

THE CHRISTIAN GOSPEL

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Words:

Closing song: Rock of Ages

INTRO: I was in the process of studying the doctrine of salvation in light of Calvinism, and then was asked my opinion on a certain book, and being in the process of both of those, I put together this message on the Gospel. It is most crucial to understand the Gospel right. So, I ask, just what is the Gospel? Well, the word gospel means good news. To know what the good news is one must first know what the bad news is. Nahum 1:15 says:

15 Behold, on the mountains The feet of him who brings good tidings, (which means Gospel) Who proclaims peace! O Judah, keep your appointed feasts, Perform your vows. For the wicked one shall no more pass through you; He is utterly cut off.

Let me give you a picture of what it was like in the time of the OT. When Israel went out to war, children worried about their dad or friends or uncles who had gone to war. Wives worried about their husbands or sons. There was no rest in the camp. There were no phones and no way to get news other than that someone went to the battle zone or a runner was sent back home. So, the watchmen would watch from the walls and when they saw a runner coming, they knew that news was coming. And our verse says, "Behold on the mountains the feet of him who brings good tidings or good news."

When the Jews translated the OT into Greek they translated these words "good tidings" as the gospel. The word "gospel" occurs 4 times in the book of Isaiah.

Now in war time, the bad news was that the men were off to war. Anything could happen. They might all die. When they were victorious and a runner was sent ahead with the news of victory, this was the gospel, the good news! You will remember how Absalom rebelled against king David and eventually an army went out from the king against Absalom and how Absalom rode underneath a tree and his head caught in some branches and he hung there and Joab killed him and the battle was over.

Then Ahimahaaz, a strong runner wanted to bring this news to king David who would be anxiously waiting, but Joab forbid him. Why? Because he was a good man and David would think he was

bringing good news, but for David, the fact that Absalom was dead would not be good news. So, Joab sent the Cushite to bring this news to David. Then Joab relented, thinking that Ahimahaaz could not now outrun the Cushite, but he did. When the watchmen saw Ahimahaaz coming David said, "He brings the gospel (good news) because he is a good man."

When Jesus was born the angel of the Lord appeared to the shepherds in the field and said "Do not be afraid, for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy which will be to all people. For there is born to you this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord." The angels brought the gospel to the shepherds. And what was the good news they brought? Christ, the OT Messiah, the NT Kristus, the Savior, had been born in Bethlehem! How long had they been waiting for this good news? For 4,000 years!

Our question is, just what is the "Christian" Gospel?

I. THE GOSPEL FROM GOD'S PERSPECTIVE

A. In the OT

We will begin with the OT. Hebrews 4:2 says this:

2 For indeed the gospel was preached to us as well as to them; but the word which they heard did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in those who heard it.

When it says the Gospel was preached to them, these are those who came out of Egypt with Moses and were headed for the promised land. They had the gospel preached to them. What was this gospel, this good news that was preached in the OT? Well, let us go even further back, all the way to Genesis 3 to look at the first proclamation of the Christian Gospel.

Go to Genesis 3. Adam and Eve had sinned and God dealt with Adam and Eve and Satan. Do you know to whom the gospel of man's salvation was first proclaimed and by whom? It was first proclaimed to Satan and it was proclaimed to him by God Himself. Genesis 3:14-15:

14 So the LORD God said to the serpent: "Because you have done this, You are cursed more than all cattle, And more than every beast of the field; On your belly you shall go, And you shall eat dust All the days of your life.

*15 And I will put enmity Between you and the woman,
And between your seed and her Seed; He shall bruise
your head, And you shall bruise His heel."*

This was not good news to Satan because it spelled his defeat, but it was good news to Adam and Eve and all who followed them. The promise here is the promise of a Messiah, a deliverer and this deliverer would bruise Satan's head, that is a fatal blow and it would happen when Jesus died, was buried and resurrected!

Now I call this the "Christian" gospel, but you might say that "Christian" is a NT term. Well, believers were first called Christians in the book of Acts. But do you know what "Christian" means? The word in the NT is "Christianos" which means a "Christ one" or one who belongs to Christ.

