

Episode #503 - How to Know God 4: This I Believe, That Jesus is the Christ

- I. The “Knowing God in the Word Radio Program” is for the purpose of helping listeners to fulfill the greatest need we have as believers – to know God.
- II. We have seen that getting to know God is our greatest need, and the way to enter into relationship with and to please God is through faith. What we need regarding faith is to believe the record God gave of His Son.
- III. It is commonly thought that all who profess to be Christians are infused with the conviction that Jesus of Nazareth is the Christ, the Son of the living God. This would be good if it was true, but it is obviously not. Some who profess Christianity deny this altogether, giving Christ a much smaller role. Most Christians do not even know what is meant by “the Christ.”
- IV. What does it mean?
 - A. Is “Christ” His last name? His dad and mom were Mr. & Mrs. Christ?
 - B. The “son of God”: does this mean He was God’s little boy?
 - C. Many who claim Jesus as Savior and acknowledge Him as Lord are still greatly lacking in a positive faith that He is the Christ. But this is central to the gospel!
- V. The importance of belief.
 - A. John 20:30-31. “You” has no antecedent, a literary device which makes the message applicable to anyone who reads it. This was the purpose of this book!
 - B. The apostles knew the importance of this.
 1. Peter. Acts 2:36. God made Him Christ.
 2. Paul. Acts 17:3 in Thessalonica.
 3. Paul. Acts 18:5 in Corinth.
 - D. What does it mean to believe that Jesus is the Christ? Many say “Christ” means “Anointed.” True! But this leaves us with the question of what “Anointed” means?
 - E. Acts 10:38. To anoint is to consecrate, to designate, to name, to appoint, to elect.
 - F. I Samuel 16:1. Samuel anointed David as king in Israel. This was done by a ceremony involving oil. But Jesus was anointed by the Holy Spirit and power.
 - G. Luke 3:15. People were questioning if John might be the Christ? John 1:20. He denied it. But what would he have had to have been had he been the Christ?
- VI. The Christ is the Messiah
 - A. It is well known that *Christ* comes from the Greek and *Messiah* from the Hebrew.
 - B. Most do not know these languages, and depend on scholarship. But even the best scholarship has no right to express an opinion here, for God has spoken. John 1:41 and John 4:25. These two words are completely identical.
 - C. Matthew 16:16. To change this to “You are the Messiah” is completely true.
 - D. Many have deep-seated prejudice against this, due to phrases like “the Jewish Messiah” and “We have nothing to do with Messiah, our hope is in Christ.” But these statements have one clear answer. The Messiah is the Christ. There is no difference. To have nothing to do with the Messiah is to have nothing to do with Christ. Israel has no special claim on Him. The Samaritan men were right, John 4:42.
 - E. Ephesians 2:5-7. Many would strongly react against making this read “Messiah.” Yet strong reaction against unfamiliar truth is to be expected. Such a paraphrase is consistent with the truth, and only arouses our prejudices.
 - F. It is not that we intend to do away with the word “Christ,” only establish its complete identity with “Messiah.” We will never understand the Greek word Christ until we

embrace its complete and total equality with the Hebrew word Messiah. This is a strong link between the Old and New Testaments!

- G. Many talk strongly about believing the Bible but change their minds when brought face to face with specific statements, mumbling about a “question of interpretation.” There is no question of interpretation here. The believer must submit.

VII. The expectation of the Christ

- A. In the Old Testament, the single theme is that the time will come when God will take control of earth’s governments and impose His beneficent rule on earth.
- B. After sin and death entered the world, God made it known that Satan would not exercise his power over the human race forever. Genesis 3:15. This first promise centers in a Person, ordained by God – God’s Anointed One, the Messiah.
- C. The expectation of the Messiah was generated in the hearts of men by the Hebrew Scriptures, Genesis to Malachi. To say that Jesus is the Christ is to say He is the Messiah promised and predicted in the Old Testament.
- D. This expectation existed among all classes of people in Israel at the time of the New Testament. Matthew 2:2. This caused great excitement in Jerusalem! Matthew 2:5-6. These “chief priests and scribes” knew that at some point in history the Messiah would be born. Yet they had a conception of Him that did not match the truth!

VIII. Bringer of salvation.

- A. The man Simeon had a special promise from the Holy Spirit. Luke 2:26.
- B. In the temple he proclaimed a great truth about Jesus. Luke 2:29-32.
 - 1. “Salvation” here is an adjective, though it has been substantivized. This shows an ellipsis. We must not try to supply it with something foreign to the context (Moffitt, “saving power;” Lenski, “saving gift.”)
 - 2. Greek *soterion* means “salvation-bringing.” What? Christ!
- C. Simeon confirms what we already know from the Old Testament: the Christ must be the bringer of salvation. He must make the world safe. He must meet the needs of all people, and provide light to the nations and glory to God’s people Israel.

IX. Conclusion: To say that we believe that Jesus is the Christ is to say that He is the Messiah. It is to say that He is the One promised throughout the Old Testament Scriptures. It is to say that He is the One Anointed or designated by God. It is to say that He is the bringer of salvation. May we all believe the glorious truth that Jesus is the Christ!