

"We Need a Savior"

In this confused and sinful world in which we live, it shouldn't surprise us that we desperately need a Savior. Hello, I'm Phil Sanders, and this is a Bible study "In Search of the Lord's Way." And today we're looking to Jesus to save us from sin.

Welcome to In SEARCH of the Lord's Way! We're here to search the Scriptures for God's will. The New Testament always speaks to our greatest needs, and we have no need greater than to be saved from sin. The world may tell us what we want to hear, but the Bible will tell us what we most need to hear. God's word isn't trivial; it speaks to the most important matters of life. We need to hear what God has to say. Thanks for taking time with us today. We'd love to hear from you and want to be a part of your life each week.

"Jesus" is the personal name of our Lord. It's the Greek equivalent of the Hebrew word "Jeshua" or "Joshua." And this name is divinely appointed, "for He will save His people from their sins." Matthew 1:20 to 23 tells how this came about. "But as he (that is Joseph) considered these things (that is Mary being with child), behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, "Joseph, son of David, do not fear to take Mary as your wife, for that which is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins." Now all this took place to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet: "Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall call his name Immanuel" (which means, God with us).

You remember that John the Baptist, pointing to Jesus, said in John 1 verse 29, "Behold, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!" Jesus is that lamb sacrificed to atone for our sins. Isaiah 53 and verse 6 says, "the LORD has caused the iniquity of us all To fall on Him." Jesus Christ is our hope for salvation!

Now this is an important study on our need for a Savior; and we offer it free! If you'd like a printed copy and live in the United States, mail your request to In Search of the Lord's Way, P.O. Box 371, Edmond, OK 73083 or send an e-mail to searchtv@searchtv.org. Or, you can call our toll-free telephone number. That number is 1-800-321-8633. We also have free materials on our website at www.searchtv.org. You can also see us on YouTube.

We'll now worship in song, read from Isaiah 53:4 to 6, and remind each of us how badly we need a Savior.

Our reading today comes the book of Isaiah chapter 53 verses 4 to 6. And they foretell the death of Jesus Christ on the cross.

Surely our griefs He Himself bore,
And our sorrows He carried;
Yet we ourselves esteemed Him stricken,
Smitten of God, and afflicted. But He was pierced through for our transgressions,
He was crushed for our iniquities;
The chastening for our well-being fell upon Him,
And by His scourging we are healed.
All of us like sheep have gone astray,
Each of us has turned to his own way;
But the LORD has caused the iniquity of us all

Yes, Jesus bore the sins that we commit and paid the price. Let's pray. Father we are so grateful that Jesus was willing to die in our stead. To bare our sins, to give us hope and to give us life. Father we're so sorry that He had to pay such and awful price. But we're grateful that He loved us enough to be willing to do that. And Father we pray that we may so live to show our love for You and our care and concern for Your will. Help us to be Your people and to love You and serve You. In Jesus name we pray, Amen.

¶ Luke 19 verses 1 to 10 tells the story of an outcast man who was lost but found the grace of God. He (that is Jesus) entered Jericho and was passing through. And there was a man called by the name of Zaccheus; he was a chief tax collector and he was rich. Zaccheus was trying to see who Jesus was, and was unable because of the crowd, for he was small in stature. So he ran on ahead and climbed up into a sycamore tree in order to see Him, for He was about to pass through that way.

Well when Jesus came to the place, He looked up and said to him, "Zaccheus, hurry and come down, for today I must stay at your house." And he hurried and came down and received Him gladly. When they saw it, they all began to grumble, saying, well "He has gone to be the guest of a man who is a sinner." Zaccheus stopped and said to the Lord, "Behold, Lord, half of my possessions I will give to the poor, and if I have defrauded anyone of anything, I will give back four times as much." And Jesus said to him, "Today salvation has come to this house, because he, too, is a son of Abraham. For the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost."

Now a tax-collector in Israel during the days of Jesus would have been very hated. He did,'t collect taxes for the common good of Israel but for Rome, a pagan nation. Rome gave each city a lump tax quota, and the chief collector had the power of the Roman army to collect the taxes. Well now once the collector met his quota, he could keep everything else he collected. Well many collectors unfairly taxed the Jews and were considered frauds and thieves. The Jews considered tax-collectors as the worst of sinners because they supported Rome. They were often the most hated people in town.

Now Jesus, despite this, showed grace to Zacchaeus. Jesus looked into that tree and saw a person with a soul that needed saving. He showed love to a person that everyone else considered a sinner. He determined to go to that sinner's house, that sinner who was a son of Abraham and could be saved and to help him. Now you may feel that nobody cares about you. Nobody wants you to be saved. Make no mistake. Jesus loves you and wants you to be saved, no matter what your past has been. You can have hope in Christ, even when everyone around you thinks there's no hope for you. The Lord sees not only what we were and what we are, He also sees what we can become. He can forgive our past, change our present, and give us a future of life eternal.