But what does a "Christ one" mean? Well, the name "Christ" means the "Anointed One." And who is that? Well, the name "Christ" is the Greek word for the OT Meshiach or Messiah. So, a Christian is a believer who belongs to the OT Messiah, who is the NT Christ! And who was that? Well, in the NT He is the *Kristos*, from which we get the name "Christian"! He is that that One who will bruise Satan's head! We know Him as the Lord Jesus Christ! So, the Gospel is the Christian Gospel from Genesis through Revelation.

Now we could spend a long time and find many, many references to this Messiah or Christ in the OT but we'll turn to Luke 24. Let me remind us of an event that happened the day Jesus rose from the dead. Two men were walking towards Emmaus and they were sad because the One they had been sure was the Messiah, or the Christ, had died and to them He was dead and gone.

We pick up the story in verse 13:

13 Now behold, two of them were traveling that same day to a village called Emmaus, which was seven miles from Jerusalem.

14 And they talked together of all these things which had happened.

15 So it was, while they conversed and reasoned, that Jesus Himself drew near and went with them.

16 But their eyes were restrained, so that they did not know Him.

17 And He said to them, "What kind of conversation is this that you have with one another as you walk and are sad?"

18 Then the one whose name was Cleopas answered and said to Him, "Are You the only stranger in Jerusalem, and have You not known the things which happened there in these days?"

19 And He said to them, "What things?" So they said to Him, "The things concerning Jesus of Nazareth, who was a Prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people,

20 "and how the chief priests and our rulers delivered Him to be condemned to death, and crucified Him.

21 "But we were hoping that it was He who was going to redeem Israel. Indeed, besides all this, today is the third day since these things happened.

22 "Yes, and certain women of our company, who arrived at the tomb early, astonished us.

23 "When they did not find His body, they came saying that they had also seen a vision of angels who said He was alive.

24 "And certain of those who were with us went to the tomb and found it just as the women had said; but Him they did not see."

25 Then He said to them, "O foolish ones, and slow of heart to believe in all that the prophets have spoken!

26 "Ought not the Christ (the Messiah) to have suffered these things and to enter into His glory?"

27 And beginning at Moses and all the Prophets, He expounded to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself.

Notice Jesus began to tell them about Himself at Moses. He may well have begun at Genesis 3:15, and He

expounded from the OT the things concerning Himself, the Messiah, the Christ! What was the *Christos* or the Christian gospel in the OT? Here it is: The Messiah, the Deliverer from sin, the *Christos* is coming! Deliverance is coming! That was the good news of the OT!

Do you know what the message was in every blood sacrifice in the OT? The Messiah, the Christ will come and die on sinful man's behalf! He will be their substitute in death. We learn from the book of Hebrews that the blood of bulls and goats and sheep could never forgive sins. So why were they offered? In them the offeror showed his faith that the Messiah would come and die for them. This is the *Meshiach*, the *Kristos*, the Christian gospel in the OT.

B. In the Time of Christ

What was the Gospel, the good news in the time of Christ? We go to Mark 1. Mark begins his gospel, his good news account of the life of the Messiah or the Christ, the Anointed One of God when Jesus was 30 years old. You will recall that the angels came to the shepherds that night when Jesus was born and they said to the shepherds, "We bring you good tidings (the gospel) of great joy." In the original it says, "We gospelize you" or "we bring you the gospel." And what was the gospel? The Messiah has been born! He is here!

And now, in Mark 1, some 30 years later Jesus says this in verses 14-15:

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."

He said, "Repent and believe the Gospel!" That means, "Repent and believe the good news." What was this good news? It was this, the Messiah is here! I am He! I am the Christ! For 4,000 years they had waited, but now He is here!

Now go to John 1. We'll begin in verse 19:

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 (I am not the Messiah)."

21 And they asked him, "What then? Are you Elijah?" He said, "I am not." "Are you the Prophet?" And he answered, "No."

22 Then they said to him, "Who are you, that we may give an answer to those who sent us? What do you say about yourself?"

23 He said: "I am 'The voice of one crying in the wilderness: "Make straight the way of the LORD,"' as the prophet Isaiah said."

24 Now those who were sent were from the Pharisees.

25 And they asked him, saying, "Why then do you baptize if you are not the Christ (or the Messiah), nor Elijah, nor the Prophet?"

