

THE WAY OF THE LORD



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Scriptures Cited:

Romans 10:17; Mark 16:16; Acts 17:30; Romans 10:10; Acts 2:38; Revelation 2:10; 2 Peter 3:15-16; Matthew 13:1-23; Acts 8:37; Matthew 3:17; Luke 6:45; Matthew 1:19-21; Matthew 28:19; Isaiah 12:2; Isaiah 9:6; John 13:26-30; John 13:31-33; John 14:8; John 14:18; John 14:26; John 17:1-6; Acts 19:17; John 5:43; Mark 1:1-3; John 1:19-23; Luke 3:2-4; Matthew 3:1-4; Matthew 3:13-17; Acts 9:1-2; Acts 9:9; Acts 19:23; Acts 22:4; Acts 24:14; Acts 24:22; Acts 18:1-6; Acts 18:7-8; Acts 18:24-28; Acts 19:1-3; Acts 19:4; Jeremiah 5:1-5; Jeremiah 5:6; Isaiah 35:3-10; Matthew 11:2-5

In these lessons, our approach has been to look at salvation as a whole, then the role of baptism in salvation, and specifically, the name of Jesus Christ in baptism. In approaching this as a Bible study, I'd ask you to engage your mind with what we are going to be studying - engaging your spirit with the Word of God and His Spirit. And hopefully we will grow in our understanding of what the Lord is saying to us.

We've started each of these lessons by using six things listed in scripture that are directly connected to salvation. The title of the first lesson was "[Games, Puzzles, and Riddles](#)", the second was "[Come Be Filled](#)" and the title of *this* lesson is "The Way of the Lord"; each one looking at aspects of salvation from different angles. In this lesson we will begin by taking our time and looking at these six things, step by step. By doing this, we will gain a deeper understanding of how salvation works.

- **Hear** (Romans 10:17)
- **Believe** (Mark 16:16)
- **Repent** (Acts 17:30)
- **Confess** (Romans 10:10)
- **Be Baptized** (Acts 2:38)
- **Live Faithfully** (Rev 2:10)

In the religious world today, when you list the things that the Bible says you have to do, many will say "ah, see that's work-based salvation, but I believe that all it takes is faith (only believe)." Then the whole conversation goes left because these aspects of salvation are not properly being understood.

HEAR

So starting with the hearing - the scripture given in connection to salvation is Romans 10:17, but we have to understand, what does this mean by "hearing"? What is it that we must "hear" in order to be saved? The answer to that is the gospel of Jesus Christ, which is: who Jesus is, what He taught, and what He has done for us. That, in simple terms is the gospel.

And if you look in the Bible, that can be found in the books of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. Those are called the Gospels for that reason. In those books, we learn who Jesus is. According to scripture, He is the Son of God. We also learn the things that He taught, and what He did for us through His sacrifice. He suffered and died on the cross, He was buried in the grave, and was resurrected to make salvation possible, by cleansing us of our sins through His sacrifice. That is the gospel.

Also, what we find in the Gospels, as well as in the book of Acts - is what we must *do* once we've heard the gospel *if* we believe it. We learn what our response should be, and *how* we are to respond to the gospel. Is it just by saying 'I believe'?? The prescription that is given by Jesus and through the apostles is: if you believe the gospel of who Jesus is, and what He has done, the way that you respond to God is by being baptized, according to Acts 2:38, in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of your sins and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

When we look at the Gospels (Matthew, Mark, Luke, John) and the book of Acts, we can see **what** the apostles *did* with that message of the gospel, His Way of Salvation.

However, many people believe the way of salvation is found in the letters of Paul, specifically what they call the "Roman's Road of Salvation". This has led many people into misunderstanding the Bible - Peter even warning of such error (2 Peter 3:15-16).

This being the case, a better approach when leading someone to Christ using the New Testament - is to keep it in Matthew, Mark, Luke, John and the book of Acts for the reason - that the rest of the Bible after those books (the Epistles: Ephesians, Romans, Corinthians, Galatians, etc.)... **all of those books were written to people who have already obeyed the Gospel**. Today, when those looking for salvation skip past the Gospels and Acts, into letters that were written to people who were *already* saved - the result is that they are unknowingly led astray 'to their own destruction'.

This is *one* of the reasons why so many people in the world today are confused about the true salvation that Jesus instituted - because they do not understand that ***Paul's letters were not written to people who are not saved.***

To illustrate this, I'll give a little example:

Let's say that your next door neighbor is a doctor - a medical doctor. And a letter from the Medical Association that was mailed to him, accidentally gets delivered to your home. It has his name and address on it, but it gets delivered to your home. You may not have noticed that it is clearly addressed to him, so you open it up and decide that you're going to read it. As you read, you see that in this letter there are all sorts of benefits of being a doctor - it tells of all the privileges that come with being a doctor. It lists all things pertaining to being a doctor. Now, you may understand all of it. You may understand some of it, or you may think you understand. You may believe what is written in that letter wholeheartedly and like I said, you may even understand it. But your belief and understanding of that letter, does *not* mean that the letter or anything in it applies to you.

