

THE GOSPEL LESSON 2 – BELIEVE IN JESUS – PART 1

INTRODUCTION

We have begun our study anchored in the truth of Ephesians 1:13: “In Him, you also, after listening to the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation—having also believed, you were sealed in Him with the Holy Spirit of promise.” It is the message of truth that actually saves. Over the coming lessons we will examine exactly what this gospel is, what it requires, and why it must remain clear and undefiled.

The gospel is not a call to a better life, a religious system, or a vague hope. It is the announcement of good news centered on a Person. The next few lessons focus on the content of that message. We will look at three essential aspects in order:

1. **Who Jesus Is** – the identity of the One who brings salvation.
2. **What Jesus Has Done** – the finished work that secures our redemption.
3. **What Jesus Promises** – the certain gift given to the one who believes.

Today, we begin with the first of these: the identity of Jesus Christ: to believe in Jesus one must believe in who He is. John wrote his Gospel with a clear purpose: “these have been written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing you may have life in His name” (John 20:31). The human request for life (salvation, reconciled to God) is not empty or aimless. It is directed toward this specific Person whom the Scriptures reveal with unmistakable clarity. If we are wrong about who Jesus is, we do not believe the gospel.

Throughout the coming weeks we will let the text speak plainly. We will observe what the Bible actually says about Jesus. Our goal is simple: to be convinced by Scripture of who this Jesus is, so that when we hear the gospel message we will know exactly in whom we believe.

This is foundational. Everything that follows (His finished work and His sure promises) rests upon the truth of His identity. Let us open the Word and as John 1:14 says, see “His glory, glory as of the Only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth.”

THE CONTENT OF THE GOSPEL PART 1 – WHO JESUS IS

In the Gospel of John, written so that you might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name (John 20:31), the identity of Jesus stands at the center. Eternal life comes to the one who believes in Him, but this belief is not vague or empty. It requires being convinced about who this Person is. The Scriptures present Jesus with unmistakable clarity so that no one need guess.

He Is the Eternal Word Who Is God, the Creator

“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through Him, and apart from

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Him nothing came into being that has come into being. In Him was life, and the life was the Light of men” (John 1:1-4).

The imperfect tense of “was” (ἦν ἔν) three times in verse 1 carries the force of continual existence: He always has been and continues to be the Word. Jesus Christ is not a created being; He is the uncreated Creator. “He was in the world, and the world was made through Him” (John 1:10). This matches the great Christological passages:

- “For by Him all things were created, both in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible... all things have been created through Him and for Him. He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together” (Colossians 1:16-17).
- “In these last days has spoken to us in His Son, whom He appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the world. And He is the radiance of His glory and the exact representation of His nature” (Hebrews 1:2-3).
- “Who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant” (Philippians 2:6-7).

Jesus is the God who forever was, the God of creation.

He Is the Only Begotten God Who Explains the Father

“No one has seen God at any time; the only begotten God who is in the bosom of the Father, He has explained Him” (John 1:18). The unique Son shares the divine nature fully. He is “God with us” (Matthew 1:23), the visible image of the invisible God (Colossians 1:15). The exact representation of the Father, through whom God spoke.

He Is the “I AM” – YHWH in the Flesh

Jesus repeatedly used the divine name that belongs to the covenant God of Israel. In Exodus 3:14 God said, “I AM WHO I AM.” Jesus declares “Εγώ εἰμι”:

- “Unless you believe that I AM, you will die in your sins” (John 8:24).
- “Before Abraham was born, I AM” (John 8:58). The Jews understood exactly what this meant and picked up stones.
- “I and the Father are one” (John 10:30) – again they sought to stone Him for blasphemy.
- In the garden: “I AM” caused the arresting soldiers to fall to the ground (John 18:5-6).

The seven “I AM” statements with the “fill out what this means for us”: the Bread of Life, the Light of the World, the Door, the Good Shepherd, the Resurrection and the Life, the Way, the Truth, and the Life, the True Vine. Each echoes YHWH’s roles in the Hebrew Scriptures and shows that life, light, security, guidance, resurrection, access to the Father, and fruitfulness are found in Him alone.

