

A WORLDWIDE MINISTRY IN CAESAREA (PART II): PREACHING PEACE ACTS 10:34–43

Introduction

This passage gives the first message ever preached to Gentiles by one of the apostles. It is the message that opened the door of salvation to all the people of the world, to the Gentiles. It gives the points that need to be preached to all the nations of the world.

- I. God shows no favouritism — He accepts anyone who fears Him and does what is right (vv. 34-35).
- II. God sent His Word to Israel; He sent Jesus Christ preaching peace (vv. 36-37).
- III. Jesus is God’s anointed Saviour (vv. 38-39).
- IV. Jesus was crucified (v. 39).
- V. Jesus was raised up by God (v. 40).
- VI. Jesus appeared to some who were chosen to be witnesses (vv. 40-41).
- VII. Jesus shall judge the living and the dead (v. 42).
- VIII. Jesus is the prophesied Messiah (v. 43).
- IX. Believing in Jesus brings forgiveness of sin (v. 43).

I. Acts 10: 34–35 *Favouritism, Partiality, Discrimination*

God shows no favouritism. The word *favouritism* (prosopolemptes) means to regard with partiality and favouritism; to favour a person because of looks, position or circumstances.

The great point of this chapter is that God has no favourites and no prejudice against anyone. He shows no partiality or discrimination whatsoever. He does not accept a person because of nationality, race, caste, social standing or class. God does not favour a man because of...

- who he is
- what he does
- what he has

Person or appearance, possessions or position, abilities or works, health or stature — these things do not make a person acceptable to God. “God shows no favouritism.” He has always said so; but men, including Peter, had not paid attention to Him (see Dt. 10:17; 2 Chr. 19:7; Job. 34:10; Rom 2:11; Eph 6:9; Col. 3:25; Jas. 2:1; I Pet. 1:17). They just went right on ignoring the truth of God’s Word and feeding their prejudices. Note that Peter said...

- God is no respecter of persons (v. 34)
- God is no respecter of nations (v. 35. See Rom. 2:27-29.)

Two things make a person acceptable to God. Peter covered them both.

- 1 Fearing God (see *Fear of God*, Acts 9:31).
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- 2 Doing what is right (see *Righteousness* and *Abundant Life*, Mt. 5:6). In the Bible righteousness means two simple but profound things: *to be* right and *to do* right. (See *Righteousness* and *Abundant Life*, Mt. 5:6.)

Christ does not say, “Blessed are the righteous,” (Mt. 5:6) for no one is righteous (Rom. 3:10). He says, “Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness.” Man is not righteous, not perfectly righteous. His chance to be righteous is gone. He has already come short and missed the mark. He is already imperfect. Man has but one hope: that God will love him so much that He will somehow *count* him righteous. That is just what God does. God takes a man’s “hunger and thirst for righteousness” and counts that hunger and thirst as righteousness. God does this because He loves man (Rom 5:6, 8-9).

- a. There are those who stress *being righteous and neglect doing righteousness*. This leads to two serious errors.
- 1) False security. It causes a person to stress that he is saved and acceptable to God because he has believed in Jesus Christ. But he neglects doing good and living as he should. He neglects obeying God and serving man.
 - 2) Loose living. It allows one to go out and do pretty much as he desires. He feels secure and comfortable in his faith in Christ. He knows that what he does may affect his fellowship with God and other believers, but he thinks his behaviour will not affect his salvation. He thinks that no matter what he does he is still acceptable to God.

The problem with this stress is that it is a false righteousness. Righteousness in the Bible means being righteous and doing righteousness. The Bible knows nothing about being righteous without *living righteously*.

- b. There are those who stress *doing righteousness and neglect being righteous*. This also leads to two serious errors.
- 1) Self-righteousness and legalism. It causes a person to stress that he is saved and acceptable to God because he does good. He works and behaves morally and keeps certain rules and regulations. He does the things a Christian should do by obeying the main laws of God. But he neglects the basic law: the law of love and acceptance — that God loves him and accepts him not because he does good, but because he loves and trusts the righteousness of Christ (See *Righteousness* and *Abundant Life*, Mt. 5:6).
 - 2) Being judgmental and censorious. A person who stresses that he is righteous (acceptable to God) because he keeps certain laws often judges and censors others. He feels that rules and regulations can be kept, for He keeps them. Therefore, anyone who fails to keep them is judged, criticized and censored.

The problem with this stress is that it, too, is a false righteousness. Again, righteousness in the Bible is both being righteous and doing righteousness. The Bible

knows nothing of being acceptable to God without *being made righteous in Christ Jesus* (see *Righteousness*, Mt. 5:6; See 2 Cor. 5:21.)

Mat 5:45 “That you may be sons of your Father in heaven. He causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous.”

Rom 10:12 For there is no difference between Jew and Gentile — the same Lord is Lord of all and richly blesses all who call on him.

Gal 2:6 As for those who seemed to be important — whatever they were makes no difference to me; God does not judge by external appearance — those men added nothing to my message.

Eph 6:9 And masters, treat your slaves in the same way. Do not threaten them, since you know that he who is both their Master and yours is in heaven, and there is no favouritism with him.

ACTS 09:31 FEAR OF GOD

Then the church throughout Judea, Galilee and Samaria enjoyed a time of peace. It was strengthened; and encouraged by the Holy Spirit, it grew in numbers, living in the fear of the Lord. Acts 09:31

Fear (phobo) of God means to stand in awe and reverence before God. It does not mean to fear God’s presence, to shrink and withdraw from Him. On the contrary, it means that a person reverences and stands in awe of Him, wanting to approach and know Him because He is the majestic and sovereign Being of the universe. It means that a person does not fear...