So we can see from that example why it's important to understand the context of the things written in the Bible. Keeping in mind that when it comes to the Epistles - they were written to the people who have *already* obeyed the gospel.

So generally I save the Epistles for people who have already obeyed the gospel, and I use the rest of the Bible - the Gospels, the book of Acts (the examples of people being saved), and the Old Testament to bring people to Christ. The apostles did not rely on Paul's letters as they spread the message of salvation to the world. They brought people to Christ by showing them who Christ is, using the Old Testament and the life and the testimony that Jesus gave.

So hopefully you'll understand what I am saying here.

BELIEVE

The next thing listed is to believe. What does the Bible actually say about what it means to believe? Well, the Bible tells us that a person is to believe with their heart. This may seem a little bit strange because it's not how we think of belief in our modern day. We normally think that you believe with your mind, but the Bible clearly tells us that you are to believe with your heart.

When Jesus gave the parable of the seed and the sower, He said the seed is sown in the heart (Matthew 13:1-23). And later on we can see that you are to believe with your heart, when looking at the example of the Ethiopian eunuch. When he heard the gospel and wanted to be baptized, the one condition given was "If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest." (Acts 8:37)

So belief is in the heart, and there's a reason why the Bible tells us that saving faith is with the heart - it is with the thing that you use to love. That's an easy way to understand why the Bible says to believe with your heart. If we compare how we believe to how we love, it may give us a better understanding of how we are to truly believe.

If you think about the ways that you can love, one way is to love with your mind. That is a theoretical type of love. People say all the time "well I love everyone". You love everyone - you say that, but if somebody cuts you off in traffic, we'll see how far that "love" goes. That is an example of "theoretical love". In the same way, you don't want to have that kind of faith - "theoretical faith". The kind of faith that says "yeah, I agree that Jesus is the Son of God and He died for me", but that "agreement" is only in your head. When the Bible talks about belief, that is not what it is saying. The Bible says to believe with your heart.

Now there's another type of love that we see commonly, and it is the love of the belly, or you could say "the love of the appetite". You hear people saying things like "I love those potato chips" or "I love this or that" - things of the appetite. And it's really not that you love that thing - *you actually just love what that thing does for you*; the way it makes you feel, or the way it tastes. And that's even the way some people "love" other people. They say that they love the other person, but in reality it is the "love of the appetite". It's really "I love you because of how you make me feel."

And once again, we are not to believe the gospel in that same type of way. Our faith should not come from a place of "what can God do for me?" You'll see this a lot in the 'prosperity gospel'. They will say "Oh yeah, I'll believe Jesus because He's going to give me a Rolls-Royce and a mansion." They say "I'll be rich if I believe in Jesus." That's belief from the appetite. But what the Bible is telling us, and what Jesus has said about **saving faith** is that it is from the heart. And if you think about when you love from the heart, what does that actually do? It puts you in a position where if you love that person from your heart, you will actually put them ahead of yourself. Most of us never really experience that type of love until we have children.

That is really when you get to experience love from the heart - when you would sacrifice yourself for the person you love. And in the same sense, that's how we are supposed to believe the gospel. We are to believe it with the same thing that we love our children with. **Believe the gospel with all your heart**, and that is the type of faith that leads to salvation. As we continue, we will see how this plays out in the rest of what we have listed here.

REPENT

When you see the word 'repent' in the Bible, it is translated from the Greek word *metánoia*. And it is a Greek compound word:

- **meta** - meaning to "change", where we get metamorphosis or metabolic, etc.
- **noia or gnosis** - meaning "understanding", where we get knowledge, knowing, thought, etc.

In the Bible when we read the word repent, what that word literally translates to is the changing of your mind. It's the changing of your understanding, it is *metánoia*.

And you might say "ok, what is it that I need to change my mind about?" Well normally, the first thing that you will change your mind about is who Jesus is, and the truth of the gospel. In your mind you may have thought that Jesus was just a prophet, as the Muslims do. Some people think He was a great teacher, some people think that Jesus is just something that you celebrate on Christmas. Some people think that Jesus was an enlightened master. But when you come to have faith in the gospel, believing in your heart what the gospel is - that faith will change your mind, causing your heart and mind to be in agreement with what the Bible says about Jesus: that He is the Son of God.

The other way that true faith in your heart will cause you to change your mind - is that when you understand who Jesus is and what *He* has done, it will change your mind about what *you* have done. You will begin to see the seriousness of sin and that someone had to die for what you have done.

