

**Where would we be with Jesus?
Colossians 1:13-18**

One can only imagine how different life would be without Jesus – after all **He is the Son of God, the Lord, the Alpha and the Omega, the Holy One, the Son of Man, the Word, the Savior, the Advocate, the Suffering Servant, the Lamb of God, the Great High Priest, the I AM, the Shepherd and Guardian of your souls, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the pioneer and the perfecter of our faith, the image of the invisible God, the Firstborn of all creation.** No person who ever lived is like Jesus; no blood but His blood can cleanse you from sin; no words but His words will judge you on the last day; no power but his power can raise you up on the last day; and no way but His way can lead you to the Father in heaven. **You may meet some impressive people, but no one compares to the Lord Jesus Christ.** He is love; He is wisdom, He is kindness; and He is truth.

Does it matter whether Jesus came into the world? My answer is Yes, now let me show my reasoning for this answer: **First, because of Jesus, I know something about God.** Matthew tells us much about the birth of Jesus in **Mt. 1:18-23**: ***“Now the birth of Jesus Christ took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together, she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit. And her husband Joseph, being a just man and unwilling to put her to shame, resolved to divorce her quietly. But as he considered these things, 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.” 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).”***

Jesus is indeed ***God with us***. We can know what God is like by looking at Jesus. **John 1:14-15** says, “***And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.***” {**Why did John call Jesus the Word?**} Well, “***Words are the means that permit us to communicate with others, John used it to show that Jesus Christ is the only means by which Go chose to communicate with man.***” **Jesus Christ, then, is God’s speech or God’s discourse to man.** **John** wrote in **1:18**, ***No one has ever seen God; the only God, who is at the Father’s side, he has made him known.*** The **NASB** puts it this way, “***He has explained Him.***” **Jesus explains to us the character and the nature of God.**

In **John 14:6-7** Jesus himself said, “***“I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. ⁷ If you had known me, you would have known my Father also. From now on you do know him and have seen him.”*** Because God sent Jesus into this world, we can know the way to the Father, we have life in His name, and we can know the truth about God. Jesus is how the Father speaks to us today. **Hebrews 1:1-3** says, that “***Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed the heir of all things, through whom also he created the world. He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature, and he upholds the universe by the word of his power...***”

Second, **because of Jesus, I know what love truly is all about.** **1 Jn. 4:7-10** says, “***Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God, and whoever loves has been born of God and knows God. Anyone who does not love does not know God, because God is love. In this the love of God was made manifest among us, that God sent his only Son into the world, so that we might live through him. In this is love, not that we have loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.***” The Father’s willingness to sacrifice His Son

Jesus, and the Lord Jesus' willingness to bear the cross for our sins, reveals the love of God in a clear and touching way. No one has ever loved you like Jesus has loved you – He died for your sins and in your stead. No one else could have!

The love of Jesus goes far beyond being our atoning sacrifice. Jesus understands us and allows us to approach Him with confidence, even in times of weakness. **Hebr. 4:15-16** says, *“For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin. Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.”* Not only can we approach the Lord Jesus, our high priest, we can find grace to help in dealing with our temptations. Jesus is doing everything He can to help us. He wants us in heaven with Him.

Jesus predicted that Peter would deny Him three times before the rooster crowed, and Peter did indeed deny Him three times. Hear what Jesus said to Peter – knowing how He would deny him – in **Lk. 22:31-32** He says, *“Simon, Simon, behold, Satan demanded to have you, that he might sift you like wheat, but I have prayed for you that your faith may not fail. And when you have turned again, strengthen your brothers.”* Have you ever considered that even when you fail, the Lord Jesus is praying for you? Yes, He truly loves you!

Third, because of Jesus, I can have my sins erased. I can be clean and justified by the blood of Jesus Christ. John the Baptist, in **John 1:29**, said that when he saw *“Jesus coming toward him, and said, “Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world.”* Jesus sacrificed His body on the cross so that we might be saved from our sins. We read in **Col. 1:13-14** where God *“has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.”* Jesus' blood, not silver and gold and not some kind of precious metal, is what redeemed

us from sin, it was His blood. Because He suffered and died, shedding His blood, is the reason we don't have to suffer the consequences of our sin.

The Lord Jesus gave us a second chance, He erased all the guilt of our past, and He allowed us to start over as a new person, born again. **And all this took place when we were baptized into Christ.** According to **Romans 6:2-11**, baptism is the time when we were buried with Him, raised with Him, and received the newness of life. And according to Paul in **Gal. 3:26-27**, we are baptized into Christ through faith. And from that point on God considers us children of God.

