

The Uplifted Christ

Introduction

1. John 12:32 But I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all men to myself.
2. No one has ever had the influence upon the lives of so many people for such a long period of time. Here we are promised that it is Christ that is the drawing influence to lost humanity.
3. Jesus said many things about himself. What can you recall that Jesus said about himself?

I am the way I am the truth I am the vine I am the life
 I will rise from the dead I am from above I am the light of the world
 I am greater than Solomon All power is given unto me
 I am greater than the temple I came down from heaven
 If you have seen me you have seen the Father
 Come to me all who are weary and burdened and I will give you rest
 Heaven and earth will pass away but my words will never pass away

4. No one, other than Jesus, ever made such claims and proved them to be true. In this series of studies we will look at some ways that Christ is lifted up in the Scripture, and then see how we can lift up Christ in every area of our lives.

1. CHRIST WAS LIFTED UP IN PROPHECY

A. The Prediction of a coming prophet

1. Deuteronomy 18:15 The LORD your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among your own brothers. You must listen to him.
2. Acts 3:22-26 For Moses said, 'The Lord your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among your own people; you must listen to everything he tells you. Anyone who does not listen to him will be completely cut off from among his people.' "Indeed, all the prophets from Samuel on, as many as have spoken, have foretold these days. And you are heirs of the prophets and of the covenant God made with your fathers. He said to Abraham, 'Through your offspring all peoples on earth will be blessed.' When God raised up his servant, he sent him first to you to bless you by turning each of you from your wicked ways.

B. The Birthplace of the coming Messiah

1. Micah 5:2 But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, though you are small among the clans of Judah, out of you will come for me one who will be ruler over Israel, whose origins are from of old, from ancient times.
2. Matthew 2:1-6 After Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, during the time of King Herod, Magi from the east came to Jerusalem and asked, "Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews? We saw his star in the east and have come to worship him." When King Herod heard this he was disturbed, and all Jerusalem with him. When he had called together all the people's chief priests and teachers of the law, he asked them where the Christ was to be born. "In Bethlehem in Judea," they replied, "for this is what the prophet has written: "'But you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for out of you will come a ruler who will be the shepherd of my people Israel.'"

C. The Mistreatment of the Messiah

1. Isaiah 50:6 I offered my back to those who beat me, my cheeks to those who pulled out my beard; I did not hide my face from mocking and spitting.
2. Mark 14:61-65 Again the high priest asked him, "Are you the Christ, the Son of the Blessed One?" "I am," said Jesus. "And you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Mighty One and coming on the clouds of heaven." The high priest tore his clothes. "Why do we need any more witnesses?" he asked. "You have heard the blasphemy. What do you think?" They all condemned him as worthy of death. Then some began to spit at him; they blindfolded him, struck him with their fists, and said, "Prophecy!" And the guards took him and beat him.

D. The Gambling for his Garment

1. Psalm 22:18 They divide my garments among them and cast lots for my clothing.
2. John 19:23 When the soldiers crucified Jesus, they took his clothes, dividing them into four shares, one for each of them, with the undergarment remaining. This garment was seamless, woven in one piece from top to bottom.

E. The Drink on the Cross

1. Psalm 69:21 They put gall in my food and gave me vinegar for my thirst.
2. John 19:28-30 Later, knowing that all was now completed, and so that the Scripture would be fulfilled, Jesus said, "I am thirsty." A jar of wine vinegar was there, so they soaked a sponge in it, put the sponge on a stalk of the hyssop plant, and lifted it to Jesus' lips. When he had received the drink, Jesus said, "It is finished." With that, he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.

F. Those prophets lived in different parts of the world, in different ages, many of them not knowing the other, yet told all about His life and death and uttered the very words that Christ would speak while hanging on the cross. It strengthens our hope, builds our faith and creates within us a stronger desire to be with Christ.

2. CHRIST WAS LIFTED UP IN HIS LIFE

A. The life of Jesus Christ was a perfect one. His character was stainless. What happened during the trials of Jesus that demonstrated that he had lived a perfect and blameless life?

B. His teaching infallible, and adapted to every land and age. Can you name two times when the Father said that we are to listen to Jesus?

C. The life of Jesus is highly regarded by all of the world religions - even those that are not Christian. Jesus is lifted up in history, poetry, literature and philosophy.

1. What are some teachings of Jesus that are regarded as true by virtually everyone?

~Do unto others as you would have them do unto you.

~Let him who is without sin cast the first stone.