26 John answered them, saying, "I baptize with water, but there stands One among you whom you do not know.

27 "It is He who, coming after me, is preferred before me, whose sandal strap I am not worthy to loose."

28 These things were done in Bethabara beyond the Jordan, where John was baptizing.

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.'

John said, "Behold the Lamb of God!" Here is the One who was pictured by every lamb slain in the OT. Here is the Passover lamb! Here is the Messiah! Here is the Christ! He is here! That was the good news when Christ was on earth. You see, in the OT the good news was; "He is coming", and now the good news is, "He is here!"

After 4,000 years of waiting, is that not good news? We have now waited some 2,000 years for Jesus Christ who

is coming again! When He comes, that will be good news for us and it could be at any time.

C. After the Resurrection

So, for 4,000 years the good news was, "He is coming!" Then for 30 years the good news was, "He is here!" We want to now look at what the good news was when those two who were so sad as they were walking on the road to Emmaus.

We go back to Luke 24 once more. We begin in verse 27, which we left off with earlier:

27 And beginning at Moses and all the Prophets, He expounded to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself.

28 Then they drew near to the village where they were going, and He indicated that He would have gone farther.

29 But they constrained Him, saying, "Abide with us, for it is toward evening, and the day is far spent." And He went in to stay with them.

30 Now it came to pass, as He sat at the table with them, that He took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them.

31 Then their eyes were opened and they knew Him; and He vanished from their sight.

32 And they said to one another, "Did not our heart burn within us while He talked with us on the road, and while He opened the Scriptures to us?"

33 So they rose up that very hour and returned to Jerusalem, and found the eleven and those who were with them gathered together,

34 saying, "The Lord is risen indeed, and has appeared to Simon!"

35 And they told about the things that had happened on the road, and how He was known to them in the breaking of bread.

36 Now as they said these things, Jesus Himself stood in the midst of them, and said to them, "Peace to you."

37 But they were terrified and frightened, and supposed they had seen a spirit.

38 And He said to them, "Why are you troubled? And why do doubts arise in your hearts?"

39 "Behold My hands and My feet, that it is I Myself. Handle Me and see, for a spirit does not have flesh and bones as you see I have."

40 When He had said this, He showed them His hands and His feet.

41 But while they still did not believe for joy, and marveled, He said to them, "Have you any food here?"

42 So they gave Him a piece of a broiled fish and some honeycomb.

43 And He took it and ate in their presence.

44 Then He said to them, "These are the words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, that all things must be fulfilled which were written in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms concerning Me."

45 And He opened their understanding, that they might comprehend the Scriptures.

46 Then He said to them, "Thus it is written, and thus it was necessary for the Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead the third day,

47 "and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.

48 "And you are witnesses of these things.

49 "Behold, I send the Promise of My Father upon you; but tarry in the city of Jerusalem until you are endued with power from on high."

50 And He led them out as far as Bethany, and He lifted up His hands and blessed them.

51 Now it came to pass, while He blessed them, that He was parted from them and carried up into heaven.

52 *And they worshiped Him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy,*

53 *and were continually in the temple praising and blessing God. Amen.*

Well, 40 days after this day, Jesus ascended to heaven and then only 10 days later the day of Pentecost took place and the Church was born. A new time had come into being. I view this as the time when God's kingdom on earth, that is His people, are ruled from heaven. This is the kingdom of heaven. You see, in the OT God ruled His people through people such as kings. In the millennium He will rule His kingdom through the Messiah when He returns to earth. But between those two times He rules His kingdom from heaven.

I mention this kingdom to prepare you for Matthew 11:11. In this verse Jesus said this:

11 *"Assuredly, I say to you, among those born of women there has not risen one greater than John the Baptist; but he who is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he.*

Now Luke 7:28 adds the word "prophet". It goes like this, "Among those born of women there is not a greater prophet than John the Baptist; but he who is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he."

The least important prophet in the time of the Church age is greater than John the Baptist! So, let me ask, what makes one prophet greater than another? Well, it is his message! What was the message of all the prophets before John? It was this: "Messiah, Christ is coming!" What made John's message greater than that of all other prophets? He said, "Behold, the Lamb of God!" He said, "Messiah is here!" Here was the One they had waited for, for 4,000 years!