It would be hard to imagine going along in your life, living a life in sin, living a life to yourself... and then coming to faith that Jesus is the Son of God and He died to save you from all of these sins... to then look to Jesus and say "yeah Jesus, I know that you died to save me from all of this - I see you over there Jesus, but I am still going towards those things that you died and suffered to save me from."

It's impossible to imagine doing that if you **truly believe** in your heart, who Jesus is and what He's done. When you truly believe, you will realize "these sins are what Jesus died to save me from." Then, you will turn from those sins and live your life towards and for Jesus.

That's repentance.

CONFESS

Next on the list is to confess. Once again, when you read in the Bible the word 'confess', the Greek word that it is translated from is *homologeō*. This is another compound word:

- **homo** - meaning "the same". This prefix is commonly understood
- **logeō** - which is a form of *logos*, meaning "word"

So literally translated, the word "confess" in Greek means the "same word" - *homologeō*. So how do we apply that here? Well, if you think about when someone confesses to a crime, what are they actually doing? They are saying the same word as what they did. "This is what I did, and now I am saying it." Their words are the same thing as what they did.

Let's look at how confession happens in relation to salvation: when you believe in your heart who Jesus is and what He has done, that faith will come out of your mouth – and now you're saying the same thing that God said about His Son. God said, "this is my beloved Son" (Matt 3:17). And when you believe what God has said, your confession will be that "Jesus is the Son of God."

The faith that is in your heart has led to your confession - as it says in the scriptures, 'from the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks' (Luke 6:45). When there's faith in your heart and you speak that faith, it becomes a confession - it is a confession. You are saying the same thing about Jesus that God says about Jesus, and that the Word of God says about Jesus. You are also saying the same thing in accordance with the faith that is in your heart.

BE BAPTIZED AND LIVE FAITHFULLY

Lastly, to be baptized and live faithfully. I have grouped these together because this is where faith becomes action, and being baptized and living faithfully are basically two sides of the same coin. We find that once we come to believe the gospel in our hearts, the Bible tells us how we are to respond to that. We must live by that faith. And the Bible gives us the first step (Mark 16:16), which is to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of your sins (Acts 2:38). That is the first step when we come to have faith in our hearts, according to scripture.

Then after being baptized in Jesus' name, we continue to live faithfully. Simply put, we live by the faith that's in our hearts.

It seems that many people today look at these things and "over-religiousize" them to the point where they lose sight of what the *root* of salvation is - faith in Jesus Christ through the gospel. **The things listed *after* hearing and believing the gospel (repent, confess, be baptized, live faithfully) are all byproducts, or the fruit of having true faith - saving faith, in your heart.** In reality, the desire for salvation is not the starting point - faith in Jesus Christ is. Salvation is the *result* of true faith, not necessarily the goal.

What if you came across someone who had no idea that they were even lost, and had no desire to be saved? What if you preached the gospel to them and they believed it? They didn't start by asking "what do I have to do to be saved?" Their starting point would be "I heard the gospel and I believed it. And now when someone asks me, I tell them that I believe Jesus Christ is the Son of God." That person will have made a confession as a byproduct of their faith.

They would say "I heard the gospel and it completely changed my mind. I read the Bible and came to understand that what I needed to do now that I believe, is to be baptized in Jesus' name." I was just living my own life, but now I'm living for Jesus.

If you believe, then this is the way to respond: repent, confess, and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of your sins. And continue to live faithfully.

MEANING OF THE NAME JESUS

In the last lesson we went to the book of Matthew, and we were looking into the name of Jesus. What we saw was that the name Jesus had been purposefully given, it was not just some 'random' name that Mary and Joseph came up with and decided to name Him. There was an important reason why He was named Jesus. And if we look in Matthew 1, verse 19 it reads:

Matthew 1:19-21

¹⁹ Then Joseph her husband, being a just man, and not willing to make her a public example, was minded to put her away privily.

²⁰ But while he thought on these things, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost.

²¹ And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus: for he shall save his people from their sins.

That name Jesus - why is that stated there? The reason is that the Hebrew word for salvation is a form of the word "Yeshua" or "Jesus" in English. If you look this up in the original language, you will see this throughout the Old Testament - that the word for salvation in Hebrew is "Yeshua". This is why there was an angel sent from God to tell them 'Name this child Jesus/Yeshua, because He is going to save His people from their sins.' Salvation *is* Yeshua in Hebrew throughout the entire Old Testament.