- to trust and believe Him
- to approach and worship Him
- to do His will
- to serve Him ☐

MATHEW 05:06 RIGHTEOUSNESS

“Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.” Mathew 05:06

What is righteousness? In the Bible “righteousness” means two simple but profound things; it has a double meaning. It means *to be* right and *to do* right. It may be said another way: *to be good* and *to do good*. This is critically important in the Bible.

Rom 3:10 As it is written: “There is no one righteous, not even one.”

Rom 3:23 For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.

Mat 19:17 “Why do you ask me about what is good?” Jesus replied. “There is only One who is good. If you want to enter life, obey the commandments.”

What is being said is that God alone is righteous; He alone is perfectly good. Man is not perfectly righteous; he comes short. How then can a man become perfectly righteous? What is the answer? The answer is what Christ says: “Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness: for they will be filled.” What happens is this.

God takes a person’s “hunger and thirst for righteousness” and *counts* it as righteousness. The person is not righteous, but God counts him righteous. This is the great love of God. A man hungers and thirsts for righteousness; therefore, God fills him.

Several things need to be said about righteousness.

1. Righteousness is explained throughout Scripture in the word *faith*. Faith is believing God and trusting the goodness of God to take our faith and count it as righteousness. “And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists, and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him.” (Heb. 11:6)

It is the person who *diligently seeks God* who really believes God. The man who *so hungers and thirsts for God and His righteousness* shall be counted righteous and shall be filled.

2. The righteousness of God has been shown to man. Just what God wants man *to be* and *to do* has been demonstrated perfectly in Jesus Christ. This is the love of God. God has not given man just the written Word describing His righteousness; He has given man a life — the life of His own Son — to show what He means by righteousness. Jesus Christ is perfect righteousness; He did nothing but good. This is what the Bible means when it talks about Christ’s being “the righteousness of God.” Christ is the picture, the expression, the pattern, the very image of righteousness — of *being right* and of *doing right*.

1 Cor 1:30 *It is because of him that you are in Christ Jesus, who has become for us wisdom from God — that is, our righteousness, holiness and redemption.*

2 Cor 5:21 *God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.*

Phil 3:9 *And be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ — the righteousness that comes from God and is by faith.*

3. Righteousness involves the mind. Scripture says involves being “made new in the attitude of your minds” (Eph. 4:23), and being “renewed in knowledge” (Col. 3:10).

This means that the man who seeks God is “created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness.” He “puts on the new self or the new man” and is “made new in the attitude of [his] minds” (Eph. 4:23).

In other words, the man who seeks God has “taken off [his] old self with its practices and [has] put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge in the image of its Creator” (Col. 3:9-10). □

MATHEW 05:06 ABUNDANT, FILLED LIFE

“Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.” Mathew 05:06

The believer who hungers and thirsts for righteousness is wonderfully filled with both abundant life and eternal life.

1. He is “full of goodness, complete in knowledge” (Rom. 15:14).
2. He is “filled to the measure of all the fullness of God” (Eph. 3:19).
3. He is “filled with the Spirit” (Eph. 5:18).
4. He is “filled with the fruit of righteousness” (Phil. 1:11).
5. He is filled with “the knowledge of His [God’s] will” (Col. 1:9).
6. He is “filled with joy and with the Holy Spirit” (Acts 13:52) □

II. Acts 10:36–37 *Jesus Christ’s Ministry in Israel*

God sent His Word to Israel; He sent Jesus Christ preaching peace. Note exactly what is being said.

=> God sent His Word to Israel. Israel was the first nation to receive God’s Word.

Salvation is of the Jews (see *Israel, God’s Special People*, Jn. 4:22; Rom. 9:3-5).

=> God sent His Word to Israel *by Jesus Christ*, God’s very own Son. It was Jesus Christ who brought the message of God (see Jn. 1:34).

However, God’s Word was not meant for Israel alone. Jesus Christ did not come just for Israel’s salvation. God is no respecter of persons. God accepts people from *every nation*, all those who fear Him and work righteousness. Peter declared three facts.

1. He burst forth: “Christ is Lord of *all*.”

Not only of...

- the Jews
- the privileged
- the poor
- the religious

but of...

- the Gentiles, every nation
- the heathen
- the people who truly fear Him and work righteousness

Acts 2:36 “Therefore let all Israel be assured of this: God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ.”

Rom 10:9 That if you confess with your mouth, “Jesus is Lord,” and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.

1 Cor 1:9 God, who has called you into fellowship with his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, is faithful.

1 Cor 8:6 Yet for us there is but one God, the Father, from whom all things came and for whom we live; and there is but one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom all things came and through whom we live.

2. Peter declared that Jesus Christ had been talked about throughout all Judea. Peter told Cornelius: “You know. You have heard the Word — the message God sent.” Cornelius and the ones sitting there had just paid little or no attention to it.

Thought 1. Think how many hear and sit under the gospel and pay little if any attention to it.

Mat 7:26-27 “But everyone who hears these words of mine and does not put them into practice is like a foolish man who built his house on sand. The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell with a great crash.”

Mat 13:19 “When anyone hears the message about the kingdom and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what was sown in his heart. This is the seed sown along the path.”

Mat 22:5 “But they paid no attention and went off — one to his field, another to his business.”

3. Peter said that Jesus Christ began to preach God’s Word in Galilee right after John’s ministry of baptism.

Mark 1:14 After John was put in prison, Jesus went into Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God.

Luke 4:43 But he said, “I must preach the good news of the kingdom of God to the other towns also, because that is why I was sent.”

Luke 8:1 After this, Jesus travelled about from one town and village to another, proclaiming the good news of the kingdom of God. The Twelve were with him.

Acts 1:3 After his suffering, he showed himself to these men and gave many convincing proofs that he was alive. He appeared to them over a period of forty days and spoke about the kingdom of God.

