

- Systemic Teaching about Christian Life -

Evangelium

Das 1. Capitel.

Von Christi Person und Amt; wie auch von Andrea, Petro, Philippo
und Nathanael, seinen Jüngern.

Im * Anfang war das † Wort, und das Wort
war bei Gott, und * mit Gott war das Wort.

* 1 Mos. 1, 1. † 1 Joh. 1, 1.

2. Derselbe * war im Anfang bei Gott,
3. Alle
und ohne dasselbe ist nichts gemacht
macht ist.

* Ps. 33.

4. In ihm * war das Leben, und
war das † Licht der Menschen * c. 5, 2.

5. Und das * Licht scheinete in der Finsternis,
und die Finsternis haben es nicht begriffen.

* c. 8, 12. u. 9, 5. u.

6. * Es ward ein Mensch von Gott gesandt,
der hieß Johannes.

* Matth. 3, 1. u. 11, 10. Marc. 1,

7. Derselbe kam zum Zeugnis, daß er von
dem Licht zeugete, auf daß sie Alle durch ihn
glaubten.

8. Er war nicht das Licht, sondern daß er ein

The Gospel of Christ

Series:
THE GOSPEL
The Good News of God

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General Considerations about Using This Material:

The subject presented in this material aims to provide support to knowledge and an in-depth study of the Bible and the Christian life.

Based on the understanding that in the Christian Bible is contained the consolidation of fundamental and formal records of the writings inspired by God for humanity and each person of it, the contents exposed in this material are not intended to add, ever, anything to the Bible, nor ever remove anything from it. The aim through this subject is to contribute to the exploration of what already was registered and passed on to us over thousands of years of history by the One Creator and Lord of Heaven and Earth.

The contents presented on the next pages, of course, intend to address just a portion of the essential themes of life displayed with such great amplitude in the Bible. On the other hand, however, this subject is presented in a grouped, colligated, organized and systematized manner with the objective to serve as an aid to knowledge and understanding of the Christian life without losing sight of the main aspects of it.

Ecclesiastes 12: 11 The words of the wise are like goads, and the words of scholars are like well-driven nails, given by one Shepherd.

Related words put together, as told in the biblical text above, serve as goads and nails for fixing supports and help for the life of people that hear and receive them. Therefore, one objective of this material is to study and seek a broader understanding of the truths handed down to us by the Unique Pastor and God, the Creator of Heaven and Earth.

We would still like to suggest that the reading and studying of this material also should always be accompanied by prudence and proper investigation, believing that this is a very healthy habit to be practiced toward any material presented to a person.

The act of acceptance, rejection, or “retaining what is good,” is a personal and individual attribute given to those who receive the wisdom from God and which should be exercised or used by them toward all that comes into their hands.

Proverbs 8: 12 "I, wisdom, dwell with prudence, And find out knowledge and discretion.

Acts 17: 11 These were more fair-minded than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness, and searched the Scriptures daily to find out whether these things were so.

Proverbs 16: 1 The preparations of the heart belong to man, But the answer of the tongue is from the LORD.

2 All the ways of a man are pure in his own eyes, But the LORD weighs the spirits.

3 Commit your works to the LORD, And your thoughts will be established.

More details about these initial considerations are posted at www.zoominchristianlife.org.

Ronald Gortz and Irmelin Gortz, servants of the Lord Jesus Christ!

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*Revelation 21: 5 Then He who sat on the throne said, "Behold, I make all things new." And He said to me, "Write, for these words are true and faithful."
6 And He said to me, "It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. I will give of the fountain of the water of life freely to him who thirsts.*

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*1Timothy 2: 3 For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior,
4 who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.*

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C1. The Second Compound Name of the Gospel

The subject addressed in this new material refers to another of the themes that make up the series “The Gospel, The Good News of God,” which, in turn, contains already the following previous subjects:

- ⇒ 1) Much More Than a Message: An Offer of Life!
- ⇒ 2) The Limit of the Unlimited Gospel.
- ⇒ 3) The Gospel of the Creator.

In the subjects mentioned above, it has been highlighted that the Gospel of God refers to an offer of newness of life presented directly by God to humankind and also that the breadth of the Gospel is so extensive and comprehensive that it is necessary to use various compound names to expose its greatness and the diversity of its characteristics.

We also understand that it is relevant to remember that the different compound names related to the Gospel do not constitute distinct “gospels.” There is only one Gospel of God. The various compound names of the Gospel, therefore, announce some of the most paramount facets of the same and the unique Gospel of the Lord.

So, the first more specific approach to the compound names of the Gospel, already performed in the themes mentioned above, has considered the expression “Gospel of God” or “Gospel of the Creator.”

The act of considering the Gospel as being of God or the Eternal Creator exposes a multitude of factors associated with it. To say that the Gospel is of God, for instance, associates the origin, property, motivation, conception, and purposes of the Gospel with the Eternal God Himself and with the Father of all creation. The Gospel that comes from the Father of Lights is also the Gospel of the Love of God, since it is also entirely structured and grounded in this inexhaustible and wonderful virtue of God Himself.

Aiming, however, to give continuity to the other compound names of the Gospel of God, we would like to advance in the present subject to the second name that is associated with this Gospel.

After exploring the Gospel under the compound name “Gospel of God” or “Gospel of the Creator,” we could not choose to go further other than the compound name “Gospel of Christ.”

The fact of referring to this new approach as the second name associated with the Gospel does not imply that it is less important than the first, since the aspects regarding the first and the second name are both inseparable, and one could not exist without the other.

Associated with the first name of the Gospel, it has been seen that God bestowed His Beloved Son as the central point of His offer. Through Christ granted by His grace, God offered forgiveness for the sins of the human beings and offered the restoration of the fellowship of each person with his or her Eternal Creator.

*2 Corinthians 5: 18 **Now all things are of God, who has reconciled us to Himself through Jesus Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation,***

19 that is, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not imputing their trespasses to them, and has committed to us the word of reconciliation.

Nevertheless, associated with the second name of the Gospel, we can see and realize that the Gospel of God is not only the Gospel of the Heavenly Father, but it is also the Gospel of Christ Himself, it is also the very Gospel of the Beloved Son of God.

The Lord Jesus Christ is the Beloved Son of God who came to manifest the Gospel of God to the world, but the Lord Jesus Christ also came to manifest the Gospel of which He Himself is co-participant with the Heavenly Father.

The Gospel of God is as well called the “Gospel of Christ” or the “Gospel of Jesus Christ” because this Gospel has also associated with Christ the essential aspects that are associated with the Heavenly Father.

If the association of the Gospel with the name of God, for instance, characterizes the origin of the Gospel in God, attributing the Gospel to Christ reveals that it also has its origin in the Only Begotten Son of God.

The fact that the Gospel is called the Gospel of Christ denotes that it is also the Gospel belonging to the Lord Jesus Christ.

Thus, **he or she who proclaims the Gospel of God equally announces the Gospel of Christ and vice versa**, as we can see exemplified in the following two texts:

Romans 15:15 Nevertheless, brethren, I have written more boldly to you on some points, as reminding you, because of the grace given to me by God,

16 that I might be a minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles, ministering the gospel of God, that the offering of the Gentiles might be acceptable, sanctified by the Holy Spirit.

17 Therefore I have reason to glory in Christ Jesus in the things which pertain to God.

18 For I will not dare to speak of any of those things which Christ has not accomplished through me, in word and deed, to make the Gentiles obedient,

19 in mighty signs and wonders, by the power of the Spirit of God, so that from Jerusalem and round about to Illyricum I have fully preached the gospel of Christ.

Mark 1:1 The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

2 As it is written in the Prophets: "Behold, I send My messenger before Your face, Who will prepare Your way before You."

3 "The voice of one crying in the wilderness: 'Prepare the way of the LORD; Make His paths straight.'"

4 John came baptizing in the wilderness and preaching a baptism of repentance for the remission of sins.

5 Then all the land of Judea, and those from Jerusalem, went out to him and were all baptized by him in the Jordan River, confessing their sins.

- 6 *Now John was clothed with camel's hair and with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey.*
- 7 *And he preached, saying, "There comes One after me who is mightier than I, whose sandal strap I am not worthy to stoop down and loose.*
- 8 *"I indeed baptized you with water, but He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit."*
- 9 *It came to pass in those days that Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee, and was baptized by John in the Jordan.*
- 10 *And immediately, coming up from the water, He saw the heavens parting and the Spirit descending upon Him like a dove.*
- 11 *Then a voice came from heaven, "You are My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."*
- 12 *Immediately the Spirit drove Him into the wilderness.*
- 13 *And He was there in the wilderness forty days, tempted by Satan, and was with the wild beasts; and the angels ministered to Him.*
- 14 *Now after John was put in prison, Jesus came to Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God,*
- 15 *and saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand. Repent, and believe in the gospel."*
-

The one who believes in the Gospel of God should also believe in the Gospel of Christ, for the two are one and the same Gospel of the Lord, and which emphasis complement each other in perfect harmony.

C2. The Diversity of Christ's Roles Regarding the Gospel

When a person observes the Biblical Scriptures in a broader or more detailed way, one can realize that the Lord Jesus Christ is presented by them in various distinct roles in relation to the Gospel of God.

In turn, the perception of the many distinct roles of the Lord Jesus Christ regarding the Heavenly Gospel is very significant and even essential so that the excessive emphasis on a particular point does not overshadow the essential positions of Christ regarding His Gospel.

The overemphasis, for instance, on the position of the Lord Jesus Christ as the herald and demonstrator of the Gospel of God and His own Gospel may lead some people to look more to the works and deeds performed by Christ than to His person.

The Lord Jesus Christ has assumed the role of interlocutor, preacher, and demonstrator of the Gospel of God, but the Lord Jesus Christ is also the Gospel itself. The Lord Jesus Christ is the central part of all the offer of life and reconciliation that God announces and offers to human beings.

To be able to see the accounts of the deeds of the Lord Jesus Christ, which are described in the first four books of the so-called New Testament, is obviously very relevant. In these books, can be observed many words of the Lord, as well as His postures, actions, reactions, and conduct in the most diverse circumstances, which allow us to see much of what the Lord did and how the Lord Jesus acted in the days that He was in the flesh in the world. No part of the Scriptures should be considered disposable, for they were all given to be profitable for teaching and edification.

On the other hand, however, if the attention to the Scriptures is only directed to the deeds and miracles performed by the Lord Jesus Christ, one may easily lose sight of who and what the Lord Jesus Christ came first to announce and show, as well as to lose sight of who and what the Lord Jesus Christ came to represent.

The fact that an apprentice may be interested in learning something from a teacher or a tutor, without really caring about the life of this instructor and what the instructor indeed proposes, can be something ordinary or usual in the world. In life in general, it is quite likely that the vast majority of learners does not seek to know their instructors, but only what they can offer their apprentices for short-term application. This behavior, however, does not fit well when it comes to the Gospel of God or the Lord and Master Jesus Christ.

The Lord Jesus Christ indeed came to reveal the power, compassion, mercy, righteousness, and love of God, as well as the Lord Jesus Christ also came to announce and manifest the importance of God's guidance and instruction in all facets of life, but this still was not the most central aspect. All the announcements and acts of Christ pointed to something even more exalted and sublime that was also part of the Gospel of God and His own Gospel.

The Lord Jesus Christ did not primarily come in the flesh to the world so that people could learn from Him how they could perform miracles, so that they could learn from Him about techniques of how they could make the right decisions in life or, yet, how they could plan and guide their lives by themselves.

The Lord Jesus Christ came in the flesh to the world primarily to show Who is the God Who sent Him and as well to present Himself. Christ came into the world so that people may return to recognize the Creator God they no longer acknowledged, that they may receive the acknowledged God in the heart, and that they may eternally deposit their trust in Him.

The deeds and writings regarding the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ to Earth, in the likeness of the Son of Man, had a clear and definite purpose, as we can see in the following texts:

John 21: 25 **And there are also many other things that Jesus did, which if they were written one by one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that would be written. Amen.**

+

20: 30 **And truly Jesus did many other signs in the presence of His disciples, which are not written in this book;**
31 **but these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name.**

John 6: 29 **Jesus answered and said to them, "This is the work of God, that you believe in Him whom He sent."**

1 Peter 1: 17 **And if you call on the Father, who without partiality judges according to each one's work, conduct yourselves throughout the time of your stay here in fear;**
18 **knowing that you were not redeemed with corruptible things, like silver or gold, from your aimless conduct received by tradition from your fathers,**
19 **but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.**
20 **He indeed was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you**
21 **who through Him believe in God, who raised Him from the dead and gave Him glory, so that your faith and hope are in God.**

The tendency to be absorbed or entertained with all the actions and movements that Christ performed on Earth, without realizing the most central part of what Christ came to present, also occurred with the disciples who lived physically close to Christ in the days when He was in the flesh in the world.

And in turn, the accounts of the disciples' attitude toward the person of Christ are not told in the Scriptures to expose and criticize these disciples. They are described as an example of what can happen to anyone who comes close to information about the life of the Lord. They are narrated to show that special attention is needed to the essence that the Lord wants to be perceived and known about His Gospel and His person.

Therefore, regarding what is being considered in this chapter, we highlight the following text for example and reflection, which we suggest reading with particular attention:

- John 14: 1 Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me.*
- 2 In My Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you.*
- 3 And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also.*
- 4 And where I go you know, and the way you know.*
- 5 Thomas said to Him, "Lord, we do not know where You are going, and how can we know the way?"*
- 6 Jesus said to him, "I am the way, 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; and from now on you know Him and have seen Him."*
- 8 Philip said to Him, "Lord, show us the Father, and it is sufficient for us."*
- 9 Jesus said to him, "Have I been with you so long, and yet you have not known Me, Philip? He who has seen Me has seen the Father; so how can you say, 'Show us the Father'?"*
- 10 Do you not believe that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me? The words that I speak to you I do not speak on My own authority; but the Father who dwells in Me does the works.*
- 11 Believe Me that I am in the Father and the Father in Me, or else believe Me for the sake of the works themselves."*
-

It is interesting to note that the above text refers to an episode that occurred just a few days before the crucifixion of the Lord Jesus Christ, at which time the disciples closest to Christ had already been with their Master for about three years. And yet, the impression one may have of the last text set forth is that the Lord Jesus Christ, in His dialogue with the disciples, introduced a consideration that did not even pass through their minds. The subject Christ presented to His disciples was a complete surprise to them.

