

## Podcast Episode 3: Who is Christ?

**QUESTION: As one who knows Christ, how would you describe Him?**

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DENVER: If I can help you envision our Lord a little more, let me describe Him in terms of His characteristics. Our Lord was, and is, affable, but He is not gregarious. He was approachable, and He is approachable, and He is not aloof. He is patient. He is willing to guide and He is willing to teach. He is intelligent but He is not overbearing. He is humble in His demeanor, even though the power that He possessed and possesses is undeniable. He is therefore, both a Lamb and a Lion.

Jesus Christ came into the world unexpected and unannounced by men, unanticipated by men, but fully expected by the heavens themselves. There were signs in the heavens, but men were oblivious, largely, and when the shepherds keeping watch over the flocks by nights were interrupted, it was not by an earthly herald, it was by those from beyond the veil. The Savior crept into the world with heaven taking notice, but precious few paying attention to what it was that was afoot in His day.

It's so easy to overlook Him in the cares of this world. I want to assure you that He is real. He exists. He was a man every bit a man as any of us. He had flesh, He had blood, He dwelt among us. Don't doubt that. Trust in Him. Believe in Him. Have confidence in His existence.

He is quick to forgive sin.

He allows all to come unto him.

And He is no respecter of persons.

Because He is quick to forgive sins, it really doesn't matter if you are not good enough, because one of the first orders of business when you come into His presence, is He forgives you. He cannot look upon sin with the least degree of allowance, but He has the capacity and the ability to forgive sin. Therefore, although your sins may be as scarlet, He can, He will, and He does make you white as snow, no longer accountable. Therefore you needn't fear. But you can approach boldly our Lord.

But He is the prototype, or standard of salvation-- or in other words, He is a saved being. And if He were anything different from what He is, He would not be saved for His salvation depends on His being precisely what He is, and nothing else.

As a consequence of that, to speak of Christ is necessarily to speak of salvation. To understand Christ is to understand salvation. He went from “grace to grace,” until He was called the Son of God, before this world, and before He entered into the flesh here, through a long enough period of development that He had sufficient grace to be called the Son of God. And this is the prototype of the saved man. This is what you must be, or else not be saved.

Our Lord, and we’re talking about Him in the beginning before the world was, “*received not the fullness at first, but received grace for grace*” [D&C 93:12]. And we think “grace for grace” consists of “I’m going to now obey a principle, and as a result of obeying that principle, I will receive the benefit of the grace that flows from doing so.” And that is true enough-- that is a true enough principle. But it is also truer and more accurate to say, in connection with the long preparation that preceded the call of Christ to be the Son of God, that grace to grace is also something that involves the upward scale of a ladder, as Joseph alludes to it.

“*He was called the Son of God, because He received not of the fullness at first*” [D&C 93:14]. He was "called" to be the Son of God because that wasn't His status before. Therefore He had to be "called" to be the Son of God. And that was true because He “received not of the fullness at first.”

Long before the Lord assumed the role and the responsibility of descending here and being the Redeemer of this world, He qualified by grace, doing things that proved, while He was behind the veil, as you presently find yourselves situated, that demonstrated graciousness and faith by obedience to the commandments of God, even though it would a great while yet before He, and now you, would rise up to that level. Still, He lived His life with such grace that He qualified to receive more, and to develop, and to move up.

“*He*” (Christ) “*was in the world and the world was made by Him, and the world knew Him not*” [John 1:10]. And why did the world not know Him? The world did not know Him because the same reason why people would not know a messenger if one were sent today. Because our Lord was so very ordinary. For all the world He was just another itinerant preacher. There had been so many pretenders in the days before them. The Maccabean rebellion-- the family of David had fallen into great disrepute by the time the Lord arrived. When the census was taken and everyone had to go to their own city and he went to the city of David to be enumerated, there was no room for them in the inn. It was in His day as it is in ours.

“*The Lord omnipotent who reigns, who was and is from all eternity shall come down from heaven among the children of men and shall dwell in a tabernacle of clay*” [Mosiah 3:5]. Father is a tabernacle of spirit and glory; the Son descended to be among us in a tabernacle of clay.

How was the Lord able to accomplish all that He did? Abraham 3:19-- the Lord tells you. He says *"I am the Lord thy God, I am more intelligent than they all."* Why is the Lord able to say that He is "more intelligent than they all?" Because our Lord went from "grace to grace" to the point in which He understood all things, because He had been through all things. He had descended below all things, and He had risen above all things. Therefore, He comprehends all things. He's more intelligent than us all because He is more experienced than us all. He has arrived at a state in which He is worthy, holy, sanctified. Having been left to choose between good and evil, He has chosen good.