Now Jesus cares about everybody, even people who are hard to love. You might remember that He went into the house of Zacchaeus, who may have been one of the most hated men in Jericho – he was the chief tax collector. He talked to the woman at the well who had been married five times and was living with a man. He saved Saul of Tarsus, who by his own word was the foremost of sinners, and *He did this to show His perfect patience to those who have sinned against Him.* Saul of Tarsus became the apostle Paul. In **1 Tim. 1:15-16** he said, *“The saying is trustworthy and deserving of full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am the foremost. But I received mercy for this reason, that in me, as the foremost, Jesus Christ might display his perfect patience as an example to those who were to believe in him for eternal life.”* Jesus is the champion of grace and He is also the champion of opportunities to start over.

And once we become Christians, the Lord Jesus doesn't abandon us. He is with us every step of our Christian life. In **1 Jn. 1:7-9** we read, *“But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin. If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.”* Jesus does not save us and

then forget us! As a matter of fact, here is how **Hebr. 7:25** puts it, ***“Consequently, he is able to save to the uttermost those who draw near to God through him, since he always lives to make intercession for them.”*** Jesus does indeed intercede for us as we draw near to God in obedience and in love.

Fourth, because of Jesus, we can live forever as an heir of God. Some people sadly imagine there is nothing beyond this earth. Some even say there is no resurrection of the dead. Paul told the elders of the church at Ephesus in **Acts 20:32**, ***“And now I commend you to God and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up and to give you the inheritance among all those who are sanctified.”*** Those who are cleansed by the blood of Christ do indeed have an inheritance in heaven.

Peter explains our inheritance in **1 Peter 1:3-5**, ***“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! According to his great mercy, he has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you, who by God’s power are being guarded through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.”*** According to God’s great mercy, our inheritance is kept in heaven for us, reserved for us. God is getting us ready for heaven and getting a home in heaven ready for us. We have a salvation ready to be revealed at the last time.

Paul speaks of this change from perishable to imperishable, when Jesus returns to earth at the second coming. In **1 Cor. 15:50-54** he said, ***“I tell you this, brothers: flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable. Behold! I tell you a mystery. We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we shall be changed. For this perishable body must put on the imperishable, and this mortal body must put on immortality. When the***

perishable puts on the imperishable, and the mortal puts on immortality, then shall come to pass the saying that is written: “Death is swallowed up in victory.” “O death, where is your victory? O death, where is your sting?” Christ will raise His people from the dead and change their perishable bodies into imperishable ones and take them home to heaven. Christ conquered death, and we can also through His power. To live in heaven our bodies must be changed, and Christ prepares us for eternal life!

At the end of his life Paul could say with confidence in **2 Tim. 4:6-8**, *“For I am already being poured out as a drink offering, and the time of my departure has come. I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Henceforth there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, will award to me on that day, and not only to me but also to all who have loved his appearing.” Christ will not merely give us a home with Him but will award to us a crown of righteousness and a crown of life. I look forward to the day when God will say, “*Well done, good and faithful servant. You were faithful with a few things, I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master.*”*

When this life is over, the faithful will spend eternity with God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. Heaven will be a place of joy and peace. **2 Cor. 5:1** says, *“For we know that if the tent that is our earthly home is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.”* That will be our new imperishable body living in an imperishable city – **this is only possible because of Jesus!** This is why Paul reminds us in this life, *“But our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, who will transform our lowly body to be like his glorious body, by the power that enables him even to subject all things to himself” (Phil. 3:20-21).* That is why we are commanded to keep our mind, thoughts and heart on heavenly things.

Sadly, some will miss out on heaven because they have rejected or ignored the Lord Jesus. But because they didn't believe in Him or His words, they will not enjoy His promises. **When you ignore or reject the Lord, the Lord responds to your decision; and you will face eternal consequences.** **You cannot ignore Him in this life and expect His grace and blessings in the life to come.** **Hebrews 10:26-27** puts it this way, *“For if we go on sinning deliberately after receiving the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, but a fearful expectation of judgment, and a fury of fire that will consume the adversaries.”*

Isn't it better to place your faith in the Lord Jesus and obey Him by *repenting of your sins*, by *confessing Him as the Son of God*, and by *being baptized into Christ* for the forgiveness of your sins? **Because of Jesus, you have hope and promise.** Don't miss out on the blessings and joy that the Lord Jesus has prepared for those who love him. Won't you come to Jesus today?