

Cross-Cultural Missions

Matthew 12: 18

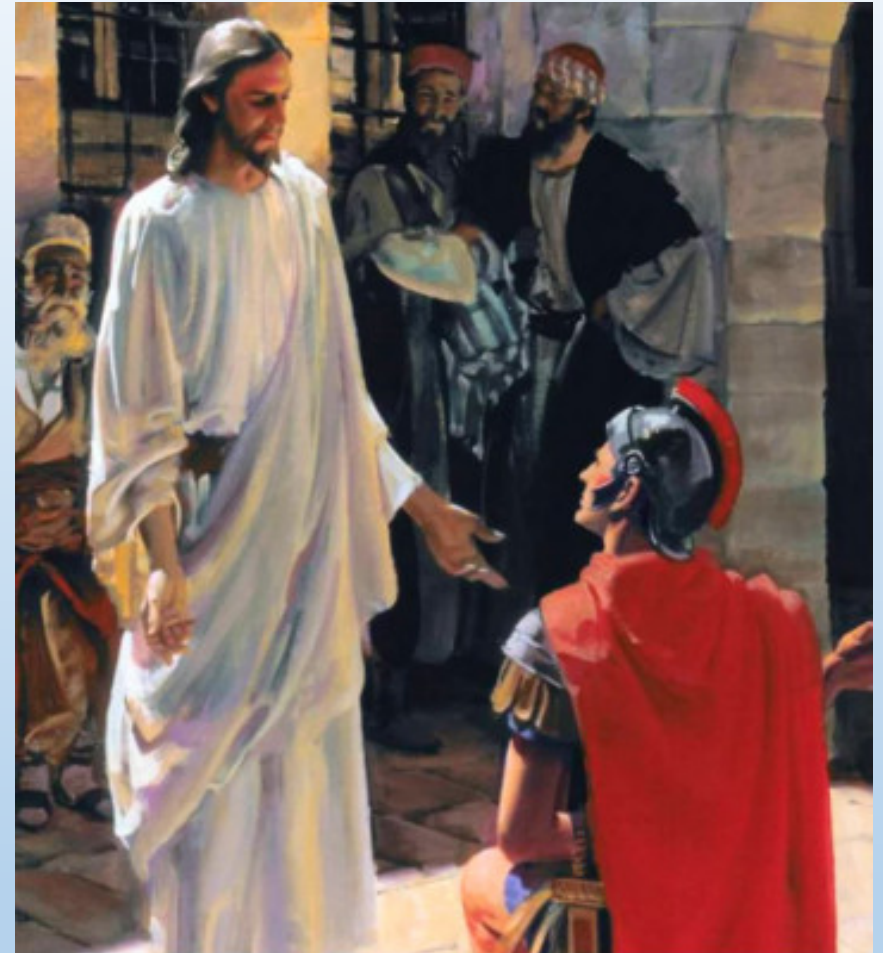


“Behold, My Servant
whom I have chosen, my
Beloved in whom My soul
is well pleased! I will put
My Spirit upon Him, and
He will declare justice to
the Gentiles.”
Matthew 12: 18.



I. Introduction

The perfect ministry of Jesus had a tremendous impact on the Gentiles, allowing them to understand the extraordinary plan of salvation, as well as the coming of God's eternal kingdom of glory destined to every nation, tribe, tongue, and people.



The promise is extended to the Gentiles,
without excluding the Jews

“Why did Christ serve the Jews? Paul explains: “So that the promises made to the patriarchs might be confirmed and, moreover, that the Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy” (Romans 15: 8 – 9). It is only through Christ that people may be forgiven and thereby receive the patriarchal blessings. But Christ’s purpose extends beyond the physical descendants of Abraham — he also wants Gentiles to bring glory to God.”

Michael Morrison



“Jesus realized that it was his earthly task to prepare for the revelation of the Kingdom by fulfilling these two necessary conditions. “The reason why Jesus came to Israel was precisely because his mission concerned the whole world.” That is to say, his announcement of salvation to Israel, just as his vicarious death, was at the same time an act of service to the Gentiles. Both took place in order that the incorporation of the Gentiles into the kingdom of God might be possible. Jesus’ preaching to Israel was the precondition, his death for countless hosts rendered possible, and his Parousia will bring into being, the people of God, ... the kingdom of God over the whole world.”

