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## Jesus the Teacher

“Sanctify them by the truth; your word is truth.” John 17:17

**Key verses:** Luke 11:1-11; 12:1-11

**Key personalities:** God as the Trinity, Jesus, and John the Baptist

**Timeline:** The God of Eternity; He enters as a Man, being fully God and fully Man, walks this earth as our Lead, 28-29 A.D.

Many people have their opinions of who Jesus is. As Reformed or Evangelical Christians, we are sure we know who Jesus is. He is clearly spelled out in the Bible, in our creeds and confessions, preached on Sunday and even studied during the week. But, who is He really to you? Is the world's interpretation the same as yours? Is He a mere man? A prophet? A madman? A myth? A liar, fraud, or imposter? Great teacher? Is He truly our LORD, or is He a convenience or a compartment of our life, or even just a puppet for us to get our way with God?

If you really think this through, you may be surprised by what you find. How you live out your Christian life is a true reflection of who Jesus is to you. What we do with His spoken and written Word will determine how we are to ourselves, others, and to the world; this mindset fuels our faith and our maturity. It will also decide our composure and contentment and be the main inspiration for our growth in Christ and our relationships with those around us. If we ignore His voice and shirk our responsibilities, we forfeit so many of His wonders and the enjoyment of life in Christ. Sit at the feet of the Teacher, allow Christ to weave and thread His Life, Truth, and Way in and through you. There is no better way. So, are you serious about your faith and His Word (Gal. 5; Heb. 12:25)!?

**Key Happenings:** Christ is the Teacher, but He is not only a Teacher!

Is Jesus just a great teacher? No, He is *The Savior of the world*, the Eternal God incarnate, the Only One who can save us from our sins and give us a New Life. Jesus is no mere prophet or a teacher. He is the Eternal God incarnate, the Only One who can save us from our sins and give us a New Life! Even more astoundingly, He extends this and offers Himself to the entire world! When we realize this, we can hear, learn and apply His true Truths into our lives and pass them on to others (Matt. 23:7-8; John 3:16; 4:14; 10:16; 11:51-52; Acts 8:4-25).

If we see Him only as a teacher, we will become flustered by being totally unable to do as He instructs. He has set a standard that we could never meet on our own. What point could there be to a Christian life and Church if Christ is just a teacher? What point would there be to a sermon that cannot be followed, or as some proclaim, does not even apply to us until Christ comes back! When we have the notion that we can carry the Lord's message and work without His inward work in us, we will fail and be a hindrance. We will not be the blessings we are called to be. We have to see Christ as our Savior and Provider, so we can respond in character and actions. We cannot do this just out of duty or obligation. This comes from a heart that is transformed. None of these blessing components could work if all we have is a lesson. They must be manufactured from within us by the raw materials He gives us. We become the factory of blessing by receiving Him, modeling Him, and helping others.

When we realize the value of His Truth, we will dedicate our lives to Christ! We will get rid of everything and anything that keeps us away--we will even sacrifice what we like, if it is bad for us or clouds His Way from us, so we can possess His truth (Matt. 13:28-30; Phil. 3:7-10).

**What happens when I am taught?** When God is instructing us, He is edifying us with the information to grow our faith and transform our hearts, character, and actions while leading us into deeper maturity. God is holding up a mirror to show us our real heart. What is inside of you? He is looking for faith, for authenticity, for Fruit, for a soul who cries out to Him, so He can grow His seed in us. God also desires to multiply His seed so He can be made known to others. He is looking to see where His Word has fallen on you. How is His Word being used?

Jesus teaches with the Holy Spirit in mind to empower us, and His grace sustains us. In so doing, He does not teach us a set of "do's and don'ts," but reveals to us a picture of life, as it should be. The picture of life is the church as we relate to the world, living and working in the power of the Spirit by what Christ has done.

Look at it this way. In God's infinite mercy, He dispenses the knowledge and truth we need at the level we need and at the time we can handle it. Then, He brings us deeper into His Word and gives us a deeper understanding as we grow in our faith. His truths will not contradict, but rather expound and expand our faith. The more we know and have grown in our faith and knowledge, the more reasonability we have to model and tell it to others. This is also why many Christians are not involved in Discipleship and why most churches do not teach from the Bible or only offer superficial messages; the pastors and members are in fear of their growth because they do not want the responsibility or to model Jesus or show and tell Him to others. Many Christians prefer disobedience rather than an effectual faith that is contagious.

So, when we are ready, we get it; when we get it, we are responsible for it and have the passion to run with it. If you do not get it, you are too prideful, too apathetic or too immature or too young in the faith to understand because you have not learned and applied what must come and become before. You cannot play Beethoven when first learning the piano, nor can you do calculus when you are just learning fractions. You build up to it, practicing and meeting challenges that are appropriate for where you are. When Jesus first taught them, the disciples were not ready, thus they did not get it; they were too young in the faith. The Pharisees did not get it not because of their ignorance; they were certain of what they knew, and they just were so prideful that they would not allow the Truth to penetrate their conceit and traditions. The Romans did not get it due to their apathy, their pluralism, and their disdain; they felt that they also had their own education. We, as followers of Christ, do not need to search for Truth, since we have it already. Now, we are required to learn it, preserve it, study it, and apply it (John 14: 6, 26; 16:13; 17:17; Col. 3:1-3).