The disciples of Christ had become so close to the Lord that they in their minds no longer considered the possibility of living without their so sublime Master. The disciples left many things of their lives behind and became extremely dependent on the Lord Jesus and His instructions. These followers were already widely accustomed to the daily and visible presence of the Lord with them, making the news that Christ would leave them, even if for a certain period, sounding at least as strange and unexpected.

In the context in reference, it may be noted how some moments in life, which precede a break of relationship with what someone was so closely connected, may also come to awake a set of questions that people did not even think to formulate before these moments occur.

Thus, following once more in the text in reference, when the Lord said that He would prepare a place for them and that the disciples already knew the way to where He would go, Thomas's reaction was immediate and rationally obvious, as part of the text repeated once more below shows us:

*John 14: 5 **Thomas said to Him, "Lord, we do not know where You are going, and how can we know the way?"***

Although the Lord Jesus Christ said that He would go to the Father's house, the disciples thought that the Lord had not yet told them where the Father's house was. So, in a sense, Thomas' inquiry is rationally very reasonable, because how can one trace a route to a destination if one does not even know where this destination is?

In the minds of the disciples, the matter mentioned to them by the Lord was not clear. How, then, could they know the way to where the Lord said He would go if they did not even know the location where the Lord was going? How could they know how to get to the destiny of which Christ was speaking if they had no idea or the least understanding of how to get there?

And the Lord Jesus once again surprises them in the answer He gives to His disciples. When asked about how to know the way, the Lord Jesus Christ redirects the whole dialogue to some approaches to which the disciples had not yet been attentive, even though the Lord had already spoken to them about it previously.

Although the Lord Jesus Christ and the disciples were talking about the same aspect, the manners the disciples sought to see the solution of the question under discussion and how Christ saw the answer to it were entirely different.

The Lord Jesus Christ was showing the disciples that there may be different manners in which some matters are addressed and dealt with, and there may be appropriate and inappropriate manners of dealing with them.

For the disciples, how a person might know a way to a particular place is the most commonly known or most popular manner by which people directly draw the right routes between their origins and the intended destinations.

For the Lord Jesus, however, the manner in which one can know the way to the Heavenly Father, the aspects of the kingdom of God, and the will of God is not primarily a route, a set of references based on geographical coordinates, or a map, but rather to have the Lord Himself as reference or path.

While Thomas asked about a place to know the way to this place, the Lord Jesus answered him about who Christ was regarding the way to truth, eternal life, and the Heavenly Father.

*John 14: 6 **Jesus said to him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me."***

The Lord Jesus Christ and the disciples were talking about the same subject, but the variables or the means they were using as a parameter were entirely different.

While the disciples spoke in places and ways to follow the Lord, He answered them by saying, “*I AM*.”

- ⇒ “*I AM*” the Way!
- ⇒ “*I AM*” the Truth!
- ⇒ “*I AM*” the Life!

And the Lord Jesus Christ was even more specific in His very short sentence, saying: *I AM “THE!”* The Lord Jesus did not say I AM “ONE” among others!

At the height of His disciples' questioning of where He would be going, the Lord Jesus changes the conversation with them from the position of “doing” and “where to be” to the position of “Who He was.” While the disciples asked how they could know the Lord’s destination and the way to it, or how they could do to go to this destination, the Lord Jesus answered them Who He was.

In the dialogue in reference, the Lord Jesus Christ was seeking to awaken in the disciples a perception of something extremely essential that they were not yet seeing, even after walking for almost three years side by side with the Lord.

John 14: 7 "If you had known Me, you would have known My Father also; and from now on you know Him and have seen Him."

Could it be possible to walk three years with someone, almost day and night, and still do not know who this person is?

The answer to the question in the last paragraph is that it is possible, yes, and particularly when one is focused on looking only at the works and movements of another person without becoming awakened of who this person is indeed.

The Lord Jesus Christ had performed many extraordinary miracles before the eyes of the disciples; many people were attended and healed; many people in many places were blessed by the Lord; but did they know, more precisely, who was this person they followed?

The hearts of the disciples of the Lord Jesus were troubled when they received the news of their Master's departure, but following the narrative, it is striking to note that their disturbance was not necessarily focused on the possible departure or absence of this Master.

Despite the discomfort that the absence of Christ could generate for the disciples, the text shows us that they were more focused on what the Lord Jesus Christ could give them than on the Lord Jesus Christ Himself, and for this, they did not see Who was the One Who was so close to them.

When we look at the continuation of the dialogue in reference and the response of Philip to the Lord Jesus, we can see that Philip did not understand the essence of what the Lord had just told him.

Let us see this part of the Scriptures again:

John 14: 6 Jesus said to him, "I am the way, 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; and from now on you know Him and have seen Him."

8 Philip said to Him, "Lord, show us the Father, and it is sufficient for us."

While Philip expected what Christ would do to show him the Father, the Lord Jesus Christ was speaking of who He Himself was. Philip and the Lord Jesus Christ were focusing on very distinct or different emphases.

The Lord Jesus Christ was telling His disciples that He was not a teacher who only taught principles or who just pointed to ways. The Lord Jesus Christ was announcing His disciples that He was not a kind of teacher that becomes disposable after He has granted the instructions that His disciples wanted to receive from God.

The Lord Jesus Christ was looking for awakening in His disciples something very challenging to be seen and understood by human beings. The Lord was telling the disciples that they needed Him more than they ever imagined and thought.

The Lord Jesus Christ did not just say that He knew the way and that He knew how to teach others the way to the Heavenly Father. What the Lord Jesus declared was that He Himself is the way.

What the Lord Jesus was proclaiming and teaching to His disciples is that He was and would always be the WAY or the PATH itself to anyone who wants to come to the Heavenly Father.

The Lord Jesus declared that if it is not through Him, no one can come to the Heavenly Father.

And why did the Lord say "***to come to the Heavenly Father***" and not "*to go to the Heavenly Father?*"

The Lord Jesus Christ, among other things, declared "*to come to the Heavenly Father*" because the Heavenly Father had already come to people when He revealed Christ to the world.

God took the initiative to draw near to people with an offer of life called Christ and offered to the world through the Gospel of God and the Gospel of Christ.

In granting Christ, God has already come to meet with people, so, now, people have the option to come to meet with God.

The Lord Jesus Christ has clearly stated that the way for a person to come to meet the Heavenly Father can only be performed in the same way that God came to meet human beings.

The Lord Jesus Christ is the very Path or Way that has come to human beings in order to mediate "God for people" and "people for God."

1 Timothy 2: 5 For there is one God and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus,

6 who gave Himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time.

Through the dialogue with His disciples, the Lord Jesus Christ was revealing to the world that He is not a type of teacher who teaches or gives things that people yearned so that in the sequence He may be replaced by the bestowed gifts. The Lord Jesus is not granted to people to be discarded by them once they reach what they intended to achieve with the help of this Master.

Through a conversation with His disciples, the Lord Jesus Christ announced that He is the One Who can never be put aside if one truly seeks the truth, the life, and the Eternal Heavenly Father.

When the Lord says, "***I AM***," He is saying that apart from Him or absent from Him does not exist what only He is or what exclusively He is!

When Philip said to the Lord Jesus "***show us the Father, and it is sufficient for us***," Philip had not yet realized what Christ had just told him. Philip still thought that Christ was a way-indicator or a mere instructor on the means of how the Heavenly Father could be reached. Philip had not yet understood that Christ was the very Gospel of God that they were waiting for so eagerly.

Speaking only figuratively, the Lord Jesus Christ did not present Himself to the world as one who only indicates the bridge that linked people to God and who taught people how to walk on this bridge. The Lord Jesus Christ is the One who points out the bridge, who teaches to walk on the bridge, but He is also the very bridge over which people can walk to draw near to the Heavenly Father. If Christ is disregarded, the bridge is also despised, making the instructions on how to walk on the bridge fruitless to the one who does not acknowledge the Lord's unique position.

The text of chapter 14 of the book of John does not expressly declare this, but when Philip says to Christ to show him the Father and that this would be enough, it seems that Philip saw the Father as a more important target to be achieved than Christ. It appears that Philip saw Christ as a helper to reach his final objective, probably even thinking that Christ could be discharged after the higher goal had been reached.

And what was Christ's answer to Philip and the other disciples?

John 14: 9 ***Jesus said to him, "Have I been with you so long, and yet you have not known Me, Philip?"***

He who has seen Me has seen the Father; so how can you say, 'Show us the Father'?

10 Do you not believe that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me? The words that I speak to you I do not speak on My own authority; but the Father who dwells in Me does the works.

11 Believe Me that I am in the Father and the Father in Me, or else believe Me for the sake of the works themselves."

In other texts, the Lord Jesus Christ reiterates the aspects quoted above still in other words, as follows:

John 10: 30 ***"I and My Father are one."***

John 15: 1 I am the true vine, and My Father is the vinedresser.

...
 5 *I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing.*

In the text of John 14, the Lord Jesus Christ said that, without Him, His disciples were not fit to go wherever they wanted to go. And in the text narrated in John 15, the Lord Jesus Christ further added that nothing useful or profitable could be produced or done by the disciples if they stayed apart from Him, confirming once again the position of Christ as the newness of life granted by God.

Therefore:

- ⇒ **To discard Christ is to discard also the Eternal Heavenly Father.**
- ⇒ **To discard Christ is also to reject the Way, the Truth and the Eternal Life.**
- ⇒ **To discard Christ is also to discard the Gospel of God.**

The Lord Jesus Christ answered Thomas and Philip, as well as the other disciples, that dissociated from Him, there is no truth or eternal life, there is no enduring life for eternity or life in the eternal dwelling places prepared by the Heavenly Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

People may pretend to work for Christ, even call Him Lord, but if they are not in the Lord or if they are separated from fellowship with Him, their lives are not the kind of life that has the deeds recognized by the Lord.

God does not call disciples to produce fruit for the Lord according to their very understanding, or, still, for them to try to walk in the ways or instructions of the Lord by their own strength. God calls human beings to live and walk in Christ. God invites people to do works together with the Lord and through Him.

The invitation presented by God through the Gospel or the call to the Christian life is, firstly, a call for eternal salvation and a living relationship with Christ.

1 Corinthians 1: 9 God is faithful, by whom you were called into the fellowship of His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

To live the Christian life also means to have fellowship with Christ, to be with Him, and not just to receive instruction from Christ to apply His teachings in a way dissociated from the life so-called “in Christ” or “with Christ Jesus.”

From the perspective of the words of the Lord Jesus, only studying about His life and having knowledge of His words and His deeds does not achieve lasting benefit if this does not involve being with Christ because of Who Christ is.

Christ is the reason why a Christian can come to exist, just as Christ also should be the reason by which a Christian lives his or her new existence.

When an individual loses sight of the main attributes of Christ and places his or her focus only on the gifts or teachings that the Lord can offer him or her, this individual may also become subject to the risk of losing the proper perspective on the many essential aspects related to the person of the Lord Jesus.

When a relationship is built only by what one does for the other and not on what one may be for another, this relationship may become very fragile in adverse circumstances.

Therefore, **the Lord Jesus, in His conversations with His disciples, time after time, led the dialogues with them into the point of Who He is, showing them that He is the very Way of Truth and Life.**

The way to the life that is in conformity with the kingdom of God is in the abiding in Christ and in being guided by the Lord Himself each new day, as it has also been told us in the following Psalm:

*Psalms 139: 23 **Search me, O God, and know my heart; Try me, and know my anxieties;**
24 **And see if there is any wicked way in me, And lead me in the way everlasting.***

In the same way, in the life of Abraham, as reported in the books of Genesis, Romans, Galatians, and Hebrews, we find yet another example of what it is to have God as the way.

When God called Abraham to follow Him, the Lord did not announce in advance the way he should go. God only said that He Himself would lead Abraham to the place determined by the Lord. And Abraham followed the Lord without knowing where God would lead him, for he, firstly, trusted the Lord Himself.

*Hebrews 11: 8 **By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to go out to the place which he would receive as an inheritance. And he went out, not knowing where he was going.***

Considering that in Christ people have an ever-present guide Who knows all the possible ways of life, it is also Christ that they should seek to know more deeply so that through Him they may be guided by the true path of life.

The Psalmist David, even young, also discovered what is the meaning of having the Lord as his Way to Truth and Newness of Life, as exemplified in the words of his songs below:

*Psalms 23: 1 **The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want.**
2 **He makes me to lie down in green pastures; He leads me beside the still waters.**
3 **He restores my soul; He leads me in the paths of righteousness For His name's sake.***

- 4 *Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; For You are with me; Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me.*
- 5 *You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; You anoint my head with oil; My cup runs over.*
- 6 *Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me All the days of my life; And I will dwell in the house of the LORD Forever.*

Psalms 32: 6 For this cause everyone who is godly shall pray to You In a time when You may be found; Surely in a flood of great waters They shall not come near him.

7 *You are my hiding place; You shall preserve me from trouble; You shall surround me with songs of deliverance.*

8 *I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go; I will guide you with My eye.*

9 *Do not be like the horse or like the mule, Which have no understanding, Which must be harnessed with bit and bridle, Else they will not come near you.*

10 *Many sorrows shall be to the wicked; But he who trusts in the LORD, mercy shall surround him.*

11 *Be glad in the LORD and rejoice, you righteous; And shout for joy, all you upright in heart!*

In other words, in the dialogue we are taking as a reference in this chapter, **the Lord Jesus was telling His disciples that what really mattered was “His presence” with them at all times in their lives.**

Christ with the disciples and them with Christ is the Way, the Truth, and the Life, just as it is the condition so that their fellowship with the Heavenly Father can also be established and maintained continuously and eternally.