Joachim Jeremias, *The Gentile World in the Thought of Jesus*, *Bulletin of SNTS*, vol. 3, p. 18.

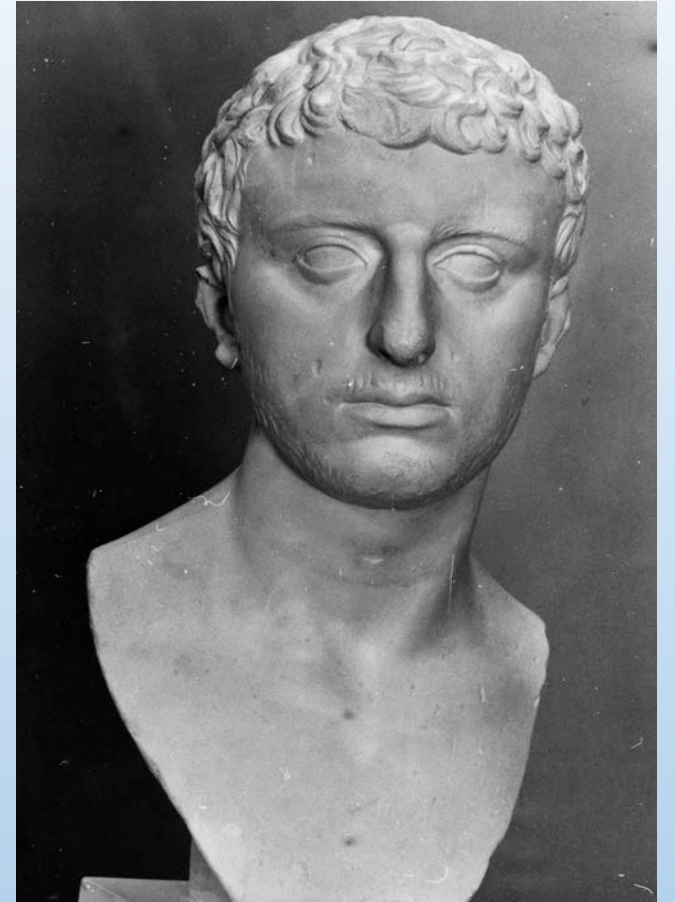
“God’s offer of salvation to accept the unworthy, his promise that “I will be your God and you shall be my people”, is to all, but it is to be mediated through his chosen people. Jesus’ words and deeds in Matthew 10 and Matthew 15 show his awareness of the need to make the offer of salvation first to Israel and to call into being the renewed people of God who will then communicate that message to others.”

J. Julius Scott, Jr. “Gentiles and the and the Ministry of Jesus”, JETS 33/2, June 1990, p. 161 – 169.

“Paul has just used that wonderful word “everyone” in Romans 1:16, “The gospel is the power of God unto salvation to everyone who believes.” O, what an exhilarating word to those of us who feel that there is something about us that rules us out! Wrong family, wrong background, wrong education, wrong language, wrong race, wrong culture, wrong sexual preference, wrong moral track record. Then to hear the word, “Everyone who believes.” Everyone! One thing can rule you out: unbelief. Not trusting Jesus. But nothing else has to. The good news that Christ died for our sins, and that he rose from the dead to open eternal life, and that salvation is by grace through faith – all that is for everyone who believes. Not just Jews and not just Gentiles and no one race or social class or culture, but everyone who believes.”

John Piper

“Now, there was about this time Jesus, a wise man, if it be lawful to call him a man. For he was a doer of surprising feats - a teacher of such men as receive the truth with pleasure. He drew over to him both many of the Jews and many of the Gentiles. He was [the] Christ; and when Pilate, at the suggestion of the principal men amongst us, had condemned him to the cross, those that loved him at the first did not forsake him, for he appeared to them alive again the third day, as the divine prophets had foretold these and ten thousand other wonderful things concerning him; and the tribe of Christians, so named from him, are not extinct to this day.”
Flavius Josephus, Antiquities of the Jews 18.3.3



“As the entire New Testament demonstrates, Christianity is — at its very core — a missionary faith. The Christian’s command from the very beginning was to go and “make disciples of all the nations...”