2. A few quotes about Jesus

~ I know men and I tell you that Jesus Christ is no mere man. Between Him and every other person in the world there is no possible term of comparison. Alexander, Caesar, Charlemagne, and I have founded empires. But on what did we rest the creation of our genius? Upon force. Jesus Christ founded His empire upon love; and at this hour millions of men would die for Him. – Napoleon

~But I will never stop helping and loving people the way Jesus said to. - Michael Jackson

~I ain't here to argue about his facial features. Or here to convert atheists into believers. I'm just trying to say the way school need teachers the way Kathie Lee needed Regis that's the way yall need Jesus. -Kanye West

~I felt unworthy to play Jesus. - Jim Caviezel

3. People from all walks of life and all times have been influenced by Jesus Christ. He was lifted up in his life.

3. CHRIST WAS LIFTED UP IN HIS DEATH

- A. The whole Bible has much to say about the cross of Jesus. When you think about the cross of Christ, is there any one thought that surfaces above the others?
- B. It was because of sin that Christ was lifted up on the cross, not His sin but my sin and your sin. Here are just a few passages of reflection upon the cross.
 1. Galatians 6:14 May I never boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world.
 2. Philippians 2:8 And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death— even death on a cross!
 3. Ephesians 1:7 In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God's grace.
 4. Revelation 1:5 ...Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, the firstborn from the dead, and the ruler of the kings of the earth. To him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by his blood,
- C. Jesus was lifted up literally, and symbolically, at the cross. He was lifted up in the Bible, in his life, in his death...

4. CHRIST WAS LIFTED UP FROM THE GRAVE

- A. "It may have been that not a person on earth, saint or sinner, Jew or roman, believed that Jesus Christ would be lifted up from the grave." ~ V. P. Black What do you think of that statement?

- B. The three darkest days that this world has ever known were those three days that Jesus Christ was laying in Joseph's tomb.
- C. 1 Peter 1:3-5 Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, and into an inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade—kept in heaven for you, who through faith are shielded by God's power until the coming of the salvation that is ready to be revealed in the last time.

Conclusion

1. John 12:32 But I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all men to myself.
2. Jesus was lifted up in prophecy, his life, his death, his resurrection.
3. We will be talking about lifting up Jesus Christ in our own lives for the next several weeks.

Next week: *Uplifting Christ and Him Crucified*

Resources

Abilene Christian College Annual Bible Lectures, 1967. V. P. Black, The Uplifted Christ

Uplifting Christ and Him Crucified

Introduction

1. John 12:32 But I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all men to myself.
2. 1 Corinthians 2:1-3 When I came to you, brothers, I did not come with eloquence or superior wisdom as I proclaimed to you the testimony about God. For I resolved to know nothing while I was with you except *Jesus Christ and him crucified*. I came to you in weakness and fear, and with much trembling.
 - a. *Jesus Christ and him crucified* places the emphasis on the sacrifice made for humanity.
 - b. It also is an expression that includes the resurrection and everything that Jesus taught us about how to live.
3. Today we explore this theme throughout the New Testament and recognize it's central place in our own thinking and experience with Christ.

1. Christ and Him Crucified Is The Very Essence of Christianity.

- A. Jesus came to save humans from their sins.
- B. The Scriptures reveal God's perspective of sin and salvation.
 1. Romans 3:23-26 for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, 24 and are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus. 25 God presented him as a sacrifice of atonement, through faith in his blood. He did this to demonstrate his justice, because in his forbearance he had left the sins committed beforehand unpunished— 26 he did it to demonstrate his justice at the present time, so as to be just and the one who justifies those who have faith in Jesus.)
 2. Humans are sinners.
 3. It will take a significant sacrifice to save them (Hebrews 10:4 *because it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins.*)
 4. That sacrifice was made by Christ (Ephesians 1:7 *In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with*

the riches of God's grace...)

C. The church was purchased with the blood of Christ (Acts 20:28 *...Be shepherds of the church of God, which he bought with his own blood.*)

D. Without Christ and Him Crucified there would be no salvation, no church, no Christianity - and this needs to be always before us. It is the very essence of Christianity.

2. Christ and Him Crucified is Our Highest Motive for Giving Our Life to Him

A. We are motivated to live for Him because of his great love for us.

1. Romans 5:8 But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.
2. John 3:16 For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son,[a] that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.
3. 1 John 4:19 We love because he first loved us.