Zacchaeus showed love and care about others because Jesus Christ loved him. "Behold, Lord, half of my possessions I will give to the poor, and if I have defrauded anyone of anything, I will give back four times as much." You see he cared because Jesus cared for him, and Jesus cares for you. Many people today don't care about God, but you know what, God still cares about them. Zacchaeus not only saw Jesus passing by, but he also saw the incredible grace and love that Jesus shows, even to people that everyone else despises. If you truly knew how much the Lord Jesus cares about you, you would care about Him! Please don't dismiss and miss what the Lord can do for you and what He will do for you, if you open your heart to Him and if you follow Him.

We mustn't forget what a great price was paid for our salvation, a price greater than any of us could pay. The Lord Jesus tells this parable about the kingdom of God in Matthew 18:23 to 25. He says, "For this reason the kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who wished to settle accounts with

his slaves. "When he had begun to settle them, one who owed him ten thousand talents was brought to him. "But since he did not have the means to repay, his lord commanded him to be sold, along with his wife and children and all that he had, and repayment to be made."

Now in today's world, if a laborer earns 20 dollars per hour and he works 2,000 hours per year, he will earn 40,000 dollars per year. Now just one talent equals 800,000 dollars. So, "ten thousand talents" would amount to a massive debt, about 8 billion dollars.

Verses 26 and 7 say, "So the slave fell to the ground and prostrated himself before him, saying, 'Have patience with me and I will repay you everything.' "And the lord of that slave felt compassion and released him and forgave him the debt." Now let's consider what this forgiveness of a massive debt means. First, we've sinned greatly against the holy and righteous God. Now I tell you if you sinned only once per day, that's 365 sins each year, 3,650 per decade, and 7,300 times in twenty years. Most folks sin more than once a day, and many people sin multiple times every day. But it only takes one unforgiven sin to cause you to be lost eternally. If Christ Jesus had not endured the punishment for all your sins, you'd have to bear them yourself. Make no mistake, sin and eternal punishment are real. Your need for salvation is no small thing. We have by God's graciousness received a gift that cannot be earned and cannot be repaid. If we could live a hundred lives, we could never repay the debt that we owe the Lord for dying on the cross for us.

Now unless you are forgiven by God, you'll pay the loss for your soul and with your soul. Romans 6:23 simply says, "the wages of sin is death." And it hadn't changed. Paul wasn't speaking here of physical death but of spiritual death that is separation from God eternally. Isaiah 59:1 to 2 says, "Behold, the LORD's hand is not shortened, that it cannot save, or his ear dull, that it cannot hear; but your iniquities have made a separation between you and your God, and your sins have hidden his face from you so that he does not hear." You see sin breaks your fellowship with God, and your friendship with God, so that He hides His face from you and will not hear your prayers.

Second, we can easily see the complete inability ever to repay such a debt. Sin is not a debt that can be paid with money. Silver, gold, and precious jewels don't cost the Lord anything. He doesn't need them; He created the world. Our debt can only be paid by Jesus. And what He paid was Himself, His body, and His blood. 1 Peter 1:17 to 19 says that, "If you address as Father the One who impartially judges according to each one's work, conduct yourselves in fear during the time of your stay on earth; knowing that you were not redeemed with perishable things like silver or gold from your futile way of life inherited from your forefathers, but with precious blood, as of a lamb unblemished and spotless, the blood of Christ."

Third, God has great mercy and patience with us. The unmerciful servant asked for the king to be patient with him, and the king was more than patient. He was compassionate and willing to forgive all the massive debt. In incredible mercy and love, He withheld His immediate righteous judgment. And when we sin against God, we deserve judgment for our sins. God is a righteous judge. And He's right to judge the guilty, and we are guilty and stand condemned. But out of love and mercy, God forgives. When God forgives, He forgives all our sins, washes us clean, makes us holy and justified us in His sight.

Titus 3:3 to 7 reminds us, "For we also once were foolish ourselves, disobedient, deceived, enslaved to various lusts and pleasures, spending our life in malice and envy, hateful, hating one another. But when the kindness of God our Savior and His love for mankind appeared, He saved us, not on the basis of deeds which we have done in righteousness, but according to His mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewing by the Holy Spirit, whom He poured out upon us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, so that being justified by His grace we would be made heirs according to the hope of

eternal life.” He saved us even though we had committed so many sins against Him, because He was kind and merciful.

