

Praise God. Praise God that we can enter into this place and worship Him collectively as body of believers. And thank Him for all of His goodness, His grace and His mercy that He has bestowed upon us. Even in the midst of the storm He is present. We learn about his presence and His Essence. His presence is there. His presence sometimes gets thick in the house. In your time of prayer and devotion, you go into your prayer closet, you can sense the presence of God, so thick and so real that you just pour out your soul to Him. And you allow Him to comfort you, and to encourage you and to illuminate your heart and mind about what you're seeking Him for. We thank God that we have this time of prayer and praise and the proclamation of His word as a body of believers. This is why we gather on the first day of the week, to worship God through our giving, through our prayers, through our singing, through our reading of the Word, teaching of the Word and the proclamation of the Word. This is what the Church has been doing for the last 2,000 years. And beloved, it's not a trite thing. It's not a religious thing. This is relational thing. It's a spiritual thing. Because God meet us every Sunday that He allows us to come together as a body of believers to worship. He meets us here as He meet the body of Christ all over the world and His presence is real. So we thank God that our lives are in His hands.

Well, let's turn to our message this morning as we continue with *What is a Biblical Christian?*.

Father bless Your word as it goes forth. Illuminate the hearts and minds of Your people. May this word encourage, empower and enable them to be those ambassadors, those witnesses of the Lord Jesus Christ that we may touch one soul for the Kingdom of God, plant one seed of truth in that heart, that you may send others along their path to water that seed, and then you Oh God, will give the increase. Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in Your site, Oh Lord our strength and our Redeemer. Speak Lord, Your people are listening. In Jesus' name we pray, Amen, Amen.

What is a Biblical Christian? To be a Christian requires a miracle. And I think we overlook that. Being a Christian for us in America is a natural process. It's like coming down the aisle, making a confession, joining the congregation; you're a Christian. But a Christian is a miracle. It's a supernatural work of God. On the sinful and wicked and

evil heart of man. See, God has to take our dead soul and bring it to life for us to belong to Christ. This cannot be done by any natural means. You cannot order it on Amazon, pick it up at Costco or have it prescribed by your doctor. Salvation is something supernatural done by the Spirit of God through the preaching of the gospel. Now once you experience the miracle of salvation, it is not uncommon to continue to see God Show up in His power to do the supernatural in your life. God does extraordinary things for His ordinary people. An unknown writer states, "It is not what men eat but what they digest that makes them strong. Not what we gain, but what we save that makes us rich. Not what we read, but what we remember that makes us learn. Not what we preach but what we practice that makes us Christians."

So let us unpack the second of the four truth statements that answers the question, *What is a biblical Christian?* The first truth statement says a Biblical Christian is one who has faced realistically the problem of his or her own personal sin. And secondly, a Biblical Christian is one who has seriously considered the one divine remedy for sin. In the Bible, we are told again and again that Almighty God has taken the initiative in doing something for human beings that we cannot do for ourselves. We cannot forgive ourselves. We cannot redeem ourselves. We cannot reconcile ourselves. We cannot make ourselves born again. We cannot make ourselves acceptable to God. The Bible emphasizes God's proactiveness and God's initiative in providing a remedy for sinful hearts. In John 3:16 it says, "**For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.**" 1 John 3:16 says, "**By this we know love, that he laid down his life for us, and we ought to lay down our lives for the brothers** (and the sisters)." In 1 John 4:10, it says, "**In this is love, not that we love God, but that he loved us**" How did He do that? How did He love us? By sending his Son to be the atoning sacrifice, "**the propitiation for our sins.**" That's a work that's supernatural. It's a miracle. You are a miracle today if you are a Christian. A unique feature of the Christian faith is that it is not a religious self help scheme. Where you patch yourself up with the aid of God. Just as surely as it is a unique tenet of the Christian faith that Christ is the only Savior for sinners, so it is also a unique tenet of the Christian faith that all of our true help comes down and

meets us where we are. It does not come from the east or the west. It comes from Heaven and it meets us where we're at. We cannot pull ourselves up by our own bootstraps spiritually. God in His mercy breaks into our hearts. He breaks upon the human condition, the human situation and does something that we could never do for ourselves. When we turn to the scriptures, we find that God's divine remedy has at least three amazing focal points. There's three points of this amazing remedy of God.