B. We are motivated to live for Him because of our need for forgiveness

1. When we consider Christ's death on the cross we realize the exceeding sinfulness of sin. Anything that would make it needful for God to give His Son and make it necessary for Him to die on the cross for its forgiveness must be bad beyond all words to describe. ~C. E. McGaughey
2. Isaiah 53:5 But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was upon him, and by his wounds we are healed.
3. Along with the message that we are sinners is the message that we can be forgiven.
4. Hebrews 7:25 Therefore he is able to save completely those who come to God through him, because he always lives to intercede for them.
5. "There is nothing more powerful in producing conviction of sin and the desire to be released from the condemnation of it than the preaching of the cross of Christ." C. E. McGaughey

6. When we fail to magnify the cross we fail to avail ourselves of that which above all other things can motivate men.

C. We are motivated to live for Him because He reveals how we can be saved

1. Philip went down to Samaritan and preached Christ to them (Acts 8:5)

2. Read Acts 8:12-13 - many were baptized

3. Acts 8:35 - the Ethiopian was baptized

4. When Paul went to Corinth knowing nothing but Christ and Him crucified 'and many of the Corinthians who heard him believed and were baptized.' (Acts 18:8).

5. Christ died for us - we need to know what God desires for us to do to secure the benefits of the blood of Christ.

6. "No preacher today can truly preach "Christ and Him crucified" and omit telling his listeners what Christ requires of the sinner to be saved.. While we must emphasize grace, we must make known to men how to receive the benefits of grace." C. E. McGaughey

3. Christ and Him Crucified Influences Our Daily Lives

A. Gratitude.

1. We are motivated to fulfill our Christian duties and responsibilities. In remembering the cross we have the foundation for a deep and abiding gratitude that will move us to be what God wants to be.

B. Service.

1. 1 Timothy 1:12 I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who has given me strength, that he considered me faithful, appointing me to his service.

C. Attitudes.

1. We will keep in mind the Christian graces.

2. 2 Peter 1:9 But if anyone does not have them, he is nearsighted and blind, and has forgotten that he has been cleansed from his past sins

D. Love.

1. John 13:34-35 "A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another."
2. 1 John 4:11 Dear friends, since God so loved us, we also ought to love one another.

E. Giving

1. In talking about giving, Paul pointed out the importance of recalling the sacrifice of Christ on our behalf.
2. 2 Corinthians 8:9 For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, so that you through his poverty might become rich.
3. 2 Corinthians 9:15 Thanks be to God for his indescribable gift!

F. Humility

1. Philippians 2:5-8
2. When we remember Christ and him crucified that takes away all boasting because we realize that everything we depend upon is what He has done.
3. Ephesians 2:8 For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God..
4. Were the whole realm of nature mine,
That were a present far too small;
Love so amazing, so divine,
Demands my soul, my life, my all. ~Isaac watts

5. Forgiveness.

- a. Ephesians 4:32 Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.

7. Share.

- a. Christ and Him Crucified should move all Christians to tell the whole world that Christ is the answer to all of our problems.
- b. Romans 1:14-15 I am obligated both to Greeks and non-Greeks, both to the wise and the foolish. That is why I am so eager to preach the gospel also to you who are at Rome.
- c. Christ tasted of death for every man, we should not selfishly receive these blessings for self and forget those who have not heard.
- d. Matthew 10:8 ... Freely you have received, freely give.

8. Peace

- a. Ephesians 2:14 For he himself is our peace, who has made the two one and has destroyed the barrier, the dividing wall of hostility,
- b. Romans 5:1 Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ
- c. Philippians 4:6-7 Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. 7 And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

Conclusion

1. John 12:32 But I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all men to myself.
2. Paul said, "For I resolved to know nothing while I was with you except *Jesus Christ and him crucified.*"
3. To keep the crucified Savior in our sight changes everything about our lives.

Next week: *Uplifting Christ and Our Morality*

Resources

Abilene Christian College Annual Bible Lectures, 1967. C. E. McGaughey, Preaching Christ and Him Crucified.

Uplifting Christ in Our Morality

Introduction

1. John 12:32 But I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all men to myself.
2. When Christ is in our heart, He effects our moral choices.
 - A. There will always be temptation ... failure ... repentance ... but Christ calls us to live a higher standard than the world.
 - B. Here are two quotes from the 1960s:
 1. "All that can be said with certainty is that sexual behavior that used to be concealed has now been made clearly visible, and is both talked about and written about exhaustively." Dr. Isadore Rubin, 1966
 2. "Of the twenty-two civilizations that have appeared in history, nineteen of them collapsed when they reached the moral state the United States is in now." Arnold Toynbee, 1964
 - C. Recent Headlines Demonstrate What We Already Know
 1. Senator Anthony Weiner steps down from office after admitting he sent lewd pictures of himself to various women.
 2. A recent survey shows that nearly 1/5 of Adults in the US have been involved in sexting.
 3. The state of New York is close to joining five other states in allowing same-sex marriages.
 4. Chicago Tribune reports churches are not only opening doors to same-sex unions, some denominations also requiring clergy in same-sex relationships to make them legal. Chicago's Episcopal and Lutheran bishops this week unveiled new policies for openly gay pastors in committed relationships and those who want to officiate same-sex civil unions. Many clergy already informally blessed same-gender partnerships. Non-celibate gay ministers may serve in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, the Episcopal Church, the United Church of Christ and most recently the Presbyterian Church USA, which changed

its policy last month.