After Pentecost this command was taken literally, as the early church turned Jerusalem upside-down. Concerning this, David Bosch writes, “Mass conversions of the Jews are again and again reported, particularly of Jews in Jerusalem” (Acts 2:41; 4:4; 5:14; 21:20.)

We are not to be ashamed of sharing the good news of the gospel with anyone. In that this good news came through the children of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and in that “salvation is from the Jews” (John. 4:22), this message was “for the Jew first.” It seems that this is almost completely forgotten today. The gospel of Jesus Christ was first and foremost to go to the Jews, and then to the Gentiles. Christians owe a great debt to the Jews, for our entire spiritual heritage is derived from them. Indeed, we have been grafted into the olive tree of Israel, not the reverse (Rom. 11:11ff).” Joseph P. Goudel.

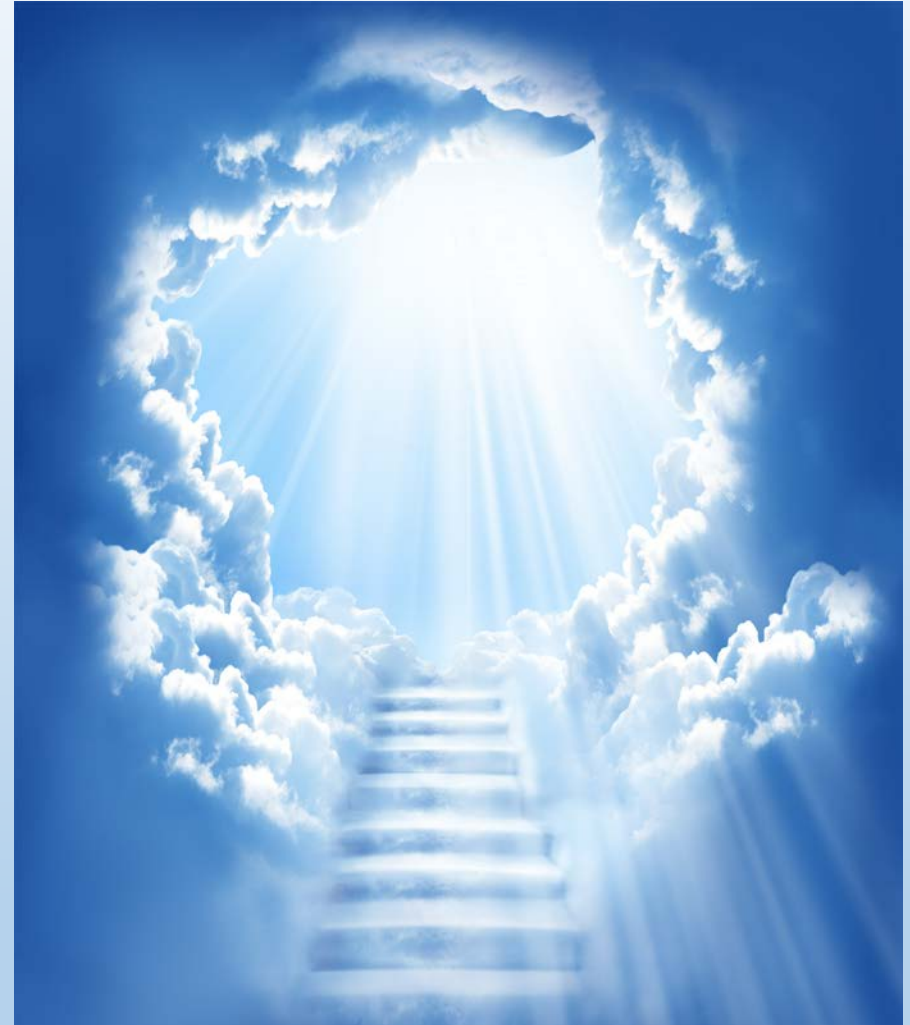
“I don’t want to just preach to the church.
I feel like I have a broader message.”
Joel Osteen



II. Context



Our text is included in the third part of the Gospel of Matthew (11: 1 – 13: 52) where the message of God's kingdom is underlined with strength.