The Lord Jesus showed to His disciples what had also been expressed in one of the names by which the Heavenly Father said that Christ would be called, as follows:

*Matthew 1: 23 **Behold, the virgin shall be with child, and bear a Son, and they shall call His name Immanuel, which is translated, “God with us.”***

The way of truth, of life, and of fellowship with God for a Christian is the Lord Jesus Christ.

The way of God's continual and eternal presence toward the Christian, through which one is enlightened and can reach the truth and the heavenly life, is the Lord Jesus Christ.

It is impossible for a human being to learn and foresee all the possibilities of paths and alternatives that will be presented to him or her in the course of life, and, therefore, everyone is in need of the instruction of the Unique Guide that knows the right way and also discerns every path contrary to truth and life.

However broad or varied might be the set of false options, obstacles, and threats against the life of people, the Lord Jesus Christ told His disciples to not let the heart become troubled, for since He is “**The Way**” of life according to the unshakable kingdom, also everyone who is in Him will be in “**The Way**” that can never be corrupted or shaken.

The Lord Jesus Christ instructs all who believe in Him that they do not let their heart become troubled, nor by the present nor by what is to come, for He is the ever-present Way with all who trust Him. He is the Emmanuel, which means “God with us” or God always present to lead in truth and to grant the life that is in Him.

Romans 10: 11 **For the Scripture says, "Whoever believes on Him will not be put to shame."**

John 8: 12 **Then Jesus spoke to them again, saying, "I am the light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life."**

2 Corinthians 6: 16 **And what agreement has the temple of God with idols? For you are the temple of the living God. As God has said: "I will dwell in them And walk among them. I will be their God, And they shall be My people."**

Matthew 28: 20 (b) **... I am with you always, even to the end of the age. Amen.**

In some situations, it might even be helpful for a person to have memorized all the miracles written in the first four books of the so-called New Testament. Perhaps it might be useful to count the number of miracles narrated in these same books. Eventually, it might be useful to know how many sentences the Lord said while He was on the cross of Calvary in agony and pain. However, could it be sufficient to have just this kind of informative knowledge to know the Way to eternal life and to walk on this Path of the newness of life?

The Lord Jesus accomplished many deeds while in the flesh on Earth. If the story of each of the thousands of sick healed were narrated, we would have thousands and thousands of books to be published, since each case had a unique history of life. Each person had a singular trajectory to reach Jesus, a specific cure for his or her illness or syndrome, and a proper liberation from the oppression and fears.

Everything that was mentioned in the last paragraphs is indeed beautiful and expressive in value, all of it has a precious degree of importance. However, the purpose of all the texts of the Bible about the Gospel of God is not for a mere admiration of the works and words of Christ. The Scriptures regarding the Gospel have been given for an even more specific purpose.

All the knowledge about Christ described in the Scriptures has been granted by God so that listeners, readers or scholars of these Scriptures may come to believe that the Lord Jesus is also the Christ sent by God, the Son of the Living God sent to grant salvation, and that, by believing, they may have life in the Lord.

The Scriptures on the Gospel of God and Christ were not manifested to the world for literary prizes and were not written to be equated with the most famous books and deeds of humankind. And if a person does not come to realize Who is the Lord Jesus described in the Scriptures or does not believe in Him as the Eternal Christ, one still did not understand the essence of the purpose of the writings about the Gospel of God.

Earlier we have already seen that John, a disciple of the Lord Jesus, finishes the Scriptures of the book bearing his name stating clearly the reason why so many narratives about the Gospel were written, as follows once more:

*John 21: 25 **And there are also many other things that Jesus did, which if they were written one by one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that would be written. Amen.***

+

*20: 30 **And truly Jesus did many other signs in the presence of His disciples, which are not written in this book;***

*31 **but these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name.***

Still, in other words: **The Scriptures about the Lord Jesus were recorded for people to believe in Christ according to what the Scriptures describe who He is, the Eternal Son of the Eternal Heavenly Father, and that, by believing, they may experience eternal life in the Lord!**

Nevertheless, do most people in the present day who have read the Scriptures or who have heard of them indeed know what it means the Lord Jesus to be the Christ, the Only Begotten Son of the Living God?

Moreover, what, then, are the practical implications that should be present in the faith or trust of the one who believes that the Lord Jesus is the Christ?

While the Lord Jesus Christ presented and demonstrated various facets of the power and love of the Gospel to people, so that they could see that the Gospel was not merely human words, He also continually presented Himself to manifest to people who He is and in Whom they could come to believe.

The Scriptures about the Gospel of Christ show plenty deeds of Christ, but they are also filled with expressions in which the Lord Jesus Christ calls people to look at Who He is, what and Whom He represents, and what is offered for those who accept Who and what the Lord has announced and showed to be.

Below, then, we seek to synthesize, respectively, some of the many expressions that point to the attributes of the Lord Jesus, Whom He represents, and what is offered to those who accept Christ as Lord in the heart:

⇒ *I am the Good Shepherd, the Unique Shepherd of the Unique Flock of God!*

⇒ *I Am the Door!*

- ⇒ *I Am the Light of the world. The one who follows me will not walk in darkness; on the contrary, he or she will have the Light of Life!*
- ⇒ *I Am the Bread that comes down from Heaven!*
- ⇒ *I Am the Bread of Life. The one who comes to Me shall never hunger, and the one who believes in Me shall never thirst!*
- ⇒ *I Am the Messiah!*
- ⇒ *I Am the Unique Teacher!*
- ⇒ *I Am the Son of Man!*
- ⇒ *I Am the Son of God!*
- ⇒ *I Am the Way!*
- ⇒ *I Am the Truth!*
- ⇒ *I Am the Life!*
- ⇒ *I Am the Christ!*
- ⇒ *I and My Father are one!*
- ⇒ *I have come that you may have life, and that you may have it more abundantly!*
- ⇒ *Whoever believes in me, as the Scriptures said, out of his or her heart will flow rivers of living water!*
- ⇒ *The water that I shall give him will become in him a fountain of water springing up into everlasting life!*
- ⇒ *I Am the resurrection and the Life. Whoever believes in Me, even if he or she dies, will live!*

Believing in Who Christ “IS,” has a determining role in finding the true life, just as not believing in the attributes of Christ is decisive for an individual to be deprived of this true newness of life offered to the world by the Heavenly Father.

- John 8: 23 And He said to them, "You are from beneath; I am from above. You are of this world; I am not of this world.*
- 24 Therefore I said to you that you will die in your sins; for if you do not believe that I AM He, you will die in your sins."*
- 25 Then they said to Him, "Who are You?" And Jesus said to them, "Just what I have been saying to you from the beginning.*
- 26 I have many things to say and to judge concerning you, but He who sent Me is true; and I speak to the world those things which I heard from Him."*
- 27 They did not understand that He spoke to them of the Father.*
- 28 Then Jesus said to them, "When you lift up the Son of Man, then you will know that I AM He, and that I do nothing of Myself; but as My Father taught Me, I speak these things.*
- 29 And He who sent Me is with Me. The Father has not left Me alone, for I always do those things that please Him."*
- 30 As He spoke these words, many believed in Him.*

The Gospel of God, Christ, and the heavenly kingdom, above all, is a presentation of an offer of the manifestation of Who God is so that we may believe in the Heavenly Father and the Son of His Love, and that we may also receive the heavenly life of the Lord offered in Christ by this same Gospel.

Many people throughout history have discovered that more crucial than performing works for Christ is first knowing Christ and learn from Him, or through Him, about Who is the Christ Who gives all life and support for the unfolding of the Christian life.

The Gospel of Christ not only has its origin in Christ Himself, but it is also through Christ and in Christ that it can indeed be received, learned, and lived.

*Matthew 11: 28 **Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.***

*29 **Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.***

It is very interesting and meaningful to learn about the deeds of Christ in the history and the lives of others, but the essence of experiencing the Christian life has always been and will forever continue to be in the personal fellowship with the Lord Jesus Christ in the quality of Who He is and Who He offers to be in each person's life.

It is also laudable, essential, and profitable for a person to obey Christ's instructions for one's life, but not even a life of search for obedience to the Lord's instructions can replace the fellowship of an individual with the presence of Christ in him or her.

It is a fact that Christ's instruction to a Christian is achieved by fellowship with the Lord and that obedience to it is also a source of life. However, through His presence, Christ also relieves, from the heavy burdens, those who draw close to Him, as well as He renews and strengthens their spirit, soul, and body to continue their journey of life according to the way of the Lord.

Therefore:

*Psalms 27: 8 **When You said, "Seek My face (or presence)," My heart said to You, "Your face (or presence), LORD, I will seek."***

*Psalms 38: 9 **Lord, all my desire is before You (or in His presence); And my sighing is not hidden from You.***

*Psalms 116: 9 **I will walk before the LORD (or in His presence) In the land of the living.***

*Psalms 56: 13 **For You have delivered my soul from death. Have You not kept my feet from falling, That I may walk before God In the light of the living?***

*Psalms 31: 20 **You shall hide them in the secret place of Your presence From the plots of man; You shall keep them secretly in a pavilion From the strife of tongues.***

*Psalms 68: 3 **But let the righteous be glad; let them rejoice before God (or in His presence): yea, let them exceedingly rejoice.***

*Psalms 16: 11 **You will show me the path of life; In Your presence is fullness of joy; At Your right hand are pleasures forevermore.***

*Psalms 89: 15 **Blessed are the people who know the joyful sound! They walk, O LORD, in the light of Your countenance.***

*Psalms 105: 4 **Seek the LORD and His strength; Seek His face (or His presence) evermore!***

Christ came personally in the flesh to the world to reveal the Gospel that manifests Who He was always, is, and will be forever, and this, so that we accept the call to eternal fellowship with Him and, through Him, with the Heavenly Father.

*Hebrews 13: 8 **Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever.***

*Revelation 3: 20 **Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me.***

C3. Christ is the Most Objective, Direct, and Concentrated Manifestation of Who Is the Unique Creator God of the Heavens and the Earth

The Scriptures teach us that God manifested and manifests Himself to human beings in a variety of ways and that the existence of the Creator God of the Heavens and the Earth and all that is in them can also be perceived clearly by the very things created by the Lord.

*Romans 1: 20(a) **For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead.***

On the other hand, although the created things express the power, divinity, and various other invisible attributes of God, they do not reveal more comprehensively how God wants to relate to each human being. Although the created things announce multiple characteristics of the Eternal Lord, God has reserved the revelation of another part of His attributes for an especially distinctive or specific way.

Thus, from the proclamation of the Gospel and the coming of Christ as the supreme gift of God to human beings, the revelation of Who God is or how God is has passed on to a still much broader, profound, detailed, and objective level.

In Christ Jesus, God began to manifest Who He is or how He is in a much broader and more precise manner, as His very Scriptures declare:

*John 1: 18 **No one has seen God at any time. The only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, He has declared Him.***

The Only Begotten Son, Who is in the bosom of the Father, is the Beloved Son of God, is the Heavenly Son Who came as the Christ sent by God into the world to reveal the Unique Creator God in a way that had never been done in any other time of human history.

*Hebrews 1: 1 **God, who at various times and in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets,***
*2 **has in these last days spoken to us by His Son, whom He has appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the worlds;***
*3 **who being the brightness of His glory and the express image of His person, and upholding all things by the word of His power, when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high,***
*4 **having become so much better than the angels, as He has by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they.***

What wonderful words are exposed in these last texts that were recently seen above and in which it is informed that:

- ⇒ **Christ is the Only Begotten Son Who is in the bosom of Heavenly Father;**
- ⇒ **Christ is the Son of God the Creator;**
- ⇒ **Christ is the One through Whom God created the universe;**
- ⇒ **Christ is the brightness of the glory of God;**
- ⇒ **Christ is the express image of God's person;**
- ⇒ **Christ is the One Who sustains all things by the word of the power of God;**
- ⇒ **Christ is the One Who has the name above every name.**

For being Who He is, Christ also told His disciples:

*John 14: 9 **Jesus said to him, "Have I been with you so long, and yet you have not known Me, Philip? He who has seen Me has seen the Father; so how can you say, 'Show us the Father'?"***

*10 **Do you not believe that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me? The words that I speak to you I do not speak on My own authority; but the Father who dwells in Me does the works.***

*11 **Believe Me that I am in the Father and the Father in Me, or else believe Me for the sake of the works themselves."***

*John 10: 30 **"I and My Father are one."***

Christ, the living and voluntary offer of God to human beings, is the exact expression of God as offeror.

The characteristics of Christ show the attributes of God.

If anyone wants to know how God loves, one can look at the way Christ loves. If anyone wants to know how God works in righteousness, one can look to Christ and know how God works in righteousness. If anyone wants to observe how God forgives the sinner, one can check the narrative about Christ which describes His most distressing moment and see how Christ forgave the thief on the cross at His side and how Christ asked the Heavenly Father that the sin of crucifying the Lord should not be imputed to those who crucified Him, and so on.

Christ is the faithful expression of the Heavenly Father Himself providing and freely offering His reconciliation to every human being, as described below:

*2 Corinthians 5: 18 **Now all things are of God, who has reconciled us to Himself through Jesus Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation,***

*19 **that is, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not imputing their trespasses to them, and has committed to us the word of reconciliation.***

Although Christ was the chief preacher of the Gospel, is the perfect Lamb Who was sacrificed, prophesied and is the Master of His disciples, **Christ is, above all, the brightness of God's glory and the express image of God's person.**

If one does not come to like Christ, one will not come to like God either, for Christ is also God and Christ is the express image of Who or how God is.

It is impossible for anyone to speak truthfully that he or she loves God but does not love or despises Christ. There is no way to dissociate Christ from God or dissociate Christ from God's personal testimony about Christ.

*1 John 5: 9 **If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater; for this is the witness of God which He has testified of His Son.***

*10 **He who believes in the Son of God has the witness in himself; he who does not believe God has made Him a liar, because he has not believed the testimony that God has given of His Son.***

Christ is the face of God revealed for people to know how God is!

Christ is God face to face with the human being!