5. Boston Globe: Survey of 3,000 adults: Americans, regardless of generation, are deeply conflicted as they wrestle with the legality and morality of abortion, with large numbers identifying themselves as both “prochoice” and “prolife,” according to a sweeping new survey. While a solid majority — 56 percent — says abortion should be legal in most or all cases, 52 percent say abortion is morally wrong.
 6. Crystal Harris called off her marriage to Hugh Hefner which was supposed to happen this weekend. It wasn't a moral issue. She herself is a Playboy model. She's been seeing Dr. Phil McGraw's son since March.
- D. Ernest Hemingway's definition of morality: "What is moral is what you feel good after, and what is immoral is what you feel bad after."
- E. In order to maintain the morality that is of God two things need to happen.
1. We need to know the eternal teachings of God.
 2. We need to know the utter ruin that waits at the end of the road of immorality.

1. The Bible Defines Immoral Behavior

- A. Galatians 5:19-21 The acts of the sinful nature are obvious: sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery; idolatry and witchcraft; hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions 21 and envy; drunkenness, orgies, and the like. I warn you, as I did before, that those who live like this will not inherit the kingdom of God.
- B. Revelation 21:8 But the cowardly, the unbelieving, the vile, the murderers, the sexually immoral, those who practice magic arts, the idolaters and all liars—their place will be in the fiery lake of burning sulfur. This is the second death.”

2. Three Observations About Morality:

- A. God's truths do not change. What is acceptable in society / culture shifts and changes with each generation. God’s view about these things is not shifting around like ours.
1. God's physical laws do not change. Gravity exists just as it did at the beginning!
 2. God's moral laws do no change. If something is a moral law, it is not going to

change.

3. "In the light of God's teaching, our nation is sowing the wind and must some day reap the whirlwind. Only if the homes, the schools and the churches of our nation speak out for morality and chaste virtuous behavior on the part of both men and women is there hope for the future of our nation." Batsell Barrett Baxter

B. Proverbs 14:34 Righteousness exalts a nation, but sin is a disgrace to any people.

3. Why We Should Seek To Be Moral People Psalms 139:1-24

A. God already knows who we are, how we are tempted. (verses 1-3)

B. God's presence, knowledge, and power are beyond us. (verses 4-6)

C. God alone can lead us as we need to be led.

1. Psalm 139:23-24 Search me, O God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. See if there is any offensive way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.

4. Discerning God's Will For Our Moral Guidance

A. Renew

1. Romans 12:1-2 Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God—this is your spiritual act of worship. 2 Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, *but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is*—his good, pleasing and perfect will.

B. Guard

1. Proverbs 4:23 Above all else, guard your heart, for it is the wellspring of life.
2. Matthew 12:25 Jesus knew their thoughts and said to them, "Every kingdom divided against itself will be ruined, and every city or household divided against itself will not stand.

C. Think

1. Philippians 4:8 Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is

admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things.

D. Choose

1. 1 Corinthians 15:33 Do not be misled: “Bad company corrupts good character.”
2. Psalm 119:63 I am a friend to all who fear you, to all who follow your precepts.

E. Believe

1. 1 John 3:2-3 Dear friends, now we are children of God, and what we will be has not yet been made known. But we know that when he appears, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is. 3 Everyone who has this hope in him purifies himself, just as he is pure.

F. Pray

1. Hebrews 4:14-16 Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has gone through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold firmly to the faith we profess. 15 For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are—yet was without sin. 16 Let us then approach the throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.

G. Work

- A. Philippians 2:12-13; 1:6, "work out your salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God who is at work in you, both to will and to work for His good pleasure...For I am confident of this very thing, that He who began a good work in you will perfect it until the day of Christ Jesus."

Conclusion

1. John 12:32 But I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all men to myself.
2. The manner in which we live our life will either lift up Christ or hide him from the world.
3. When Christ so-fulfills the heart that His system of values is dominant in all aspects of one's life, then and only then will man be able to live as God wants him to live.
4. It is not possible to teach morality apart from religion. Only when man respects

God does he have the strength to be moral. only when Christ dominates the heart and life is there the power to live on the high road of moral purity.

Next week: *Uplifting Christ When We Teach*

Resources

Abilene Christian College Annual Bible Lectures, 1967. Batsell Barrett Baxter, Christ and Morals.