So, what is the message of the least prophet in this time when God rules His people from heaven? It is this: "The long-promised Messiah has come and He was crucified and has been resurrected!" And that is now the complete Gospel! From that time forward, the full Gospel story could be told. Nothing will ever be added to it! When Jesus died on the cross, the rest was now

all up to God. His work was finished and His last words on the cross were, "It is finished!" The word is, *tetelestai*. It is the perfect tense of something completed. It is finished once for all. There will be no further additions!

The least prophet in the kingdom of heaven has a message greater than all the prophets had before! And what is this Gospel? Well, it is most precisely set out in John 3:16 which says, "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son that whosoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life!"

It is crucial to understand that the Gospel is for the world, the sum total of lost mankind. The Gospel is more fully explained by the Apostle Paul in 1 Corinthians 15. Beginning in verse 1 it says:

1 Moreover, brethren, I declare to you the gospel which I preached to you, which also you received and in which you stand,

2 by which also you are saved, if you hold fast that word which I preached to you—unless you believed in vain.

3 For I delivered to you first of all that which I also received: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures,

4 and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures,

What is the Gospel? Christ died in our place for our sins, just as the Bible had prophesied; and He was buried and rose again. The Christian Gospel is complete!

II. THE GOSPEL FROM MAN'S PERSPECTIVE

Well, that is the Gospel from God's perspective, but what is the Gospel from man's perspective? Before you have good news, you have some danger or some bad news and that is what makes the good news good news! If one went to some tribe of people who had never heard of the God of the Bible or Jesus and one gave them the Gospel like this: I have good news for you; the one true God, the God of the Bible sent His only

Son, Jesus Christ to die for you. Jesus died for you, He was buried and raised again and if you repent of your sins and put your trust in Him you will be saved!" That native might say, "That is not good news to me. I don't need your Jesus. What will He save me from, the tiger?" When Don Richardson tried to bring the Gospel to the Cannibals of New Guinea when he told them how Judas betrayed Jesus they laughed. To them this betrayal made Judas the hero! And now Don Richardson had to find a way to make them understand the Gospel in such a way that they would understand it.

So, before the Christian gospel becomes good news, one must understand the bad news. The good news that Messiah was coming was first given in the Garden of Eden; the bad news began there as well. Here is the bad news; Adam and Eve, the parents of mankind, sinned against Almighty God, and through their sin they tainted all of mankind with a sin nature with the result that all sin and come short of the glory of God. And whoever dies in that state goes to hell for all eternity! Now that is bad news. Sin is man's problem and it must be dealt with if man is to be saved.

A. Definition of Sin

Now much more needs to be said here but I want to move on to define sin. Sin sends man to hell! The word to sin in the NT, *hamartia*. It means to miss the mark. When you set up a target and you miss the bull's eye you missed the mark. And we ask, what is the mark sin misses? It misses the mark of the perfect will and character of God. Let me point out that sin is a judicial term because sin is a transgression of law.

B. The Seriousness of Sin

Now let me ask, how serious is sin? Over the years, I have tried to find a new illustration for this but I have not succeeded so let me give what I usually give to explain how horrible sin is: Let us say you have a family and you own your own home. One day you take your family to town and when you get back home, all that is left is ashes and smoldering smoke. Everything is burned. Then a neighbor tells you that he saw another neighbor's son leaving the house and he was carrying a gas can. The boy has no father and he is a very troubled boy.

That causes anger but there is nothing you can do. By anger, I do not mean a tantrum I mean a wall has come between you and your neighbor and the kid. But the boy has a rich uncle and he is very disturbed at the situation and so he offers to rebuild your house any size you want and with any list of appliances you name, and to help you with rent until the house is finished, he gives you an extra \$300,000.00. Then he asks, "Are you satisfied with that?" And you say, "Oh, yes, very satisfied." Instead of an old house you will now have a new house and new appliances and money left over.

Now let me give you another scenario. Your family is at home and you have been called away on business and will be gone over night. That night the neighbor boy comes and burns your house and your wife and children are in it and they are all burned. I ask you what price could the rich uncle pay now that would satisfy you? And whenever I ask this question, the answer is that there is no price.