Christ is the Living Word of God Who came down from Heaven to manifest Himself among human beings and to show God palpably and tangibly to them so that the most intimate attributes of God may be known, touched, and contemplated very closely or personally.

*1 John 1: 1 **That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, concerning the Word of life***

*2 **(the life was manifested, and we have seen, and bear witness, and declare to you that eternal life which was with the Father and was manifested to us)***

*3 **that which we have seen and heard we declare to you, that you also may have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ.***

Looking at this last text of 1John chapter 1, it can be observed that the list of Who is Christ shows again to be more and more extensive, namely:

- ⇒ **Christ is the heavenly life that has manifested itself to the world;**
- ⇒ **Christ is the very eternal life that was with the Heavenly Father and that became manifested to the world;**
- ⇒ **Christ is the tangible provision of God so that people may have fellowship with the Heavenly Father and the Son of His Love;**
- ⇒ **Christ is the means or the way for people to have a true fellowship also among them.**

Christ is the eternal Light that comes down from God. Christ is the Light that can never be extinguished in those who receive it and keep it in the heart.

And the major aspect that this heavenly light illuminates for people is the express image of God's person.

- John 1: 4 **In Him was life, and the life was the light of men.***
*5 **And the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it.***
*6 **There was a man sent from God, whose name was John.***
*7 **This man came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all through him might believe.***
*8 **He was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness of that Light.***
*9 **That was the true Light which gives light to every man coming into the world.***
- ...
- 14 **And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.***

Christ is God present with people in a way that people can know about God everything they need to know about Him.

*Isaiah 7: 14 Therefore **the Lord Himself will give you a sign: Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and shall call His name Immanuel.***

*Matthew 1: 23 Behold, the virgin shall be with child, and bear a Son, and **they shall call His name Immanuel, which is translated, "God with us."***

*Isaiah 9: 6 For unto us a Child is born, **Unto us a Son is given; And the government will be upon His shoulder. And His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.***

Christ is God present with people so that people also receive from the same heavenly life that is in God Himself.

*1 John 4: 9 **In this the love of God was manifested toward us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him.***

Only God can provide true life or eternal life, and if Christ is the means for us to have the life of God, it is because Christ is also God.

Christ is the envoy of God, but Christ is also God sending forth Himself as the eternal offer of eternal life.

The Heavenly Father, the Son of God's love, and the Holy Spirit are one God, although there is a distinct or specific participation of each one of them in their actions on the entire universe.

In the universe, many things only exist because of the participation or the action of more than one person. A home for a couple, for instance, is one home, but it is made up of the participation of the husband and the wife. Once something has been done together, there is no longer any way to make an exact division of what was done by each spouse. Although there was the distinct participation of each party in what was accomplished, what was done together became one.

The Scriptures tell us that the Heavenly Father is in a position above the Lord Jesus Christ, but they also teach that the Lord Jesus Christ is an integral and inseparable part of Who God is.

1 Corinthians 15: 27 **For "He has put all things under His feet." But when He says "all things are put under Him," it is evident that He who put all things under Him is excepted.**

28 **Now when all things are made subject to Him, then the Son Himself will also be subject to Him who put all things under Him, that God may be all in all.**

1 Corinthians 3: 21 **Therefore let no one boast in men. For all things are yours:**

22 **whether Paul or Apollos or Cephas, or the world or life or death, or things present or things to come, all are yours.**

23 **And you are Christ's, and Christ is God's.**

John 14: 6 **Jesus said to him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me."**

John 1: 1 **In the beginning was the Word (Christ), and the Word (Christ) was with God, and the Word (Christ) was God.**

2 **He (Christ) was in the beginning with God.**

3 **All things were made through Him (Christ), and without Him (Christ) nothing was made that was made.**

God's option in converging a more profound revelation of Himself to human beings through His Beloved Son was, for example, an option of the Heavenly Father Himself to show that His glory also extends in favor of those who are to be constituted heirs of God, those who through faith in Christ receive the Holy Spirit as the pledge of their eternal inheritance in the Lord.

*Ephesians 1: 3 **Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ,***

*4 **just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love,***

*5 **having predestined us to adoption as sons by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will,***

*6 **to the praise of the glory of His grace, by which He has made us accepted in the Beloved.***

*7 **In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace***

*8 **which He made to abound toward us in all wisdom and prudence,***

*9 **having made known to us the mystery of His will, according to His good pleasure which He purposed in Himself,***

*10 **that in the dispensation of the fullness of the times He might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth, in Him.***

*11 **In Him (in Christ) also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestined according to the purpose of Him who works all things according to the counsel of His will,***

*12 **that we who first trusted in Christ should be to the praise of His glory.***

*13 **In Him you also trusted, after you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also, having believed, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise,***

*14 **who is the guarantee of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, to the praise of His glory.***

The Gospel of God offers Christ so that we may know in a living and tangible way the most sublime provision that the Heavenly Father could provide for the salvation of humankind.

Nevertheless, the fact that the Gospel is also the Gospel of Christ shows us that God calls us to have fellowship with Him in all the more prominent aspects of His Being.

In Christ, God reveals how His eternal love works in favor of those and through those who allow the Heavenly Father to guide them as children through His Holy Spirit.

In Christ, God reveals the perfect unity of existence and purpose of the Eternal Heavenly Father, the Only Begotten Son of God, and His Eternal Holy Spirit.

*John 16: 27 **For the Father Himself loves you, because you have loved Me, and have believed that I came forth from God.***

*2 Corinthians 13: 14 **The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.***
Amen.

C4. A Proposition of a Gospel Without Christ or that Despises the Lord Jesus Can Never Express the True Gospel of God

When Christ came in the flesh to the world, He was faithful in manifesting Who He is, and He did not omit to testify of the many aspects that the Heavenly Father Himself had determined about Him.

*John 5: 19 **Then Jesus answered and said to them, "Most assuredly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of Himself, but what He sees the Father do; for whatever He does, the Son also does in like manner."***

Similarly, the Heavenly Father also never omitted to make public, even with an audible voice coming from heaven to many people, that Jesus Christ is:

- ⇒ The Eternal Savior and Lord!
- ⇒ The Emmanuel!
- ⇒ The Christ Who came from Heaven!
- ⇒ The Beloved Son in whom God is pleased!

God, for thousands of years, inspired people to preach and announce the coming of the Gospel of His kingdom and that in Christ all His purpose would be made manifest, that is, that in Christ would be converged all the promises of the novelty of life that God had made during the centuries that preceded the coming of the Lord in the flesh to the world.

*Galatians 3: 16 **Now to Abraham and his Seed were the promises made. He does not say, "And to seeds," as of many, but as of one, "And to your Seed," who is Christ.***

All pre-announcements of the Gospel, all the announcements of the coming of the Gospel, and all the Scriptures after the arrival of the Gospel to the world point to the irrevocable condition of Christ as the indispensable character or being of the entire Gospel.

Water, for instance, is water only because of the composition of two distinct elements, that is, "H₂ + O." If one takes H₂ out of the water, the water ceases to exist as water, because what is left of water, without H₂, is no longer water but oxygen.

Likewise, if one makes a proposition to exclude the Lord Jesus Christ as an integral and essential part of the Gospel of God and Christ, the result will no longer be the Gospel of the Lord.

If anyone tries to disassociate Christ from God and the Heavenly Gospel, what will remain in one's expectations will no longer be the Unique Sovereign and Eternal God described in the Bible Scriptures.

From the beginning to the end of the Gospel of God, the position of the Lord Jesus is proclaimed as the Christ coming from God, as the essential part of the Gospel, just as Christ is as well announced as being one with God and, as we saw in the previous chapter, being also God.

Some people claim to believe in the God of the Bible but who at the same time as well declare that they do not believe in Jesus Christ as the Bible presents Him. Biblically, however, this hypothesis is entirely invalid.

If the Lord Jesus Christ were not who the Bible declares He is, the so-called “Word of God” would be a lying expression and, consequently, the One God presented by the Bible, the Unique righteous and true God, as well could not exist.

1 John 5: 9 If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater; for this is the witness of God which He has testified of His Son.

10 He who believes in the Son of God has the witness in himself; he who does not believe God has made Him a liar, because he has not believed the testimony that God has given of His Son.

If Christ were not the one the Scriptures proclaim He is, the Bible would constitute the greatest fraud and the most brilliant false tale ever produced in all ages. If Christ were not the person the Scriptures narrated that He is, the Bible would be the most notable book of fiction ever conceived in all human existence, there being in history no other production of literary fiction that could even come close to what was produced in these Scriptures.

In addition, and as also mentioned in the subject “History Told by the Unique Father of All Sons and Daughters,” if the Bible were a work of fiction, it would be an unimaginable human literary production. Even on the natural level of literature, the Scriptures prove unimaginable to have been conceived merely by the natural human mind, for they contain a particular condition also because they have been complemented perfectly over many years, or even centuries, and by writers who lived in distinct regions, at different times, under different cultures, and under the most varied conditions pertinent to each period of these writers.

And if Jesus of Nazareth were not the Christ, Who came down from Heaven, how could He make that every one of the most several facts prophesied about His life during so many centuries became fulfilled faithfully?

What simple man, of a humble home and profession, could devise an action that would lead Him to be put on trial simultaneously by King Herod, by the high priest, and by the Roman governor Pilate, and, still, that would lead Him to be put to death by the death of the cross precisely in the week of the Passover celebration, contradicting the Hebrews judgments which order to kill by stoning?

And if Jesus of Nazareth were not the Eternal Christ, how, for instance, could He manipulate the facts so that His opponents would give Him a royal robe and that the Roman soldiers would be casting lots for it during the crucifixion, as had been prophesied centuries before these events occurred?

From the Scriptures point of view, the attempt to deny the testimony that God Himself gives about His Beloved Son is utterly absurd.

A person may choose not to believe what is described by the Scriptures, in the God presented in the Bible, and in Jesus Christ, the Son of God. However, if someone does a real and honest study of the Bible, even just from a literary standpoint, one will see that God and the Lord Jesus Christ are inseparably intertwined with each other in the Gospel, as well as throughout the writings preceding the coming of Christ to the world.

It is crucial to understand that just as Christ is the expression of God to the world and that the acceptance of Christ in the heart is as well the acceptance of God in the heart, so also the rejection of Christ is the rejection of God Himself.

The fact that people say that they want God, but do not want Christ, is an indirect way of saying that they do not want God Himself, for God is as Christ is.

In the material on the Gospel of the Creator, it was described in more detail that resistance to the Gospel of God is a resistance of the creature against the will of the Creator. So, if the creature does not want to submit to the Creator, it will not want to submit to the Creator in any way that the Creator manifests His Sovereignty and Lordship, as, for instance, in Christ.

Moreover, **since Christ is the most objective and direct means of God to reveal Himself to the creature, it is also to be expected that the resistance to Christ will be more strongly manifested than the resistances in general to God.**

If, on the one hand, Christ is the most tangible and the closest manner of God revealing Himself to human beings, on the other side, it is also against Christ that the greatest oppositions, rejections, and contempt of human beings directed to God have been and continue to be manifested.

In Christ, there was and is the highest manifestation of the glory of God bestowed upon human beings, but also regarding Christ and His Name there have been the most critical manifestations of wrath, on the part of the creation, against God.

In Christ is the largest concentration of the manifested love of God for the creature, but also in the actions against Christ and His Name that the most intense contempt and wrath against the heavenly love and the Offeror of this love have been expressed.

*Colossians 1: 13 **He has delivered us from the power of darkness and conveyed us into the kingdom of the Son of His love,***

*15 **He (the Son of God's love) is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation.***

*16 **For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers.***

All things were created through Him and for Him.

*John 3: 31 **He who comes from above is above all; he who is of the earth is earthly and speaks of the earth. He who comes from heaven is above all.***

- 32 And what He has seen and heard, that He testifies; and no one receives His testimony.*
- 33 He who has received His testimony has certified that God is true.*
- 34 For He whom God has sent speaks the words of God, for God does not give the Spirit by measure.*
- 35 The Father loves the Son, and has given all things into His hand.*
- 36 He who believes in the Son has everlasting life; and he who does not believe the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him.*

John 10: 30 I and My Father are one.
31 Then the Jews took up stones again to stone Him.

Since Christ is the point of convergence of the Gospel of God, it is also in relation to Christ that has occurred the convergence of oppositions to this same Gospel.

Given the supreme purpose of God to reveal Himself through Christ, the clear manifestation of Who Christ is in the Gospel will also be the point of the most active resistance to this Gospel, as well as to the grace and the newness of life offered through it to the world.

Jude 1: 1 Jude, a bondservant of Jesus Christ, and brother of James, To those who are called, sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ:

- 2 Mercy, peace, and love be multiplied to you.*
- 3 Beloved, while I was very diligent to write to you concerning our common salvation, I found it necessary to write to you exhorting you to contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints.*
- 4 For certain men have crept in unnoticed, who long ago were marked out for this condemnation, ungodly men, who turn the grace of our God into lewdness and deny the only Lord God and our Lord Jesus Christ.*

Undoubtedly one of the most prominent attacks on the Gospel of God and Christ is the attempt to disassociate the figure of Christ from God or the effort to discredit the person of Christ and the central position He occupies in the whole Gospel of the Lord and in all creation.

Throughout Christ's pilgrimage on Earth, He was incessantly tempted and pressed to deny His position of Who He was as God and in God. The constant questioning addressed to Christ if He was indeed "the Son of God," was made repeatedly from the beginning of His ministry, when the devil came to tempt Him in the wilderness, to the final moments in which Christ was in pain and agony on the cross of Calvary, as exemplified in some texts below

Matthew 26: 63 But Jesus kept silent. And the high priest answered and said to Him, "I put You under oath by the living God: Tell us if You are the Christ, the Son of God!"

64 Jesus said to him, "It is as you said. Nevertheless, I say to you, hereafter you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Power, and coming on the clouds of heaven."

65 Then the high priest tore his clothes, saying, "He has spoken blasphemy! What further need do we have of witnesses? Look, now you have heard His blasphemy!"