Lifting Up Christ With Compassion

Introduction

1. John 12:32 But I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all men to myself.
2. Jesus was known for being a compassionate person.
 - a. Acts 10:38 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.
 - b. "His life is the most wonderful manifestation of compassion for the human family the world has ever known. In this characteristic of Jesus as in all others, we can see the perfect ideal of what we ought to be." Robert Bankes
 - c. Compassion literally means "to suffer with". Jesus identified with the sufferings and temptations of man. "He became a man, lived as a man, died the death of a man, that He might save man." (Bankes)

1. Christ The Demonstrator

- A. The compassion of Christ came from a heart of love for people and a deep understanding of human needs.
 1. John 2:25 "He did not need man's testimony about man, for he knew what was in a man"
 2. Jesus knew the thoughts and emotions of others.
 3. In a time of sorrow when his dear friends were hurting with grief over the loss of their brother, "Jesus Wept" (John 11:35).
- B. There are many examples of the compassion of Christ.
 1. Mark 1:40, 41 "A man with leprosy came to him and begged him on his knees, "If you are willing, you can make me clean." Filled with compassion, Jesus reached out his hand and touched the man. "I am willing," he said. "Be clean!" Immediately the leprosy left him and he was cured."
 - a. There were many lepers in that day and Jesus could have easily evaded him.
 - b. He was willing to touch the untouchable.

2. Matthew 20:29-34 29 As Jesus and his disciples were leaving Jericho, a large crowd followed him. Two blind men were sitting by the roadside, and when they heard that Jesus was going by, they shouted, "Lord, Son of David, have mercy on us!" The crowd rebuked them and told them to be quiet, but they shouted all the louder, "Lord, Son of David, have mercy on us!"

3. Mark 6:34 "When Jesus landed and saw a large crowd, he had compassion on them, because they were like sheep without a shepherd. So he began teaching them many things."

4. Luke 7:13 is the account of a widow who has lost her son in death. When the Lord saw her, his heart went out to her and he said, "Don't cry."

C. Jesus spoke of compassion. We not only see him as a compassionate Savior, we hear him speak of compassion.

1. Mark 8:1-3 "During those days another large crowd gathered. Since they had nothing to eat, Jesus called his disciples to him and said, "I have compassion for these people; they have already been with me three days and have nothing to eat. If I send them home hungry, they will collapse on the way, because some of them have come a long distance.""

2. Christ had compassion both for individuals and for multitudes which causes us to love Him more and want to be more like Him.

3. Matthew 9:36 "When he saw the crowds, he had compassion on them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd."

4. G. Campbell Morgan "They were distressed, fleeced, lacerated by the fleecing, scattered, flung, tossed by violence. In these words we have the picture of sheep departed from the fold, into the midst of wolves; they are seen with their fleece torn, half dead, bleeding from wounds, and fainting ... He had come to heal them. He had come to seek and save that which was lost; He was the 'Good Shepherd' and the Good Shepherd layeth down His life for the sheep."

2. COMPASSION FOR PHYSICAL NEEDS

A. 1 Peter 3:8 " Finally, all of you, live in harmony with one another; be sympathetic, love as brothers, be compassionate and humble."

1. It is in such compassion that we are moved to care for the needy, the indigent, and all others that we have the opportunity of helping in our day.
2. Galatians 6:10 "Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, especially to those who belong to the family of believers."
3. Whenever we reach out to meet the needs of others around us we are emulating the compassion of Christ.
4. Perhaps there are more opportunities today than ever. Our knowledge of needs is certainly ramped up with social networking and internet capability. Floods, tornadoes, hurricanes, tsunamis, and other disasters open up opportunities to express the love of Christ.

B. As we grow in the compassion of Christ, we will be mindful of our duty to support the needy.

1. The parable of the good Samaritan in Luke 10 is a demonstration of compassion.
2. The priest and the Levite may have felt sorry for the beaten man, but that did not move them to demonstrate compassion.
3. "What would Jesus do today with the emotionally disturbed, the handicapped, the blind, the brain-injured, the mentally retarded, the alcoholics, the narcotics addicts? All these can be helped.
 1. Are these people counted worthy of our compassion, our consideration, our understanding, and patience?
 2. Christ's tender loving care for these people should direct our efforts and our goals toward a brighter world for them. " Bankes

3. WHAT HINDERS COMPASSION?

A. The idea that suffering is punishment for sin.

1. John 9:1-3 "As he went along, he saw a man blind from birth. His disciples asked him, "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?" "Neither this man nor his parents sinned," said Jesus, "but this happened so that the work of God might be displayed in his life. "
2. The disciples had in mind that some sin had taken place; Jesus had in mind an opportunity to work the works of God.
3. Sin often brings suffering, but it is not right to conclude that every time one sees a case of suffering that one is being punished for sin.
4. "They're getting what's coming to them."

