

JESUS GIVES A LIFT

1. JOB DESCRIPTION FOR JESUS:

Mt. 18:11: "For the Son of Man has come to save that which was lost.

1 Timothy 1:15 Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners...

2. HIS MOTIVATION: LOVE

John 3:16 "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.

3. HIS PRIESTLY PROCESS

John 3:14-15 Just as Moses lifted up the snake in the desert, so the Son of Man must be lifted up,¹⁵ that everyone who believes in him may have eternal life.

a. By intercession and sacrifice a priest reconciles people to God. A priest works to restore people to the favor of God.

Hebrews 5:1¹ Every high priest is selected from among men and is appointed to represent them in matters related to God, to offer gifts and sacrifices for sins.

- **Prophets:** deal with the people for God and in God's place
- **Priests:** deal with God for people in their place

b. Christ is our high priest. The Old Testament promised that the Messiah was to be a priest (Psalm 110:4, Zech. 6:13; Hebrews 5-10)

Christ	Other Priests
Holy and perfect son of God	Sinful, weak
<i>Had no sins</i>	<i>Had to sacrifice first for their sins</i>
Offered himself	Offered animal
<i>Was both the priest and the sacrifice in one person</i>	<i>Was just the priest.</i>
One sacrifice effected eternal redemption (Heb. 9:12; 10:14)	The necessary repetition of the sacrifices of the priests proved them to be ineffective (Heb. 10:1-2)

c. The Old Testament Sacrifice

Because "it is not possible that the blood of bulls and goats could take away sins" (Heb. 10:4), so the sacrifices of the Old Testament could not atone for sin. Yet they were by no means useless and without benefit to the people. They were shadows of the good things to come. They had value and power because they prefigured Christ's sacrifice on Calvary.

Monday, March 23 *Read John 3:14-21*

Our the new birth is secured by two acts.

1. The first act is Jesus' death. Jesus illustrated His point by using the Old Testament story of Moses lifting up the bronze serpent in the wilderness ([Numbers 21:4-9](#)). The children of Israel had begun to murmur and grumble about the trials of the wilderness, wishing they had never left Egypt. God disciplined them by sending fiery serpents to plague them. The discipline worked; the people repented and begged for mercy. God met the people's need by telling Moses to make a bronze image of a serpent and to hold it up upon a pole in the midst of the people. The person who looked upon the *lifted up* serpent was healed.

Jesus said that He must be lifted up just as the serpent was lifted up. What did He mean? There are several pictures here.

- a. **The people of Israel had great need**, for they were dying from the poison of the fiery serpents. Men today are dying from the poison of the serpent, the deadly poison of sin.
- b. **The serpent is a symbol of the evil one, Satan** ([Genesis 3:1f](#); [Rev. 12:9](#); [Rev. 20:2](#)). Jesus Christ destroyed the works of the devil by being lifted up ([Hebrews 2:14-15](#)); therefore the serpent hanging upon the pole symbolized the defeat of Satan. By looking upon the *defeated evil* (the serpent), Israel was healed. Today we are healed by looking upon the Son of Man who has been lifted up upon the cross.

*John 12:31-32*³¹ *Now is the time for judgment on this world; now the prince of this world will be driven out.*

32 *But I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all men to myself."*

*Hebrews 2:14-15*¹⁴ *Since the children have flesh and blood, he too shared in their humanity so that by his death he might destroy him who holds the power of death--that is, the devil--*¹⁵ *and free those who all their lives were held in slavery by their fear of death.*

- c. The serpent was a cursed creature from the very beginning ([Genesis 3:14-15](#)). Jesus became a curse for us ([Galatians 3:13](#)).

*Galatians 3:13*¹³ *Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us, for it is written: "Cursed is everyone who is hung on a tree."*

1 Peter 2:24 *He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness; by his wounds you have been healed.*

- 2. The second act is our's belief in Jesus.** The person who believes in the Son of Man being lifted up...
- will not perish
 - but will have eternal life

Note: if an Israelite believed God's message (the good news of healing), he looked upon the lifted up serpent, and he was healed. If you did not believe God's message, you did not look, and you died. Thus it is with us today: everyone must believe the message of Christ in order to be healed, that is, be born again.

