



CHRIST THE HOPE OF THE WORLD

Jesus is not only the hope for the people who are His, right now, and believe in Him and follow Him with their lives on December 1st, 2024. He's also the hope for the people who *will* be His, and will believe in Him and follow Him sometime in the future! Whether that's in the next 30 minutes, tomorrow, a week, a month, a year, two years, five years, ten years, twenty years, thirty years, fifty years, or centuries from now!

The religious leaders of Jesus' time were out to get Him. They were trying to trap Him, slander Him, defame Him, and ultimately they wanted Him dead. This meant that Jesus was on the run all the time. That was the case in Matthew 12:15b-21- Jesus was on the run from the Pharisees who wanted Him snuffed out;

Large crowds followed (Jesus), and He healed them all.

Jesus was in full public view, because "many followed him, and he healed all their sick" (12:15). From the beginning of his public ministry people came to Jesus for healing from the surrounding countryside (cf. 4:24 - 25; 9:35), now including people from as far away as Idumea, over a hundred miles away (see Mark 3:7 - 8).¹

To get admittance into a country club, you've got to pay a large sum of money and get a membership, only then do you get in. Only then are you allowed in.

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To get admittance into a public park, like Chestnut Ridge Park off East Ave in Kenmore, Akron, OH, you just show up. You don't need to pay a big fee. You don't need a membership. You show up. You let your kids play on the playground. You have a picnic, or whatever else.

Many of the people in these crowds did not have a "membership" to the Kingdom of God. They were not all godly people. They were not all faithful synagogue attenders, the "Church" of their culture and time. But Jesus healed, not one of them, but **all** of them. Why? Because heaven wanted to give people a taste! And what did they have to do? SHOW UP!

And Jesus isn't saying to you "get a nice pair of pants on, get a haircut, get a job, get into your Bible, get prayed up, get a shower, get your tattoos removed, get sober, get nonviolent, get your theology together, get baptized, get a clue, get your sex life in order, get your living situation together, and get into Church membership, and **then** I'll touch your life!

No, like the crowds, Jesus is saying, "Bring your jacked up self right to me and get a taste of heaven! SHOW UP AND I'LL SHOW UP! I'll show you who I am! I'll show you how powerful I am! How loving I am, how good I am, how forgiving I am, how merciful I am, how righteous I am, how holy I am, and how much I can flip your whole life around!" And when you get that taste you'll want more and more and more and more and more and more and more!!!! **Then** you'll hunger for the Word of God, **then** you'll wanna get your life together, **then** you'll wanna pray, **then** you'll wanna get sober, **then** you'll get a Christian tattoo, **then** you'll move away from violence and abuse, **then** you'll be hungry for theology, **then** you'll wanna get baptized, **then** you'll wanna be sexually pure, **then** you'll wanna faithfully be part of a Church community!

16 (Jesus) warned them not to make him known,

Not only does Jesus heal all who come, but he warns "them not to tell who he was." We have already seen that a regular aspect of Jesus' ministry is to demand secrecy about his identity and activity (8:4; cf. 12:16; 16:20; 17:9). Jesus carefully avoids stirring up in the crowds a misunderstanding of his messianic identity. The typical person in Israel hoped for liberation from oppression by the Roman occupation and the fulfillment of the promise of a Messiah who would restore the dignity of the Davidic kingdom to Israel. Jesus wants the people to see that his purpose in coming will not always meet their expectations. As Matthew now clarifies, Jesus is indeed the Messiah, but he has come meekly to bring justice to the Gentiles. Although miracles will attest the authenticity of his message about the arrival of the kingdom, Jesus does not want crowds clamoring

for miracles alone. They may misunderstand his message to mean that he has come to effect only national and military liberation.²

Now when I think of a “hype man” in the world of music, I think of Lil Jon. Lil Jon did everything he did in music and on stage to get attention, make money and sell records.

Jesus wasn't about hype. He wasn't doing miracles to get popular. He was very aware of who He was- the Messiah and the Son of God. He knew that letting that cat out of the bag too early would bring so much attention and scrutiny on Him, that He would get sent to the cross before His time. So He travelled around spreading the message of the Kingdom of God, and inviting people into full eternal forgiveness through His power and eventual sacrifice for their sins.