Point A: God's remedy for sin is bound up in a person. Wow, you thought I was gonna say a program, didn't you? Because that's what we think it is. We think it's a program, a process, a procedure, a paradigm. No, it's a person. It demands a relationship. Anyone who begins to take seriously the divine remedy for human sin will notice in the scriptures that the remedy is not in a set of ideas, as though it were just another philosophy. Nor is it found in an institution. It's not in the government. It's not in your family. It's not in the local church, it's in a person. It's bound up in a divine person. A person who is both God and man. The *theanthropos*. Not the man of God. That's what we are, men and women of God. He's the God man. John 3:16 says it for us, **“For God so loved the world, that he gave his only {unique *monogenes*} Son.”** Matthew 1:21, the Angel said to Mary, “she will bring forth a Son”. He's a divine person. He's the second person of the God-head of the Trinity. A son and “you shall call his name Jesus”. Jesus means savior, salvation, deliverer, “for he will save his people from their sins”, not their religious institutions, but a person. John 14:6 Jesus himself said that **“I am the way, the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.”** God's remedy for sin is bound up in the person of Jesus Christ. The divine remedy for sin is a person, and that person is the Lord Jesus Christ, the eternal Word, the Divine Logos who became Flesh. He became human, he took on humanity.

Now stay with me because Jesus is God when he came down, he just added to his divine. He remained divine. He just took on additional nature. So he's truly God and truly man at the same time. So uniting a true sinless nature to his divine nature. Here is God's provision for you and me with our bad record and our bad heart, a Savior who is both God and man join two natures in one person, Jesus to deliver us. Now if your personal problem of sin is to ever be remedied in a Biblical way, it will be remedied only

as you have personal dealings with the person of the Lord Jesus Christ. There's no way to get around him to get to the Father. There's no way to have forgiveness but to come to the Son. You can't have access to God without coming through Jesus. Many people move Jesus to the side and just go to the Father. But you can't have a relationship with the Father if you don't have a relationship with the Son. He says in John 14:6, **“I am the way, the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.”**

Now what about all those other religions? And they're praying to Father God or praying to God? They're not. Because they haven't come through the Son. Islam sees the Son as just a prophet. Mormon see Him as one of the angels, like Moroni. Jehovah Witnesses sees Him as an Angel, Michael. And they pray “Father God”. They're praying to the wrong person. Because you gotta come through the Son to get to the Father to have a genuine relationship. Mormons are not Christians. They're not. Anyone who denies the Son also denies the Father. You can't have one without the other. Such is the unique truth of the Christian faith. The sinner in all his needs united to a Savior in all the fullness of His grace. The Sinner in his spiritual need and the Savior in His almighty sufficiency, they're brought directly together in the Proclamation of the Gospel. That reality is the glory of God's good news to lost men and women. So God's remedy for sin is bound up in a person, the Lord Jesus Christ.

Point B. God's remedy for sin is centered on the cross upon which Jesus Christ died for our sins. When we turn to the Bible, we find our biblical perspective, divine remedy in a unique way is centered on the cross. The Cross in the 1st century was a scandal. In the Roman culture it was despicable for people to be associated with across. For the Jew, you were call a curse if you hang on the cross. No one in polite society wanted to discuss the cross. But it is the cross, the scandal of the cross, that brings sinners into a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ. John the Baptist when he saw Jesus, he says, **“Behold the Lamb of God, who take away (forcefully removes) the sin of the world!”** That's John 1:29. So John uses Old Testament image of the sacrificial lamb when he points to Jesus and says that Jesus is the Lamb of God. In Matthew 20:28 Jesus himself said, “the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve and to give his life a ransom for many”. Listen to how He explains serving. Serving was His sacrifice at the Cross to redeem many. See the true preaching of the

gospel is so much centered on the cross that Paul says in 1 Corinthians 1:18, "For the word of the cross is foolishness". It's a scandal to those who are perishing. "But to us who are being saved, it is the power of God." When Paul came to Corinth, a center of intellectualism and pagan Greek philosophy, he did not follow the prescribed patterns of rhetoric oration and argumentation. But he said in 1 Corinthians 2:2 that he **"decided to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ and him crucified."**