66 "What do you think?" They answered and said, "He is deserving of death."

Luke 22: 67 If You are the Christ, tell us. But He said to them, "If I tell you, you will by no means believe.

68 And if I also ask you, you will by no means answer Me or let Me go.

69 Hereafter the Son of Man will sit on the right hand of the power of God."

John 10: 24 Then the Jews surrounded Him and said to Him, "How long do You keep us in doubt? If You are the Christ, tell us plainly."

25 Jesus answered them, "I told you, and you do not believe. The works that I do in My Father's name, they bear witness of Me.

Luke 23: 39 Then one of the criminals who were hanged blasphemed Him, saying, "If You are the Christ, save Yourself and us."

Matthew 27: 40 And saying, "You who destroy the temple and build it in three days, save Yourself! If You are the Son of God, come down from the cross."

Christ is God's greatest expression to humankind, therefore, how an individual reacts to Christ is also the most striking manifestation of how he or she positions himself or herself regarding God.

So, the great challenge of an appropriate exposition of the Gospel of God and Christ is the proper exposition of the Lord Jesus Christ Himself in the Gospel of God.

Romans 10: 14 How then shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher?

Since one of the main challenges of appropriately preaching the Gospel is to faithfully maintain the association between Christ and God and Christ and the Gospel, the attempts of the alternative propositions to the Gospel

of God will continually seek, in one way or another, to dissociate the figure of Christ from His sovereignty as the Only Begotten Son of God, trying to do so in a direct or subtle way.

The oppositions to Christ may try to be presented in the most varied forms, including through the so-called apostles, prophets, teachers, pastors, brothers, and those who falsely offer to be priests on the lives of their fellow men and who claim to represent Christ to others. These false agents do not aim actually to lead people to be disciples of Christ, but themselves or any other form of worship than the frank and direct relationship with the Lord Jesus, as also exemplified in the following texts:

*2 Corinthians 11: 13 For such **are false apostles, deceitful workers,** transforming themselves into apostles of Christ.
14 And no wonder! For Satan himself transforms himself into an angel of light.*

*Matthew 7: 15 Beware of **false prophets,** who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravenous wolves.*

*John 10: 11 I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd gives His life for the sheep.
12 But a **hireling,** he who is not the shepherd, one who does not own the sheep, sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and flees; and the wolf catches the sheep and scatters them.
13 The hireling flees because he is a hireling and does not care about the sheep.*

*2 Peter 2: 1 But there were also false prophets among the people, even as there will be **false teachers** among you, who will secretly bring in destructive heresies, even denying the Lord who bought them, and bring on themselves swift destruction.*

*2 Timothy 4: 3 For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but **according to their own desires, because they have itching ears, they will heap up for themselves teachers;**
4 and they will turn their ears away from the truth, and be turned aside to fables.*

*Galatians 2: 3 Yet not even Titus who was with me, being a Greek, was compelled to be circumcised.
4 And this occurred because of **false brethren** secretly brought in (who came in by stealth to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, that they might bring us into bondage),
5 to whom we did not yield submission even for an hour, that the truth of the gospel might continue with you.*

*Jeremiah 2: 26 As the thief is ashamed when he is found out, **So is the house of Israel ashamed; They and their kings and their princes, and their priests and their prophets,***

*27 **Saying to a tree, 'You are my father,' And to a stone, 'You gave birth to me.'** For they have turned their back to Me, and not their face. But in the time of their trouble They will say, 'Arise and save us.'*

*Acts 20: 29 For I know this, that after my departure **savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock.***

*30 Also from among yourselves men **will rise up, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after themselves.***

31 Therefore watch, and remember that for three years I did not cease to warn everyone night and day with tears.

*Galatians 5: 4 **You have become estranged from Christ, you who attempt to be justified by law; you have fallen from grace.***

*5 For we through the Spirit eagerly wait for the hope of righteousness by faith.
6 **For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision avails anything, but faith working through love.***

7 You ran well. Who hindered you from obeying the truth?

*8 **This persuasion does not come from Him who calls you.***

9 A little leaven leavens the whole lump.

Knowing Who Christ is to God or in God, and Who Christ is in the Gospel of God, is vital for everyone who wants to receive eternal life and grow in the Lord.

When people do not recognize the unique attributes of Christ and begin to present any other mediating means or other mediating persons to an alleged relationship of an individual with God, they resist what God established in Christ and what the Lord Jesus accomplished through the cross of Calvary in favor of all human beings.

Those who try to distort the condition and position of Christ established by God and the position of Christ in His Gospel should be avoided and their doctrines resisted by trusting in the word of the Lord and the Lord Himself.

*Psalms 26: 4 **I have not sat with idolatrous mortals, Nor will I go in with hypocrites.***

*2 Thessalonians 3: 1 **Finally, brethren, pray for us, that the word of the Lord may run swiftly and be glorified, just as it is with you, and that we may be delivered from unreasonable and wicked men; for not all have faith.***

The position of Christ in the Gospel of God is unique, unequaled and cannot be assumed and claimed by anyone but Christ Himself.

Acts 4: 11 This (Jesus) is the 'stone which was rejected by you builders, which has become the chief cornerstone.'
12 Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved.

Bearing in mind that the root of the motivations contrary to the Gospel of the Creator is the resistance of the creation to its Creator, to the extent that the creature objectifies to diminish God to the position of the creature and to elevate the creature to the position of God, it may be understood more broadly why the resistance to the Gospel of Christ is also so intensely focused on attempts to reduce the figure of Christ to a mere man and to try to elevate human beings to be "christs."

Following are a few more examples of texts related to what was commented in the previous paragraph:

Matthew 24: 22 And unless those days were shortened, no flesh would be saved; but for the elect's sake those days will be shortened.
23 Then if anyone says to you, 'Look, here is the Christ!' or 'There!' do not believe it.
24 For false christs and false prophets will rise and show great signs and wonders to deceive, if possible, even the elect.

Mark 13: 21 Then if anyone says to you, 'Look, here is the Christ!' or, 'Look, He is there!' do not believe it.
22 For false christs and false prophets will rise and show signs and wonders to deceive, if possible, even the elect.

Luke 21: 8 And He said: "Take heed that you not be deceived. For many will come in My name, saying, 'I am He,' and, 'The time has drawn near.' Therefore do not go after them."

Matthew 24: 5 For many will come in My name, saying, 'I am the Christ,' and will deceive many.

And why are many deceived?

Many individuals in the world are deceived because they do not discern the One True Christ. If they knew the true Christ, they would not be confused by the voice of false "christs."

John 10: 27 My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me.

John 10: 4 And when he brings out his own sheep, he goes before them; and the sheep follow him, for they know his voice.
5 Yet they will by no means follow a stranger, but will flee from him, for they do not know the voice of strangers.

We recall here that the word “Christ” means “the anointed of God” or “the One anointed by God to be Savior and King.” And throughout the existence of the Universe, there is only one Who is entitled “The Anointed One of God” and who is also the Only Begotten and Eternal Son of God.

The Lord Jesus makes a severe warning that many will come to say that they are “specially anointed,” using this also as a pretext to rise above their fellow men and to present themselves to them as their chiefs or guides. However, the Lord Jesus likewise warned that they are “false anointed ones” who actually aspire to be equated to the Lord in aspects that they should never attempt to be equated with Him.

Matthew 23: 8 But you, do not be called ‘Rabbi’; for One is your Teacher, the Christ, and you are all brethren.
10 And do not be called teachers (or guides); for One is your Teacher (or Guide), the Christ.

Considering that Christ is the only one chosen by God to be Who He is, no one else should aim to be what Christ is exclusive, for the one who does so, longs for what a person can never achieve.

People who do not relate to Christ are deceived because they know neither God nor His word, for both the knowledge of God and the heavenly understanding of the word of God are granted only through Christ Jesus.

John 5: 39 You search the Scriptures, for in them you think you have eternal life; and these are they which testify of Me.
40 But you are not willing to come to Me that you may have life.

Since Christ is the greatest revelation ever given of Who God is and that Christ is the truth of God, also the most direct, shortest, and most efficient way to know God and to have fellowship with the Heavenly Father is the Lord Jesus Christ Himself.

The acceptance of human beings as sons before the Heavenly Father and the fellowship with God has a specific door and way called the Lord Jesus Christ, which can be accessed by heavenly grace through faith in the Christ revealed and proclaimed by the Gospel of God to the world.

Unfortunately, however, many people have still insisted on seeking God by alternative ways and by trying to bypass the fellowship with the Unique One Whom God has chosen as the only way to the newness of life that is in Him.

Finally, in this chapter, we further emphasize the Lord's teaching that **once a person accepts God's invitation to be and remain in Christ, nothing of the present world or the world to come can separate him or her from the love of God that is in Christ. And this is also why the darkness militates so strongly against all faithful announcements of the Gospel of Christ and for people not coming to receive Christ and to abide in Him.**

*Romans 8: 38 **For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, 39 nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.***

Any proposition of a Gospel that does not have Christ as an indispensable and essential aspect of the Gospel is a proposition dissociated from True Love, and, therefore, it is not a Gospel indeed. This kind of proposition, in fact, is not an offer of good news that has eternal benefits for people.

The eternal love that God offers people through His Gospel has a unique and specific address where it can be found, namely:

The Lord Jesus Christ!

C5. The Essential Condition of Christ in the Past, Present, and Future of the Gospel

The mere point that the present generation is living in a chronological period after the time when many remarkable facts of the Gospel have already been manifested on the Earth may be one reason why many people tend to see the Gospel of Christ as something of a distant past or belonging to the ancient life of humanity.

The Gospel of Christ, in fact, has already been manifested in many ways in the past. Through the Gospel, God has already performed many unique aspects that will never happen again. However, the Gospel of the Lord is not bound to the past times. The Gospel of the Heavenly Father and Christ remains current and will continue to be valid and perfectly applicable to all generations and to all ages that will yet be manifested.

The eternal Gospel of God, pre-announced to human beings from the earliest days of humankind and revealed more intensely from the coming of the Son of God in the flesh to the world, is indeed also composed of several events that have occurred once and forever. But what has been accomplished by these events, has established positions and conditions in the history of the universe that will never be altered in the present or the future.

The event in which the Lord Jesus Christ was offered on the cross of Calvary as the Perfect Lamb, for instance, will never again be repeated since this offer was perfect and has definitive effects for eternity. The fact that Christ's offer was complete, and the fact that Christ was raised from the dead, have manifested the Lord Jesus as the eternal provision for the salvation of people without the need for any further repetition of the same sacrifices.

From the singular event established by the cross of Calvary, the Lord Jesus Christ was revealed forever as the Perfect Lamb, the One Who is also the Lord and the Christ of humankind forever and ever.

Thus, what the Gospel came to offer in Christ Jesus became an eternal offer, for all generations, and with validity that is enduring or eternally endorsed by God.

Everything that the Gospel of God and the Lord Jesus came to offer in Christ never ages, never loses its power, and never loses its effect and validity.

Christ died only once for the remission of all human beings, but from His resurrection, and from His ascension to sit at the Heavenly Father's right hand, Christ was quickened and re-established in His eternal position to continue to serve God eternally.

*Romans 6: 10 **For the death that He died, He died to sin once for all; but the life that He lives, He lives to God.***

The Scriptures on the Gospel of Christ in the first four books of the so-called New Testament expose various aspects of the beginning of the revelation of the Gospel of God, but what was established by this Gospel in

the past does not present any possibility of weakening or become revoked in the present and future course of history.

Let us see below, then, by way of example, a list of texts that mention the past and the introductory condition of the revelation of the Gospel, but which also express the constant and future condition of the offer that God made to humankind through His Beloved Son, the eternal gift that the Heavenly Father and Christ, together, offer all human beings through the eternal grace.

Mark 1: 1 **The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.**

1 Peter 3: 18 **For Christ also suffered once for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh but made alive by the Spirit.**

Hebrews 10: 12 **But this Man (Jesus), after He had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down at the right hand of God,
13 from that time waiting till His enemies are made His footstool.
14 For by one offering He has perfected forever those who are being sanctified.**

Acts 4: 11 **This (Jesus) is the ‘stone which was rejected by you builders, which has become the chief cornerstone.’
12 Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved.**

Romans 5: 17 **For if by the one man’s offense death reigned through the one, much more those who receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness will reign in life through the One, Jesus Christ.
18 Therefore, as through one man’s offense judgment came to all men, resulting in condemnation, even so through one Man’s righteous act the free gift came to all men, resulting in justification of life.**

Acts 2: 36 **Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ.**

Revelation 7: 10 **And crying out with a loud voice, saying, "Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!"**

Romans 16: 25 **Now to Him who is able to establish you according to my gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery kept secret since the world began,**

26 but now has been made manifest, and by the prophetic Scriptures has been made known to all nations, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, for obedience to the faith.

27 To God, alone wise, be glory through Jesus Christ forever. Amen.

1 Timothy 3: 16 And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifested in the flesh, Justified in the Spirit, Seen by angels, Preached among the Gentiles, Believed on in the world, Received up in glory.

Colossians 1: 26 The mystery which has been hidden from ages and from generations, but now has been revealed to His saints.

27 To them God willed to make known what are the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles: which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.

1 John 3: 2 Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is.

Revelation 5: 12 Saying with a loud voice: "Worthy is the Lamb who was slain To receive power and riches and wisdom, And strength and honor and glory and blessing!"

The Gospel was given in order to offer unique and historical acts of God in Christ in favor of humanity, but these deeds also came to manifest the unshakable path to eternal life and established appropriate conditions for people of all generations to have access to living and walking in Christ or according to the will of the Lord.

The idea that intends to present Christ only as a historical figure or of a distant past, or that seeks to resemble the Lord with any character in ancient history who has ceased to have a living and active performance in the lives of human beings in the present time, is entirely incoherent with all that the Gospel of God came to offer and came to announce.