The Gospel of Matthew, Structure

Jesus: God With Us	1: 1 – 1: 25	Genealogy of Jesus, son of David and of Abraham	
	2: 1 – 2: 23	Mystery of Incarnation	
Part I	3: 1 – 7: 25	The Meaning of the Law <small>The New Deuteronomy</small>	Narrative: (Ch. 3 – 4; Teaching: Ch. 5 – 7)
Part II	8: 1 – 10: 42	The Discipleship <small>The New Numbers</small>	Narrative: (Ch. 8: 1 – 9:34; Teaching: Ch. 9:35 – 10:42)
Part III	11: 1 – 13: 52	God's kingdom <small>The New Leviticus</small>	Narrative: (Ch. 11: 1 – 12: 50; Teaching: Ch. 13: 1 – 52)
Part IV	13:53 – 18:35	The Church <small>The New Exodus</small>	Narrative: (Ch. 14: 1 – 17: 27; Teaching: Ch. 18: 1 – 35)
Part V	19: 1 – 25: 46	The Judgment <small>The New Genesis</small>	Narrative: (Ch. 19 – 22; Teaching: Ch. 23 – 25)
Jesus: God with Us Obtained Victory For Us	26: 1 – 27: 66	Crucifixion	
	28: 1 – 28: 20	Resurrection	

Five Speeches in the Gospel of Matthew and Five Books of Moses

The Meaning of the Law
The Torah Revisited
The Book of DEUTERONOMY

The New Meaning of the Law
The Spirit of the Law re-explained
The New DEUTERONOMY

Matthew
Ch. 5 – 7

Organization, Leadership
Moses sends 12 spies to explore the land
The Book of Numbers

Discipleship, Leadership
Jesus sends 12 disciples to transform the land
The New Numbers

Matthew
Ch. 10

The Great Controversy (GC)
The worship, the Atonement, GC (ch.16)
The Book of Leviticus

The Great Controversy (GC)
The Parable of the Tares and GC (36-52)
The New Leviticus

Matthew
Ch. 13

The Birth of God's People
Children of Israel coming out of Egypt
The Book of Exodus

The Church, new people of God
Children entering God's kingdom
The New Exodus

Matthew
Ch. 18

Creation, our Origins
Garden of Eden, God's plan for this Planet
The Book of Genesis

New Kingdom, Our Destiny
New Garden of Eden, God's plan for this Planet
The New Genesis

Matthew
Ch. 23-25

Five Speeches in the Gospel of Matthew

Speech #1 (Chapters 5 – 7)

The New Meaning of the Law (DEUTERONOMY)

Jesus' explanation of the Spirit of the Law, underlining the beauty of God's Revelation on Sinai

Speech #2 (Chapter 10)

The New Concept of Discipleship (NUMBERS)

The role of twelve disciples, their authority, and their mission. The new way of conceiving leadership.

Speech #3 (Chapter 13)

The New Vision of God's Kingdom (LEVITICUS)

God's plans for the triumph of His concept of love in the context of the Great Controversy

Speech #4 (Chapter 18)

The New Call to Come Out and to be Part of God's people (Exodus)

God's church (Ecclesia in Greek, which means "called out or forth").

Speech #5 (Chapter 23-25)

The New Presentation of God's Kingdom (Genesis)

After a long conflict, Jesus presents a place where we can live with God forever.

Just before a long series of parables (chapter 13) we have three cycles of narratives, underlining the centrality of Jesus' ministry for the establishment of the kingdom to come.



Gospel of Matthew: The Structure of 11: 2 – 12: 50 (3 CYCLES)

Cycle #1 (11: 2 – 30)	Come to Me	
	11: 2 - 19	Rejecting John the Baptist and Jesus
	11: 20 - 24	Unrepentance despite mighty works
	11: 25 - 30	"Take my yoke and learn from me"
Cycle #2 (12: 1 – 21)	There is One greater than the Temple	
	12: 1 – 8	A criticism from the Pharisees
	12: 9 – 14	A conspiracy by the Pharisees
	12: 15 – 21	In His name the Gentiles will hope
Cycle #3 (12: 22 – 50)	He who is not with Me is against Me	
	12: 22 – 37	Blasphemy against the Holy Spirit
	12: 38 – 45	The evil and adulterous generation
	12: 46 – 50	Here are my mother and my brothers

The cycle #2 starts with the attachment of the Pharisees for the rules and the right observation of the Sabbath. Jesus insists on His superiority to all proclaimed rules of human traditions and demonstrates His lordship over all religious realities, including the Sabbath.



