cover me. I need that strength to carry me and enable me to be successful in the job I've been given.* After Peter learned this lesson, as we know he winds up being one of the heroes of the Bible. He writes a couple of books of the New Testament. He's a hero in the book of Acts. He does have a couple of stints in a jail cell that are recorded in the book of Acts and this same guy that is denying Christ, saying don't look at me, he's standing down the Sanhedrin who are threatening him saying, *"Don't preach in this guy's name or we'll lock you in prison."* He said, *"I'm going to obey God rather than men."* Now he's standing up to all of this and he's showing courage. He even has the courage to not only face prison but to face death. Eventually that realization sinks in of what this is supposed to mean. It's not just an intellectual profession, it's realizing the humility of what a flawed person I am and I need a savior to cover my sins and enable me to have the strength to fulfill what I need to do as a Christian. That realization is what turns around his life and enabled him to be the hero of the Bible that we know of Peter today.

As we've covered in this sermon, Christ did a lot of signs to prove that He is who He is. Not only to the people who saw Him in His lifetime, but for those who read the accounts in the gospels, who are to believe in Him. But that belief should be much deeper for us than just the intellectual realization that Christ is the Son of God and died for the sins of mankind. It should be a realization for us that Christ died for me, because I am so flawed inside that I needed a Savior to cover my sins and to reconcile me to the Father. I need that help every day of my life to enable me to live a Christian life because I'm not impressive on my own. I need a Savior to enable me to make it. As we go forward from this Sabbath, let's learn the lessons of what it really means to understand that Christ is the Messiah, that He is the Son of God. It's much more than an intellectual profession and something we just intellectually acknowledge. It should be something that is life changing information for us so that it changes how we live, how we see ourselves and how we act on a day to day basis in our Christian lives.