So we see here the meaning of the name Jesus, which we also saw in the lesson '[Come Be Filled](#)'. And in the first lesson '[Games, Puzzles, and Riddles](#)', we looked at Matthew 28:19 where Jesus gave the commission to baptize in the **name** of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. If you carefully look, it says "name", singular. **One name**. If it meant three names, it would say in the *names* of the Father and the Son, etc. but it says "name" - **singular**. One way that this can cause confusion is when people think 'well I know the name of the Father is Jehovah, and I know the name of the Son is Jesus, and the name of the Holy Spirit – well I guess the Holy Spirit is just the Holy Spirit, "He" gets a title and not a name...'

THE FATHER AND THE SON

Let's now look at one place in the Old Testament: Isaiah chapter 12, and focus in on the name "Jehovah". This is the name of God according to Exodus 6:3. Normally in the Old Testament this name is translated as "LORD" with all capital letters. This name "Jehovah" or "LORD" is used about 6,500 times in the Old Testament. And in most cases, it is written in our English bibles as "LORD". But there are four places in the Old Testament, where rather than using the word "LORD", it is left 'untranslated' as "Jehovah". We will see this in Isaiah 12:2.

Isaiah 12:2

²Behold, God is my salvation; I will trust, and not be afraid: for the Lord Jehovah is my strength and my song; he also is become my salvation.

Here we see that they did not translate that word "Jehovah" to "LORD". If we also didn't translate the *Hebrew* word for "salvation" into English - leaving it in the original Hebrew, this verse would read:

"...Jehovah is my strength and my song; he also is become my Yeshua."

So once again, if you take into consideration why Jesus was named Yeshua, it's because He **is** salvation, He is the salvation sent from God. There are multiple times in the Old Testament where you will see the phrase 'the LORD is my salvation' or 'the LORD has become my salvation'. If we keep in mind what this means (the word for salvation actually being the name of Jesus), it gives us a deeper understanding of some things written in the Old Testament.

Now let's go to Isaiah chapter 9, where we will get more understanding of this relationship between the Father and the Son.

Isaiah 9:6

⁶For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.

I could almost just leave it here and ask "how could that even be?" We know that prophetically speaking, the child spoken of here is Jesus. But how is it even possible that the prophet said of this child – 'His name would be called the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father...'?

I could just leave it here, walk off and let you chew on that - maybe come back later and ask you what you got.

But rather than do that, let's review what Jesus said in the book of John regarding the relationship between the Father, the Son, the Spirit - especially in chapters 14-16. We looked at this in the last lesson, but now we will add some of the context that will shed more light on who Jesus is.

Starting in John chapter 12 - leading up to His crucifixion, we see Jesus coming into Jerusalem. This is when He rode in on a donkey, and later we see the Last Supper taking place. Then, between John chapters 14-16, there is a discourse where Jesus is talking to His disciples. But I want to look at the 'bookends' of that discussion (chapters 13 and 17), to point out some important details.

We'll begin in John 13:26 for context.

John 13:26-30

²⁶ Jesus answered, He it is, to whom I shall give a sop, when I have dipped it. And when he had dipped the sop, he gave it to Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon. ²⁷ And after the sop Satan entered into him. Then said Jesus unto him, That thou doest, do quickly.

²⁸ Now no man at the table knew for what intent he spake this unto him. ²⁹ For some of them thought, because Judas had the bag, that Jesus had said unto him, Buy those things that we have need of against the feast; or, that he should give something to the poor. ³⁰ He then having received the sop went immediately out: and it was night.

So we see here that Jesus has all of His disciples with Him. But before He begins to disclose the deeper things about the Father that we read in chapters 14, 15, and 16 - He dismisses Judas. The message that He is about to give is not for Judas to receive. As we continue reading, let's pay close attention to what Jesus said after Judas left.

John 13:31-33

³¹ Therefore, when he was gone out, Jesus said, Now is the Son of man glorified, and God is glorified in him. ³² If God be glorified in him, God shall also glorify him in himself, and shall straightway glorify him.

Note: Jesus is speaking to the faithful eleven – but now notice how Jesus addresses them.

³³ Little children, yet a little while I am with you. Ye shall seek me: and as I said unto the Jews, Whither I go, ye cannot come; so now I say to you.

So if you're paying attention to how He addressed His disciples after dismissing Judas, you'll notice that He calls them "little children". Keep that in mind with what we just read in Isaiah chapter 9 and who this is that they are talking to.

And as we keep reading into John 14, Jesus reveals on a deeper level the 'relationship' between the Father and the Son. We see this in John 14:8 when Philip asks "shew us the Father, and it sufficeth us" – and Jesus responds "Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known **me**, Philip?" We also see more detail on this when He introduces the "Comforter" in John 14:18. Jesus says "I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you."