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Jesus Christ revealed Himself through his signs, through the witness of John, and through His words. The use of “Εγώ εἰμι” is more than a simple emphatic statement, although it can be used in this manner, it is a declaration of the character and attributes of YHWH. Jesus does point to the Father apart from Himself but includes Himself in the declaration of “Εγώ εἰμι.”

In this study, we saw how the seven “Εγώ εἰμι” statements are joined with a predicate that point to the Hebrew Scriptures concerning the nature of YHWH and the Messiah. There is no doubt that Jesus was using an emphatic statement to point to the fact that He is the “I AM.” He and the Father are one. They are not one in mind but He Himself is the Word who became flesh to save those who are lost. Jesus is God, Jesus is the “Εγώ εἰμι,” Jesus is YHWH.

He Is the Promised Messiah, the Son of God

The apostles confessed Him as “the Christ, the Son of the living God” (Matthew 16:16). John the Baptist pointed to Him as the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world (John 1:29, 34). Martha declared, “I have believed that You are the Christ, the Son of God” (John 11:27). Thomas, after seeing the risen Lord, worshiped: “My Lord and my God!” (John 20:28). Jesus accepted this confession without correction or clarification.

Jesus is Eternal

Micah 5:2 – This is not normally thought of as a deific statement, but this is actually very critical. Of the Messiah the prophet says that the Messiah’s (literal translation) “origins are from antiquity (aforetime), from everlasting (eternity, forever, ‘yom olam’).”

Revelation 2:8; 22:13 – Jesus Christ is “The first and the last.” This is also how YHWH declares Himself and is a declaration of eternity (Isaiah 44:6; 48:12).

How can Jesus be the source of eternal life and He Himself not be eternal?

Why This Identity Matters for Belief and Eternal Life

The salvation of God is presented through a message, the grace of God saves, all who believe in Jesus. It is not believing that saves, it is God who saves. God presents the truth, salvation through His grace given as gift, through Himself.

Jesus is not a vague religious figure. Jesus is the eternal Word who became flesh, the I AM, the only begotten Son, the Messiah, fully God and fully man. Jesus gave Himself for us, He is the One who accomplished our redemption.

“He who believes in the Son has eternal life; but he who does not believe the Son will not see life” (John 3:36). “These things have been written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing you may have life in His name” (John 20:31). “Truly, truly, I say to you, he who hears My word, and believes Him who sent Me,

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has eternal life, and does not come into judgment, but has passed out of death into life” (John 5:24).

To believe in Jesus is to accept the Biblical testimony about who He is. Anything less is not believing in Jesus. The One who created us, the One who revealed the Father, the One who bore the divine name, the eternal God – this Jesus alone is the One who saves. When a person is convinced of this identity, His atoning work, and His promises concerning life eternal, they receive the gift of God.

This is the foundation of the Gospel of your salvation. Next, we will look at what this Jesus has done on our behalf.

Who is Jesus?

The Divine Identity at the Heart of the Gospel

The Eternal and Uncreated Creator



The Pre-Existent Word

Jesus is the uncreated Creator who existed before time and holds all things together.



The Exact Representation of God

As the "only begotten God," Jesus is the visible image who fully explains the Father.



Eternal from Antiquity

Prophecy and Scripture confirm His origins are from eternity, describing Him as "The First and Last."

The "I AM" (YHWH in the Flesh)

'Εγώ εἰμι

The Divine Name: "Εγώ εἰμι"

Jesus identifies Himself as "I AM," explicitly claiming the covenant name of God (YHWH).



The Requirement for Belief

Eternal life is tied directly to believing in Jesus as the Christ and Son of God.



Validated by Worship

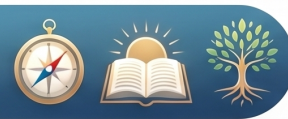
Jesus accepted the confession "My Lord and my God" without correction or clarification.



Bread of Life / Light of the World
Provision and Guidance



The Door / The Good Shepherd
Security and Access



Way, Truth, and Life
The exclusive path to the Father