And through Jesus,

17 What was spoken through the prophet Isaiah (was) fulfilled:

Jesus was identified with the messianic Servant in Isaiah 42:1 - 4: The context in Isaiah's prophecy is the section often called the Servant Songs (Isa. 40 - 52). The identity of the Servant is perplexing, because it vacillates between the nation of Israel as the Servant (41:8 - 10; 44:1 - 3, 21; 45:4 [49:3?]) and an individual who leads the nation (42:1 - 4; 49:5 - 7). That individual emerges as the Servant Messiah who has a ministry and mission both to Israel and the nations.³

So the book of Isaiah was written about 700 years before Christ was on earth, and here was Jesus- fulfilling every Messianic prophecy in there and more!

18 Here is my servant whom I have chosen, my beloved in whom I delight; I will put my Spirit on him, and he will proclaim justice to the nations.

Jesus is the gentle, Spirit-endowed, Suffering Servant, who advances a mission of justice to the nations. The “justice” Jesus brings to the “nations” combines the sense of grace and judgment that has characterized the theme of inward righteousness that accompanies the arrival of the kingdom of heaven (e.g., 5:20). The Servant will pronounce the arrival of the kingdom as an invitation to kingdom life, but it is also a sentence of judgment on the rulers of this world.⁴

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The term “justice” in Greek was κρίσις (*krisis*) and meant a legal decision, a judgment determining guilt or innocence, a verdict, a decision, or an evaluation.⁵

There’s two kinds of “justice” that Jesus brings!

To the proud in spirit, the feeling and brokenness avoidant, the arrogant, the unrighteous, the merciless, the tainted in heart, the conflict makers, and the persecutors, Jesus brings a justice that would expose, convict, plunge into guilt, plunge into confusion, and confound.⁶ Jesus and the gospel throughout history has brought a justice to the nations which points out corruption, greed, immorality, hatred, prejudice, envy, idolatry, selfishness, elitism, dishonesty, overindulgence, consumerism, individualism, tribalism and more!

But;

*“Blessed are the poor in spirit,
for the kingdom of heaven is theirs.*

*Blessed are those who mourn,
for they will be comforted.*

*Blessed are the humble,
for they will inherit the earth.*

*Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness,
for they will be filled.*

*Blessed are the merciful,
for they will be shown mercy.*

*Blessed are the pure in heart,
for they will see God.*

*Blessed are the peacemakers,
for they will be called sons of God.*

*Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness,
for the kingdom of heaven is theirs. (Matt. 5:4-10)*

⁵ James Swanson, [*Dictionary of Biblical Languages with Semantic Domains: Greek \(New Testament\)*](#) (Oak Harbor: Logos Research Systems, Inc., 1997).

⁶ Inverse of Matt. 5:4-10

If you're aware of your sin, if you're aware of your need, if you're aware of your brokenness, if you're aware of your pride, if you long for something better for yourself, for others, and for the world, if you feel the pain of others, if you don't wanna lie to yourself but wanna see yourself clearly, if you want to bring peace where there is division and hatred, if you are one of the oppressed, hated, misunderstood and mistreated for the sake of His Name and His righteousness and His love, Jesus says; "The Kingdom of Heaven is yours!!!!"

19 (Jesus did) not argue or shout, and no one (heard his voice in the streets. 20 He (did) not break a bruised reed, and he (did) not put out a smoldering wick, until he led justice to victory.

This is a picture of a gentle Servant Messiah, who will not brazenly demand allegiance with his proclamation of justice but will gently and humbly invite those who are the most in need (11:28 - 30). The double metaphor of a bruised reed and smoldering wick emphasizes that the Servant will compassionately care for those who have been abused and who are about to expire because of misuse — pictures that find relevance in the harassed and helpless (9:36) and the weary and burdened (12:28) who are being oppressed not only by the foreign invading forces of Rome but also by the legalistic burdens from Israel's religious establishment.⁷

The Suffering Servant's advance of justice will not break those who are abused, nor will it smother those who are nearly out of resources; rather, he will provide the ultimate victory for those who respond to the invitation to enter the kingdom. The strong and the mighty are often victorious in this life because they advance their own causes by abusing others and withholding care from the needy. But even as Isaiah knew that evil would not have the ultimate victory, Matthew points to Jesus and declares that victory is at hand for those who seek God's justice.⁸

Jesus wasn't a softie. He didn't get walked on like a doormat, or timidly sit back acting all pious and tortured. He was as bold and truthful as a lion.