Then later on once again in John 14:26, we read: “But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send **in my name**, he shall teach you all things...” and we could keep going through chapter 15 all the way through 16, where finally He lets them know that He had been speaking to them in ‘proverbs’ or ‘dark sayings’ concerning the Father. He wasn’t saying things plainly, but reassured them that there will be a time coming when He would show them plainly of the Father.

Remembering that the first bookend was Jesus dismissing Judas, now let’s look at the last bookend in chapter 17 after His discourse with His disciples. This is when He begins His prayer to God.

John 17:1-6

¹ These words spake Jesus, and lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee: ² As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him.

³ And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.

⁴ I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do. ⁵ And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was. ⁶ I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world: thine they were, and thou gavest them me; and they have kept thy word.

So the question that I would ask you is:

When Jesus says ‘I have manifested thy name unto them which you have given me’ – where in any of the Gospels do we see Jesus magnifying the name “Jehovah”? **What name** was magnified and glorified by the life of Jesus? **What name** was made known around the world by the sacrifice He made? **What is that name?** (Hint: Acts 19:17)

Looking in John chapter 5, we can find the answer to the question of how did Jesus manifest the Father’s name when He plainly told the people:

John 5:43

⁴³ I am come in my Father’s name, and ye receive me not: if another shall come in his own name, him ye will receive.

So we have to ask ourselves, what did Jesus mean when He said “I am come in my Father’s name?” We’ll leave that there for now, and continue on with this lesson.

THE WAY OF THE LORD

Let's get into the main topic of discussion, by starting with a question:

Do you know what the Way of the Lord is?

And just for fun... I'll also ask "do you know what The Way of the Dragon is?" ...well the Way of the Dragon is actually an old Bruce Lee film ...it's a classic.

But all jokes aside, what is sad is that there are probably more people in the world who know what "The Way of the Dragon" is, than there are those who know what "The Way of the Lord" is. So let's see what we can learn about what is the Way of the Lord, according to the Bible.

As we begin looking into this, it is interesting to note that the New King James and NIV translations show the distinction of this "Way" by capitalizing it in some verses where it is being referenced. Though the original KJV doesn't make this distinction, I will be pointing out some of the places where the other translations do, as we go through the scriptures concerning the "way".

Another interesting fact about the "way of the Lord" is that, this 'phrase' appears in all four of the Gospels. Historically, the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke have been grouped together and called the "synoptic Gospels". The word synoptic is a compound word. Syn – meaning "with" or "together" (as in "in sync"), and optic – meaning "from the eye". So those three Gospels "see" from a similar point of view, whereas the book of John gives a lot of details that the other three do not give. So it is worth noting that the phrase "the way of the Lord" actually appears in all four gospels.

We will look first in the book of Mark, and quickly go through to see if we can pin down what the Way of the Lord is.

Mark 1:1-3

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 thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee. ³ The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.

In reading Mark 1:1-3 there are two things to note:

- In verse 2 it says "which shall prepare thy way" - this is the way of the Lord that we will be focusing on
- Then in verse 3, "the voice of one crying in the wilderness, prepare ye the way of the Lord, make His paths straight"

Next we will look at the apostle John's Gospel in chapter 1 verse 19, where we see it says "this is the record of John" (the Baptist) who was the one 'crying' in the wilderness.

John 1:19–23

¹⁹ And this is the record of John, when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, Who art thou? ²⁰ And he confessed, and denied not; but confessed, I am not the Christ.

²¹ And they asked him, What then? Art thou Elias? And he saith, I am not. Art thou that prophet? And he answered, No. ²² Then said they unto him, Who art thou? that we may give an answer to them that sent us. What sayest thou of thyself?

²³ He said, I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness, Make straight the way of the Lord, as said the prophet Esaias.

So once again we see that John was preparing the Way of the Lord and he was 'making it straight'. He was making it plain what the Way of the Lord was going to be – he was preparing the way.

If I were to ask you what was John doing to prepare the Way of the Lord – **how** was he preparing it? Well, one clue is in his name – what was he doing? **He was baptizing**, that's why his name is, John the Baptist. John the Baptist was preparing the Way of the Lord. He was making the path straight, showing what the path was going to be – **by baptizing**.

Let's now go to Luke's account, which is in chapter 3. Then we will go to Matthew, because in Matthew we get a little more information that will help our understanding.

Luke 3:2-4

² Annas and Caiaphas being the high priests, the word of God came unto John the son of Zacharias in the wilderness

³ And he came into all the country about Jordan, preaching the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins;

⁴ As it is written in the book of the words of Esaias the prophet, saying, The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.

There we see it again, preparing the way of the Lord – that's what John the Baptist was doing. We have to really think about what this means. Lastly, let's go to book of Matthew, the third chapter.

Matthew 3:1-4

¹ In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judaea, ² And saying, Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.

³ For this is he that was spoken of by the prophet Esaias, saying, The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.