John 5:24 *"I tell you the truth, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life and will not be condemned; he has crossed over from death to life.*

Isaiah 53:5 *But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was upon him, and by his wounds we are healed.*

Tuesday, March 24th *Read John 3:16*

What does it mean to perish? Simply, (*apolētai*) means to be lost, to destroy utterly, to lose utterly, to lose eternal life, to be spiritually destitute, to be cut off.

1. Perishing means to be in a lost state in this world. It means to be...
 - aging, deteriorating, decaying, dying.
 - without life (purpose, meaning, significance).
 - without peace (assurance, confidence, security in God's keeping).
 - without hope (of living forever).
2. Perishing means to be in a lost state in the world to come. It means...
 - having to die
 - facing judgment
 - being condemned
 - suffering separation from God and all loved ones
 - experiencing all that hell is

2 Peter 1:4 *Through these he has given us his very great and precious promises, so that through them you may participate in the divine nature and escape the corruption in the world caused by evil desires.*

Here's the point: the body of any person has within it the principle or the seed of corruption, and the world in which you live has within it the principle or the seed of corruption. Therefore, you deteriorate and decay—you die and return to dust.

This seed of corruption is caused by sin. Sin is selfishness or lust. Sin is acting against God, against others, and even against oneself.

When you offend—when you act selfishly, do what you want instead of what you should do—when you act *against* instead of *for*—you energize and set in motion the process of corruption. Your selfishness corrupts yourself and the world in which you live—including the ground and the air and the water of the earth ([Romans 8:21](#)). Selfishness corrupts the relationship between you and God and between yourself and other persons and even the relationship between other persons. Your selfishness and sin corrupt your own body ([1 Cor. 15:42](#)). It may be nothing more than eating too much or failing to stay physically fit, but selfishness and sin set in motion the process of corruption. And the process of corruption just continues and continues to eat and eat away at life. Sin, that is, selfishness, has caused and is causing death, both physically and spiritually. And you thought you were pretty swell!

Wednesday, March 25th *Read John 3:16; John 1:4*

The simple statement "in Christ was life" means at least three things.

1. Life is the quality and essence, the energy and power, the force and principle of being. Christ is life; He is...
 - the very quality of life
 - the very essence of life
 - the very energy of life
 - the very power of life
 - the very force of life
 - the very principle of life

Without Christ, there would be no life whatsoever. Life is in Him, within His very being. All things exist and have their being (life) in Him.

2. Life is purpose, meaning, and significance of being. Christ is life; He is...
 - the very purpose of life.
 - the very meaning of life.
 - the very significance of life.

3. Life is perfection. Life is all that you must be and possess in order to live perfectly. This is what is meant by life. Life is completeness of being, absolute satisfaction, the fulness of all good, and the possession of all good things. Life is perfect love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, and self-control (cp. [Galatians 5:22-23](#)).

Whatever life is and all that life is, it is all in Jesus Christ. Even the legitimate cravings you have are sometimes entangled with evil—such as power, fame and wealth—are all included in the life given by Jesus Christ. Those who partake of His life shall reign forever as kings and priests. This is the very thing that is distinctive about life—it is eternal. It lasts forever and it is rewarding. It will eventually exalt the believer to the highest life and place and position. (Cp. [Rev. 21:1f.](#))

Jesus Christ is the source of life: He is the way to life and He is the truth of life. He is the very substance of life, its very being and energy ([John 5:26](#); [1 John 1:2](#)).

Thursday, March 26th

John 10:10 *The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.*

LIFE is one of the great words of the Scriptures. The word "life" (*zoe*) and the verb "to live" or "to have life" (*zen*) have a depth of meaning.