The Father declares what is true, and the Son does it. And thus the Son became the Word of God, because He did what the Father bid Him do. Would you be a son or daughter of God? Do what He bids you do! This is how the Son worshipped. This is what you must do if you will worship Him also.

He can cleanse any of you, every whit. That He has such power as that so that he can take what is broken and mend it and he can take what is unclean, even scarlet in color, and make it white as snow, by His word, which is the word of the Father, because the two of them are One. He lifts, He raises, He elevates. He endows you. He blesses your lives. He not only created this world, He also suffered to save it. He came beneath all things. He came as someone that was considered renegade, an outsider-- someone that was easy to dismiss, someone that was easy to look at and say "for that, I'm having none of it." You rely on Him. But just remember, when He speaks, this is how He came! He's not going to do it differently. He's not going to make it easy for you.

*"He is despised and rejected of men"* [Isaiah 53:3], and that will be true-- that will be true of whomever. They will be despised and rejected of men. He was a *"man of sorrows and acquainted with grief"* [Isaiah 53:3]. It's necessary for Him to be so, so that He might know how to understand us. He grieved because of the things He knew He had to offer and none would receive it. It was necessary for him to experience sorrow and be acquainted with grief. *"We hid as it were our faces from Him"* [Isaiah 53:3], that is we turned from Him. We would not give heed to what it was He offered. *"He was despised, we esteemed Him not"* [Isaiah 53:3]. The only person who has ever lived who deserved to have respect given to Him and we esteemed Him not.

*"Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows; yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted"* [Isaiah 53:4]. See, smitten of God-- smitten of God! He was cast out of the synagogue. They were looking to stone Him! I mean, why would you expect that God would honor a man who had been cast out of the synagogue? "Smitten of God, afflicted." *"But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; with his stripes we are healed"* [Isaiah 53:4].

You know, don't think you are going to follow that Master and then be spared. He's going to let you understand what it means to follow Him. And that understanding is going to come by the experiences that help you relate to and understand our Lord in a way that you don't understand Him at present. If you're comfortable, He will make you uncomfortable. If you're certain, He will make you uncertain. If you think you've got it all figured out, He will offer up a contradiction, and then He'll leave you to struggle with it. And then when you can bear the contradiction no more, and in the agony and anguish of your uncertainty, He'll delay the answer a little further still, until your heart is finally soft enough to come to Him in meekness. And then He'll speak to you the words that you need to hear-- sometimes only just in time.

He gains the knowledge by which redemption comes through the things that He suffers. Because in suffering for sin, He overcomes and finds the path back from sin. So far as He is cast out, that is how far He knows the path back to return. There is no burden you bear that He does not know how to solve. There is no dilemma that you confront that He has not already found the way to resolve and come back to peace with God. He did this stuff precisely so that whatever it is that is infirm in you, He can blot it out. Whatever it is that you need to have succor to remedy, He has the knowledge required to do that. He is not experimenting when He deals with us. He knows what He is doing. He has descended below it all in order to acquire the capacity to lift it all. And the things that He intends to lift back include all of you.

He intends to save everything, and by saving everything, allow it to continue on in its course. Those who will receive less will continue on in a lesser course. Those who will receive more will continue on in a greater course. But all will continue on, freely using what God freely gives to both the righteous and the wicked. He makes the sun to shine on the righteous and the wicked. He makes the rain to fall on both the righteous and the wicked. And he does so while merely asking you to repent and turn to Him.

Christ is in all things. Everything that you're acquainted with in this creation is sustained by the Light of Christ. He occupies, He brings the light into-- He is more intelligent than it all and He keeps its organization together by the light that emanates from Him. This is why it is possible for redemption to come through Him. Because when He descended below it all, including death, He has the power then to bring it all with Him back into life.

He is the fulcrum. He is the one which must permeate all things in order for Him to be able to lay hold upon all things, and in order, therefore, to bring you back from the grave. Which means, at this very moment, you are in contact with Him, through His spirit. He is giving you the life which you are presently living. He is not a distant God. He is an immediate, and an intimate God. You say He knows your thoughts, and that is true enough, because He is giving you the ability

and the freedom to entertain the thoughts. Therefore, He knows how to judge you, because everything that you have done, you have done using the power and the light He lends to you.

*“I say unto you, if ye should serve him with all your whole souls yet ye would be unprofitable servants”* [Mosiah 2:21]. Because the energy being used at present to power this life that you’re living is borrowed from Him. It is His light. It is His light, it is His truth, it is His intelligence. He is sustaining you from moment to moment. So this mortal frame that you are walking about it temporarily, belongs to Him. And ultimately He is going to take it back and reduce it back to dust, and reform it into something else and do something else with it. And someday He will resurrect you, but when He does that, that’s Him also. Because it will be a long time before you attain to the resurrection of the dead.