We all need to remember what God has done for us, even when we didn’t deserve it. God’s gracious provision of Christ’s death and resurrection paid the debt for our sins and broke the power of sin in our lives. Romans 5:6 to 8 says, “For while we were still helpless, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. For one will hardly die for a righteous man; though perhaps for the good man someone would dare even to die. But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.”

We were helpless and couldn’t save ourselves. We were ungodly and never thought about God or how our sins had offended Him. The Romans didn’t know God, and many people today don’t know God or even think of Him. Yet, God always has us in His mind and sees every sin we commit. He always knows the good and the bad. God loved us enough to send His Son Jesus to die for our sin while we were still sinning against Him. You see He loved the pagan Romans and still loves people who don’t know Him and sin against Him. Our God, who made us, has an incredible and indescribable love for us. He knew that we needed saving. Oh, I wish every person would realize how much we need the salvation of God.

Fourth, God realizes what a terrible predicament that sin brings to us. Galatians 1:4 says that Jesus “gave Himself for our sins so that He might rescue us from this present evil age, according to the will of our God and Father.” It’s an important day in our lives when we realize that we need saving. God saves us because He wants something better for us. A life of sin doesn’t bless anybody. And we can have a life that free from sin that will bless us all. 1 Peter 2 and verse 24 says Jesus “Himself bore our sins in His body on the cross, so that we might die to sin and live to righteousness; for by His wounds you were healed.” Sin destroys people, but God’s grace and forgiveness heals our souls. Because of God’s grace we can be righteous. God wants you to be righteous, to be free from that old sinful life that destroys you.

God forgives us, because He wants to restore a relationship with us that was ruined by sin. God wants more than to restore us in our forgiveness; He wants us to be friends. He wants us to be His children and to live with Him eternally. 2 Corinthians 5:17 to 19 says, “Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come. Now all these things are from God, who reconciled us to Himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation, namely, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and He has committed to us the word of reconciliation.”

God reconciles us through the blood of Jesus. He reconciles the world to Himself by “not counting their trespasses against them.” I tell you when God saves us, He no longer holds our sins against us. Forgiveness means that God doesn’t count our trespasses against us. The purpose of forgiveness is reconciliation. Relationships with His people are more important to God than trespasses. And to be reconciled to God is the single most important blessing that you will ever possess. Nothing else can open the door to heaven. Nothing else can save you. You must be forgiven to enjoy a new life in Christ. Come to the One who loves you and can save you.

Let’s pray together. Heavenly Father we pray the You’ll be with us, that You will help us always to live in such a way that we honor You knowing what You have done for us through Christ on the cross. Father help us to do Your will. In Jesus name, Amen.

On the internet, you can find the price of gold, the price of silver, where the Dow Jones Industrials stand, and the price of oil per barrel; but the price of your soul is beyond measure. The Lord Jesus

asked in Matthew 16:26 and 7, "For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world and forfeits his soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul? "For the Son of Man is going to come in the glory of His Father (and) with His angels, and will then repay every man according to his deeds." If the blood of Jesus doesn't cover your sins, God will hold you accountable for them. You need the Savior! You cannot save yourself by yourself!

God's grace will save us, if we're willing to deny ourselves, take up our cross daily and follow Him. "For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake, (Jesus says) he is the one who will save it" (Luke 9:23 and 4). Now you must trust and love the Lord Jesus. You must turn from sin in repentance and start living a new life that pleases the Lord and does His will. You must confess Jesus Christ is the Son of God and be baptized into Christ for the forgiveness of your sins (Romans 10:9 and 10 and Romans 6:3 to 7), teach these things. And if you wish to be saved, you must follow the Lord's way of salvation found in Scripture. And the book of Acts tells how people heard the word, believed, repented, and were baptized into Christ for the forgiveness of their sins.

Now we pray today's study about how we need a Savior has helped you to see God's concern for your soul. If you live in the United States you want a free printed copy of this message, mail your request to In Search of the Lord's Way, P.O. Box 371, Edmond, OK 73083. Send an e-mail to searchtv@searchtv.org. Or, you can call the Search office toll-free at 1-800-321-8633. There's also a schedule of our programs and a map with the location of churches in your area at www.searchtv.org. and you can watch SEARCH anytime on YouTube! Subscribe to our channel, "SearchTVMinistry." And like the programs. We also offer free Bible Correspondence courses. There are as many as 50 lessons. Now don't worry if you get a hold of us, we're not asking for money. We're here to help you draw close to God.

Focus your heart on God by worshiping at church. Everybody needs a church family. And I realize some of you can't go because health reasons; but go when you can. Do that. Now there's probably a church of Christ that's near you. And if you're looking for a healthy, Biblical church home, we'll gladly help you find one. Well we'll be back next week, Lord willing. So keep searching God's Word with us and tell a friend about the program. God bless you and we love you from all of us at In Search of the Lord's Way.