There it is again, now we have seen it in all of the Gospel accounts – this was important enough that it's in all four. So no matter which one of the four Gospels someone reads, you will see what John the Baptist was doing – which was, he was out baptizing. But think about what the prophet Isaiah (Esaias) actually said this was – the preparation of the Way of the Lord.

As we continue reading here in chapter 3 verse 13, we see when Jesus Himself came to John to be baptized.

Matthew 3:13-17

¹³ Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to Jordan unto John, to be baptized of him. ¹⁴ But John forbad him, saying, I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me?

¹⁵ And Jesus answering said unto him, Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness. Then he suffered him.

¹⁶ And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him:

¹⁷ And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.

This is one of the many places in the gospels where it tells us who Jesus is – the Son of God. But what I want to highlight is that when Jesus came to John to be baptized, John himself knew ‘Wait a minute. I need to be baptized by YOU’... John knew that he was preparing the Way of the Lord, but now here is the Lord, coming to him.

Next, we will go into the book of Acts where we will see some of the scriptures that capitalize the word “Way” depending on the translation used as mentioned earlier. In Acts chapter 9 we read Paul’s account as he was going to persecute the church...

Acts 9:1-2

¹ And Saul, yet breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord, went unto the high priest, ² And desired of him letters to Damascus to the synagogues, that if he found any of this way, whether they were men or women, he might bring them bound unto Jerusalem.

You will notice here that it says ‘if he (Paul) found any of this **way**’. The word “way” is capitalized in some translations of the Bible because this is not just speaking of any way, but particularly of **the way** – this was how the early church was referred to; it was referred to as the Way. That’s why it says “if he found any of this way“, he had letters to bring them bound to Jerusalem.

We will now look at several other places where this “way” is referenced in the book of Acts. In chapter 19, we see it referred to as “that way”.

Acts 19:9

⁹ But when divers were hardened, and believed not, but spake evil of that way before the multitude, he departed from them, and separated the disciples, disputing daily in the school of one Tyrannus.

Acts 19:9 is speaking of those who were coming in contact with the gospel; some people were receiving the truth but those who rejected it were speaking evil against it, and here it is referred to as “that way”.

Again, depending on which translation you have – the NKJV or NIV, where it says “that way”, the word “Way” is capitalized because it’s speaking specifically of The Way of ‘Christianity’ – those who had walked the way that was prepared by John the Baptist, fulfilled by Jesus and introduced to the world by the apostles in the book of Acts.

It’s referred to as “that way” once again in chapter 19, verse 23:

Acts 19:23

²³ And the same time there arose no small stir about that way.

This verse tells us about the commotion that was being caused because some of the people in Ephesus were no longer worshipping the pagan gods, but now were following the way of Christ – and it was referred to here as the “Way”.

We will see it again in chapter 22, verse 4. When Paul was in Jerusalem and had to give his defense before the religious and political leaders in the synagogue concerning this new doctrine of “Christianity” that he was now preaching. Previously, Paul himself was a persecutor of the church and when recounting that fact he tells them:

Acts 22:4

⁴ And I persecuted this way unto the death, binding and delivering into prisons both men and women.

Once again, he's speaking of a particular way – “this way”, the way that we now call Christianity or being a follower of Christ. And again in chapter 24, we will see two more instances where it is referred to as the “way”.

In Acts 24:14, Paul is now giving an account for himself to the Roman authorities. When explaining that he is now a follower of Jesus, Paul says:

Acts 24:14

¹⁴ But this I confess unto thee, that after the way which they call heresy, so worship I the God of my fathers, believing all things which are written in the law and in the prophets:

Lastly, in Acts 24:22...

Acts 24:22

²² And when Felix heard these things, having more perfect knowledge of that way, he deferred them, and said, When Lysias the chief captain shall come down, I will know the uttermost of your matter.

In verse 22 we see that Felix, one of the Roman authorities, already had knowledge of “that way”, which Paul had been preaching and now following.

So I was just pointing out those few verses to show that the Way of the Lord is a particular way – it's an actual thing.

We are going to sum things up here in the book of Acts by going to the 18th chapter.

Side note: Having an understanding of Acts 18 and 19 is actually crucial for understanding the things we read later in the Bible when getting into the book of Corinthians and the book of Ephesians, because in these chapters we can see **what Paul was doing** in those places **before** he wrote the letters to them.

In Acts 18, starting in verse 1 for context, we read:

Acts 18:1-6

¹ After these things Paul departed from Athens, and came to Corinth; ² And found a certain Jew named Aquila, born in Pontus, lately come from Italy, with his wife Priscilla; (because that Claudius had commanded all Jews to depart from Rome:) and came unto them. ³ And because he was of the same craft, he abode with them, and wrought: for by their occupation they were tentmakers.