The Christ narrated by the Scriptures did not remain dead in a tomb, for death and no sepulcher could ever retain the Lord of Life, Glory, Love, and the fullness of power, also witnessed by the following text:

Acts 2: 22 Men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a Man attested by God to you by miracles, wonders, and signs which God did through Him in your midst, as you yourselves also know,

23 Him, being delivered by the determined purpose and foreknowledge of God, you have taken by lawless hands, have crucified, and put to death;

24 whom God raised up, having loosed the pains of death, because it was not possible that He should be held by it.

Christ, as recorded by history, came from Heaven, entered the world by birth as a child, grew, and was slain indeed as a sacrifice of provision for the remission of the sins of humankind. However, the same history also testifies that Christ was resurrected and that He is alive at the right hand of the Heavenly Father, to the point that the Scriptures declare:

Romans 4: 25 Christ was delivered up because of our offenses, and was raised because of our justification.

Matthew 28: 20(b) ... I am with you always, even to the end of the age." Amen.

All attributes of Christ, such as "I AM the Good Shepherd," "I AM the Light of the world," and "I AM the Resurrection and the Life," were never declared exclusively for past times, never ceased, and will never cease in the present time or in any future time.

Moreover, if yet the Scriptures recorded before the coming of Christ to the world in the flesh are observed, there is also found another broad list of eternal attributes of the Lord Jesus Christ, as shown in the example below:

Isaiah 9: 6 For unto us a Child is born, Unto us a Son is given; And the government will be upon His shoulder. And His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

7 Of the increase of His government and peace There will be no end, Upon the throne of David and over His kingdom, To order it and establish it with judgment and justice From that time forward, even forever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this.

Precisely because Christ is eternal and eternally alive, that there is so much to be considered about each of the attributes of the Lord Jesus, remembering that in each of the characteristics of Christ there is also revealed the exact expression of the attributes of the Heavenly Father.

Therefore, considering that God chose to reveal Himself in a more personalized way through Christ, Who died, yes, but Who also rose again to eternally manifest the grace of God to those who believe in Him, the great challenge of every generation, including that of the present time, passed to be to know continually and increasingly this Christ eternally alive.

John 17: 3 And this is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent.

Thus, **through knowing the Lord Jesus Christ, resurrected and alive, a person can know the eternally alive God so that, through knowing Christ and God, one may also receive all that is necessary for one's eternal life and a life of piety before the Lord**, as explicitly stated in the following text:

*2 Peter 1: 2 Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord,
3 as His divine power has given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him who called us by glory and virtue.*

Taking into account, then, that the position of Christ in the Gospel remains indispensable and unshakable eternally, the most excellent and most useful project that a person can undertake in his or her own life is the project of personal approach to Christ, so that one may be saved, taught, and instructed to know God and the will of the Lord for one's existence both for the present time and for one's eternal condition.

Since the Gospel is the greatest good of all times that God offers to every human being, also the best good that an individual can do for his or her soul is to receive the invitation of Christ to be freed by Him from the burdens of sin, law, flesh, and the world, and to be saved, strengthened, and instructed eternally in the will of the Heavenly Father.

*Matthew 11: 27 All things have been delivered to Me by My Father, and no one knows the Son except the Father. Nor does anyone know the Father except the Son, and the one to whom the Son wills to reveal Him.
28 Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.
29 Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.*

Given the fact that Christ is the very eternally living expression of God's heavenly life, it becomes evident that the person without the instruction of Christ lives a dormant life and a life short of what God intends for him or her.

Although many people try to be religious and try to apply themselves to the laws of religions, it is important to highlight that no religion can ever replace what is exclusively in Christ.

*2 Corinthians 3: 14 But their minds were blinded. For until this day the same veil remains unlifted in the reading of the Old Testament, because the veil is taken away in Christ.
15 But even to this day, when Moses is read, a veil lies on their heart.
16 Nevertheless when one turns to the Lord, the veil is taken away.
17 Now the Lord is the Spirit; and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.*

18 But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord.

Ephesians 5: 14 Therefore He says: "Awake, you who sleep, Arise from the dead, And Christ will give you light."

Since Christ is the expression of the essence of the Gospel of God and the source of life that never fades, receiving Christ in the heart, in the form and with the attributes that He is offered through the Gospel, is indispensable for every human being who longs for the eternal life offered to all by the eternal Heavenly Father.

By offering Christ to the world, God fulfilled once and for all the provision of forgiveness to sinners, but by offering the eternally living Christ so that He may dwell in the heart of those who receive Him, God also offers people a newness of life and instruction for the present time, as well as a guarantee of everlasting life with Him.

Christ indeed did many works in the past for the sake of the salvation of every human being, and each of those accomplishments presents vital aspects that have cooperated for this salvation. However, the Scriptures do not merely reveal what Christ did, also presenting what Christ is and what is His position to sustain continually or eternally the salvation already manifested in the past.

Colossians 1: 13 He has delivered us from the power of darkness and conveyed us into the kingdom of the Son of His love,
14 in whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins.
15 He (Christ) is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation.
16 For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him.
17 And He is before all things, and in Him all things consist.
18 And He is the head of the body, the church, who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in all things He may have the preeminence.
19 For it pleased the Father that in Him all the fullness should dwell,
20 and by Him to reconcile all things to Himself, by Him, whether things on earth or things in heaven, having made peace through the blood of His cross.

The Lord Jesus Christ presented and offered through the everlasting and unchangeable Gospel, and Who acted and acts in all times of human history, is an offer of God that is perfect or complete for all that an

individual may need in order to deal with his or her past, present, and future.

Many people, even many who claim to be Christians, have tried to idealize and shape a Christ according to their thoughts and interests rather than open their hearts to accept Christ as He is and as He is offered by God through the Eternal Gospel, thus incurring the fact that the years of their lives are consumed by their proper concepts or concerns rather than receiving the true novelty of eternal life offered to them by God.

The Lord Jesus Christ, resurrected and eternally alive, is Who He is and how He is. The Lord Jesus Christ, as God's eternal and perfect offer, is not subject to the desires of how people want Him to be.

And as we have already mentioned, **no one can be, and no one can supply and provide for oneself or others, what Christ alone is!**

Therefore, **when God proclaimed Christ to be the perfect, complete, and eternal provision for what a person needs in all times of his or her life, God, in Christ, has shown Himself immeasurably generous to all, but He also has announced that the aspects in which Christ is unique or exclusive can never be attributed to any other creature.**

Although the Lord Jesus came as the Son of Man into the world to share the virtues and the riches of God's glory to humankind, even to the point of demonstrating God's love for all on the cross of Calvary, Christ is also God from the beginning and eternally, and no one can ever equate oneself or be equated with Him.

In presenting His Gospel in Christ as the provision for past, present, and future things, to grant salvation and the eternal newness of life through His grace, the Lord announced, also through this aspect, that God alone is God, and that the creature, however much God loves and exalts it, will always be a dependent creature of God, an aspect repeatedly announced by the Lord in the Scriptures and also witnessed by many people as exemplified below:

*Isaiah 42: 8 **I am the LORD, that is My name; And My glory I will not give to another, Nor My praise to carved images.***

*Isaiah 48: 11 **For My own sake, for My own sake, I will do it; For how should My name be profaned? And I will not give My glory to another.***

*Psalms 62: 5 **My soul, wait silently for God alone, For my expectation is from Him.***

*6 **He only is my rock and my salvation; He is my defense; I shall not be moved.***

*7 **In God is my salvation and my glory; The rock of my strength, And my refuge, is in God.***

*8 **Trust in Him at all times, you people; Pour out your heart before Him; God is a refuge for us.***

The lack of understanding or the non-acceptance of the ever-living and current condition of the Gospel of Christ, even after more than 2000 years from the Lord's crucifixion, is one of the central reasons why so many sufferings of the soul that afflict people so sharply continue to be present so intensely in the current days.

Because people do not know the eternal attributes of Christ or resist the fact that Christ is much more than just a historical figure of the Gospel, being the living and everlasting Christ, many have deprived themselves of experiencing the relationship with the Unique Lord and Savior Who can save and fully supply souls with true salvation, justice, peace, and love in any age and human generation.

Hebrews 7: 24 **But He (Jesus), because He continues forever, has an unchangeable priesthood.**

25 **Therefore He is also able to save to the uttermost those who come to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them.**

John 6: 35 **And Jesus said to them, "I am the bread of life. He who comes to Me shall never hunger, and he who believes in Me shall never thirst."**

Thus, bearing in mind that human miseries are resulting from the detachment of the creature from the fellowship with its Creator, and considering that God has chosen to converge His most intense and central manifestation through the Lord Jesus Christ, it can be concluded that the miseries of soul that a vast part of humanity suffers are also the result of the distance that people adopt in relation to the relationship with the ever-living person of the Lord Jesus Christ.

As mentioned above, **the fact that the Lord Jesus Christ is not just a provision of the past, but that He is God's forever alive and everlasting provision for salvation and newness of life for human beings, also establishes the fact that what is offered by God in Christ is unique eternally and only possible to be found in Him.**

What Christ alone is no one else can be, but also what Christ provides exclusively cannot be found in any other or any other created thing.

And among the many eternal aspects of the uniqueness that exists in the Lord Jesus Christ and of what He provides, the Heavenly Father Himself, through the Gospel, revealed Christ also as:

- ⇒ *The Unique Mediator between God and all human beings;*
- ⇒ *The Singular Savior and Redeemer;*
- ⇒ *The Singular Eternal Salvation;*
- ⇒ *The Singular True Righteousness;*
- ⇒ *The Singular True Peace;*

- ⇒ *The Singular Source of True and Eternal Life;*
- ⇒ *The Unique High Priest;*
- ⇒ *The One Head of every man;*
- ⇒ *The One Head of the Church or His Body;*
- ⇒ *The One Head of every principality and power;*
- ⇒ *The Singular Lord of Lords;*
- ⇒ *The Singular Lion of the tribe of Judah;*
- ⇒ *The Singular King of Kings;*
- ⇒ *The Singular King of Glory, Righteousness, and Peace that comes from the Heavenly Father.*

*1 Corinthians 1: 30 But of Him you are in Christ Jesus, who became for us wisdom from God, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption,
31 that, as it is written, "He who glories, let him glory in the LORD."*

What the Gospel reveals that Christ is, as well as what is in Christ, is an inexhaustible and eternal source of life from the eternal Heavenly Father, the Eternal Father of Love, and the Eternal Father of Lights.

And yet, considering that Christ is irreplaceable in all that He is unique, why not come to Him and surrender in humility to God's plan to have the heavenly life that comes from the Heavenly Father? Why seek in other people or in other things what only Christ can provide?

*John 1: 12 But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name:
13 who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.
14 And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.
15 John bore witness of Him and cried out, saying, "This was He of whom I said, 'He who comes after me is preferred before me, for He was before me.'"
16 And of His fullness we have all received, and grace for grace.
17 For the law was given through Moses, but grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.
18 No one has seen God at any time. The only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, He has declared Him.
19 Now this is the testimony of John, when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, "Who are you?"
20 He confessed, and did not deny, but confessed, "I am not the Christ."*

...

- 29 The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, "Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!"*
- 30 This is He of whom I said, 'After me comes a Man who is preferred before me, for He was before me.'*
- 31 I did not know Him; but that He should be revealed to Israel, therefore I came baptizing with water."*
- 32 And John bore witness, saying, "I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and He remained upon Him.*
- 33 I did not know Him, but He who sent me to baptize with water said to me, 'Upon whom you see the Spirit descending, and remaining on Him, this is He who baptizes with the Holy Spirit.'*
- 34 And I have seen and testified that this is the Son of God."*
-

Finally, in this chapter, and given that the present material aims to focus on a more summarized panorama of the Gospel from the standpoint of this also being the Gospel of Christ, we will not detail at this time each of the attributes of Christ mentioned above.

The continuity of the explanation of the attributes of Christ mentioned above, however, is permeated in each of the subjects on the Gospel of God that are exposed in the sequence of the present material, since **every facet of the Gospel of God is also the expression of an aspect of Who Christ is and what God offers people through Christ.**

We would still like to highlight the relevance of the specific subject on "The Gospel of the Glory of God and the Glory of Christ," which is also part of this present series on the Gospel.

Considering that teaching about some attributes of the forever alive and present ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ, while seated at the right hand of the Heavenly Father, has been set aside by many in the last centuries, making direct teaching about them increasingly scarce and rare, we have sought through the theme mentioned in the previous paragraph to bring to mind these aspects that should never be relegated to a second plan by those who believe in the Lord.

The acts of Christ that are already part of "past history" serve indeed as a basis and cooperation for Christ's present and future position, but the invitation of God so that we may relate to Him is not an invitation to a relationship with historical facts alone. God calls everyone, in each generation, to the fellowship with the living and eternal person of the Son of His Love, and this is what the Gospel of Christ and the Gospel of the Glory of Christ teach us.

- 1 John 5: 11 And this is the testimony: that God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son.*
- 12 He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life.*
- 13 These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, that you may know that you have eternal life, and that you may continue to believe in the name of the Son of God.*

C6. Christ Was Given and Gave Himself for Love to Us and for Love to The Heavenly Father

In the material on the Gospel under the compound name of the Gospel of the Creator, it was used, several times, the text of the book of John that marvelously summarizes a central motivation by which God has extended the Lord Jesus Christ as an offer of eternal salvation, and which we repeat once again below:

*John 3: 16 **For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.***

The Gospel of the Creator of the Heavens and the Earth is characterized by the presentation and offering of salvation and eternal life with God, aspects offered through the Lord Jesus Christ from the love of the Heavenly Father.

What, however, we would like to highlight in this chapter, and in the present theme under the compound name of the Gospel of Christ, is that the Gospel, being as well of Christ, is also an offer of Christ's very love to humanity and equivalent to the same love by which the Heavenly Father offered His Only Begotten Son.