1. Life is the energy, the force, the power of being.
2. Life is the opposite of perishing. It is deliverance from condemnation and death. It is the stopping or cessation of deterioration, decay, and corruption ([John 3:16](#); [John 5:24, 29](#); [John 10:28](#)).
3. Life is eternal (*aiionios*). It is forever. It is the very life of God Himself ([John 17:3](#)). However, eternal life does not refer just to duration. Living forever would be a curse for some persons. The idea of eternal life is also quality, a certain kind of life, a life that consistently knows love, joy, peace, power, and responsibility ([John 10:10](#)).
4. Life is satisfaction ([John 6:35](#)).
5. Life is security and enjoyment ([John 10:10](#)).
6. Life is found only in God. God is the source and author of life, and it is God who has appointed Jesus Christ to bring life to us. Jesus Christ gives the very life of God Himself ([John 5:26](#); [John 6:27, 40](#); [John 10:28](#); [John 17:23](#)).
7. Life has now been revealed. It has been unveiled and is clearly seen in Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ shows us what life is ([John 1:4-5](#); [John 5:26](#); [1 John 1:2](#)).

8. Life only comes to us by believing in Jesus Christ. A person outside Jesus Christ only exists. They merely have the existence of an animal. Real life is found only in God. This is to be expected and it is logically true, for God is the creator of life. As the creator of life, He alone knows what life really is and what it is supposed to be ([John 3:36](#); [John 5:24](#); [John](#)

6:47). This is the reason He sent His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, into the world: to show us what life is. When a person looks at Jesus Christ, he sees exactly what life is, exactly what it involves (cp. [Galatians 5:22-23](#)):

- love
- joy
- peace
- longsuffering
- gentleness
- meekness
- goodness
- faith
- temperance or control and power

Friday, March 26th Read John 3:16

God so loved the world. He loved the whole world. Note several facts.

1. The idea that God loves the whole world is a new idea. The Jews believed God loved the religious (the true Jew) and hated the non-religious (the Gentiles). The same thoughts are held by many in every generation, especially by *religionists*. The fact that God truly loves is shocking to many. Some wonder and others question how God could possibly love the...

- mean pastor
- murderer
- immoral person
- wife beater
- child abuser
- prostitute
- thief
- alcoholic
- street person
- oppressor
- enslaver
- bitter, vengeful

God loves *everyone*, not just the religious and the good. He does not love only the people who love Him. He loves everyone, even the unlovely and the unloving, the unbelieving and the obstinate, the selfish and the greedy, the spiteful and the vengeful.

John 10:16 I have other sheep that are not of this sheep pen. I must bring them also. They too will listen to my voice, and there shall be one flock and one shepherd.

Romans 10:12-13 For there is no difference between Jew and Gentile--the same Lord is Lord of all and richly blesses all who call on him,¹³ for, "Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved."

2 Peter 3:9 The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.

2. The basis of God's love is His nature. God is love ([1 John 4:8, 16](#)); therefore, He loves. He acts, demonstrates, and shows His love.

Romans 5:8 But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

1 John 4:8 Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love.¹⁶ And so we know and rely on the love God has for us. God is love. Whoever lives in love lives in God, and God in him.

3. Love acts; it expresses itself. Love does not sit still, doing nothing. It is not dormant, complacent, inactive. If love actually exists, it has to act and express itself; it has to do something good. Love is *loving*; that is, love is always demonstrating love to others. Therefore, God's love acts and reveals Him to be love.

There is the evidence of God's love—God gave His only begotten Son. Note several points.

1. God demonstrated His love in the most perfect way possible: He gave His only begotten Son to the world. As God, He is perfect, which means His love is perfect. Therefore, God not only loves, but He *so* loves. He loves to perfection, loves to the ultimate degree. Whatever the ultimate degree and the perfect act and expression of love is, God shows it. Without question, the greatest act of love is the sacrifice of a man's own life; therefore, God sacrificed the life of His own Son to save man.

2. The word gave (*edōken*) has a twofold meaning. God gave His Son to the world, and He gave His Son to die. The idea of *sacrifice*, of great cost, is in both acts. It cost God dearly to give His Son *up to the world and up to the cross*.

- a. He gave up His Son to be separated from Him, *allowing Jesus to leave His presence*, to leave the majesty and glory, worship and honor of heaven.
- b. He gave up His Son to be separated from Him, *allowing Jesus to come to earth...*

Into a world that was...	Into a world full of...	
fallen	darkness	selfishness
depraved	hostility	greed
wicked	bitterness	immorality
rebellious	wrath	barriers
revolting	anger	sin
apostate	war	shame

c. He gave up His Son to be separated from Him, *allowing Jesus to die* for the sins all.