

***“Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God” Acts 5:27-32 / John 20:19-31 (4/27/25)***

When I was not a Christian, many people around me tried to make me become a Christian. In my memory, I remember one of my teachers in elementary school who was a faithful Christian. She always gathered children and taught us about Heaven. What I remember most is that she said the gates of Heaven are decorated with many jewels, and Heaven is filled with gold.

In middle school in China, most of my Korean friends who studied abroad with me were Christians. They often told me that I had to believe in Jesus to go to Heaven. They did not explain why. They just told me to believe.

At that time, one of my roommates read the Bible every night. One day, I asked him about the Bible, and he picked some verses that related to a concern I was going through. I found it interesting that those verses seemed to describe my situation like a prophecy, but I still did not feel like reading the Bible seriously.

Even though these people tried to share Christianity with me, I did not accept it back then. After I became a Christian later on, I wondered why I did not believe in Jesus at that time.

Can you find out what all these people who shared Christianity had in common? They did not tell me who Jesus was. They told me many things about

Christianity, but no one clearly explained who Jesus really was.

Last week, we talked about the resurrection can be proven by witnesses. And witnesses of resurrection are people who know who Jesus is. So, as witnesses, it is very important that we clearly know who Jesus is.

So, who is Jesus? The simple but complete answer is Jesus is the Christ and the Son of God. Why is this simple confession so important, even though most Christians know it?

The word “Christ” came from the Greek word Christos, which is a translation of the Hebrew word Messiah. The word Messiah means “Savior.” So, when we say Jesus is the Christ, we are saying that Jesus is our Savior. This is a very basic and simple truth, but many Christians forget it and focus on other things. Many people, even Christians, make blessings and being well the main goal of their faith instead of remembering that Jesus is their Savior.

Let’s think about it. Imagine you see someone drowning, and you tell your son to save them. But in the process, your son dies, and the person you saved comes alive. Then, that person asks you, “Since you saved me, can you also give me some money, give me a car, or buy me a bigger house?” How shocking would that be? This happens when someone does not really understand how they were saved or who

saved them.

Of course, asking God for blessings or praying about personal problems is not wrong. But blessings from God should help us live for Jesus, our Savior. If blessings become the main purpose of our relationship with God, then we do not really know that Jesus is Christ.

We must also know that Jesus is the Son of God. This means believing in the Trinity—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Jesus is God who came to us in the human body. Knowing this helps us understand that God is with us.

Knowing that Jesus is Christ and the Son of God is very important because it gives direction to our lives. It helps us decide how to live for Jesus who saved us and how to live with God.

So, how does Jesus, our Christ and the Son of God, work in our lives?

First, Jesus transforms fear into peace. In today's Bible Scripture, Jesus appeared to His disciples who were afraid. And Jesus said, "Peace be with you." The disciples were hiding behind locked doors because they were scared the Jewish leaders would arrest and kill them. But think about it—who would have been scarier for the disciples at that moment, the Jewish leaders or Jesus? They had betrayed Jesus and run away when He was arrested. If Jesus suddenly stood before disciples

alive, would not they be afraid Jesus might punish them? But instead of judging them, Jesus' first words were, "Peace be with you." Jesus forgave his disciples and made peace with them, and their fear turned into joy when they realized it was Jesus.

There are many ways to get to know someone. You can read about that person or hear stories from other people. But the best way is to meet that person face-to-face and spend time with that person. Getting to know Jesus is the same.

I was baptized when I was 20 years old and went straight to seminary. I thought I knew well that "Jesus is the Christ and the Son of God." I confessed it at my baptism and even wrote a statement of faith for seminary. I thought I knew Jesus for sure. On the one hand, I had a happy faith life, but deep in my heart, I was filled with fear and uncomfortable feelings. My efforts to become a better Christian made me scared before God.

Before I truly met Jesus, my faith life had this cycle: I tried hard to be a good Christian, read the Bible, prayed, and went to worship. But I kept failing and felt frustrated about my sinful nature. On Sunday, I would make a new promise to try harder again, but then I would fall back into the same cycle. The more this cycle repeated, the more afraid I became that God would punish me for not fixing my problems.

Can you know the problem in my cycle? Back then, Jesus was only present in my life at church on Sundays. The goal of my faith was to become a better Christian, not to know Jesus more deeply. Every Sunday, I would say, “Thank you, Jesus! I’ll try again,” and then live my faith life without Jesus during the week.

But after I realized that Jesus is my Christ and that God is always with me, the purpose of my faith changed. It became about experiencing Jesus in my daily life and getting to know Him more. Of course, it’s still hard to feel Jesus every moment. Even as a preacher, I find it hard to live that way. But now, instead of fear, I have peace knowing that God is with me even in hard times. Once I truly knew who Jesus was, my direction and purpose in faith changed, and my fear turned into peace.

Second, Jesus transforms doubt into assurance. In today’s Bible story, we can see Thomas, known for doubting. Jesus did not blame Thomas for his doubt. Thomas said he would not believe Jesus was alive unless he could see the hole in Jesus’ hands and side. This might seem like a lack of faith. But Jesus knew that believing in His resurrection was more important than staying stuck in doubt. So, Jesus showed Thomas Jesus’ hands and helped turn Thomas’ doubt into faith.

I also had two big doubts when I was living my faith life without really knowing Jesus. First, I doubted myself. Second, I doubted God. I wondered, “Can I

really become a faithful Christian?” and “Is God really alive? God does not seem to respond to my life” But when I realized that Jesus is God who is always with me, those doubts transformed into assurance that God is with me in every moment.

Third, Jesus gives us a mission. When the risen Jesus appeared to His disciples, He did not just give them peace and assurance. After giving the disciples peace and showing them that Jesus was alive, Jesus said, “I am sending you.” This was the moment when the disciples, who had been hiding in fear, were given a mission. They were no longer just people who felt and stayed at peace and assurance. They became people with a mission to share that Jesus is the Christ and the Son of God.

After I truly knew who Jesus was, the purpose of my life completely changed. I did not just want to know God more for myself. I wanted to help other people know God too. Since I already knew Jesus was my Savior and God who is with me, I received the mission to share this Good News with others.

Jesus is Christ and the Son of God. We have heard this many times and know it very well. But if we do not meet Jesus personally and accept this truth with faith, our lives may not be very different from those of people who only seek blessings and success. But when we accept that Jesus is Christ and the Son of God with true

faith, our lives will completely change. I hope this week we can take some time to think about who Jesus is to us. I hope we can experience God's presence and have assurance from the resurrection of Jesus. Amen.