

**Peace** be with you, listening friends. We greet you in the name of God, the Lord of peace, who wants everyone to understand and submit to the way of righteousness that He has established, and have true peace with Him forever. We are happy to be able to return today to present your program *The Way of Righteousness*.

In our last study in the holy book of the Gospel or *Injil*, we heard the thrilling story of the Messiah's birth. **No one has ever been born as Jesus was.** He was born of a virgin, by the power of God, in the town of Bethlehem, exactly as prophesied. On the night that Jesus was born, God sent a multitude of shining angels to some shepherds who were spending the night in the fields surrounding Bethlehem. One of the angels said to the shepherds, *"I bring you good news of great joy that will be for **all the people!** Today in the town of David a **Savior** has been born to you; he is Christ, the Lord!"*

Today we plan to study **what Jesus was like as a child and as He became an adult.**

The book of the Gospel shows us that following the birth of Jesus, Joseph and Mary had four sons and some daughters. The child Jesus grew up with his younger siblings in a crowded house in northern Palestine, in the town of Nazareth. As you know, Joseph did not beget Jesus, but in the eyes of men, Jesus was the son of Joseph. Since Joseph was a carpenter, Jesus also worked as a carpenter while He lived at home. Consequently, Jesus was accustomed to hard work. Thus the Scripture says: *"And Jesus grew in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men."*

Like all children, Jesus ate and slept, played and studied. However, there was something about Him that made Him different from all other children. Do you know what it was? It is this: **Jesus never committed sin!** No unjust word ever came out of His mouth. He never said to anyone, "Forgive Me", because He never wronged anyone. He could not commit sin, because there was **no root of sin** in Him! He had a holy nature. Evil was not a part of Him. He only did what pleased God. **He had a physical body like**

**ours, but He did not have an evil nature like ours!** That is what the Scriptures declare, when they say: *"We do not have a high priest – who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are, yet was **without sin.**"*

When Jesus was thirty years old, **the time for Him to begin His work** for God, as the Savior of the world had come. One day He bid farewell to his family, left the town of Nazareth, and headed for the Jordan River where the prophet John, or *Yahya* in Arabic, was preaching and baptizing the people in water.

Do you remember John? He was born six months before Jesus. John was the prophet whom God sent to prepare the hearts of people, so that they might repent of their sins and welcome the Messiah whom God had sent. Listen to what is written in the Gospel concerning the prophet John and how he prepared the way of the Messiah.

In the Gospel of Matthew, chapter three, the Scripture says:

*In those days John the Baptist came, preaching in the Desert of Judea and saying, **"Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is near."** This is he who was spoken of through the prophet Isaiah: "A voice of one calling in the desert, **'Prepare the way for the Lord, make straight paths for him!'**" John's clothes were made of camel's hair, and he had a leather belt round his waist. His food was locusts and wild honey. People went out to him from Jerusalem and all Judea and the whole region of the Jordan. Confessing their sins, they were baptized by him in the Jordan River.*

Let us pause here to think about what we are reading. Did you hear John's message?

In brief, John preached: "Repent of your sins! Turn from your evil deeds, and prepare to meet the holy Messiah who has come to you from heaven!" Those who confessed their sins before God were baptized by John in the river. Thus, the prophet John became

known as *John the Baptizer*. Being baptized in water could not wash away the people's sins. It was only a sign which showed that they had repented of their sins and were ready to receive the Messiah as their Savior.

Some of those who responded to John so that he might baptize them, belonged to the two most famous Jewish sects, *the Sadducees* and *the Pharisees*. **The Sadducees** were the wealthiest Jews and had influence in the Roman government. But in their hearts they did not care about the Writings of the Prophets. **The Pharisees** were the religious experts who were very zealous in praying, fasting, giving alms and paying tithes. However, their worship was worthless, because they were trying to become righteous before God by their own efforts. Also, the Pharisees mixed their traditions with the true Word of God. Consequently, their worship of God had become nothing more than a flashy show combined with contempt for those who did not belong to their group. In short, the Pharisees and the Sadducees honored God with their **lips**, but their **hearts** were far from Him.

Now then, let us continue to read in the Gospel and hear how John rebuked these religious experts because of their hypocrisy. The Scripture says:

*But when [John] saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming to where he was baptizing, he said to them: "You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the coming wrath? Produce fruit in keeping with repentance. And do not think you can say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our father.' I tell you that out of these stones God can raise up children for Abraham. The axe is already at the root of the trees, and every tree that does not produce good fruit will be cut down and thrown into the fire. "I baptize you with water for repentance. **But after me will come one who is more powerful than I, whose sandals I am not fit to carry. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit***

*and with fire. His winnowing fork is in his hand, and he will clear his threshing-floor, gathering his wheat into the barn and burning up the chaff with unquenchable fire!"*

*Then **Jesus** came from Galilee to the Jordan to be baptized by John. But John tried to deter him, saying, "I need to be baptized by you, and do you come to me?" Jesus replied, "Let it be so now; it is proper for us to do this **to fulfil all righteousness.**" (Then John consented.)*

Thus John baptized the Lord Jesus in the Jordan River. Perhaps some might ask, "Why did Jesus, who was without sin, ask John to baptize Him?" It is true, the Lord Jesus did not need to repent of anything, because He had never committed sin. Why then did Jesus come to John, so that John might baptize Him as he was baptizing sinners? What did Jesus say about this? Jesus said to John, *"Let it be so now; it is proper for us to do this to fulfil all righteousness."* By being baptized, Jesus not only put before us an example to follow, but He also showed us that He came to live as one of us and to die for us.