The Gospel of God is also the Gospel of Christ because the Lord Jesus was always part of all the purposes of the Gospel and because the Lord Jesus also gave Himself in this Gospel, as described in the following texts:

*John 15: 13 **Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one's life for his friends.***

*John 10: 11 **I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd gives His life for the sheep.***

...
*17 **Therefore My Father loves Me, because I lay down My life that I may take it again.***

*18 **No one takes it from Me, but I lay it down of Myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This command I have received from My Father.***

*Ephesians 5: 1 **Therefore be imitators of God as dear children.**
*2 **And walk in love, as Christ also has loved us and given Himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling aroma.****

The love of Christ for the Heavenly Father and every human being led the Lord Jesus to surrender His life and suffer on the cross of Calvary, aiming to offer the way of salvation and the novelty of eternal life to all human beings.

Moreover, **Christ's provision for Him to be God's highest and most sublime offer in all eternity has already been established since the foundation of the world**, as it is also mentioned at the end of the following text:

*Revelation 13: 8(b) ... **in the Book of Life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.***

Christ offered to human beings, as the means to salvation and eternal life, expresses the gift of what is most precious to the Heavenly Father, but this also implied that the Lord Jesus Christ, for a determined period, would have to humble Himself to a condition of a servant and of extreme contempt and humiliation on the part of the creation towards the Creator.

*Philippians 2: 6 **Who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God,***

*7 **but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men.***

*8 **And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross.***

The Lord Jesus Christ was proclaimed by John the Baptist as the “Word of Life” that was manifested by the Heavenly Father in the flesh before humankind, but Christ is also the “Word of Life” because He offered Himself to manifest the life of the Heavenly Father to the world in a way that it could be seen, touched, and received forever in the heart of those who believe in Him.

A phrase devoid of “verbs” has no expression of action. If someone says, for example, “the rabbit food,” one can only know that the sentence says something about a rabbit and something about food, since any additional deduction would be entirely uncertain.

Without the presence of a “verb,” there is no way to know, in the example of the previous paragraph, whether the rabbit ate the food, whether it licked the food, whether it smelled the food, whether it despised the food, whether it trampled the food or, even, if it came to become the food of another being.

Therefore, the Lord Jesus, as the “Word of Life” willing to serve the Heavenly Father in all His will, is the One who willingly offered Himself to reveal and grant the newness of God's life to human beings.

*John 1: 1 **In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.***

*2 **He was in the beginning with God.***

*3 **All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made.***

*4 **In Him was life, and the life was the light of men.***

*5 **And the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it.***

*6 **There was a man sent from God, whose name was John.***

- 7 This man came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all through him might believe.*
- 8 He was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness of that Light.*
- 9 That was the true Light which gives light to every man coming into the world.*
- 10 He was in the world, and the world was made through Him, and the world did not know Him.*
- 11 He came to His own, and His own did not receive Him.*
- 12 But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name:*
- 13 who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.*
- 14 And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.*
- 15 John bore witness of Him and cried out, saying, "This was He of whom I said, 'He who comes after me is preferred before me, for He was before me.'"*
- 16 And of His fullness we have all received, and grace for grace.*
- 17 For the law was given through Moses, but grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.*
- 18 No one has seen God at any time. The only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, He has declared Him.*
-

Because the Lord Jesus Christ has offered Himself in full confidence, without any resistance, or willingly to the Heavenly Father to be the means by which God offers the heavenly life to all those who are willing to receive the heavenly grace presented to them, the Lord Jesus Christ also demonstrated His condition as the perfect assurance that each of the words that pre-announced and proclaimed the Gospel of God would be fulfilled, remain fulfilled, and come to be fulfilled eternally.

The Heavenly Father, because of His love for all human beings, gave His Only Begotten Son as the offer of salvation, but it was Christ from the foundation of the world Who made the choice to be faithful in everything until the death of the cross in favor of every person for whom He has given Himself as the perfect offer of eternal redemption.

The Scriptures teach us that the Heavenly Father sent His Son into the world to save all sinners, but they also show that the option to come into the world as the faithful and true provision for the forgiveness and salvation of all sinners was equally done in love by the Lord Jesus Christ.

John 3: 17 For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved.

+

John 12:47 And if anyone hears My words and does not believe, I do not judge him; for I did not come to judge the world but to save the world.

1 Timothy 1: 15 This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief.

The Lord Jesus Christ was the main herald of the Gospel of God, but He is also the very voluntary expression of what is offered by the Gospel of the Lord.

The Lord Jesus Christ is a perfect offer also because He is an offer that counted on His full willingness.

Christ is the very offer of love that surrendered itself into the hands of the Heavenly Father to be offered with the explicit purpose that humankind could know the greatness of God's love for every individual.

Still, in other words, the manifestation of the offer of the heavenly salvation to human beings who distanced themselves from God, because of sin, is the result of both the love of the Heavenly Father and the love of Christ for each person.

And in turn, considering that the salvation offered by God is the expression of the mutual love of the Heavenly Father and Christ, there is by no means the possibility of dissociating Christ from the Gospel of Salvation and the Love of God.

The manifestation of the Heavenly Father's love towards the creation is impressive and immeasurable, which was never limited by the offenses and despises that human beings created and raised against God. However, the manifestation of salvation offered by the Heavenly Father also in all is the expression of the love of Christ for every sinner.

In Christ Jesus, the Heavenly Father showed how great, how deep, and how comprehensive is His love for every human being. In Christ, God manifested how great are His mercies, compassion, and other attributes to offer forgiveness to all people despite the sins they have plotted and practiced. However, when the Scriptures teach us that Christ is the perfect voluntary offer, we may also know that every aspect that demonstrates the love of the Heavenly Father equally reflects the love that is in His Only Begotten Son.

The Lord Jesus Christ was offered by God, but He also gave Himself to demonstrate that no one needs to abstain from God because of the sins one has committed in his or her life.

*Colossians 1: 13 He has delivered us from the power of darkness and conveyed us into the kingdom of the Son of His love,
14 in whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins.*

1 John 2: 2 And He Himself is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the whole world.

God's love is superior to what people have tried to do against it. And the Lord Jesus Christ has offered Himself in faithfulness to demonstrate, in many ways, the practical working of God's love, even bearing with longsuffering the most intense concentrations of human wrath against the Heavenly Father's offer of love.

The Lord Jesus Christ, on the cross of Calvary, like a sheep that did not open its mouth against those who opposed the Creator, endured the dislike that people had against the Heavenly Father of all creation. And He did it to manifest that the love of the Father for every person, love that is equally in the Only Begotten Son of God, did not become extinct because of human transgressions and their oppositions to the Eternal Lord.

Isaiah 53: 7 He was oppressed and He was afflicted, Yet He opened not His mouth; He was led as a lamb to the slaughter, And as a sheep before its shearers is silent, So He opened not His mouth.

8 He was taken from prison and from judgment, And who will declare His generation? For He was cut off from the land of the living; For the transgressions of My people He was stricken.

9 And they made His grave with the wicked, —But with the rich at His death, Because He had done no violence, Nor was any deceit in His mouth.

10 Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise Him; He has put Him to grief. When You make His soul an offering for sin, He shall see His seed, He shall prolong His days, And the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in His hand.

11 He shall see the labor of His soul, and be satisfied. By His knowledge My righteous Servant shall justify many, For He shall bear their iniquities.

12 Therefore I will divide Him a portion with the great, And He shall divide the spoil with the strong, Because He poured out His soul unto death, And He was numbered with the transgressors, And He bore the sin of many, And made intercession for the transgressors.

The Gospel of the Heavenly Father, which is also the Gospel of the Beloved Son, is the demonstration, in every detail, of the perfect, full, and sufficient source of God's love for all generations and all people in every generation.

Since Christ is the perfect offer of God's love, this offer could only be perfect if this Offer also offered itself out of love.

Christ was sent by the Heavenly Father, but He also gave Himself in love so that all may know that the whole provision of the love of God is, in everything, a perfect and unshakable Way to novelty of life, and which purpose is for people to believe in this perfect Way so that they choose to convert to God and the unique relationship that is grounded in this perfect love.

1 John 1: 1 That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, concerning the Word of life,

- 2 *(the life was manifested, and we have seen, and bear witness, and declare to you that eternal life which was with the Father and was manifested to us)*
- 3 *that which we have seen and heard we declare to you, that you also may have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ.*

- 1 Peter 1: 17 *And if you call on the Father, who without partiality judges according to each one's work, conduct yourselves throughout the time of your stay here in fear;*
- 18 *knowing that you were not redeemed with corruptible things, like silver or gold, from your aimless conduct received by tradition from your fathers,*
- 19 *but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.*
- 20 *He indeed was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you*
- 21 *who through Him believe in God, who raised Him from the dead and gave Him glory, so that your faith and hope are in God.*

*John 17: 3 And this is eternal life:
That they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom
You have sent.*

The Lord Jesus Christ gave Himself in love for every person so that each one can live eternally in this love and so that each one may experience the sublimity of eternal life.

The love of Christ has been present in all of God's creation from the beginning, but what the Lord Jesus seeks and offers through His Gospel is that we too may remain in this same love forever and ever.

- 2 Corinthians 5: 14 *For the love of Christ compels us, because we judge thus: that if One died for all, then all died;*
- 15 *and He died for all, that those who live should live no longer for themselves, but for Him who died for them and rose again.*

1 Corinthians 13: 13 *And now abide faith, hope, love, these three; but the greatest of these is love.*

- 1 John 4: 16 *And we have known and believed the love that God has for us.
God is love.
And he who abides in love abides in God, and God in him.*

C7. “But Who Do You Say that I Am?”

Throughout this material, on several occasions, it has been emphasized that one of the main aspects that the Gospel of God or the Gospel of Christ came to manifest and offer is God Himself or the possibility for people to live and to walk in God through an eternal relationship with the Lord.

Therefore, because the Gospel expresses the offer of God Himself to human beings in Christ Jesus, it is also to be expected that the exposition of the attributes of the Heavenly Father, Christ, and the Holy Spirit has a special place in the announcement or propagation of this Gospel.

On the other hand, the Scriptures also show that a clear or appropriate presentation of a particular aspect or theme does not necessarily imply that the people who receive this exposure understand it in the same way that the offeror would like them to understand it.

In the Scriptures, it is easy to see that not all who saw the Lord Jesus and all who heard about Him had the same understanding of who was the Christ presented to them by God.

And yet, to more accurately check what is indeed the understanding of an individual about something that has been exposed to him or her, the Scriptures also show us that often it is necessary to ask the very recipient of some specific aspect what he or she has understood about what has been shown or informed.

A person, for instance, may repeatedly hear something about the Lordship of Christ or the Gospel and think that he or she has adequately learned what has been explained to him or her. But when one is challenged to explain what he or she has understood, with words from one's mouth, it may come to be perceived that which one thought he or she had understood and assimilated is not really clear as it should be or is not in line with what God did indeed expose to him or her.

The fact that God announces to human beings that the heavenly salvation is addressed to all, but at the same time instructs people that it is necessary for the recipients of the Gospel to believe in God and confess or invoke Christ as Lord, occurs, in parts, for that each person exposes what he or she has indeed understood and so that each one expresses what he or she is actually asking God by invoking Him.

Romans 10: 9 That if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved.

10 For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.

11 For the Scripture says, "Whoever believes on Him will not be put to shame."

Although a person reaches salvation in Christ by the grace offered to him or her by God, receiving it through faith in the Lord, and although Christ is the One Who actually saves the person who believes in Him, when an individual confesses Christ, one expresses what he or she is believing and aiming to receive from the Lord.

On the other hand, if an individual has difficulty to express something with a minimum of clarity or precision, it is indeed possible that he or she has not yet understood the confession to which one is called, does not believe in what has been proposed, or, still, does not want in fact commit to what is being offered.

Since the Gospel of Christ is a voluntary offer, and the act of receiving this offer is equally voluntary, it also becomes evident that the connection between the offeror and the recipient of the offer should happen based on a voluntary agreement of both parties. This voluntary agreement or covenant between the parties, however, also implies that there should be a prior clarity of the recipient's understanding about what is being offered to him or her so that his or her expression of agreement may be satisfactorily fulfilled.

Thus, to advance on what is being discussed in the introduction to this chapter, we would like to emphasize in particular an excerpt from the Bible that exemplifies the need for an appropriate understanding, by the recipient of the offer, on what is being offered to him or her and also because this narrative surely is one of the central texts of the Scriptures for the understanding of the essence and foundation of the Gospel of Christ.

In the passage that will be shown following, a context is found in which the Lord Jesus Christ asks a question by which the individuals of a group of recipients of the Gospel are challenged to think and speak very objectively of what they were thinking or understanding about what the Lord came to present to them.

We suggest, then, that in the following passage of the Scriptures, it might be observed with particular attention the relevance of a more precise understanding of what the Gospel of God, in the person of the Lord Jesus Christ, offers to human beings:

Matthew 16: 13 **When Jesus came into the region of Caesarea Philippi, He asked His disciples, saying: "Who do men say that I, the Son of Man, am?"**

14 **So they said, "Some say John the Baptist, some Elijah, and others Jeremiah or one of the prophets."**

15 **Jesus said to them, "But who do you say that I am?"**

16 **Simon Peter answered and said, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God."**

17 **Jesus answered and said to him, "Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah, for flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but My Father who is in heaven."**

18 **And I also say to you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it."**

In beginning to make an analysis of the above narrative, it may be noted that the first question that the Lord Jesus Christ asked His disciples was an open or broader question about what people, in general, were saying about who the Son of Man is or about what was the perception that the people, in general, had about Him.

And just as in our day, the general opinion about the Lord was not unanimous. The general concepts about the Lord Jesus were the result of comparisons that people tried to make with other individuals in human history. In the broad scope of the crowd, people sought to see if there was in the Son of Man any likeness to other characters who had already been a historical example to them.

Generally speaking, the people were not looking to the Lord Jesus as distinct, unusual, entirely new, or as someone who could offer them something really new.

In asking His disciples about who was the person Jesus that was before them, as well as by receiving their answers, the Lord Jesus Christ showed that not all people think the same about who the Lord is, just as it is also in the current days.

Nevertheless, the Lord Jesus Christ did not merely bring to light the variety of opinions that people, in general, had about Him. By advancing further in the dialogue with His disciples, the Lord Jesus shows that the collective or popular voice does not necessarily need to be equal to the personal opinion of an individual or the non-collective voice.