And I propose to you that when Adam and Eve sinned that was the dilemma it created. God also knew that from there on man would be born with a sin nature and if He could not find a remedy for sin all mankind would be lost and He would have no kingdom and the devil would have everyone.

Sin, any sin, is a horrible violation against the character of God and causes God's anger to be aroused and there is nothing man can do that will ever satisfy God's wrath. And I ask, what price could ever satisfy God's righteous and holy character? Sin is a breach so huge no price man could ever pay would satisfy Him.

Romans 1:17 says:

18 For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men...

Romans 4:15 says the law brings wrath. How? By man's transgression of the law by sin! And most certainly, no person with sin could ever enter God's eternal abode like that. There is nothing the sinner could offer that would appease God's anger.

When God dealt with sin it was not a matter of either love or justice, it was a matter of love and justice. Sin is a judicial or a legal matter and the requirement is death. But love creates the desire to find a solution rather than death. So, if God would satisfy His desire to save man He must do so by first satisfying His justice.

Sin is a violation of law and is therefore a judicial matter. Agapee love, the love God had for man is a love that does right so it goes to the law to see what is right to do. The law demands death for sin, but now love seeks a way to justly justify the sinner.

I have read that many years ago when England exercised the death penalty for certain breaches of law, when someone was executed, the newspaper announced that so and so had been justified at such and such a time.

C. Consequences of Sin

There are some sins where a certain price or some amount of suffering will bring about justice though the wrongdoer remains alive. There are other sins where nothing will satisfy as long as the wrongdoer is alive. Sin to God is so horrible, so unjust, so wicked that only one price would satisfy God's wrath and that is the death of the sinner. The problem is that if the sinner dies in his sin, the only place for him to go is the place God made for Satan and the fallen angels, and that is hell fire. I believe hell-fire is eternal because no amount of suffering can ever pay for sin. Christ's suffering did not pay for our sin, His suffering that brought His death did. If man should die in his sin the devil wins.

D. God's Love for Man

But God loved man, that is what John 3:16 teaches us. And because of His love for man, He wanted to save man but to save man His justice had to be satisfied first. Ephesians 1:11 teaches us that God works everything according to the counsel of His will, and His will was that all mankind should be saved.

The problem was that only one thing would satisfy God's wrath and that is the death of the sinner. But if the

sinner died in his sinful state, all of God's purpose for man, God's glory, would be foiled and everyone would go to hell and God and man would forever be separated. God had not created man for that and His love for man and His will for man wanted to save man. How could God save man and remain just at the same time?

E. Remedy for Sin

Well, love found a remedy for man's sin. What was it? Since only death would satisfy God's justice, if God would die in man's place, His justice would be satisfied. Since the sinner could not satisfy God for his sin and nobody else could offer to pay the sinner's debt, God was left with one other option; He must pay the price that would satisfy His justice or the law.

Now did you notice the number of times I used the word "to satisfy?" We go to Romans 3 for this word and we begin in verse 21:

21 But now the righteousness of God apart from the law is revealed, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets,

22 even the righteousness of God, through faith in Jesus Christ, to all and on all who believe. For there is no difference;

23 for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,

24 being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus,

25 whom God set forth as a propitiation by His blood, through faith, to demonstrate His righteousness, because in His forbearance God had passed over the sins that were previously committed,

26 to demonstrate at the present time His righteousness, that He might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus.

So let us note some key things in these verses. First, the words "righteousness, sin, law, justified, and propitiation" are all legal or judicial terms. They speak to the fact that God is just. Righteousness speaks

of a right standing before the law. It occurs 4 times in this passage. Then the words just, justifier or justified each occurs once and all three words have the same root as the word righteousness and all speak of a legal right standing. A person who is just is not guilty before law; and a justifier declares another as not guilty and justified speaks of one declared to be righteous.

But in this passage, we also find the word, "propitiation." Verse 25, speaking of Jesus Christ says:

25 whom God set forth as a propitiation by His blood, through faith, to demonstrate His righteousness, because in His forbearance God had passed over the sins that were previously committed,

God has set forth Jesus Christ as the propitiation, the satisfaction for our sins through His blood and through our faith in Him. The doctrine of propitiation is found throughout the Bible and very interestingly, the word translated "mercy seat" in the OT is translated into the Greek translation of the OT as this word we have in English as propitiation and we don't have time to deal with that. But during OT times God passed over or covered their sins through the sacrifices they offered because they spoke by faith of what Christ would do. He was not unrighteous in passing over those sins until Christ actually died because the death of the Messiah would fully satisfy God.