Thought 1. No one had an excuse for rejecting the gospel of God's kingdom. Jesus Christ had travelled and preached the gospel everywhere, and He was the topic of conversation upon everyone's lips. They were without excuse. So it is today with those who have heard the gospel. They are without excuse.

JOHN 04:22 ISRAEL; GOD'S SPECIAL PEOPLE

"You Samaritans worship what you do not know; we worship what we do know, for salvation is from the Jews." **John 04:22**

Why did Jesus Christ come to the Jewish nation and come to earth as a Jew? Very simply stated, the Jews were God's special people. They had been born by a special act of God. It all started long, long ago. God had wanted four things.

1. He wanted a people who would love Him supremely and give Him their first loyalty. (See Gen. 17:7; Isa. 43:10.)
2. He wanted a people who would witness to all other nations that He and He alone was the one true and living God. (See Gen. 12:3; 22:18; Acts 13:26, 47.)
3. He wanted a people through whom He could send the promised Seed, the Saviour and Messiah, Jesus Christ, to all men everywhere. (See Gen. 3:15; 17:7; 22:18; Gal. 3:16; Jn. 4:22.)
4. He wanted a people through whom He could send His written Word, the Holy Bible, and preserve it for all generations. (Rom. 9:4-5; 1 Pet. 2:10-12.)

In searching the earth for such a people, God could find none (Rom. 1:18-32). God could do only one thing. He had to find one man and through him raise a new people, a new nation.

1. God found and chose Abraham and through him established the Jewish nation. (Gen. 12:1-5; 13:14-17; 15:1-7; 17:1-8, 15-19; 22:16-18; 26:2-5, 24; 28:13-15; 31:13; 35:9-12.) God chose one man and challenged him to worship God supremely. If that man would worship God supremely, then God would cause a special people to be born of his seed. That man was Abraham. Abraham was the first Jew (Gen. 12:1-4; Gal. 3:16). In the Old Testament the Jews and their land (Palestine) were continually pointed to as the very special people and land of God. They were called...
 - => God's treasured possession (Exo. 19:5; Deu. 7:6; 14:2; 26:18; Psa. 135:4).
 - => the LORD's portion (Deu. 32:9).
 - => the LORD's land (Lev. 25:23; Jer. 2:7; 16:18; Hos. 9:3).
 - => the holy land (Zec. 2:12).

However, the Jewish nation failed to obey God supremely. The whole plot of the Old Testament centres around God's pleading and dealing with the Jews. Again and again, He gave the nation the opportunity to obey Him. He dealt with them in mercy and in judgment, but at every turn they refused to heed His pleading.

2. God chose the family of David. (see *Jesus Christ, King of Israel*, Jn 1:49). God had no choice but to make another move, so He chose one faithful family within the Jewish nation and gave to that family one great promise. The family was that of King David, and the promise was that of the Messiah, God's great King, God's very own Son. God's Son was to come through the line of David and establish an eternal nation of people who would love God supremely. However, the Jewish nation again failed God. They misinterpreted God's Word — the prophecies of His coming.
 - a. The Jews misinterpreted God's Word by saying the seed of Abraham included only the Jewish nation. In their minds, God had no children except the children of the Jewish nation. The Bible says explicitly that the seed of Abraham is Christ, and the special people of God are those individuals within all nations who worship God supremely (Gal. 3:16).
 - b. The Jews misinterpreted God's Word by saying that the eternal kingdom promised to David was the Jewish nation and the Jewish nation only. They expected Israel to be established as an earthly nation forever and all other nations to be subservient to Israel. But again, God's promise was not that narrow, nor was it that prejudiced. The Bible says there is not, and never has been, any respect of persons with God (Deu. 10:17; 2 Chr. 19:7; Job. 34:19; Acts 10:34; Rom. 2:11; Gal. 2:6; Eph. 6:9 ; Col. 3:25; 1 Pet. 1:17). God did say that Christ was to come from the Davidic line, but He also said that He was going to establish an eternal nation made up of people everywhere who would love God supremely (Rom. 2:28-29).

By misinterpreting God's promises, the Jews failed to be the missionaries to the world that God had chosen them to be. They became earthly bound and materialistic minded. They twisted the idea of the promised Messiah to fit their own schemes. They conceived of Him as One who was to establish an earthly kingdom for the Jewish nation alone. They failed to see that God was speaking...

- of an eternal kingdom of righteousness.
 - of a kingdom that is of another dimension entirely - the spiritual dimension.
 - of a new heaven and a new earth that would give each person an eternal life beyond just one earthly generation.
3. God had no choice but to make a third move. This He did by sending His own Son into the world through the Jewish nation. God sent Him so that the world through Him might be saved (Jn. 3:16-19). However, man rejected God's Son and crucified Him.

This act — the killing of God’s Son — was the final blow. When man slew the only Son of God, the whole world *was* involved. Both Jew and Gentile were represented symbolically in the Jewish religionists and the Roman authorities. They both actually did the plotting, sentencing, and execution. If the world were ever to be saved, it was now perfectly clear that God had to make every move Himself.

This He did once-for-all. In His eternal purpose and plan for man’s salvation, God took the sins of all men and laid them upon His Son while He was being slain upon the cross. He allowed His Son to bear the sins of the world (1 Pet. 2:24). Then He took His Son and raised Him from the dead — never to die again. He did what man had always failed to do: in His Son’s resurrection God began to build a lasting kingdom of righteousness, a new nation that is presently being made up of men from all earthly nations who desire and are willing to follow Jesus Christ supremely. He is calling out and forming a new people who have genuinely been born again — spiritually. These new born people shall live eternally — beyond just one earthly generation. These people are identified as His church, as a body of people who genuinely believe and follow Him. They are destined to be the inhabitants of the new heavens and earth. Believers become God’s new community, new society, new race, new nation of people. They become His church, His new creation — spiritually and supernaturally born again — who comprise the true family of God (Lk. 8:21; Eph. 2:11-18; 4:17-19.)

