

D&C Lesson # 2
Behold, I am Jesus Christ, the Savior of the World
(Parts of D&C 18, 19, 29, 34, 50, 76, 88, 121)
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(Here is inspirational background and evidences supporting the Restoration).

I. The name of Jesus Christ, and His teachings have spread throughout the world.

A. Christianity is the most populous faith in the world. Muslims accept Jesus **as a prophet** but feel Christians worship idols instead of God. Together both religions make up over 60% of earth's population. Add those of other faiths who acknowledge Jesus was a great teacher, and we find **the teachings of Jesus are to some extent honored by most people in the world.**

B. And yet, there has been a great loss of understanding as to who Jesus actually is, what His teachings really meant, and what he expects of mankind.

II. **It has required modern day revelation to restore belief that Jesus truly is the Son of God.**

A. The Bible often called Him Son of man, and most see Him only as a man.

B. Latter-day Revelation shows this title is a short version of "**Son of the Man of Holiness.**"

1. "Wherefore teach it unto your children, that all men, everywhere, must repent, or they can in nowise inherit the kingdom of God, for no unclean thing can dwell there, or dwell in his presence; for, in the language of Adam, Man of Holiness is his name, and the name of his Only Begotten is the **Son of Man [of Holiness]...**" (Moses 6:57).

2. Note that throughout the Doctrine and Covenants and the Pearl of Great Price, **the word "Man" when referring to Jesus as the Son of Man, is always capitalized.**

III. The Father and Son are not just spirits, **and both are personages of great Love and Holiness.**

[If they were just spirits, what would be the distinction between them and the Holy Ghost?]

A. Their united purpose was not to save just a few, but **all of mankind.**

B. They would do so by Christ's willingness to take upon himself men's sins (D&C 18:10-13).

IV. The Doctrine and Covenants adds vital knowledge of Christ's work of atonement.

A. The word "atonement" is seldom used outside of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and appears in the King James Version of the Bible only twice, not being understood.

B. Through the Doctrine and Covenants we come to understand more clearly the two basic meanings of the atonement.

1. The first meaning comes from the makeup of the word. The word "at-one-ment" means precisely that. It means that Christ has provided the way by which **we can be made One again with God,** from whose presence we were separated due to the transgression of Adam and Eve.

a. Perhaps this is explained best in D&C 88:14-19. "And the resurrection from the dead is the redemption of the soul. And the redemption of the soul is through him that quickened all things.... Therefore, it must needs be sanctified from all unrighteousness that it may be prepared for the celestial glory. For after it hath filled the measure of its creation, it shall be crowned with glory, even with the presence of God the Father."

b. In D&C 76: 62-70, He explains further, "These shall dwell in the presence of God and his Christ forever and ever.... These are they who are just men made perfect through Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, who wrought out this perfect atonement through the shedding of

his own blood. These are they whose bodies are celestial, whose glory is that of the sun, even the glory of God, the highest of all..."

c. So only through Christ and His atoning sacrifice can man stand again in the presence of God the Father. For He is, as explained by his title, "Man of Holiness." Only the Holy can dwell in His presence. And only through Christ's atonement can men be made Holy.

2. The second meaning of the atonement is contained in the Hebrew form of the word. That meaning is "to cover" or, in the case of Jesus, **to provide a covering for men's sins.**

a. The story of Adam and Eve actually foretold how Christ's atonement would serve as a covering for sin. Remember that Adam and Eve transgressed. Because of their transgression, they did not dare stand in the presence of God. So they hid. They sensed their nakedness [or unworthiness] before the pure being of God. In mercy, the Lord caused a creature to be sacrificed; its skins were given to Adam and Eve as a covering for their own nakedness. This covering allowed them to dare stand again in God's presence.

But **these events actually taught of the sacrifice of Jesus Christ.** Both His covering skin and His clothing were stripped from Him through scourging and crucifixion. His mangled flesh and His naked, stripped body served as a fulfillment of that creature sacrificed in Eden. **In providing Himself as sacrifice in a similar manner, Jesus was providing a covering for our sins.** Because of this --- His covering or atonement --- regardless of what any man has done, he may dare stand once more in God's presence if repentant and humble enough to accept Christ's covering.

3. The following scriptures in the Doctrine and Covenants show these truths.

"Listen to the voice of Jesus Christ, your Redeemer, the Great I Am, whose arm of mercy hath atoned for your sin; Who will gather his people even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings.... even as many as will hearken to my voice and humble themselves before me, and call upon me in mighty prayer. Behold, verily I say unto you that... your sins are forgiven you" (D&C 29:1-2). Just as a hen covers her offspring with her wings, [and as the wings of the cherubim covered the mercy seat of the Ark of the Covenant --- another witness of Christ's atonement], so Christ has covered our sins with His sacrifice and love, if we repent.