F. Application of the Remedy

After all this, another question remains: If Jesus died for the world, are then all saved? That is the misinterpretation of universalists and which is also Calvinism's false conclusion.

What benefit does God get out of providing salvation for all? Well, it accomplishes two very huge things for Him, and these will bring about the defeat of Satan.

First because of His great love for man He will be able to justify, that is declare righteous, all sinners who truly repent of their sins and His justice will be satisfied. God is now able to be both just and the justifier of sinners. He can justly declare the sinner

as righteous because Christ as his substitute took the sinner's place in death. When the sinner repents, and puts his faith in Jesus Christ, God can now justly impute Christ's righteousness to the sinner. That is because Christ took the sinner's place in death.

Physical death is the consequence of sin. If one dies physically without one's sins having been taken care of, that leaves one place for man to go to, and that is hell. Thus, physical death further results in both spiritual and eternal death. Once one is in hell, there is no remedy for sin.

So, upon repentance and faith, the sinner can justly be declared righteous. That is imputed righteousness, but imputed righteousness is not what God's ultimate goal is in saving sinners. He wants the sinner to become actually righteous in life. Let me recommend our Catechism classes on sermonaudio and video #23 and the next several videos to get a better understanding of justification and sanctification.

Once we have been justified, now God sets about to make us righteous or holy in life. Without holiness no one will see the Lord! This is a life-long process. These two are very important doctrines in the doctrine of salvation. To be justified is a humbling process. To be sanctified is a life-long process of humbling oneself under the mighty hand of God. Here God deals with our sin nature and seeks to conform us to the image of Christ. To be like Christ is God's ultimate goal for the saved sinner in this life. But after this life God's goal is the glorification of the believer and bring about that relationship between Himself and saved man that He desired when He created man!

CONCL: In conclusion, the Gospel is the good news that the Lord Jesus Christ came to earth, suffered the shedding of His life-blood and died for all of lost mankind so that they might be saved. All who will truly repent of their sins and live their lives by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ will ultimately go to be with the Lord for all eternity.

When Jesus took on man's sins, He did not become a sinner, He became responsible for man's sin. That is why He had to die. When He became the Lamb of God, He became the One the lambs of

the OT pictured, He became God's sacrifice for sin. This sacrifice speaks of His death. When He shed His blood, it speaks of His death. When we speak of the cross of Christ, we speak of His death. When we speak of His suffering, His stripes, His bruising, we speak of His death. Suffering does not atone for sin, death does. Suffering does not satisfy God's wrath, death does.

And finally, when a sinner wishes to be saved, what must the sinner do? Jesus said, "Repent and believe the Gospel." Just before Jesus ascended to heaven, He said this to His disciples in Luke 24:46-47:

46 Then He said to them, "Thus it is written, and thus it was necessary for the Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead the third day,

47 "and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.

Those who teach that repentance is not necessary for salvation say, "Check the Gospel of John. It was written to the Church and it does not use the word 'to repent.' It only says 'believe.'" Let me remind those teachers that the very next book after the book of John teaches repentance. The book of Acts speaks of repentance numerous times. Listen to one of those, Acts 17:30:

30 "Truly, these times of ignorance God overlooked, but now commands all men everywhere to repent,

So, to anyone wishing to be saved, you must realize you have violated God's righteous character by sin and you must repent of your sins. Second, Jesus said believe. The Christian life is a life of faith, the just shall live by faith. Whenever the Christian sins, repentance from sin by confession cleanses the believer. Repentance is the greatest change agent to conform us to the image of Christ.

Let me add that neither repentance nor saving faith are gifts given by God so we can be saved, they are commanded because we are able to do those. Second, let me say that neither repentance nor faith are meritorious works. And last, if anyone will truly repent and live their life by faith, I can assure you based on the Word of God, that you will be saved. All of that is made possible by God sacrificing His Son which resulted in His death on our behalf.