***Eph 2:18-22** For through him we both have access to the Father by one Spirit. Consequently, you are no longer foreigners and aliens, but fellow citizens with God’s people and members of God’s household, built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the chief corner-stone. In him the whole building is joined together and rises to become a holy temple in the Lord. And in him you too are being built together to become a dwelling in which God lives by his Spirit.*

God, acting solely upon His own through the death and resurrection of His Son, has fulfilled His promises to both Abraham and David. All the people of the nations of the world now have the opportunity to become children of God, the special people of God. □

III. Acts 10: 38–39 *Jesus Christ, the Anointed One*

Jesus is God’s anointed Saviour. His very name “Christ” (Messiah) means “the Anointed One of God” (see *Christ*, Mt. 1:18). Jesus was anointed by God in a very special way.

1. Jesus was anointed with the Holy Spirit. But note: He was anointed with the Holy Spirit in a way that no other person has ever been anointed: the Holy Spirit was given without measure to Christ. He received an unlimited measure of the Spirit, and it was

once-for-all. That is, the Spirit's fullness never left Christ, not for a moment. (See notes, Jn. 1:32-33; 3:34.)

Luke 4:18 *“The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to release the oppressed.”*

Acts 4:27 *Indeed Herod and Pontius Pilate met together with the Gentiles and the people of Israel in this city to conspire against your holy servant Jesus, whom you anointed.*

2. Jesus was anointed with miraculous power. Power is the *presence and outworking* of the Holy Spirit within a person. Jesus declared this. He was very clear in declaring two things.
 - a. He Himself was anointed with the Holy Spirit so that He could be anointed with the power to minister.

Luke 4:18-19 *“The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to release the oppressed to proclaim the year of the Lord's favour.”*

Acts 10:38 *How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and power, and how he went around doing good and healing all who were under the power of the devil, because God was with him.*

Jesus was anointed with the Holy Spirit so that He could go about “doing good, and healing all who were under the power of the devil,” under the power of his...

- evil spirits and demons
- strategies and methods
- bitterness and hatred
- selfishness and greed
- indulgence and extravagance
- neglect and unconcern
- stealing and injustices
- power over death (Heb. 2:14-15)
- temptations and sins
- lying and deception
- killings and wars
- enslavements and bondages
- hoarding and storing up
- immorality and lust
- laziness and complacency

- b. The believer receives the Holy Spirit so that he can have the power to be a witness to the world.

Acts 1:8 *“But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”*

Thought 1. Note: Jesus Christ did not come nor was He anointed to debate theories and theology with the ministers and priests of His day. He was anointed to “go about doing good” and helping people by delivering them from the power of the devil.

3. There is proof that Jesus did these things. Peter and the earliest believers saw and knew Him.

=> That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked at and our hands have touched — this we proclaim concerning the Word of life. The life appeared; we have seen it and testify to it, and we proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and has appeared to us. We proclaim to you what we have seen and heard, so that you also may have fellowship with us. And our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ. We write this to make our joy complete. (1 Jn. 1:1-4)

Thought 1. Jesus Christ is still working in lives today, delivering from the power of the devil. The proof is clearly seen in the lives and witness of genuine believers.

ACTS 10:38 ANOINT, ANOINTING

How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and power, and how he went around doing good and healing all who were under the power of the devil, because God was with him. Acts 10:38

Scripture speaks of at least four kinds of anointing.

1. The anointing of respect or of hospitality. Oil was poured over the body of a person as a sign of respect and hospitality. Such took place when welcoming guests into one's home (Lk. 7:46) or when burying the dead (Mk. 14:8; 16:1).
2. The anointing for service, such as prophets (1 Kng. 19:16), priests (Exo. 28:41), and kings (1 Sam. 10:1).
3. The anointing for medical purposes (Isa. 1:6; Lk. 10:34; Jas. 5:14f; Rev. 3:18).
4. The anointing of God's Son, Jesus Christ. The words *Christ* and *Messiah* mean "The Anointed One."

Luke 4:18-19 *"The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to release the oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favour."* □

IV. Acts 10:39 Death of Jesus Christ

Jesus was crucified, slain and hung on a tree (see *Death of Jesus Christ*, Acts 2:23; *Death of Jesus Christ*, Acts 3:13).

ACTS 02: 23 THE DEATH OF JESUS CHRIST

This man was handed over to you by God's set purpose and foreknowledge; and you, with the help of wicked men, put him to death by nailing him to the cross. Acts 02:23

This verse is saying a most significant thing. Jesus' death was planned by God *due to man's wickedness*. God planned Jesus' death, planned for Him to die upon the cross, but He planned it *because of man's wickedness*. Note two points.

1. Jesus was crucified and slain by wicked hands. Men are sinful, wicked, depraved and selfish.

=> They want to go their own way.

=> They want to do their own thing.

=> They want to control their own lives.

Therefore, they rebel and fight against God, against surrendering to God, against...

- following God's way
- doing God's thing
- allowing God to control their lives

It was this corruptible nature of man that rebelled against God's Son and crucified Him.

2. The "set purpose and foreknowledge of God" saved man. God knew man, what was in man (see Jn. 2:23-24). He knew exactly what men would do to His Son. He knew they would kill His Son. But in the counsel and advice of His knowledge — in consideration of all the possibilities — God knew something else as well: the way of death, the way of the cross was the best way to save men. And being God, He was bound to choose the best way. So God determined to use the best way possible, the death of His Son to save the world.