⁴ And he reasoned in the synagogue every sabbath, and persuaded the Jews and the Greeks. ⁵ And when Silas and Timotheus were come from Macedonia, Paul was pressed in the spirit, and testified to the Jews that Jesus was Christ.

⁶ And when they opposed themselves, and blasphemed, he shook his raiment, and said unto them, Your blood be upon your own heads; I am clean; from henceforth I will go unto the Gentiles.

I really like the way that the King James states that in verse 6 – that when Paul came into the synagogue and he was preaching about Jesus being the Christ, when they resisted him and didn't want to accept it – it says “they opposed themselves”.

What I've noticed personally is that many times when sharing Jesus with people outside of the faith, they won't want you to take it personally if they are resisting. I really try not to take it that way – when someone doesn't accept the truth about Jesus, just like it says here they are really “opposing themselves”, or the way we might say it today is: “they're being their own worst enemy.”

So I would just like to encourage anyone reading this lesson that when you hear the gospel, rather than do as these people and be your own worst enemy by rejecting it, just accept it – which we see some of those in Corinth did as we continue reading.

Acts 18:7-8

⁷ And he departed thence, and entered into a certain man's house, named Justus, one that worshipped God, whose house joined hard to the synagogue.

Note: Justus was what we would call a devout Jew.

⁸ And Crispus, the chief ruler of the synagogue, believed on the Lord with all his house; and many of the Corinthians hearing believed, and were baptized.

We clearly see it right here. When Paul was in Corinth preaching the gospel and many believed, what do we see immediately connected with it? How did they believe? It says “hearing believed, and were baptized”.

There are many instances throughout the book of Acts, when we see the gospel preached and the hearers believe it – immediately, baptism is the way in which the scripture shows us that they accept it.

As the chapter continues, we read about Paul's travels with Pricilla and Aquila. Here we see when they went from Corinth to Ephesus. Remembering that the focus of our lesson is "the Way of the Lord", starting in Acts 18:24 we read...

Acts 18:24-28

²⁴ And a certain Jew named Apollos, born at Alexandria, an eloquent man, and mighty in the scriptures, came to Ephesus.

²⁵ This man was instructed in the way of the Lord; and being fervent in the spirit, he spake and taught diligently the things of the Lord, knowing only the baptism of John.

Note: Apollos knew the way of the Lord, but only as it was 'prepared' (John's baptism). He did not yet know that all things were now done through Jesus.

²⁶ And he began to speak boldly in the synagogue: whom when Aquila and Priscilla had heard, they took him unto them, and expounded unto him the way of God more perfectly.

Note: When Pricilla and Aquila heard him preaching, they came to him and expounded the "way" more perfectly. This is further detailed below in verse 28.

²⁷ And when he was disposed to pass into Achaia, the brethren wrote, exhorting the disciples to receive him: who, when he was come, helped them much which had believed through grace:

²⁸ For he mightily convinced the Jews, and that publicly, shewing by the scriptures that Jesus was Christ.

Now Apollos was more perfectly instructed in the way of the Lord and knew that the way, which he previously had known as the baptism of John, is now all through Jesus Christ. That is what Aquila and Pricilla instructed Apollos on. This also sheds light on what Apollos was doing when we read about him later in the book of Corinthians.

But as we continue reading into chapter 19, verse 1:

Acts 19:1-3

¹ *And it came to pass, that, while Apollos was at Corinth, Paul having passed through the upper coasts came to Ephesus: and finding certain disciples,*

² *He said unto them, Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed? And they said unto him, We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost.*

³ *And he said unto them, Unto what then were ye baptized? And they said, Unto John's baptism.*

Now we're back with Paul as he's going through Ephesus, where he finds some people who believe. And he asks them if they've received the Holy Ghost since they have believed. When they said that they had never even heard of the Holy Ghost – Paul's only question was 'Wait a minute, if you haven't received the Holy Ghost, then unto what were you baptized?' How were you baptized? That was his question. And they said 'We were baptized unto John's baptism'.

Continuing to verse 4:

Acts 19:4

⁴ *Then said Paul, John verily baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people, that they should believe on him which should come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus.*

⁵ *When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.*

Now think about this: As we read earlier, John is the person who baptized Jesus. And these believers in Ephesus were also baptized by John. **But after the fulfillment of all things by Jesus**, even though they had been baptized by the person who literally baptized Jesus, this was still not the way.

So when Paul heard their answer, he baptized them **in the name of the Lord Jesus**.

Now that we have looked at "the way of the Lord" in the gospels and Acts I'd like to go to a few places where the Old Testament speaks prophetically about this "way". Let's begin in the book of Jeremiah – and once again, staying focused on the way of the Lord.