He does not demand obedience. He offers you, if you will obey, “grace for grace.” That you, too, might receive more of Him in you, He continuously offers you more. But it does you no good at all if you will not hearken to it because it is in the hearkening that you will meet God. You will find redemption. You will hear His voice and you will become a holy vessel because His word will be animated in you. And you will have no doubts about your salvation because you will hear Him declare it in His own voice and you will know that He’s no respecter of persons. And you’ll know that you, like any other person, can come unto Him and look to Him, and Him alone, for your salvation and not be dependent upon any other person or system.

Christ is the redemption of all. He’s the keeper of the gate. He’s the one who is mighty to save. He can tell you what He thinks you need to know, as He has told me what I need to know. Christ is, in fact, holy. And I am deeply aware of the fact that I am not. I can’t redeem any of you. But He can. I can testify of Him. I am nothing. I am keenly aware of my own limitations, but I am keenly aware of our Lord.

When I have had discussions with Him, they have invariably been parsing through the scriptures, explaining things. When I have inquired and gotten answers, it has been because of things that are in the scriptures that I do not understand. He’s not aloof and He’s not distant. If He’ll speak to someone in a military barracks, He’ll speak to you. Every one of you. And what He has to say to you is far more important than anything that I can say. But I can bear testimony of Him and I can assure you that He will not leave your petitions unanswered. And I can also assure you that today is once again a day of salvation. And He has set His hand again. But I bear testimony to you, I know what I’m talking about. Like Paul I can declare, *“He whom ye ignorantly serve declare I unto you”* [Acts 17:3]. Because He who is more intelligent than them all, has declared to me what the truth of these things is.

I bear witness of Christ. I have seen Him. I know He lives. I know He is coming in judgement. And I know that before His coming He has wanted some things to be declared. I have been as faithful as I can be in declaring the things that I've been asked to declare. I sense keenly my own inadequacy. I beg you to overlook all that. Look at the scriptures. Look at the words of Christ. Look at the explanations we got from Joseph. Look at the things that are true, and go to Him, in faith believing.

When I started out I gave you a description of Him. I want to repeat that. The Lord is affable, but He is not gregarious. He is approachable; He is not aloof. He is patient and He is willing to guide and He is willing to teach. He is intelligent, but He is not overbearing. He is humble and approachable in His demeanor, even though His power is absolutely undeniable. Therefore He is both a Lamb and a Lion. And if you come to Him in the day that He offers redemption, you will be coming to the Lamb. But if you wait for His coming in judgement, you are waiting on the Lion, and you will not like what it is that you will see.

I asked you to remember:

He is quick to forgive sin.  
He allows all to come to Him.  
He is no respecter of persons.

I said that when I began, I am saying it again as we end today. He is real. He lives! His work of redemption continues right now, just as it continued throughout His mortal life, just as it continued as He hung on the cross, just as it continued in His resurrection in Palestine and as He came to visit with the Nephites. He's ministered to other sheep. He's called other people. And there are, in fact, "holy men whom ye know not of" that still remain. Please, however, give heed to the scriptures I've read, the words of Joseph I've quoted, and the fact that I do have a witness that He is approachable, and that He is every bit alive today as He was when He walked on the road to Emmaus. And he's every bit as much willing to come and redeem you from the fall as He is willing to redeem anyone.

His work and His glory is culminated in you. His success is redeeming you. If you think that, well, "He's aloof, He's distant, and this is an impossibly high thing to achieve," the fact of the matter is, it is a greater achievement on His end to redeem you, than it is at your end to be redeemed. There's more anxiety, there's more desire. There's more rejoicing in heaven when He redeems someone from the fall than there is here.

He came, He suffered, He lived, He died. He did what He did in order to lift all of creation. And you are inextricably connected to Him. Therefore, trust that. Receive Him. It may start very

slow, very small, very distant. Act on that. Hearken to that. It gets louder. You will never wind up in the company of Gods and angels if you're not willing to have faith in those preliminary things that you receive that ask you to go and to do.

When I first got an answer to prayer sitting in a barracks in New Hampshire, if I hadn't acted on that, if I hadn't gone and done, I would never have beheld the Lord, much less been taught by Him. But I did. And I do. And whatever He asks of me, that's what I do now. And it doesn't matter how unpleasant I may find it, or how reluctant in my heart I may be to go and do. I go and I do. You need to do that. It may not even make much sense to you when you're going and you're doing. I can't tell you what sacrifices He may ask of you. But whatever He asks of you, that do you.

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