

Christian Fundamentals

The Lord Jesus Christ

The Lord Jesus is of course totally central to the foundations of our faith: *“For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ”*. He is the person, the Son of God, the saviour of the world, the Wonderful Counsellor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father. the Prince of Peace: He was all the fulness of God in a body. Jesus means Saviour, for *“He shall save His people from their sins”*; the Hebrew word is Joshua, *“The Salvation of Jehovah”*. Christ means Anointed, the Hebrew word is Messiah, the Anointed of God. Jesus came as ‘Jesus of Nazareth’, but from 3 verses in Peter’s sermon on the day of Pentecost, -

a) *“Ye men of Israel, hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs*

b) *This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses*

c) *Therefore, let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ”*.

- we can see that Jesus is made Christ in heaven having been raised from the dead, and hence His correct title is Jesus Christ, anointed, yes on the earth for His early ministry but more so now in heaven for His eternal work reigning as Lord and Christ.

To make this section more manageable it will be broken down into 4 parts, 8.1 Jesus’ birth, 8.2 His life, 8.3 His death, and 8.4 His resurrection

Jesus’ Life

Firstly, a very brief mention should be made of John the Baptist, *“The voice of him that cries in the wilderness, prepare ye the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God”*. John was born to Mary’s cousin, Elizabeth, and went before the Lord Jesus to preach the gospel of repentance, to bring people to confess their sins, and to be baptised in water as a sign of the repentance, ‘washing away their sins’. By this means, the removal of sin prepared, as Isaiah had said, the ‘way of the Lord’, and allowed the ministry of the Lord Jesus to flourish in Israel. Sin is always a barrier to God moving and it would even have been for our Lord Jesus; there had to be a ‘way prepared’ and the ministry of John did exactly that. Jesus called John the greatest of the prophets.

There is a tremendous amount of information of Jesus’ life and works in the four gospels. It is not the intention to go through all the details. Peter says this to Cornelius in Acts chapter 10, *“How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him”*.

Almost totally, Jesus’ ministry on the earth was to the Jews, those living in and around Jerusalem in the south and the area around lake Galilee in the north of what is now, and was then, Israel. Samaria was in between the two areas. One of the exceptions to Jesus only ministering to Jews was the Samaritan, we read of her in John chapter 4. Another exception was

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the Syrophoenician woman with the daughter who needed deliverance. The accounts are wonderful to read and to discover that when there was/is faith and a seeking heart, Jesus was/is always willing to meet the need. But Jesus was the apostle to the people of Israel, who in spite of the law given to them, were in an awful state as a nation. An 'apostle' is 'one who is sent' and in the book of Hebrews Jesus is described as *"The apostle and High Priest of our faith"*. The Jews were under Roman rule, but, more seriously, under the spiritual rule of the devil. Jesus told them His kingdom was 'not of this world'; while they thought He had come to deliver them from the Romans, He had come to 'heal all who were oppressed of the devil'. That is what Peter tells us in the verse quoted above, and it helps our understanding. The Jews were God's chosen people but there were so many sick and troubled, and a number of demon-possessed people among them, even children. The blind, the lame, the deaf, the dumb, the oppressed and the lunatics. In Matthew we read, *"But when Jesus knew it, he withdrew himself from thence: and great multitudes followed him, and he healed them all"*. This is confirmed in Mark's and Luke's gospels, and through the awe-inspiring ministry of the Lord Jesus on the earth so many were healed and delivered. Jesus turned the whole country upside down, it would have been astonishing to be there. God loved His people. Before the time of the gospel being preached to all nations and the coming of the Holy Spirit and the beginning of the church, God wanted again to show His power and love to His people and comfort them. Of course, they did not really realise who Jesus was, but nevertheless the love of God abounded. Jesus Himself read this passage from Isaiah 61 in the synagogue at the start of His ministry. *"The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord"*. Jesus then moves on to deliver the person in the synagogue and *"They were all amazed, and spoke among themselves, saying, what a word is this! for with authority and power he commands the unclean spirits, and they come out"*. Jesus continued for 3 ½ years, and also sent out 12 and then 70 to extend the work and they saw the same works among the people. God was at work and it was wonderful; the storms were stilled, the 5000 and the 4000 were miraculously fed, and even the dead were raised to life. Before Jesus was able to start His ministry to Israel, but after He was baptised in Jordan, He was tempted/tried/tested by the devil in the wilderness for 40 days. It was necessary for the Lord Jesus to overcome in all those temptations to be able to go and bring healing and deliverance to those in need. It would not have been possible for Him to do that unless He had victory in His own life. We read Jesus was 'filled with the Spirit', but came forth from the wilderness in the 'power of the Spirit'.

Of course, Jesus encountered much opposition from the religious leaders. They were always in attendance trying to find fault with Him, to trip Him up with words, to find some loophole in His life, and they failed. Jesus, at the end of His life said, *"The Prince of this world comes and has nothing in me"*. If the devil could not find a loophole, the Jewish rulers would not. Jesus directs them to their need and confirms their sin; *"Jesus said unto them, if ye were blind, ye should have no sin: but now ye say, we see; therefore, your sin remains"*

Jesus was also a wonderful teacher. So many people, even if they do not believe on the Lord Jesus, recognise the principles of the life which He lived and try to emulate Him. The people followed Him and 'gladly heard His words'. He spoke with authority and wisdom and understanding. He spoke in

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parables, as some of the teaching of the kingdom was not for all the people, but overall, Jesus' whole work was to glorify His Father in heaven. He was to leave behind instruction and wisdom for the sons of God who would come to the Father, by Him, after His death. Jesus knew from where He had come and to where He was going. He received the commandments from His Father in heaven and obeyed them. He prepared His disciples for the coming of the Holy Spirit after His death and resurrection. The real outworking of God manifest in the flesh. Oh, how great You are