John 03:14-16 *"Just as Moses lifted up the snake in the desert, so the Son of Man must be lifted up, that everyone who believes in him may have eternal life. "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life."*

Rom 5:6 *You see, at just the right time, when we were still powerless, Christ died for the ungodly.*

Rom 5:8 *But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.*

Gal 1:4 *Who gave himself for our sins to rescue us from the present evil age, according to the will of our God and Father.*

Heb 9:28 *So Christ was sacrificed once to take away the sins of many people; and he will appear a second time, not to bear sin, but to bring salvation to those who are waiting for him.*

1 Pet 2:24 *He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness; by his wounds you have been healed.*

3. The Scripture dealing with God's purpose.

a. God's purpose concerns Christ.

Acts 2:23 *This man was handed over to you by God's set purpose and foreknowledge; and you, with the help of wicked men, put him to death by nailing him to the cross.*

Acts 4:28 *They did what your power and will had decided beforehand should happen.*

b. God's purpose concerns believers and salvation.

Acts 13:36 *For when David had served God's purpose in his own generation, he fell asleep; he was buried with his fathers and his body decayed.*

Eph 1:11 *In him we were also chosen, having been predestined according to the plan of him who works out everything in conformity with the purpose of his will.*

Heb 6:17 *Because God wanted to make the unchanging nature of his purpose very clear to the heirs of what was promised, he confirmed it with an oath.*

c. God's purpose concerns God's plan for the world.

Acts 20:27 *For I have not hesitated to proclaim to you the whole will of God.*

d. God's purpose concerns those who reject Him.

Luke 7:30 *But the Pharisees and experts in the law rejected God's purpose for themselves, because they had not been baptized by John. □*

ACTS 03:13 THE DEATH OF JESUS CHRIST

Jesus went to the cross because of man's sin — every man's sin. No man is exempt from God's love. It was for every man that Jesus died. Therefore, every man, in all the arrogance and rebellion and denial of his sins, delivered Jesus up to the cross and killed Him. □

V. Acts 10: 40 Resurrection of Jesus Christ

Jesus was raised up by God (see *Resurrection of Jesus Christ*, Acts 1:3; *Resurrection of Jesus Christ*, Acts 2:24).

ACTS 01: 03 RESURRECTION OF JESUS CHRIST

After his suffering, he showed himself to these men and gave them many convincing proofs that he was alive. He appeared to them over a period of forty days and spoke about the kingdom of God. Acts 01:03

Jesus appeared at least ten times after His resurrection before He ascended into heaven. There were apparently many more appearances not recorded (see Jn. 20:30-31; 21:25).

1. He appeared to Mary Magdalene (Mk. 16:9-11; Jn.20:11-18).
2. He appeared to the women running to tell the disciples about the empty tomb (Mt.28:8-10)
3. He appeared to Peter, probably to assure him of his restoration (Lk. 24:34; 1 Cor. 15:5).
4. He appeared to the two Emmaus disciples sometime in the early evening (Mk. 16:12; Lk. 24:13-42).
5. He appeared to the disciples with Thomas absent (Mk. 16:14; Lk.24:36-43; Jn. 20:19-25).
6. One week later, He appeared to the disciples who had gone fishing (Jn. 20).
7. He appeared to 500 believers (1 Cor. 15:6).
8. He appeared to the apostles (Mt. 28:16-20; Mk. 16:15-18).
9. He appeared to James, the Lord's half-brother (1 Cor. 15:7).
10. He appeared to the believers at His ascension (Mk. 16:19-20; Lk. 24:44-53; Acts 1:3-12).

It should be remembered that since Jesus' ascension He has appeared at least two other times.

1. He appeared to Stephen at his martyrdom (Acts 7:55-56).
2. He appeared to Paul on the road to Damascus (Acts 9:3f). □

ACTS 02:24 RESURRECTION OF JESUS CHRIST

But God raised him from the dead, freeing him from the agony of death, because it was impossible for death to keep its hold on him. Acts 02:24

This is a great verse dealing with the resurrection of Christ. Note three points.

1. God raised up Christ. God knew that the very best way to save man from death was through the resurrection of His own Son from the dead.

2. The resurrection of Christ freed “him from the agony of death.” The word *agony* (*odinas*) means birth pangs. For the unbeliever, there is great pain in death, pain such as that experienced by a woman in giving birth. But man no longer has to suffer the pain of death nor fear suffering through it. Christ has conquered and abolished death, made it completely harmless. Death is actually the most glorious and joyful experience for the believer, an experience that simply explodes human imagination. (See Jn. 5:24; Heb. 2:14-15.)
3. It was impossible for death to hold Christ. Why? There are several significant reasons.
 - a. There was God’s set purpose and foreknowledge. God knew that the way of the cross and resurrection was the very best way to save the world. Therefore, nothing could stop God from following through with the death and resurrection of His Son. (See Acts 2:25-28.)
 - b. Jesus was approved by God. He had God’s approval, sanction, accreditation and endorsement. Jesus Christ was perfectly acceptable to God (see Acts. 2:22-24).
 - c. Jesus’ resurrection was foretold by Scripture, and Scripture must be fulfilled.
 - d. Jesus was *Life* itself. He possesses the very *being, essence, quality, substance* and *energy* of life. He is *The Life*, Life itself; therefore, He is the source of all life. All life finds its source in the energy and being of Christ Himself. Therefore, being Life, death could not engulf Him any more than darkness can engulf light. (See Jn. 1:4-5; Jn. 14:6.)
 - e. Jesus was sinless. Death exists or happens because everything is short of perfection — short of what it should be — short of *God’s glory*. This is true of man. Man dies because he falls “short of the glory of God” (Rom. 3:23). Sin is...
 - falling short
 - missing the mark
 - transgressing God’s glory

And it is sin that causes death. Therefore Jesus Christ, being sinless, did not have to die. He died because He *willed* to die for man.