Jeremiah 5:1-5

¹ *Run ye to and fro through the streets of Jerusalem, and see now, and know, and seek in the broad places thereof, if ye can find a man, if there be any that executeth judgment, that seeketh the truth; and I will pardon it. ²And though they say, The Lord liveth; surely they swear falsely. ³O Lord, are not thine eyes upon the truth? thou hast stricken them, but they have not grieved; thou hast consumed them, but they have refused to receive correction: they have made their faces harder than a rock; they have refused to return.*

Note: God here is speaking about the Jews in Jerusalem, and the extent of their disobedience and stubbornness. He even says 'if you can find one just man, I will not destroy the city'. But pay attention to what He says next:

⁴ *Therefore I said, Surely these are poor; they are foolish: for they know not the way of the Lord, nor the judgment of their God.*

⁵ *I will get me unto the great men, and will speak unto them; for they have known the way of the Lord, and the judgment of their God: but these have altogether broken the yoke, and burst the bonds.*

What God is saying here is that the common man did not know the way of the Lord, and then going to the great men, who *should have known* the way of the Lord - even *they* had broken the bond and taken off the yoke which bound them to God. In verse 6 we see the result of not following the way of the Lord.

Jeremiah 5:6

⁶ *Wherefore a lion out of the forest shall slay them, and a wolf of the evenings shall spoil them, a leopard shall watch over their cities: every one that goeth out thence shall be torn in pieces: because their transgressions are many, and their backslidings are increased.*

In this verse there are many levels of prophecy concerning the fate of those who do not know the Way of the Lord and those who do not follow the Way of the Lord (think: warnings given to the church in the New Testament about lions and about wolves).

Lastly, we will look at what the book of Isaiah says prophetically concerning the Way of the Lord, starting in chapter 35, verse 3.

Isaiah 35:3-10

³ *Strengthen ye the weak hands, and confirm the feeble knees. ⁴ Say to them that are of a fearful heart, Be strong, fear not: behold, your God will come with vengeance, even God with a recompence; he will come and save you.*

Note: How many saviors do we have? It says "your God"... *He will come and save you.*

⁵ *Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. ⁶ Then shall the lame man leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing: for in the wilderness shall waters break out, and streams in the desert.*

Note: This prophecy was the answer that Jesus gave when questioned by followers of John the Baptist on whether or not He was the Messiah, and if they should look for another. Jesus' answer was what we read right here. He said 'tell John that the eyes of the blind are opened, the ears of the deaf are unstopped, the lame are walking...' (Matthew 11:2-5). This is a direct reference to what we are reading here in Isaiah.

⁷ *And the parched ground shall become a pool, and the thirsty land springs of water: in the habitation of dragons, where each lay, shall be grass with reeds and rushes.*

⁸ *And an highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called The way of holiness; the unclean shall not pass over it; but it shall be for those: the wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein.*

⁹ *No lion shall be there, nor any ravenous beast shall go up thereon, it shall not be found there; but the redeemed shall walk there: ¹⁰ And the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.*

This prophesy is more directly connected to the "way of the Lord" that we read about in the New Testament. It is speaking prophetically about the salvation that would be prepared by John the Baptist and fulfilled through Christ - "and it shall be called The way of holiness".

As already stated, this "Way" was prepared by John the Baptist. And what was John the Baptist doing? He was baptizing, that's how he was preparing the Way of the Lord.

ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS

If you recall, the first lesson had one assessment question, and the second lesson had two. So, this being the third lesson, we will actually have three summary questions to make sure that you were paying attention.

The first question is...

1. Are there any questions?

Do you have any questions about anything that may have caught your attention in this lesson? If so, you can contact us at www.hisway.life/contact and we will search the scriptures together to find the answers.

2. Do you believe the Gospel of Jesus Christ? - That Jesus is the Son of God, that He suffered and died, was buried, and that He was raised for your justification?

It's a simple yes or no question, do you believe it or do you not believe it? If you *do* believe it, we are told in scriptures how we are to respond to that. How we respond leads us to the third question, which is:

3. Have you been baptized **in the name of Jesus Christ** for the remission of your sins according to scripture?

This is another simple yes or no question, and it is the one question that has been in all of our lessons so far. If you got it wrong the first time, ok. If you got it wrong in the second lesson, well... But to get a 50/50 question wrong three times in a row... I *really* don't know what to say.

So if your answer to that is 'no' and you haven't been baptized in the name of Jesus Christ according to scripture (Acts 2:38), don't get the answer to that wrong again. Get it right today, don't just get it right - *make* it right. This is the way we are told to respond when we believe the Gospel.

You can contact us at www.hisway.life/contact and we will help you in any way possible to fulfill your desire to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of your sins.