The Gentiles were attracted not by rules without life, but by the message of justice and victory proclaimed by Christ.

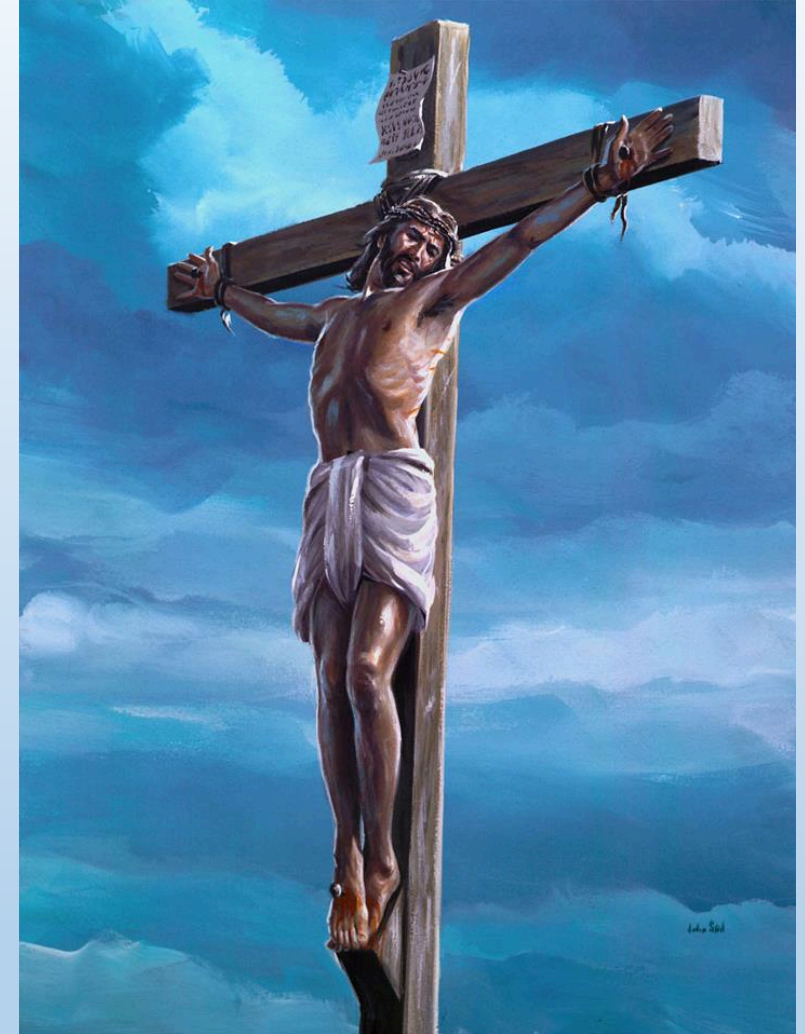


III. The attractive power of Jesus is the inspiration for us and our ministry



1. Jesus was the Suffering Servant announced by the Prophets

“Behold, My Servant”



“Only in the light of the Resurrection and after the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, whom during the Last Supper Jesus promised would instruct them in everything and remind them of all He had told them (Jn. 14:26), did the Apostles clearly understand what Jesus was trying to say about being both the Suffering Servant and the Son of Man.

This understanding of Jesus Christ is found in one of the oldest writings contained in the New Testament, St. Paul's First Letter to the Corinthians, where in 15:3 he quotes a creedal formula which he himself had already received: “For I deliver to you first of all that which I also received: that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures...”

It is to Isaiah specifically that this phrase “according to the scriptures” refers; after all the gospels were not yet written.”