But this sinless Son of God who spent His earthly life obeying God in every way in order to be a perfect blood sacrifice for the sins of anyone who would genuinely call on His Name was not about making a big noise on His way to calvary for the redemption of all His future people! He didn't make a big ol stink about it! He dutifully did what the Lord called Him to do. He did it with poise. He did it with determination. He did it with graciousness and truth that we couldn't imagine.

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Why? So that our lives would be saved!

21 The nations will put their hope in his name. (Matt. 12:15b-21)

It was not only for Israel. All “the nations” would put their hope in the name of this Servant, the One who Matthew declares is none other than Jesus of Nazareth (cf. 2:23; 12:21). The “name” in 12:21 stands for the whole of the person, including his identity and mission. Jesus Messiah is a Suffering Servant who is Spirit-endowed and who offers hope, because the advance of the kingdom of heaven promises victory for all the nations of the world.⁹

The salvation that Jesus Christ offers is not for only people of european descent, african descent, asian descent south american descent, australian descent, or north american descent! It's not only for the lower class, lower middle class, middle class, upper middle class or upper class! It's not only for babies, toddlers, elementary kids, middle school kids, high school kids, people in their 20s, 30s, 40s, 50s, 60s, 70s, 80s, 90s or 100s! It's not only for democrats! It's not only for republicans! It's not only for independents! It's not only for baptists, pentecostals, methodists, presbyterians, non-denominational, wesleyans, catholics or protestants! It's not only for organic radical Christians. It's not only for formal megachurch Christians! It's not only for straight people! It's not only for LGBTQ people! The salvation that Jesus Christ offers is for any and everyone! And He flips lives around and aligns them with His Word!

The salvation that Jesus Christ offers is not for those who have it all together. If you're in sexual sin and you're tired of it, bring it to Him! He'll meet you where you're at, rescue you, pour His incredible forgiveness and love into you, and start to change you! If you're hooked on booze or dope and you're tired of it, bring it to Him! He'll meet you where you're at, rescue you, pour His incredible forgiveness and love into you, and start to change you! If you've been lying and cheating everyone and you're tired of it, bring it to Him! He'll meet you where you're at, rescue you, pour His incredible forgiveness and love into you, and start to change you! If you've been hooked on gettin those dolla dolla bills and you're tired of it, bring it to Him! He'll meet you where you're at, rescue you, pour His incredible forgiveness and love into you, and start to change you! If you've been eating, hoarding, napping, and streaming yourself into a depression and you're tired of it, bring it to Him! He'll meet you where you're at, rescue you, pour His incredible forgiveness and love into you, and start to change you! If you're hooked on sexual release and you're tired of it, bring it to Him! He'll meet you where you're at, rescue you, pour His incredible forgiveness and love into you, and start to change you!

⁹ NIV Application Commentary Copyright © 2004 by Michael J. Wilkins.

THIS IS A FREE GIFT! THE OFFER OF SALVATION IS FOR ANY AND EVERYBODY!
YOU DON'T GOTTA CLEAN YOURSELF UP OR GET IT TOGETHER FIRST! But
many are invited, and few are chosen. (Matt. 22:14) Don't wait! Surrender your life to
Jesus now!

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. Name a time when God moved in your life when you didn't deserve it, or didn't know Him. What does this say about God's grace?
2. What's the difference between God initiating relationship, forgiveness, and healing with us, versus us initiating relationship with Him? Does God really "make the first move", or do we?
3. Jesus didn't have the motive to get attention for Himself in anything He did, even in the miraculous. What does this say about the nature of God? What does this challenge in our nature?
4. Talk about the two sides of God's justice- to the evil and wicked, and to the humble and hungry.