We've gotten far away from this message. Because most of the messages on YouTube, that I listen to, from the most famous preachers, the most popular Preachers is about you, how you can be blessed. Blessed not stressed. How you can be an overcomer. How you can be the head and not the tail. How you can fulfill your dreams and your aspirations. How God could assist you in becoming the best you possible. That you may live your best life and have everything this world offers. I'm talking about professor, prolific, profound public preachers who would probably say to me, "I'm hating on them". Because they have thousands of people listening to them and they're looking at little New Life Church and say, "What are you talking about? Look what I have. Look what you don't have." It has nothing to do with popularity. It has nothing to do with pride. I'm not jealous of any ministry. Fill it up as much as you can, reach souls, bring them in, but preach the gospel. Don't preach prosperity. Don't preach yourself. Don't preach psychology. That's all we're hearing. Preachers proclaiming politics and psychology and personal power. It makes me sick to hear it. Because they're stepping over the cross. Jesus becomes an add-on. Jesus like an Amen to the truth. You know, we said the truth, people say, "well, amen". Say amen before like Jesus said "Amen Amen" and then he told the truth. Jesus said, "Truly, Truly, I say". He didn't want your amen. He wanted you to hear His truth. So He says, "Truly, Truly" that means Amen Amen. So be it. So be it. This is what it is, take it or leave it. Jesus never crossed over the truth nor the cross from whom He was born to die upon. Jesus was born to die for sinners like you and me. Oh, that's so rich. The cross is not to be thought of as an abstract idea, a religious symbol, which it is today. The meaning of the cross is what God declares it to me. The cross was a place where God the Father by imputation poured out the sins of the world upon His son. His son becomes the sacrifice and takes the punishment for God's justice. It had nothing to do with you, primarily. You're

just a recipient of what God had to do. God was vindicating Himself. God was justifying Himself before wickedness and evil. On that cross, there was a substitutionary judgement. In the language of the Apostle Paul in Galatians 3:13, “**Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law**”. That means the judgment of the law. It ain’t talking about witches and curses. It’s not what it’s referring. It’s talking about judgement. Having become judgment for us, He became the curse for us. 2 Corinthians 5:21, “He made him who knew no sin (here it is, the substitutionary judgment) to be sin for us as our substitute to be in our place and our stand-in that place of judgment from the Father on our behalf.” God afflicted Jesus. God bruised Him for our transgressions and for our iniquities. The chastisement of our peace was upon Him and by his stripes, Isaiah says, “we are healed”. But he took that substitutionary judgment that we might become the righteousness of God in Him. I’m talking about Biblical Christianity. Not talking about denominationalism. Don’t confuse this message with denominationalism. I’m not talking about religious institutions at this point. Christ is building the church, not man. Man build buildings and programs. Man packed those buildings and programs up with people. With people who will donate and endowed that mega building with what they have. I’m talking about the Gospel of the cross being proclaimed to lost people by save people. And God by His Spirit, making someone who is spiritual dead, spiritually alive. And bringing that man, woman, boy or girl into a relationship with Himself. The cross is not a nebulous, indefinable symbol of self giving love. On the contrary, the cross is the monumental display of how God can be just and still justify guilty sinners. You know, that’s rich. Because if God is gonna be just, He’s gotta kill all of us. He’s gotta send everybody to hell if God gonna be a just judge, which He is. What God did in His divine plan of redemption to justify and vindicate His own righteousness, He said, “I’m gonna send a substitute”. And that substitute is going to not only take my wrath, but satisfy my justice. Come on, somebody. He’s gonna make appeasement. He’s gonna satisfy me in taking on my wrath. Because if I took on the wrath of God, guess what? God has still not satisfied. If a million sinners were nailed to the cross and God’s wrath came upon them, God still will not be satisfied. He needed to be able to not only justify the sinner, but He had to satisfy His justice. So He needs somebody perfect. He needs a spotless, matchless lamb. He said, “I’m gonna send one, my own Son, to be that

perfect sacrifice, that lamb without blemish or spot, and I'm gonna pour my wrath upon Him and I'm gonna satisfy my justice and also justify the sinner. He's not even worthy of my justice, but my grace and mercy is going to bestow upon him when he does not deserve. I'm preaching the gospel now! I'm preaching the gospel now! And we don't want to hear the gospel. Why? Because it confronts our religious pride, our national pride, our personal pride. I'm better than that person. I'm not evil, they're evil. That boy that shot those kids, he's evil. No, he's just as evil as you. He just displayed it and you're keeping it inside. Your heart is just as wicked as that man sneaking out at night on his wife. Told her I'm gonna pick up milk and never come back. Your heart is just as wicked as that man. He's displaying his wickedness and you're just thinking about doing it. Because you don't have no opportunity to do it. If you had one you would. Man to the core of his being is wicked. Me too. But we don't always display our wickedness, the same way. So you can take a religious man, a moral man, you can put him on the cross and it still won't do nothing for God's satisfaction, because he is wicked by nature. You're not evil because of what you do, you're evil because of who you are. You were born into sin, shaped in iniquity and the longer you live, the more you get chances to express what you truly are. And when somebody tell you who they are, believe them. And God who knows the hearts and the minds and thoughts of men and women, tells us who we are. And He tells us what we stand in need of and He calls us into relationship with Himself through the gospel. Because He sent his Son who knew no sin to be sin for us that we might become the righteousness of God in Christ. At the cross. At the cross. God having imputed the sins of His people to Jesus, pronounces judgment upon Jesus as the representative of His people, you and me. We are His people. There on the cross God pours out the bowels of wrath, unmixed with mercy. And we know it was unmixed with mercy. You know why? Because the Son cries from the cross, "MY GOD, MY GOD, WHY HAST THOU FORSAKEN ME!" No mercy. Total wrath. He experienced the core of hell itself, which is separation from a Holy, Holy, Holy God. Jesus suffered that me and for you. He was forsaken that we might be forgiven. Romans 3:26 says, It was to show the cross, **"It was to show his righteousness at the present time, so that he might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus"**. Faith in a Person. At Calvary, God is demonstrated to