B. Busyness has hindered compassion.

1. Our lesson was written in 1967 and the author writes, "We are too busy." If he could have only known.
2. He told of an incident that happened in Houston. A man noticed that a car was stalled on the freeway, but no one had stopped to help the driver.
 - a. The lady thanked the man who stopped, and asked him to send someone to help. She was in a situation because she had to catch a plane for California.
 - b. The man changed the tire for the woman. She tried to pay him, but he declined. She requested his name and address.
 - c. Weeks went by and one day a telegram and a new television arrived. The telegram read, "Thank you for your courtesy shown to my Mother-in-law in coming to see me in my illness." The wire was signed by Nat King Cole, who had by then already passed away from cancer.
 - d. Not all of our compassion for others will be rewarded this way, of course.
3. When we are too busy to help others we are too busy to be like Christ.

C. Materialism has hindered our compassion.

1. The Rich man in Luke 16 had become self-centered and satisfied with himself- so much so he was not concerned about his community.

2. "Many of our blessings in health and wealth and opportunities have been turned into curses as we fail to have compassion for others." (Bankes)

D. Failure to appreciate the individual.

1. What good would it do to help just one person?
2. In all that Christ did for the multitudes he never lost sight of the individual.
3. We cannot determine what just one individual can mean to the Lord as a result of our compassion.

4. COMPASSION FOR SOULS

A. When Christ beheld the multitude in Matthew 9, he was moved by their spiritual needs as much as anything else.

1. He saw them as a great harvest ready to be gathered.
2. Even when the harvest is ready, it does not gather itself.
3. Matthew 9:35-37 "Jesus went through all the towns and villages, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the good news of the kingdom and healing every disease and sickness. When he saw the crowds, he had compassion on them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. Then he said to his disciples, "The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field."

B. We need to see the world as a great harvest ready to be gathered and every individual represents a soul that can be gathered into the harvest of the Lord.

1. Christ prayed for laborers for the harvest. Perhaps we do not pray enough for the lost because we do not have enough compassion.
2. "When we really pray about a matter it will not be long until we are active in carrying out that for which we prayed." (Bankes)

C. We need to be cautious that we do not think the worship of the church is our main function.

1. If it is, then when we go through the form of worship we think our work is done.
2. It hasn't even begun. We meet to worship God. We should leave to serve Him through serving others.

5. DEVELOPING COMPASSION

- A. We develop compassion when we have been in the position of receiving compassion.
- B. We develop compassion when we put into practice the 'Golden Rule" (Matthew 7:12).
- C. We develop compassion when we realize that everyone stands in need of compassion.

Conclusion:

- The love and compassion of Christ in our lives will help us to never forget that the primary purpose of our lives is to shine the light of Christ into a dark world.
- The challenge is ours - show the world the reality of Christianity by a compassion for the physical and spiritual needs of others.
- One of the ways that we lift Christ up is to show His compassion.

Resources

Abilene Christian College Annual Bible Lectures, 1967. Robert D. Bankes, Christ and Compassion.

Lifting Up Christ In Worship

Introduction

1. "To worship is to quicken the conscience by the holiness of God, to feed the mind with the truth of God, to purge the imagination by the beauty of God, to open the heart to the love of God, to devote the will to the purpose of God." William Temple

2. It is crucial that we lift up Christ in our worship time together, and in our private worship times.

3. "Yet a time is coming and has now come when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for they are the kind of worshipers the Father seeks. God is spirit, and his worshipers must worship in spirit and in truth." (John 4:23-24)

4. The word 'worship' comes from the Saxon word which became *worthship*. To worship God is to ascribe the proper worth to God, to magnify His worthiness of praise, or better, to approach and address God as he is worthy.

1. God has revealed Himself Through Christ that We Might Focus on Him.

A. John 1:1, 14 "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God... 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."

B. Hebrews 1:1-2 " In the past God spoke to our forefathers through the prophets at many times and in various ways, 2 but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, and through whom he made the universe."

C. Philippians 3:3 "For it is we who are the circumcision, we who worship by the Spirit of God, who glory in Christ Jesus, and who put no confidence in the flesh"

2. Lifting Up Christ in Worship Should Activate the Heart to Deeds of Justice and Love.

- A. Romans 12:1,2 "Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God—this is your spiritual[a] act of worship. 2 Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will."
- B. Matthew 25:40 ""The King will reply, 'I tell you the truth, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me.'"