Matthew Carr

“In the churchyard in Wittenberg where Martin Luther served as Augustinian monk and priest there was a stone carving depicting Christ as a judge with two swords protruding from his mouth. Terrifying images like this reinforced young Luther’s already distorted view of Jesus as more of a tyrant than a loving Savior... Luther cringed before the ever-present images of the crucifixion, seeing in them only a frightening foretaste of his own punishment... Luther’s long-time mentor Staupitz was instrumental in securing a teaching post for Luther in Wittenberg, where in 1513 he began a series of lectures on the psalms. Eventually he came to Psalm 22, which, like the four servant songs in Isaiah, gives the reader an intimate look at Jesus’ passion and crucifixion. In Jesus’ cry of abandonment from the cross (“My God, My God, why have you forsaken me?” Psalm 22: 1), Luther sensed that Jesus had his own moment of trial. Christ experienced overwhelming desolation by identifying with us even in our alienation. Jesus was no longer Luther's judge, but the suffering servant who had been judged in his place.”
Douglas Wirth, *Christ, the Suffering Servant*, 2013. P. 25. 26.

“The beauty of the Cross is not the suffering, brutality, or cruelty, but the act of self-giving love revealed through suffering.”

Stephen M. Garrett



Jesus was serving. We are invited to do the same

“Every soul is to minister. He is to use every physical, moral, and mental power, through sanctification of the Spirit, that he may be a laborer together with God. All are bound to devote themselves actively and unreservedly to God’s service. They are to cooperate with Jesus Christ in the great work of helping others. Christ died for every man. He has ransomed every man by giving His life on the cross. This He did that man might no longer live an aimless, selfish life, but that he might live unto Jesus Christ, who died for his salvation. All are not called upon to enter the ministry, but nevertheless, they are to minister. It is an insult to the Holy Spirit of God for any man to choose a life of self-serving. Ministry means not only the study of books and preaching. It means service.”

Ellen G. White, Letter 10, 1897. 4BC 1159.

2. Jesus was the Chosen by God to present His true character of Love
"Whom I have chosen"



“As it turns out, whenever the apostles speak of Jesus as God they connect it with his incarnation and self-sacrificial death? Jesus' divine nature and character are unveiled in his humble service to us in his birth, life, suffering, and death. The point is that what makes, what proves, if you will, that Jesus is God, is not his works of power and might, but his humble self-sacrifice. His self-effacing love and service for humanity. This is who God is. Jesus is the true revelation of God. And God turns out to be the Chief Servant of all, rather than the big, power-hungry God that pushes people around to show off his greatness.”

Jeff Meyers



“All of Israel is reduced to that one person who finally fulfills the will of God, as his chosen, as his beloved, as the one in whom his good pleasure and his good will is resting, and in whom and through whom it comes to the whole world. That man, Jesus of Nazareth, is the fulfillment of Israel and the suffering servant of Isaiah. If you read from chapter 40 to the end of the Prophecy of Isaiah: how many times that is repeated: Israel, my firstborn son, my beloved son, my chosen, my elect, the one on whom is my good pleasure, the one to whom I have sworn, the one to whom I will be faithful, the one through whom I will save the whole universe. That’s just repeated again and again and again.

When we get to the New Testament—Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, Paul, the Book of Acts—it is very, very clear that Jesus is proclaimed *by God the Father himself* as his Son: My Son, and the one who is my beloved, the beloved; and the one in whom my good pleasure abides.”

Thomas Hopko

“Christ is the Greek word that means ‘the Anointed One’ or ‘the Chosen One’. Christ is actually a title rather than a name. The Hebrew word for Christ is the Messiah, God’s Anointed One. Jesus is also known by the title ‘Son of God’ and ‘Son of Man’ and this draws attention to the fact that Jesus Christ was both fully God and fully man at the same time. Jesus Christ would not allow anything stand in His way and prevent Him from doing the will of His Father and this is the reason why the Father could say of His Son “This is my Son, the Chosen One”.