4. "Listen to him who is the advocate with the Father, who is pleading your cause before him.... Saying: Father, behold the sufferings and death of him who did no sin, in whom thou wast well pleased: behold the blood of thy Son which was shed, the blood of him whom thou gavest that thyself might be glorified" (D&C 45:3-4). [i.e., Dear Father, accept my blood as a covering for other men's sins, that they may be forgiven, and might, in their new holiness, glorify Thee].

c. Those who mock the covering garments of endowed members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, have no concept of what a sacred, symbolic covering they mock.

V. Doctrine and Covenants 19 reveals more of the depth of what Christ suffered in His work of atonement. It is powerful and has implications for our taking upon ourselves His name.

A. "Therefore, I command you to repent --- repent, lest I smite you by the rod of my mouth, and by my wrath, and by my anger, and your sufferings be sore --- how sore you know not, how exquisite you know not, yea, how hard to bear you know not. For behold, I, God, have suffered these things for all, that they might not suffer if they would repent; But if they would not repent they must suffer even as I; Which suffering caused myself, even God, the greatest of all to tremble because of pain, and to bleed at every pore, and to suffer both body and spirit --- and would that I might not drink the bitter cup, and shrink" (D&C 19:15-18).

B. While millions have suffered, and many have done so for noble causes, none experienced the great depth of suffering Jesus the Christ did which is **purposely and innocently suffering for**

the sake of the terrible guilt of others, with the hopes of bringing them to repentance. Look again at D&C 19. "I have suffered these things for thee if thou would repent."

C. My own feeling is that when we truly take upon ourselves the name of Christ, we are committing ourselves to suffer for the sake of others if there is any way we can to help bring them to repentance. While our means of doing so are more limited than those of Christ, there are ways that we can accomplish similar purposes. Each of us as individuals must seek God's spirit to find those ways. (See Lenet Read, "A Book About God's Love, The Ensign, January, 1988).

VI. Jesus was a Counselor to His Father in a Great Pre-Mortal Council in Heaven (D&C 121:32).

A. In fact, one of the names of God the Father is "Man of Counsel (Moses 7:35).

B. Similarly, when Isaiah prophesied of the coming of Jesus Christ, he revealed His title of Counselor --- not only Counselor, but "Wonderful Counselor" (Isaiah 9:6).

1. The scriptures were not written with punctuation. Later translators inserted them.

2. Some scholars say in Isaiah's prophecy there are actually four parallel titles for Christ, with four ennobling adjectives. (Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace). Hebrew writings are full of such parallelism. The comma might have been inserted as part of the apostasy. For apostasy taught Christ was the Only God and thus not Counselor to any other being. In truth He would have served as a wonderful Counselor to His Father.

3. Thus it is likely that as Counselor, **He helped devise the marvelous Plan of Salvation, and then volunteered to be the great Sufferer who would carry it out. "Here am I, send me."**

VII. The Doctrine and Covenants testify Christ Lives!

A. For centuries worshippers faced mostly the representations of a dead Christ. One of the great messages of the Restoration and the D&C is that "He Lives."

B. Greatly moving are the testimonies Joseph and Oliver Cowdery, born together:

"And now, after the many testimonies which have been given of him, this is the testimony last of all, which we give of him: That he lives! For we saw him, even on the right hand of God; and we heard the voice bearing record that he is the Only Begotten of the Father. That by him, and through him and of him, the worlds are and were created, and the inhabitants thereof are begotten sons and daughters unto God" (D&C 76:22-24). What thrilling testimonies!

VIII. Many raised in other churches who have been exposed mostly to representations of the dying Christ are greatly touched when exposed to our emphasis on the Living Christ.

A. One example was reported by Richard Eyre in "Mormon Times," January 6, 2012, *Deseret News*. He told of serving as a missionary in New York when the World's Fair was held there and he worked at the Mormon Pavilion. Across from them was the pavilion set up by the Vatican. One evening, as he and his companion were cleaning up, he noticed a solitary figure standing before the Christus. He went to him, and as he drew near saw that his shoulders were trembling. When he put his hands gently on his shoulder, the man turned, and was revealed to be a priest. When Elder Eyre asked him if anything was wrong, the priest replied, "No, it's just that I was thinking... we have the dead Christ, and you have the risen Lord."

B. Surely it was with guidance of the Lord that the First presidency and the Twelve Apostles were prompted to prepare a witness to the world signed and dated, January 1, 2000. It is called "The Living Christ."

Modern day prophets of the Lord still boldly testify to the world that Jesus the Christ lives!