the visible world, what is happening in the invisible, the Spiritual world. He shrouds the heavens and total darkness to let all humanity know that He is plunging His one and only Son into the outer darkness of Hell itself. Which your sins and my sins deserve. Jesus hangs on the cross on the hill far away on that old rugged cross, that emblem of suffering and shame. He's in a posture of a guilty criminal. For Him, society has but one verdict, away with Him, crucify Him, hand Him over to death. But God does not intervene. In the theater of what men can see, God is demonstrating what He is doing in the realm where we cannot see. Oh, he's justifying. He's reconciling. He's forgiving. He's making alive in ways that man could not see on that day. He is treating His Son as a law breaker, because we're law breakers. He is causing Jesus to feel the debts of His own soul. All of the righteous wrath and divine fury that should fall upon you and me. That's why He could cry out that victory song over sin, death and the grave. Tetelestai! "It is finished". That's what Romans 4:25 says, "**who was delivered up for our trespasses and raised for our justification.**" What a God. What a savior. I'm talking about a Biblical Christian here.

Lastly, Point C. God's remedy for sin is adequate for all who believes. Put an S on the end of that. Believes. Oh, it's in the scriptures. It's continuous. It's an ongoing process. See, God's remedy for sin is adequate. It's satisfactory for all who believe. It is offered to all who believe. John 1:12, "**But to all who did receive him.. he gave the right to become the children of God**". To all who did receive Him, who believed in His name, He gave the right, the privilege, the opportunity to become children of God. John 20:31 is the epilogue of the gospel of John. In John 20:31, John tells you why he wrote Chapter one all the way to 20:30. He explains to you why he put those "I am" statements. Why he focused on certain miracles that Jesus performed. He tells you why. He says in John 20:31, "**but these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have {Zoé, Spiritual life} life in his name.**"

Now stay with me. I go to the first miracle, the miracle in Cana of Galilee and I get caught up on the miracle of the process of wine to water. That's not why he wrote it. I get caught up with the fact that there was a man in the 6th chapter who was lame

for 38 years and I'm I get caught up in that he couldn't make it to the pool when the Angel troubled the water. And I'm getting caught up trying to explain something in there that's supposed to be deep for you to hear. Well that wasn't the point. I mean go through John's gospel. I am the gate. I am the door. I am the way. I am the truth. I am before Abraham. What is that for? Well, John tells you in 20:30 that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God and that believing in Him, you may have life through His name. Listen, beloved, we get caught up in the wrong things when we read the Bible. Because we don't understand why the person that wrote the passage or book in the first place. "Let's learn why he wrote it". "Let's learn who he wrote it to, so that when we read it, we have a better understanding of what going on." I was arguing with this person, who was talking about "if Jesus would do to other people, what Jesus did to Lazarus, then maybe more people will come to Christ." I said, "No, they wouldn't. They'll find a way to explain that God had nothing to it". Not only that, the resurrection of Lazarus was for the people to believe that the Father sent the Son. Well, that's what He prayed it. Did y'all read that prayer? No. You caught up with the miracle. You caught up with the sign. You're not understanding with the sign meant. It was for them to believe Him, Jesus. Not be caught up, "oh this man was raised from the dead". The signs are pointing you to someone. If he can walk on the water, this is enough for you think about how you can walk on the water. I grew up with the young man in church at Saint John Mission Baptist Church and he told me I'm going to do just what Jesus said. I said, "what did he do?" "Walk on the water." I said, "you mean literal water, like H2O?" He said, "Yep, I'm going to do the same thing." That's not why it was there. John 20:31 said it was there so that we might believe that Jesus is the Christ. Because only God can walk on H2O. Only God can raise the dead with a word. Only God can say, "are you willing to be made whole" and then make you whole. We don't have to pray all day about your healing if Jesus is doing it. But if He is not doing it, we need to pray all day for Him to do it. It was written that you might... I'm trying to get you to understand believe. That Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, that believing in Him you may have life in His name. 1 John 5:13, the epistles here, John writes these epistles, then he writes three of them, but the first one he says in the 5th chapter 13 verse, "**I write these things to you who believe**". See John's Gospel, I'm writing so