3. Lifting up Christ in Worship Should Activate Fellowship

- A. "It is the unmistakable conclusion that true worship, as taught and practiced by Christ and the apostles, is a warm and joyous fellowship. ... Genuine worship is a fellowship. It is a fellowship that lifts up Christ, for it is composed of those within the Body of Christ, into which they were incorporated by the response of faith to the act of God in Christ!" J. Paul Du Bois
- B. "Membership in that Body is at the same time membership in one another, with attendant personal involvement, for we are "members of one another".
- C. Romans 12:5 "So in Christ we who are many form one body, and each member belongs to all the others."
- D. "I cannot imagine early Christians with the kind of fellowship that met together only on Sunday mornings, and then acted toward each other with a polite, but rather cool detachment, cautiously and sometimes suspiciously holding each other at arm's length. Their gatherings were to mutually edify, exhort, and console." J. Paul Du Bois
- E. 1 Corinthians 14:3 "But everyone who prophesies speaks to men for their strengthening, encouragement and comfort."
- F. 1 Corinthians 12:26 " If one part suffers, every part suffers with it; if one part is honored, every part rejoices with it."
- G. The awareness of 'one another' is essential to proper worship. Paul declared that being subject to "one another" is a means of showing reverence for Christ.
- H. Ephesians 5:21 "Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ."
- I. "I see in the gatherings of early Christians the kind of unbounded good will

toward each other that unashamedly tapped the spiritual resources of each other, gladly receiving every tid-bit of spiritual strength they could possibly draw from the spiritual reservoirs of their brethren..." J. Paul Du Bois

4. Lifting Up Christ Happens When We Function as Priests

A. Christians are Priests, and Christ is our High Priest

B. 1 Peter 2:5 "you also, like living stones, are being built into a spiritual house to be a holy priesthood, offering spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ."

C. "In Christ that gap between man and God has been spanned. I cannot love God perfectly, but Christ can, and does so for me. I cannot serve Him perfectly, but Christ can, and does so for me. Indeed, I cannot worship Him perfectly, but Christ can, and does so for me." J. Paul Du Bois

5. Christ is Lifted Up When We Sing.

A. Ephesians 5:19 "Speak to one another with psalms, hymns and spiritual songs. Sing and make music in your heart to the Lord"

B. Colossians 3:16 "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, as you teach and admonish one another in all wisdom, and as you sing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs with thankfulness in your hearts to God."

C. "Is Christ in our hearts when we sing? Is our singing just the perfunctory performances of our lips without the deep feeling and emotions of the heart? If Christ is to be in the congregation, we must be sure that He is in our hearts when we sing His praises." John H. Banister

6. Christ is Lifted Up When We Pray.

A. In prayer we talk to the Father through the mediation of Jesus Christ.

B. In prayer we recognize our need of divine guidance and help.

C. In prayer we express our gratitude and adoration to God for His mercy and providence.

7. Christ is Lifted Up When We Commune.

A. We are meeting in the presence of Christ to remember his death, burial and resurrection and to draw closer to Him.

B. We proclaim His return.

8. Christ is Lifted Up When We Give

A. "It is given to Him, for His glory, and the advancement of His kingdom on the earth. Giving is more than a mere donation. It is a consecration of ourselves to Christ and a deep commitment to Him. We must give of ourselves, when we give our money, if the Lord is to be glorified and exalted." John H. Bannister

9. Christ is Lifted Up In the Preaching of the Gospel

A. "When Christ is central in our preaching, His presence and power will be felt in the assembly and the entire congregation will be transformed into His likeness." John H. Bannister

Conclusion: As we gather together, we must always keep in mind that Christ is the central presence among us.

From Banister: If the congregation is to be Christ-Centered:

- It's members must constantly behold the glory of the Lord and be changed into His image (2 Cor. 3:18).
- Their lives must show the purity, humility, tenderness, compassion, and unselfishness of Jesus.
- Their ambition must be to please Christ in all things and live solely for Him (2 Corinthians 5:6, 14-15).
- Their motto must ever be, "To live is Christ" (Philippians 1:21) and this must always be their desire.
- Their faith must be, "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me" (Philippians 4:13) and in this faith they must go forth with confidence, assuredly believing that nothing shall ever separate them from the love of Christ for they "are more than conquerors through him that loved us" (Romans 8:35-39).
- Their hope must be the return of their dear Lord and for this blessed event they must watch, pray, and work so as to meet Him with confidence (1 John 2:28).
- Their longing must be to be numbered among the redeemed saints who shall be caught up in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air and be with Him forever in the heavenly glory! (1 Thessalonians 4:17-18).

When Christ thus lives in the congregation, it will be spiritual, sound, active, unselfish, charitable, and faithful to the Lord...Such a church will have power and influence in the community and will make a tremendous spiritual impact on many lives.

John H. Banister, 1967

Resources

Abilene Christian College Annual Bible Lectures, 1967. J. Paul Du Bois, Lifting Up Christ in Worship. John H. Banister, Lifting Up Christ in the Congregation.