The point is this: Jesus was sinless and perfect and righteous (Jn. 8:46; 2 Cor. 5:21; Heb. 4:15; 7:26; 1 Pet. 1:9; 2:22). He was the Ideal Man, the Sinless Man, the Perfect Man - the Ideal Pattern for all other men. Therefore, when He died for men, He died as the Ideal Man or the Ideal Pattern. And death cannot hold the Ideal Man, for the Ideal Man came short in nothing. He was not short in life; therefore, He was destined to live forever. He was Perfect Life and Perfect Man. As the Scripture says, “It was impossible for death to keep its hold on him.” (See Rom. 1:4.) □

VI. Acts 10:40–41 Resurrection of Jesus Christ

Jesus appeared to some people who were chosen and appointed to be witnesses. Three points are stressed about Jesus' resurrection appearances.

1. God caused Jesus *to be seen* (emphane genesthai), which means that God set Jesus before people so that He could be visibly, openly and publicly seen. God manifested, showed and set Him forth as the Risen Lord. (See *Resurrection of Jesus Christ*, Acts 1:3)
2. Jesus appeared to chosen witnesses. The words *already chosen* (prokecheirotoneinois) mean to be pointed out, to be designated, to be appointed (see Jn. 17:6). Before Christ ever arose, God chose some people to be witnesses of His Son's resurrection. They were chosen for the very purpose of proclaiming the resurrection to a world of dying men.
3. The witnesses "ate and drank with Him *after* He rose from the dead." They had close and intimate fellowship with Him. (See 1 Jn. 1:1-4.) Peter said this for two reasons.
 - a. To stress that he and the other witnesses *had real* contact with the risen Lord. They not only *saw* Him, they "ate and drank," communed and fellowshiped with Him. They were as closely associated with Him as persons can be. They were true, verifiable witnesses.
 - b. To stress that Jesus actually arose from the dead. The Person they saw was the Jesus whom they knew. His body was real. It was really Him; His body had been resurrected. (See Jn. 21:1-14.)

Acts 2:23-24 This man was handed over to you by God's set purpose and foreknowledge; and you, with the help of wicked men, put him to death by nailing him to the cross. But God raised him from the dead, freeing him from the agony of death, because it was impossible for death to keep its hold on him.

Acts 3:14-15 You disowned the Holy and Righteous One and asked that a murderer be released to you. You killed the author of life, but God raised him from the dead. We are witnesses of this.

Acts 4:33 With great power the apostles continued to testify to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and much grace was upon them all.

Acts 10:39-41 "We are witnesses of everything he did in the country of the Jews and in Jerusalem. They killed him by hanging him on a tree, but God raised him from the dead on the third day and caused him to be seen. He was not seen by all the people, but by witnesses whom God had already chosen — by us who ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead."

Rom 1:4 And who through the Spirit of holiness was declared with power to be the Son of God by his resurrection from the dead: Jesus Christ our Lord.

Acts 17:2-3 As his custom was, Paul went into the synagogue, and on three Sabbath days he reasoned with them from the Scriptures, explaining and proving that the Christ had to suffer and rise from the dead. “This Jesus I am proclaiming to you is the Christ,” he said.

VII. Acts 10:42 Judge of the Living and the Dead

Jesus shall judge the living and the dead of all nations. He shall judge both Jew and Gentile, both...

- rich and poor
- strong and weak
- employed and unemployed
- healthy and sick
- pretty and ugly
- happy and unhappy
- industrious and lazy
- employee and employer
- white and black
- yellow and red
- dark and light
- religious and unreligious

God has ordained Jesus Christ to judge all men, no matter who they are or where they are, alive or dead. He and He alone shall judge every soul who has ever appeared on earth. (See Jn. 5:21-29.)

Acts 17:31 “For he has set a day when he will judge the world with justice by the man he has appointed. He has given proof of this to all men by raising him from the dead.” (see Acts 24:25).

Jesus Christ alone is ordained to be the Judge. He alone, as the risen Lord, has the right to determine judgment.

1. He determines the conditions of salvation: what a person has to do to be saved; how a person is saved; who is and is not saved.
2. He determines the conditions of eternity: what eternal life shall be like; what eternal death shall be like; the state, the environment, the reward and the punishment of both heaven and hell.

Mat 25:32 “All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate the people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats.”

John 5:22 “Moreover, the Father judges no one, but has entrusted all judgment to the Son.”

Acts 17:31 “For he has set a day when he will judge the world with justice by the man he has appointed. He has given proof of this to all men by raising him from the dead.”

Rom 2:16 This will take place on the day when God will judge men’s secrets through Jesus Christ, as my gospel declares.

2 Tim 4:1 *In the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who will judge the living and the dead, and in view of his appearing and his kingdom, I give you this charge.*

VIII. Acts 10:43 Jesus Christ, the Messiah

Jesus is the prophesied Messiah. (See Acts 3:22-24; 13:23-41; see *Jesus Christ, Son of God, the Virgin*, Mt. 1:23; Lk. 3:24-31; 3:32-38; 3:38.)