After asking a question about the people's opinion about Him, the Lord Jesus challenged His disciples to check the personal concept that each of them had about the one they were following.

The Lord Jesus Christ well knew who He was, but did the disciples already know who was, in fact, the man they were following?

The Lord Jesus Christ presented a very special opportunity to His disciples when He led them to a reflection that was not limited to the popular concept or the understanding of the crowd, as well as when He led them to see that there may be notable differences between what many think and what some few people think, showing yet that the voice of the majority is not necessarily grounded in the truth.

The question, “*But Who do you say that I am?*” is an extraordinary question because it is a question where each person, individually, has the opportunity to reflect or check, not only superficially or collectively, about who Jesus, the Son of Man, is for him or her, or what He actually represents in one's personal life.

Therefore, carefully observing a question such as the one in reference can be crucial.

And the question of the Lord Jesus about who personally or in the eyes of His disciples was the Son of Man was of such great relevance that the Heavenly Father Himself, as a demonstration of a remarkable blessedness, stepped in to reveal the answer to them through Peter.

How substantial and beautiful are the words that Peter utters in response to the inquiry made by the Lord Jesus Christ, namely, “*You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.*” However, when Peter replied the question of Christ, he answered something that could not be known if the answer had not been granted to him from above or if God Himself had not granted to him the understanding about who the Lord Jesus is.

What Peter responded to the Lord Jesus Christ was not something produced by flesh and blood, it was not something conceived by the mere human mind. It was a revelation made available to Peter by the Eternal God Himself, the Creator God, the Unique Heavenly Father.

So, what knowledge so high or sublime is this that cannot be acquired just by intellect and study, but only if the Heavenly Father grants it?

What is this so profound knowledge that it is only granted to the one who receives the light of God to have the eyes of the understanding enlightened?

The knowledge that is indeed crucial to an individual is not what the world says about Christ, it is not what the people say about Christ, it is not what the media say about Christ, and nor it is what the many religions say about Christ.

The knowledge that is indeed vital to an individual is what the Heavenly Father declares about Christ and, ultimately, what each one says about Christ in response to what the Heavenly Father has allowed him or her to understand.

To know “*personally*,” according to the truth of God, Who is the Lord Jesus Christ, is incomparably more sublime than any other knowledge, and is more sublime and more profound than knowing literally every one of the works that the Lord Jesus did or knowing what men and women in the world say about Him.

The alignment of what we individually think and say with what the Heavenly Father declares about Who is the Lord Jesus is what actually matters after all!

1 John 2: 22 Who is a liar but he who denies that Jesus is the Christ? He is antichrist who denies the Father and the Son.

23 Whoever denies the Son does not have the Father either; he who acknowledges the Son has the Father also.

When a confluence, harmony, or agreement occurs regarding what God offers in Christ to people and what a person understands and says about what God is presenting as an offer of love, a great understanding of the essence of the revelation of the Gospel of God was made present in this individual.

Furthermore, the agreement with the revelation that there is one Christ and one Lord offered to us by the Heavenly Father, accompanied by the acceptance of this truth in the heart, open the way for a series of other revelations to be also granted and established in the life of the one who believes in the testimony of God, for he or she who believes in Christ, according to the truth declared about Him by the Heavenly Father, also receives in oneself the Heavenly Father and the Beloved Son.

1 John 5: 9 If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater; for this is the witness of God which He has testified of His Son.

- 10 He who believes in the Son of God has the witness in himself; he who does not believe God has made Him a liar, because he has not believed the testimony that God has given of His Son.*
- 11 And this is the testimony: that God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son.*
- 12 He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life.*
- 13 These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, that you may know that you have eternal life, and that you may continue to believe in the name of the Son of God.*
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After Peter dared to express what by the Heavenly Father had been granted him to understand, the Lord Jesus Christ continued to reveal to Peter other points that were also connected with this revelation.

After the Lord Jesus declared to Peter that the revelation that he had received came from the Heavenly Father, the Lord continued to speak to Peter and told him that on this same revealed truth from Heaven, that is, that the Son of Man is the Christ, is that the Lord would also build His Church or build what is also called the Body of Christ composed of those who believe in the Lord and receive Him as such in the heart.

The Lord Jesus Christ, in the dialogue in reference, **was not declaring that Peter would be the rock upon which the Lord would build His Church. What the Lord was announcing is that the only rock or foundation that could come to support the Church, that is, the people who believe in the Lord, is the Son of Man revealed by the Heavenly Father as being also the Christ and the Eternal Son of the living God.**

The name “*Peter*,” coming from “*petros*,” might mean a “*rock*,” but it may also mean just a “*stone*.” However, the word used by the Lord Jesus Christ to refer to the foundation upon which He will build His Church was not just “*petros*,” but “*petra*,” which may also mean a “*big rock*,” a “*rock*,” or even “*a rock that can serve as the foundation or soil of a great building*.”

When the Lord Jesus answered Simon Barjonah saying that he was a “*petros*,” the Lord was saying that although Peter was a mere man, and likened to a single stone, he could be built upon a firm and unshakable “**ROCK**” called “**THE CHRIST**,” that is, the “**UNSHAKABLE ROCK**” that would support Peter and also all those who would likewise believe in the revelation granted to them by the Heavenly Father about the Son of Man introduced by God into the world.

The Lord Jesus Christ was making known to His disciples that the Heavenly Father's revelation of WHO HE IS or that HE IS THE ETERNAL CHRIST was also exposing WHO IS THE ETERNAL FOUNDATION OF LIFE.

THE LORD JESUS CHRIST IS THE UNIQUE AND UNSHAKABLE FOUNDATION upon which Peter could be saved and edified, as well as on which likewise the other apostles and all other persons who would yet come to compose the Church or the Body of Christ could be eternally saved and edified, though Peter and each new believer in the Lord are individually just a “little stone” or a “single stone.”

Although the Lord Jesus came in the flesh to the world or to be among the human beings as the Son of Men, and in this sense also becoming like a single stone, the true revelation coming from God about the Lord Jesus proclaimed that He is indeed the Christ, the eternal foundation of all who believe in Him in accordance with the Heavenly Father's revelation about Him.

Although the Lord Jesus came into the world in the likeness of the creature, the Heavenly Father made known to Peter and the whole world that the Lord Jesus, in fact, also is the “*Eternal Rock*” that can perfectly support the edification of all who constitute the Body of Christ, no matter how many people come to believe in Christ.

Paul, Peter, the prophets, and the psalmists fully agree with what was stated in the above dialogue between the Lord Jesus Christ and His disciples, as exemplified below:

1 Corinthians 3: 10 According to the grace of God which was given to me, as a wise master builder I have laid the foundation, and another builds on it. But let each one take heed how he builds on it.

11 For no other foundation can anyone lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ.

*1 Peter 2: 4 Coming to Him (Christ) as to a living stone, rejected indeed by men, but chosen by God and precious,
5 you also, as living stones, are being built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.*

6 Therefore it is also contained in the Scripture, "Behold, I lay in Zion A chief cornerstone, elect, precious, And he who believes on Him will by no means be put to shame."

7 Therefore, to you who believe, He is precious; but to those who are disobedient, "The stone which the builders rejected Has become the chief cornerstone,"

8 and "A stone of stumbling And a rock of offense." They stumble, being disobedient to the word, to which they also were appointed.

Psalms 62: 6 The Lord only is my rock and my salvation; He is my defense; I shall not be moved.

The fact that the Lord Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God, also causes the Lord Jesus to be the firm Rock that can sustain eternally all those who receive Him as Lord and Savior.

If anyone wants to build his or her life on a foundation that attributes to the Lord Jesus only the condition of a great teacher, a great prophet, a standout man, or a great “perfected spirit,” as some try to state, this person will be building on a false or unreal foundation and on a proposition of a Jesus who is not the Christ sent by God.

If an individual wants to build one's life on a foundation that attributes to the Lord Jesus only the condition of a mere man who has excelled over other men by his efforts, dedication, or spiritual perfection, this person will be trying to build on a proposition of a Jesus who is not the Only Begotten and Eternal Son of God.

And still, if anyone wants to build one's life having as foundation another human being or the name of another human being, that is, on any other stone instead of the “*ETERNAL ROCK*” denominated the Lord Jesus Christ, one will be trying to build his or her life on that which cannot give real and trustworthy support for eternal life.

The Lord Jesus is the Christ granted by God and Who suffered for the sins of all human beings so that they may receive the remission in the Lord. The Lord Jesus Christ is the Son of the Eternal God Who was with the Father in Heaven from the beginning and Who voluntarily presented Himself as a pleasing and tender offering for the granting of salvation and newness of life according to the will of God. And the Lord Jesus is the Christ granted by the heavenly kingdom as the Only Mediator accepted between God and men.

Therefore, when a person receives and accepts the unique condition of the Lord Jesus as the Christ in conformity with that which is revealed by the Heavenly Father, he or she, like Peter, is also enabled to be built and established on the “*ETERNAL ROCK*” which is Christ.

Every person who receives Christ as Lord and Savior is placed directly on the same, singular, or unique foundation on which also Peter, John, Mary, Paul, and all other Christians were placed.

The revelation that the Lord Jesus is the Christ is the same for all, just as being able to be built up directly in Christ is for all those who believe in the Lord and receive Him in the heart.

Colossians 3: 11 (In Christ) there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcised nor uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave nor free, but Christ is all and in all.

It makes no sense for a “Christian” not to build up his or her life of faith exclusively and directly on the unique foundation recognized by the Heavenly Father, for “Christ” is the only One Who died for each person and Who gave His life to bestow eternal provision for the forgiveness of sins.

Anyone who truly serves God does not accept to be put as a foundation of other lives, for he or she knows that the condition of being Christ, the Only Begotten Son of God, and the foundation for eternal life, against which the gates of hell cannot withstand, belongs only to the Lord Jesus.

And so that people would not come to try to build a life of faith in God by having other people or other Christians as a supposed foundation, not even the very apostles of Christ, Paul reiterates that neither he nor Apollos nor Peter (or Cephas) could be the point of reference by which people expected to be supported, for no one but Christ died for the sake of others to grant them forgiveness of sins.

*1 Corinthians 1: 12 Now I say this, that each of you says, "I am of Paul," or "I am of Apollos," or "I am of Cephas," or "I am of Christ."
13 Is Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Or were you baptized in the name of Paul?*

*1 Corinthians 3: 3 For you are still carnal. For where there are envy, strife, and divisions among you, are you not carnal and behaving like mere men?
4 For when one says, "I am of Paul," and another, "I am of Apollos," are you not carnal?
5 Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers through whom you believed, as the Lord gave to each one?*

Choosing to live a life apart from Christ, which encompasses a life of trust in laws and efforts of the flesh, is to choose to place oneself apart from the foundation of God's grace that can only be found in the Lord Jesus Christ.

*2 Corinthians 3: 15 But even to this day, when Moses is read, a veil lies on their heart.
16 Nevertheless when one turns to the Lord, the veil is taken away.
17 Now the Lord is the Spirit; and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.*

Galatians 5: 4 You have become estranged from Christ, you who attempt to be justified by law; you have fallen from grace.

Romans 8: 8 So then, those who are in the flesh cannot please God.

To come to know and receive the Lord Jesus as the Christ, as the Son of the Living God, is the true way to freedom that is in God's eternal life.

The question referring to "who is Christ personally to an individual," therefore, may come to be the most essential question to be answered, for depending on the response to it, a person may encounter life or death, building upon the rock or building upon the sand, edification in God or dissociated from God, fellowship with God or lack of association with the Lord.

God's will, however, is that everyone who does not yet know Christ may come to know Him and may believe in Him to be eternally established in the Lord.

*1 Timothy 2: 3 For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior,
4 who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.*

John 14:6 **Jesus said to him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.**

And if anyone has not yet understood that the Lord Jesus is the Christ, he or she can ask God to give him or her this understanding, for the Lord liberally grants this heavenly wisdom to all those who ask Him.

James 1: 5 **If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him.**

Finally, we point out once again that the newness of life in Christ Jesus and announced by the Gospel of Christ is presented as an offer and, therefore, only the understanding of it does not mean that it is automatically shared with the one to whom it is announced. A person may understand an offer made to him or her and still do not choose to receive it.

The primary action of the recipient of an offer that gives effective access to what is offered is the acceptance of the offer, which, in the case of the Gospel of Christ, is accomplished by the clear expression before the Lord of wanting to receive it.

If a person longs for the newness of life offered by God and has already understood that the Lord Jesus is the Christ, he or she can begin to enjoy this life confessing also personally the Lord Jesus as his or her Christ and calling on His name as his or her Lord.

After a person has heard the preaching that the Lord Jesus is the Christ, there is a step to be taken to receive Him, and which is to believe in Him and to invoke Him as Lord. Knowing, however, that the very realization of salvation is performed by God, for only God knows how to perform salvation in each person and in each specific situation that each person might be.

In the Lord Jesus there are unfathomable riches that never end, but for a person not to be dissociated from them, one needs to be willing to begin a relationship with the Lord by accepting Him as the Christ that the Gospel of God and Christ offers.

Believing in the Lord, confessing and invoking Christ is due to each person. However, the concession of salvation, the most challenging part to be fulfilled, is due to God.

Romans 10: 13 **For "whoever calls on the name of the LORD shall be saved."**

Thank God that the Lord Jesus has already manifested His victory over death and hell, and that Christ can perfectly save all those who draw near to God through Him!

*Hebrews 7: 25 **Therefore He (the Christ) is also able to save to the uttermost those who come to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them.***

Thus, the priority action of each person regarding the Gospel of God and Christ, Gospel through which salvation is offered by the Heavenly Father and Christ Himself to all human beings, encompasses also the personal positioning in relation to the question of Christ to His disciples, namely:

“But who do you say that I am?”

Bibliography

Note on Biblical Texts referenced:

- 1) The biblical texts without explicit indications of reference were drawn from NKJV Bible, as indicated below.
- 2) Highlights in the biblical texts, such as underline, bold, or similar were added by the author of this study.

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