that you may believe. John's letter, I'm writing to you who believe. See, John's Gospel is not to the Church, it to the world. John's letter is to the church. Do you see that? That's rich, beloved. John is saying in the gospel, "I'm going to take the Eagle flight and I'm gonna give you a panoramic view of the life of Christ. And I want you to understand what He did, but I want you to understand what He did proves who He is. That you may believe Him." And then he writes to the church the three letters, and he says, I write these things to you who believe. We aren't talking about belief now; you believe. We gotta get into instruction and teach, warnings, rebukes. Because you believe. He said. "I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God that you may know", here it is, "that you have eternal life." Now in John 20:31 it wasn't that they may know is that they may have it. And 1 John 5:13 is that they may know they have it. Do you know you have eternal life? A Biblical Christian knows that they have it. As you can see, God's Word places great emphasis on belief. It's a gift from God. Ephesians 2:8, "**it is a gift from God**". That's a divine gift to believe. It's not something you make up your mind to do. It's something He does for you when you hear the gospel. He awakens your mind and your eyes to the truth, and He places and deposits in your spirit and your soul this capacity to believe what He says without question. However, before calling people to believe, we must first give them the foundation or "The Who" and "The what" in which they are to believe. People cannot just believe in anything they wish and be saved by it. The belief must be placed in the right object, or better yet, the right person. Act 16:31 says, "**And they said, 'Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved, even your whole household'**". You see who's the object of salvation? Who's the focal point of salvation? Believing in Jesus. The Jesus who died on the cross, was buried and rose again. It is far easier to command people to just believe. You know, we say it to a lot of people, "just believe you'll make it". "Well just believe you can do that". "Just have enough confidence and you'll work through it." That's not Christianity. We must never forget that there is a message that must be connected to that belief for true salvation to occur. A call to believe without giving a person what they need to believe in is simply, empty, false-belief preaching. Belief, no matter how strong it is in anything except the person and work of Jesus Christ amounts to a faith that is entirely ineffective in bringing about true salvation. I

hear people all the time, “Well, you know, the muslims, they really got strong belief too. The mormons strongly believe what they believe. Hindu strongly believe what they believe. Buddhists have strong faith in what they believe.” Christianity is talking about the object of belief. What's the object of their belief? If it's not the risen savior, they are lost. Men really believe they are good. Wrong object. You can believe something and it'd be a lie. If it has no corresponding foundation. Jesus Christ and his works is where we place our faith. God has given us the message, which was required of us to believe. And that message is centered on believing the redeeming works of Jesus. Apostle John is abundantly clear this morning that the gospel is all about Jesus. It has nothing to do about me and how well I am or how sick I am. How rich I am or poor I am, how happy I am or unhappy I am. It has nothing to do with me in the final analysis. It has everything to do with the Glory of God. And I become just a recipient of the grace, the mercy and the Majesty of God. It makes me a Son when I was a slave to sin. He breaks that bondage and I come from bondage to deliverance. I come from lost and transition to being found. I come from being blind spiritually and now I can see. I'm a recipient of His mercy and His grace. The message is not about me, it's about Him. And it is only belief in Him that saves us for time and for eternity.

Father God, we thank you that Jesus is truly the center of our salvation as He is center of our joy. He's the center of our hope. He's the center and circumference of our identity, of our destiny, of our purpose and of our meaning. It is in Christ that we are reconciled to God our Father by the Holy Spirit to a new and living way that he prepared through His flesh, His veil, His body. Through that awesome sacrifice on Calvary. And Now because he has opened a new and living way, we can walk into the Holy, Holy, Holy presence of God clothed in the righteousness of Jesus Christ. Unlike Isaiah and those of old. We come in clean, forgiven, reconciled, made alive and adopted into the family of God. Thank You for loving us with an everlasting love. And underneath are the everlasting arms of a gracious and mercy and loving God. Father we cast our care upon You, because you care for us and you've demonstrated that care. That you sent Your one and only Son into the world, to lay down His life that we might have the right to the tree of Life. Whatever your people are experiencing

today, may you take Your word, tailor make it for them that they may have power, the perspective and the passion to go through what they go through, knowing that greater is He that's in them and he that is in the world. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.