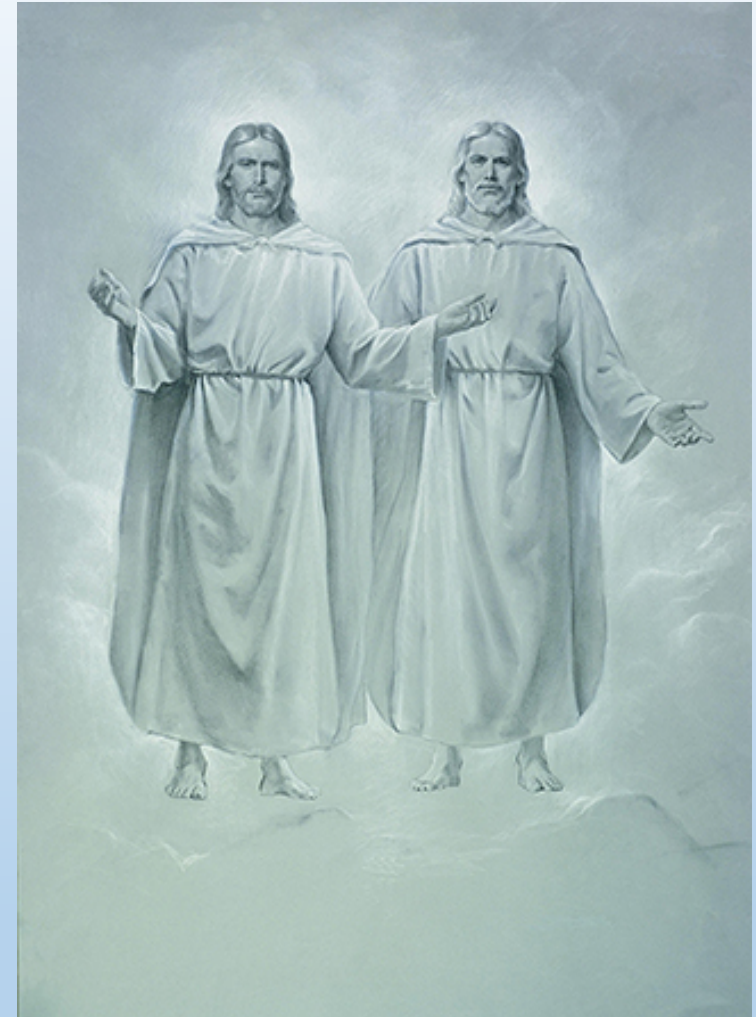
Jesus Christ is the Messiah, the chosen One - the anointed One. He is the source of the anointing and the purpose of the anointing is to reveal God. It is the revelations we have about God that leads to a special relationship with Him. Jesus Christ, the anointed One received the Holy Spirit without measure and makes this also available to us... The anointing not only brings God to us but also brings us to God and makes God’s holiness, love and power available to us.” William Baeta

“Our Redemption through the suffering of Christ is that deeper love within us which not only frees us from slavery to sin, but also secures for us the true liberty of the children of God, in order that we might do all things out of love rather than out of fear – love for him who has shown us such grace that no greater grace can be found.”
Peter Abelard, Commentary on Romans, (1079 – 1142)



3. There is a mutual respect and appreciation in the relationship between God the Father and God the Son

“My Beloved in whom My soul is well pleased!”



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“Behold, my servant whom I have chosen...” These are the words of God the Father, speaking to the church, concerning Christ, as mediator; who, as such, is God's servant, employed by him, and obedient to him, in the work of man's salvation; and is a righteous, faithful, prudent, and diligent one; whom he, from all eternity, had chosen to this service, and in the fullness of time sent him to do it, and supported and upheld him in it; for it is whom I uphold, in the Hebrew text. My beloved, in whom my soul is well pleased; who always was the object of his love, not only as his own and only begotten Son, but as in his office capacity, as mediator.”

John Gill, 1697 – 1771

“The gift of Christ to the world was beyond computation, and no power could compete with God by giving a gift that would bear any comparison to the value of heaven’s best treasure. The greatness of this gift was to furnish men with a theme of thanksgiving and praise that would last through time and through eternity. Having given His all in Christ, God lays claim to the heart, mind, soul, and strength of man. Looking upon the treasure which God has provided in the full and complete gift of Christ, we can exclaim: “Herein is love!”

Ellen G. White, *Our High Calling*, p. 18.