Mat 16:15-16 *“But what about you?” he asked. “Who do you say I am?” Simon Peter answered, “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.”*

Mat 26:63-64 *But Jesus remained silent. The high priest said to him, “I charge you under oath by the living God: Tell us if you are the Christ, the Son of God.” “Yes, it is as you say,” Jesus replied. “But I say to all of you: In the future you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Mighty One and coming on the clouds of heaven.”*

Luke 2:11 *“Today in the town of David a Saviour has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord.”*

Luke 2:26 *It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not die before he had seen the Lord’s Christ.*

John 1:41 *The first thing Andrew did was to find his brother Simon and tell him, “We have found the Messiah” (that is, the Christ).*

John 4:25-26 *The woman said, “I know that Messiah” (called Christ) “is coming. When he comes, he will explain everything to us.” Then Jesus declared, “I who speak to you am he.”*

John 6:68-69 *Simon Peter answered him, “Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. We believe and know that you are the Holy One of God.”*

John 8:28 *So Jesus said, “When you have lifted up the Son of Man, then you will know that I am the one I claim to be and that I do nothing on my own but speak just what the Father has taught me.”*

John 11:25-27 *Jesus said to her, “I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in me will live, even though he dies; and whoever lives and believes in me will never die. Do you believe this?” “Yes, Lord,” she told him, “I believe that you are the Christ, the Son of God, who was to come into the world.”*

Acts 9:22 *Yet Saul grew more and more powerful and baffled the Jews living in Damascus by proving that Jesus is the Christ.*

Acts 17:3 *Explaining and proving that the Christ had to suffer and rise from the dead. “This Jesus I am proclaiming to you is the Christ,” he said.*

1 John 5:1 *Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God, and everyone who loves the father loves his child as well.*

MATHEW 01:23
THE VIRGIN BIRTH OF JESUS CHRIST, SON OF GOD

*“The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel” – which means, “God with us”. **Mathew 01:23***

Four convincing things about the virgin birth of Christ are:

1. The concern and great pains to which Mathew went in pointing out the supernatural birth of Jesus. He said very pointedly, “This is how the birth of Jesus Christ [not just Jesus, but “Jesus Christ, the Messiah] came about.”
 - a. “Mary...was found to be with child through the Holy Spirit” (v. 18).
 - b. “What is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit” (v. 20).
 - c. “All this took place to fulfill [the prophecy]... ‘The virgin...will give birth to a son. They will call Him Immanuel... ‘God with us.’” (v. 22-23)
 - d. “They will call Him Immanuel...God With Us” (v. 23)

Matthew was not interested in giving a detailed account of Jesus’ birth. His concern was simply to draw the reader’s attention to two important facts.

First, the Old Testament prophecies of the Messiah’s birth were fulfilled in Jesus Christ.

Second, the Jews needed to know that Jesus Christ was born of a virgin, especially those who misinterpreted the Old Testament prophecies and who were not expecting the Messiah to be virgin born. One of the slanderous reports facing the early Christian believers was that Jesus was born out of wedlock.

Isa 7:14 *Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign: The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and will call him Immanuel.*

Isa 9:6 *For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.*

Luke 1:31 *You will be with child and give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus.*

Luke 2:7 *And she gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped him in swaddling clothes and placed him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.*

John 1:14 *The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.*

Rom 8:3 *For what the law was powerless to do in that it was weakened by the sinful nature, God did by sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful man to be a sin offering. And so he condemned sin in sinful man.*

Gal 4:4-5 *But when the time had fully come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under law, to redeem those under law, that we might receive the full rights of sons.*

Phil 2:6-7 *Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, But made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness.*

1 John 4:2 *This is how you can recognize the Spirit of God: Every spirit that acknowledges that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God.*

2. The simple profession of Mary that shows shock and amazement: “How will this be, since I am a virgin?” (Lk. 1:34).
3. Note the mystery of life about which man knows so little.

Eccl 11:5 *As you do not know the path of the wind, or how the body is formed in a mother’s womb, so you cannot understand the work of God, the Maker of all things.*

Psa 139:13-15 *For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother’s womb. I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well. My frame was not hidden from you when I was made in the secret place. When I was woven together in the depths of the earth.*

4. Note the mystery of godliness.

1 Tim 3:16 *Beyond all question, the mystery of godliness is great: He appeared in a body, was vindicated by the Spirit, was seen by angels, was preached among the nations, was believed on in the world, was taken up in glory. (see Gal.4:4; 1 Jn. 1:1-3)*

Heb 2:14-17 *Since the children have flesh and blood, he too shared in their humanity so that by his death he might destroy him who holds the power of death — that is, the devil — And free those who all their lives were held in slavery by their fear of death. For surely it is not angels he helps, but Abraham’s descendants. For this reason he had to be made like his brothers in every way, in order that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in service to God, and that he might make atonement for the sins of the people.*

Phi 2:5-7 *Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus: Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, But made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness.*

2 Cor 5:19 *That God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting men’s sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation.*

John 14:9 *Jesus answered: “Don’t you know me, Philip, even after I have been among you such a long time? Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, ‘Show us the Father’?”*

John 10:33 *“We are not stoning you for any of these,” replied the Jews, “but for blasphemy, because you, a mere man, claim to be God.” □*

IX. Acts 10:43 Belief in Jesus

Believing in Jesus brings forgiveness of sins (see *Saving Faith*, Jn. 2:24; *Forgiveness*, Acts 2:38).

John 3:16 *“For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.”*

John 5:24 *“I tell you the truth, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life and will not be condemned; he has crossed over from death to life.”*

John 8:24 *“I told you that you would die in your sins; if you do not believe that I am the one I claim to be, you will indeed die in your sins.”*

John 11:25 *Jesus said to her, “I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in me will live, even though he dies.”*

John 12:46 *“I have come into the world as a light, so that no one who believes in me should stay in darkness.”*

Acts 8:36 *As they travelled along the road, they came to some water and the eunuch said, “Look, here is water. Why shouldn’t I be baptized?”*

Acts 10:43 *“All the prophets testify about him that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name.”*

Acts 13:39 *Through him everyone who believes is justified from everything you could not be justified from by the law of Moses.*

Acts 16:31 *They replied, “Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved - you and your household.”*

Rom 10:9-10 *That if you confess with your mouth, “Jesus is Lord,” and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved.*

2 Tim 3:15 *And how from infancy you have known the holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus.*

John 5:1 *Every one who believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God, and everyone who loves the father loves his child as well. ■*

JOHN 02:24
SAVING FAITH: BELIEVE, COMMIT, ENTRUST

The word commit or entrust is the very same word “believe” (see Jn. 2:23). This gives an excellent picture of *saving faith*, of what *genuine faith* is — of the kind of faith that really saves a person.