**Why do I not understand Jesus' teachings?** Perhaps we are not listening or ready for it. Do we hear His Word? If not, why not? Do we see the value? Are we willing to give up our feeble ways, and all that we have, to possess His Truth? If so, what are you doing about it? What has God planted in you? What have you done with it? Is it growing, or is it trampled (John 12:23-28)? And, if you do hear and put into practice His Word, have you told others about Him; has your faith multiplied into the lives of others as well? The barrier that most Christians face, the wall that prevents them taking their faith into their life and relationships, is that they hide the Truth by burying it deep in their lives so it is never shown to those around them! When we receive His Truth, we must never hoard it just for ourselves; it must be proclaimed in our lifestyle, in our deeds, and in our words. It must be real and authentic! Why? Jesus Christ is real with us! He dwells in and with us!

**Jesus motivates us to examine our attitudes, to see if there is room, (and there should be lots of it) for improvement in our relationships with both God and those around us!**

How can I make sure I am not the one who will not hear the word of the Lord or be stagnant and never grow deeper? Get on with it; get on with your faith. Do not be the one who chooses to harden your heart! Embrace His Word with **passion**, so you take His **truth**, understand its **clarity**, and believe with **conviction**, so it **endures**; in that way, you can also make it known to others in the same way.

*Grace and truth*, the covenant that God has with humanity and His steadfast purpose to keep and fulfill it. "Truth" refers to the reality and relevance of God for us now. It also refers to the Law and God's patience with and mercy for His people who were not keeping it, bearing it, or respecting it. Christ came to fulfill the Law and bring us God's grace. This is a key principle of our Christian faith that means we are holy in Christ; He sets us apart for a reason and a purpose. Our lives have meaning and value; therefore, Jesus wants that meaning for our lives to be infused by Him so that the purpose becomes to glorify Him, enjoy grace and fellowship in Him, and share it with others. This is also what the *Westminster Catechism* states, "What is the chief purpose of man? Man's (all of humanity who proclaims Christ as Lord) chief end (objective) is to glorify God and to enjoy Him forever." (Gen. 24:27; Ex. 34:6; Psalm 25:10; 26:3; 73:24-28; Prov. 16:6; John 17:21-23; Rom. 1:6-7; 11:36; 1 Cor. 10:11; Eph. 1:5-8; 2:7; 1 Thess. 3:11)

**Key Takeaway:** Jesus gets into our hearts and minds so we are transformed and renewed in Him. He purifies us so we can know Him more deeply, and in so doing, become our best for His glory. This is quintessential in our spiritual growth. We have to be formed in Christ, and He has to have a deep impact on us so our lives are changed. We no longer rely on our feelings and experiences. Rather, we seek Him and His Word for all of our life and decisions so we are people of maturity, not tossed by the winds of society and pride. We seek Jesus and the Truth so that we do not seek to create a façade rather than a real person whose heart is growing in Him. This comes from learning from Him and trusting in His redeeming power, in His blood that saved; we respond by our trust in Him. Christ's blood was shed in our place to please God's price and wrath so we could be forgiven and have eternal life (Hebrews 9:11-28).

**God's Word has life and power! Make sure you have received it! Keep receiving it, so that God might use you to reap a *hundredfold harvest!***

*"Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men."* Are you doing that? Let us allow the power of the Holy Spirit to open our eyes, and break our will, so we can be receptive to our Lord and Savior, and so we can do as He called Matthew 4:18-22

Listening is a choice. We have the choice to do as we please with the Word when it reaches out to us! We have the choice, once we know Jesus, to keep hearing and applying His Word. The seed is given, His grace is given, our sins can be declared clean, we can have eternity, and all we need to do is accept it by faith. So easy, so simple; yet, so few will. The point we are not to miss? Do not be the one who chooses to harden your heart! Embrace His Word with passion, so you take His truth, understand its clarity, and believe with conviction, so it endures; in that way, you can also make it known to others in the same way.

**The Call to the Church?** We must know the Teacher before His teaching can make sense to us or be real in our lives! We must know the Teacher before we can teach! This develops as we become a disciple and furthers as leaders. We respond to God and others from what we are given. From this, we are to be teachers of His Word, preaching the Bible with passion, conviction, clarity, and always in the truth! (Rom 12).

## Questions to Ponder

1. Who was your favorite teacher? Why?
2. What are the qualities that make a good teacher, not just in the classroom, but also in life?
3. Why do you think that many Christians prefer disobedience rather than an effectual faith that is contagious?
4. If we see Jesus only as a teacher, we will become flustered or frustrated by being totally unable to do as He instructs. Why would this be true?
5. What do you feel are God's standards that you could never meet on your own?
6. What point could there be to a Christian life and Church where Christ is just a teacher?
7. Do you know the Teacher (Jesus) well enough to make sense of what He is teaching you? If not, what is in the way?
8. How has Jesus claimed your mind to empower and sustains you? What would your life be like with more of this? What about without?
9. List all of the benefits you will receive by being a citizen in His Kingdom. How can that list be a comfort in times of stress and confusion?
10. What do you need to do to become what Jesus teaches?
11. How and why is it our responsibility as believers to learn and partake of His precepts? How can it help you to understand that God cares and empowers us? How will you react and respond to His Word from now on? How can your reverence and gratitude for who and what Christ did help you in this quest to grow deeper in Him?
12. How does it make you feel that Jesus cares and deals with our internal selves, in matters of the heart? Why is this more important than just dealing with the external? If we had our internal life on the right path, how would our external be?