4. The Guarantee of the Success of Jesus' Ministry was the Power of the Holy Spirit

"I will put My Spirit upon Him"



“As the sun can be seen only by its own light, so Christ can be known only by His own Spirit.”
Robert Leighton



“In describing to His disciples the office work of the Holy Spirit, Jesus sought to inspire them with the joy and hope that inspired His own heart. He rejoiced because of the abundant help He had provided for His church. The Holy Spirit was the highest of all gifts that He could solicit from His Father for the exaltation of His people. The Spirit was to be given as a regenerating agent, and without this the sacrifice of Christ would have been of no avail. The power of evil had been strengthening for centuries, and the submission of men to this satanic captivity was amazing. Sin could be resisted and overcome only through the mighty agency of the Third Person of the Godhead, who would come with no modified energy, but in the fullness of divine power. It is by the Spirit that the heart is made pure. Through the Spirit the believer becomes a partaker of the divine nature. Christ has given His Spirit as a divine power to overcome all hereditary and cultivated tendencies to evil, and to impress His own character upon His church.” Ellen G. White, DA, 671.

“I will put my Spirit upon him.” This explains the manner in which judgment shall be brought forth. It is no doubt true, that there never was any portion whatever of righteousness in the world that did not proceed from the Spirit of God, and that was not maintained by his heavenly power; as none of the kings of the earth can frame or defend good order, except so far as he shall be assisted by the same Spirit. But in bringing forth judgment Christ is greatly superior to all others, for he has received the Spirit from the Father, that he may pour it out on all his people; for not only does he by word or writing prescribe what is proper, but inwardly forms the hearts of men, by the grace of his Spirit, to preserve the rule of righteousness.”

John Calvin

5. Jesus' Mission was also to answer to the needs of the Gentiles. The Gospel is the proclamation of who God is and the fulfilment of essential necessities of human being.

"He will declare justice to the Gentiles."

Matthew 12: 18.



“The Christ who has come to save the sons of men is persevering to the last degree. “He shall not fail, nor be discouraged, till he have set judgment in the earth: and the isles shall wait for his law.” Men are unwilling to be saved; they do not desire to be brought out of their prison-houses; but Jesus Christ will not cease to teach, nor cease to seek, nor cease to save, till every one of his elect is redeemed from the ruin of the fall, and until a multitude beyond all count shall surround the Father's throne... O delay not, but yield to his power! I pray that he may stretch out his sovereign arm at this moment, and rescue thee from thyself. If thy heart were as adamant, or as the nether millstone, he can dissolve it with a touch. O that the rock-breaking hammer would come down upon thee now! He is mighty to save; may he prove his mightiness in thee!”

C. H. SPURGEON, At the Metropolitan Tabernacle, Newington

“Genuine justice enters directly into the world of sin and evil and seeks in the midst of that world to bring healing and transformation, a restoration of whole relationships.”
Ted Grimsrud



Without social works, evangelism appears to be all talk. But without sharing the hope and good news of the Gospel, ministry lacks the Holy Spirit's transformative power. Neither side of social justice ministry is complete without the other. People are both spiritual and material beings. Addressing only half the problem only gives you half of the solution."

Ron Sider, Rich Christians in an Age of Hunger.



V. Conclusion



"If a person has grasped the meaning of God's grace in his heart, he will do justice. If he doesn't live justly, then he may say with his lips that he is grateful for God's grace, but in his heart he is far from him. If he doesn't care about the poor, it reveals that at best he doesn't understand the grace he has experienced, and at worst he has not really encountered the saving mercy of God. Grace should make you just."
Timothy Keller, *Generous Justice: How God's Grace Makes Us Just*



“Every act of justice, mercy, and benevolence makes melody in heaven. The Father from His throne beholds those who do these acts of mercy, and numbers them with His most precious treasures. “And they shall be Mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up My jewels.” Every merciful act to the needy, the suffering, is regarded as though done to Jesus. When you succor the poor, sympathize with the afflicted and oppressed, and befriend the orphan, you bring yourselves into a closer relationship to Jesus.”
Ellen G. White, *A Call to Stand Apart*, p. 60.

“The true religion, the only religion of the Bible, that teaches forgiveness only through the merits of a crucified and risen Saviour, that advocates righteousness by the faith of the Son of God, has been slighted, spoken against, ridiculed, and rejected. It has been denounced as leading to enthusiasm and fanaticism. But it is the life of Jesus Christ in the soul, it is the active principle of love imparted by the Holy Spirit, that alone will make the soul fruitful unto good works. The love of Christ is the force and power of every message for God that ever fell from human lips. What kind of a future is before us, if we shall fail to come into the unity of the faith?

Ellen G. White, Life Sketches, p. 326.

Cross-Cultural Missions

Matthew 12: 18