In the end of the chapter, the Scripture says:

*As soon as **Jesus** was baptized, he went up out of the water. At that moment heaven was opened, and he saw **the Spirit of God** descending like a dove and lighting on him. And **a voice from heaven** said, "This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased!"*

Friends, whose voice echoed from the sky? It was the voice of the Lord God! What did God say? God said of Jesus, *"**This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased!**"* We have already read in the Holy Scriptures how the prophet David and the angel Gabriel called the Messiah "God's Son." Now we hear how God Himself calls Jesus, *"my Son, whom I love!"* Why did God call Jesus His Son? As we have already

seen, Jesus is called *the Son of God* because He came directly from heaven. Jesus had no earthly father. God placed His Eternal Word in the womb of a virgin. Here we see another reason Jesus is called the Son of God. **God called Jesus His Son to set Him apart from all others.**

How is Jesus different from the children of Adam? Everyone descended from Adam has a nature stained by sin, but **Jesus' nature was unstained by sin.** He did not have a single sin, because He came from the holy Spirit of God. The Messiah took on a **physical form** like ours, but He did not take on our **sinful nature.** He had a holy and perfect nature! That is why God, the Holy One, could take pleasure in Jesus, as a father takes pleasure in an obedient, faithful son. It is said that the son is the shadow of the father. Whoever sees the son knows what his father is like. Similarly, whoever knows Jesus, knows what God is like, because Jesus is the One who came from God **to display God's nature.** No one has ever seen God, but the Messiah has made Him known! Jesus is the only human who had a holy nature, because He is the only One to come from the holy Spirit of God! That is why God was not ashamed to make His voice echo from heaven, saying, *"This is my Son, whom I love; **with him I am well pleased!**"*

In the remaining time today, we will begin reading in chapter four to hear what happened after John baptized Jesus. The Scripture says:

*Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the desert to be tempted by the devil. **After fasting for forty days and forty nights, he was hungry.** The tempter (that is Satan) came to him and said, **"If you are the Son of God, tell these stones to become bread."** Jesus answered, **"It is written: 'Man does not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.'**" Then the devil took him to the holy city and had him stand on the highest point of the temple.<sup>6</sup>**"If you are the Son of God,"** he said, **throw yourself down...For it is written: 'He will command his angels concerning you, and***

*they will lift you up in their hands..." Jesus answered and said, "It is also written: 'Do not put the Lord your God to the test.'" Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendor. "All this I will give you," he said, "if you will bow down and worship me." Jesus said to him, "Away from me, Satan! For it is written: 'Worship the Lord your God, and serve him only.'" Then the devil left him, and angels came and attended him.*

Three times Satan tried to entice Jesus to obey him and sin. All three times Jesus answered the devil by quoting the Word of God. As Satan tempted Adam and Eve to sin in the Garden of Paradise, so also, Satan tempted the Lord Jesus to sin in the wilderness. **But Jesus did not sin.**

Why did the devil tempt Jesus? Because he knew that Jesus was the holy Redeemer who had come from heaven to earth to save the children of Adam from his dominion. Satan also knew that if Jesus were to commit a single sin, Jesus could not save the children of Adam from the dominion of sin. Thus Satan harassed Jesus, attempting to deceive Him. But Jesus did not fall for the devil's trap.

Yes, Satan overcame and corrupted our ancestors, Adam and Eve, but he could not overcome the holy Son of God. **The Lord Jesus could not sin because God cannot sin.** Like Father, like Son. Jesus was the living and powerful Word of God in a human body. God sent Him into the world to deliver the children of Adam from the power of Satan and the penalty of sin. Only the Lord Jesus can deliver us from Satan and sin, because only He overcame Satan and sin. That is why the Scripture says of the Messiah:

*"Such a high priest meets our need-one who is holy, **blameless, pure**, set apart from sinners, exalted above the heavens. **Unlike the other high priests, [The Lord Jesus]***

*does not need to offer sacrifices day after day, first for his own sins, and then for the sins of the people. He sacrificed for their sins once for all when he offered himself."*

Thank you for listening. Plan to meet with us in our next study to hear why the disciples of the prophet John left him to follow Jesus....

May God give you insight into what we have read today. We leave you with this verse from Holy Scripture:

*"[Jesus Christ] appeared so that he might take away our sins. And in him is no sin."*

If you would like more information about *The Way of Righteousness* please visit the website: [one-god-one-message.com](http://one-god-one-message.com) That web address again is one-god-one-message.com