Lifting Up Christ At Home

Introduction

'Friends there is nothing that is needed in today's world as much as homes that lift up Christ ... we need homes that lift up Christ because herein lies the future of the church of our Lord.. We must have homes that lift up Christ because the most significant single factor in determining happiness is the home.' Eldred Stevens

1. Christ in the First Century Home

A. Jesus is not often associated with Biblical teachings about the home.

1. Jesus never married - a part of the background for centuries of monasticism and religious celibacy.
2. The Gnostics looked upon all flesh as evil and disparaged marriage.
3. The Marcionites saw the begetting of children as the work of Satan.
4. Augustine believed that sex was not wrong, but passion was. he seemed to wish that God had arranged some other way to replenish the earth.
5. Jesus at no time expressed such a low evaluation of love and marriage.

B. It may be true that no one ever thought more affectionately of his own home than did Jesus.

1. We can guess that Jesus was the 'man of the house' as oldest son. It appears that Joseph died not long after Jesus was 12.
2. Mark 6:3 implies Jesus worked as a carpenter to provide for his mother, brothers, and sisters.
3. This helps explain Jesus' warm regard for widows.
 - a. Those whose houses were devoured by the pious practices of hypocritical religionists (Mark 12:38-40 As he taught, Jesus said, "Watch out for the teachers of the law. They like to walk around in flowing robes

and be greeted in the marketplaces, 39 and have the most important seats in the synagogues and the places of honor at banquets. 40 They devour widows' houses and for a show make lengthy prayers. Such men will be punished most severely.")

- b. The one who cast her mite into the temple treasury (Mark 12:41-44 Jesus sat down opposite the place where the offerings were put and watched the crowd putting their money into the temple treasury. Many rich people threw in large amounts. 42 But a poor widow came and put in two very small copper coins,[j] worth only a fraction of a penny. 43 Calling his disciples to him, Jesus said, "I tell you the truth, this poor widow has put more into the treasury than all the others. 44 They all gave out of their wealth; but she, out of her poverty, put in everything—all she had to live on.")

4. Jesus loved children. Perhaps this had its roots back in earlier days when He, as the oldest son, was father to a large family of small brothers and sisters. (Matthew 18:2-5 He called a little child and had him stand among them. 3 And he said: "I tell you the truth, unless you change and become like little children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. 4 Therefore, whoever humbles himself like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. 5 "And whoever welcomes a little child like this in my name welcomes me. 6 But if anyone causes one of these little ones who believe in me to sin, it would be better for him to have a large millstone hung around his neck and to be drowned in the depths of the sea.")

C. Jesus did offer teachings that showed a deep respect and love for the home.

1. He was severely critical of the Pharisees for excusing themselves from the care of their parents. (Mark 7:10-12 For Moses said, 'Honor your father and your mother,' and, 'Anyone who curses his father or mother must be put to death.'[b] 11 But you say that if a man says to his father or mother: 'Whatever help you might otherwise have received from me is Corban' (that is, a gift devoted to God), 12 then you no longer let him do anything for his father or mother.)
2. He revealed his own sense of family responsibility when we read of him saying, "the son of man has nowhere to lay his head," and when we read of his visits to the home of Lazarus in Bethany, we feel his lonesomeness for a home.
3. Jesus made bold attacks on the divorce customs of his day. He taught his

disciples to regard marriage as an honorable and permanent union. (Mark 10:5-9; Matthew 19:3-9).

D. Two of the most basic principles of the gospel were couched in family concepts.

1. The fatherhood of God. (Matthew 6:26; 7:7-11; Luke 15:21-32)

2. The brotherhood of man. (Matthew 7:44-47; Luke 10:30-37)

E. The most precious revelation of Christ's feelings about home is found at the cross. Among the last words that He uttered were those spoken to His mother. (John 19:25-27)

2. Christ and the Twenty First Century Home

A. Husbands are to love their wives. Ephesians 5:25-33

B. Husbands are to provide for their families. 1 Timothy 5:8

C. Wives are to be keepers at home. Titus 2:1-5

D. Raise Children in the Lord. Ephesians 6:4

"Bring them up in the nature and admiration of the Lord." Marshall Keeble

E. Honor the aged. Mark 7:10-13; 1 Timothy 5:4, 16

"Help us to repay, in service to one another, the debt of thine unmerited benefits and mercies, so that, when the period of our stewardship draws to a conclusion, when the windows begin to be darkened, when the bond of the family is to be loosed, there shall be no bitterness of remorse in our farewells." ~ Family prayer of Robert Louis Stephenson

Resources

Abilene Christian College Annual Bible Lectures, 1967. Eldred N. Stevens, Christ in the Home.