1. Saving faith is not head knowledge, not just a mental conviction and intellectual assent. It is not just *believing the fact* that Jesus Christ is the Saviour of the world. It is not just believing history, that Jesus Christ lived upon earth as the Saviour just as A. J. Abdul Kalam lived upon earth as the President of India. It is not just believing the words and claims of Jesus in the same way that a person would believe the words of Abdul Kalam.
2. Saving faith is believing in Jesus, *who* and *what* He is, that He is the *Saviour* and *Lord* of life. It is a man giving and turning his life over to Jesus. It is a man casting himself upon Jesus as Saviour and Lord.
3. Saving faith is commitment — the commitment of a man’s total being and life to Jesus Christ. It is a man’s commitment of all he *is and has* to Jesus. It gives Jesus everything; therefore, it involves all of a man’s affairs. The man trusts Jesus to take care of his past (sins), his present (welfare), and his future (destiny). He entrusts his whole life, being, and possessions into Jesus’ hands. He lays himself upon Jesus’ keeping, confiding in Him about his daily necessities and acknowledging Him in all the ways of life. He follows Jesus in every area and in every detail of life, seeking His instructions and leaving his welfare up to Him. It is simply commitment of a man’s whole being, all he is and has, to Jesus.

There are three steps involved in faith, steps that are clearly seen in this passage.

1. There is the step of *seeing* (Jn. 2:23) or *hearing* (Rom. 10:16). A man must be willing to listen to the message of Christ, the revelation of truth.
2. There is the step of *mental assent*. A man must agree that the message is true, that the facts of the case are thus and so. But this is not enough. Mere agreement does not lead to action. Many a person knows that something is true, but he does not change his behaviour to match his knowledge. For example, a man knows that eating too much harms his body, but he may continue to eat too much. He agrees to the truth and knows the truth, but he does nothing about it. A person may believe and know that Jesus Christ is the Saviour of the world and yet do nothing about it, never make a decision to follow Christ. This man still does not have faith, not the kind of faith that the Bible talks about.

3. There is the step of *commitment*. When the New Testament speaks of faith, it speaks of *commitment*, a *personal commitment to the truth*. A man hears the truth and agrees that it is true and does something about it. He commits (entrusts) and yields his life to the truth. The truth becomes a part of his very being, a part of his behaviour and life. □

ACTS 02:38 REMISSION, FORGIVENESS (APHESIN)

Peter replied, “Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.” Acts 02:38

Forgiveness means to send off, to send away. The wrong is cut out, sent off, sent away from the wrongdoer. The sin is separated from the sinner.

There are four main ideas in the Biblical concept of forgiveness.

1. There is the idea of why forgiveness is needed. Forgiveness is needed because of wrongdoing and guilt and the penalty arising from both.

Rom 3:23 *For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.*

Rom 6:23 *For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

Rom 8:1 *Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.*

2. There is the idea of a *once-for-all* forgiveness, a total forgiveness. A man is forgiven once and for all when he receives Jesus Christ as his Saviour. Belief in Jesus Christ, which includes true repentance, is the only condition for being forgiven once and for all.

Mat 26:28 *“This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins.”*

Eph 1:7 *In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God’s grace.*

Rom 4:5-8 *However, to the man who does not work but trusts God who justifies the wicked, his faith is credited as righteousness. David says the same thing when he speaks of the blessedness of the man to whom God credits righteousness apart from works: “Blessed are they whose transgressions are forgiven, whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man whose sin the Lord will never count against him.”*

Isa 44:22 *“I have swept away your offenses like a cloud, your sins like the morning mist. Return to me, for I have redeemed you.”*

3. There is the idea of forgiveness that maintains fellowship. Fellowship exists between God as Father and the believer as His child. When the child does wrong, the fellowship is disturbed and broken. The condition for restoring the fellowship is confessing and forsaking the sin (Psa. 66:18; Prov. 28:13; 1 Jn. 1:7).

Acts 2:38 Peter replied, “Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.”

Luke 3:3 He went into all the country around the Jordan, preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins.

Luke 24:47 “And repentance and forgiveness of sins will be preached in his name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.”

4. There is the idea of a *releasing from guilt*. This is one of the differences between a man forgiving another man and God forgiving a man. A man may forgive a person for wronging him, but he can never remove the guilt that his friend feels. And often he cannot remove the resentment he himself feels within his own heart. Only God can remove the guilt and assure the removal of resentment. God does both. God forgives and erases the guilt and resentment (Psa. 51:2, 7-12; 103:12; 1 Jn. 1:9).

Isa 43:25 “I, even I, am he who blots out your transgressions, for my own sake, and remembers your sins no more.”

Isa 55:7 Let the wicked forsake his way and the evil man his thoughts. Let him turn to the LORD, and he will have mercy on him, and to our God, for he will freely pardon.

Jer 33:8 I will cleanse them from all the sin they have committed against me and will forgive all their sins of rebellion against me.

Micah 7:18 Who is a God like you, who pardons sin and forgives the transgression of the remnant of his inheritance? You do not stay angry forever but delight to show mercy.

Jer 31:34 “No longer will a man teach his neighbour, or a man his brother, saying, ‘Know the LORD,’ because they will all know me, from the least of them to the greatest,” declares the LORD. “For I will forgive their wickedness and will remember their sins no more.” □