

Sep 12, 2010



Oaks Early Risers Bible Class

The Oaks Baptist Church
Grand Prairie, Texas

Lesson Leader:
James Haymon

Class Leaders:
Director: Ron Harris
Inreach: Pat Hester
Outreach: Shearon Lehrack
Secretary: Mary Clark

ESSENTIAL TRUTH Knowing Christ Personally

Date	Lesson	Text
08/01	Introduction	
08/08	Who is God	Exod 3:1-15
08/15	God Wants to Talk	Isa 6:1-10
08/22	Oaks120th Anniversary-No Class	
08/29	What God Expects	Mk 12:28-34
09/05	Bible is Important	Matt 4:1-11
09/12	Who is Jesus	Matt 16:13-20
09/19	Can I be Forgiven	John 3:1-17
09/26	Death	John 11:17-44
10/03	Lone Ranger	Acts 2:42-47
10/10	Keep it Real	Luke 11:37-54
10/17	Temptation	Gen 3:1-8
10/24	Meaningful Life	Luke 9:23-27
10/31	Holy Spirit	Acts 2:1-13
11/07	Grace	Eph 2:1-10
11/14	Summary and Review	

Food for Thought

Jesus promised the keys to the kingdom of God to Peter and the other disciples when Peter, on faith, testified to who Jesus was.

What do you think these keys can "open up" for us?

Session 5: Who is Jesus?

Matt 16:13-20

About Today's Lesson

Match a Name to a Face

What does it really mean to "know someone"? It can mean that you can match a name to a face. That is one level of knowing who a person is. However, do we really know a person when all we know is his or her name? We don't know if we can trust the person with what is in our hearts. If knowing someone means being able to match a face with a name, then at this level nobody on earth knows who Jesus is, because, in spite of all the best efforts of various artists down through the centuries, nobody knows what Jesus looked like. On the other hand, if by knowing someone we mean knowing vital things about their character - what they most value, what they will stand up for, what they can be trusted with - then we can know who Jesus is.

We can Know Jesus

We can know Him even better than the people we know who walk the earth with us, because many of them hide who they really are. Some smile and say sweet things when they are angry and waiting to stab you in the back. Others talk about the weather and the superficialities of life but are silent when it comes to talking about who they are and what they feel deep inside. Still others seem to change like a chameleon with their environment, and you never know what is really important to them. As we examine the picture we get of Jesus in Scripture, we find that He was not like any of these people we have described. When He was angry, He let you know He was angry. He stood firm for what He valued, loving God and loving all people, especially those who were struggling. He gave His life for the mission God had given Him.

Knowing Him by His mission

It was that mission that most defined who Jesus is. He is God's Son who came into this world to die for the sins of all of us, and then be raised again to conquer death. Knowing who Jesus is must include knowing what He came to do. In this session we will look at these aspects of who Jesus is.

Life Change Lesson

Publicly acknowledge that you have chosen to become a Christian and live for Jesus

What we can do. Make a decision about who you believe Jesus is, and that you make that decision public in some way. Decide that of all the religions and philosophical perspectives in the world, Christ and His way is the only way to God and salvation.

Declare by your lifestyle that Jesus Christ is Lord of your life

What we can do. Lip service is never enough. Decide to show by the way you live that Jesus Christ is Lord of your life. Let His values be your values and consult Him on every step of your life journey.

(Adapted from Essential Truth: Knowing Christ Personally)

NOTES AND CROSS-REFERENCES

Today's Lesson

In many relationships there are certain defining moments where the nature of the relationship comes into sharper focus. In many respects, that was the kind of situation we read about in our Scripture for today. Jesus had already spent a great deal of time with His disciples. They were in their final year of a three-year ministry together. After all of that, Jesus wanted to know, "Am I getting through to them? Are they at least starting to understand what I am about?"

Jesus starts off asking who *other* people think He is. The guesses they list are significant. Previous to Jesus, John the Baptist had been the most influential religious figure in the lives of the people. He even drew many of the religious leaders of His day out of their comfortable homes to listen to Him in the desert (Matt. 3:7-10). The people knew that by this time John the Baptist was dead. He had been imprisoned by Herod (Matt. 11:2) and later executed (Mark 6:14-29) for taking a stand against Herod's immorality. John the Baptist himself was thought to be the prophet Elijah (John 1:21) back from the dead. Later the Emperor Domitian was thought to be Nero, brought back to life for evil. Thus many believed that Jesus was John the Baptist, raised from the dead. King Herod himself seemed to believe this (Mark 6:14-16).

Others said that Jesus was Elijah. He was so great that rather than letting him die, God sent a chariot of fire to take Elijah up to heaven (2 Kings 2:11). Like Jesus, Elijah had raised someone from death (1 Kings 17:17-24). Because of his greatness, it was prophesied that Elijah would return to earth. Malachi had said, "See I will send you the prophet Elijah before that great and dreadful day of the Lord comes. He will turn the hearts of the fathers to their children and the hearts of the children to their fathers" (Mal. 4:5-6). Still others said that Jesus was one of the prophets. There had not been a great prophet for hundreds of years. The word *prophet* means "speak for" and hence these were men who "spoke for God."

However, Jesus dismissed these titles and looked for something more from His disciples. Jesus was not disappointed. When the disciples were asked who *they* thought Jesus was, Peter said, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God." Both parts of this response are significant. Peter recognized Jesus as the *Christ*. Christ was the Greek form of the Hebrew word *Messiah*. The word meant "anointed one." Originally, the word was applied to any of Israel's kings, who were anointed with oil as a sign that God had ordained them to their position and that they had the Spirit of God. But after God promised the people a special king who would bring in an eternal kingdom (Isa. 9:1-7), the word *Messiah* came to mean this very unique king who was coming. There were many prophets in Israel's history. There would be only one Messiah.

Peter also recognized that Jesus was *the Son of God*. God had already declared that Jesus was the Son of God when Jesus was baptized (Matt. 3:17). It would be declared again by God during Jesus' transfiguration, when "His face shone like the sun, and his clothes became as white as the light" (Matt. 17:2). The Bible says, "While he was still speaking, a bright cloud enveloped them, and a voice from the cloud said, 'This is my Son, whom I love: with him I am well pleased. Listen to him!'" (Matt 17:5). What did it mean that Jesus was God's Son? Peter probably did not fully understand since he later resisted what Jesus had to do as the Son of God (Matt 16:21-23). Hebrews 1:3 says, "The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being." That is what a Son should do - reflect who his father is.

Preparation for the Next Session (09/19/10)

	READINGS	REFLECTIVE QUESTIONS
Monday	John 3:1-3	Why did Jesus not respond to Nicodemus' statement?
Tuesday	John 3:4-7	What is the basic difference between their understanding of rebirth?
Wednesday	John 3:8-9	Why did Jesus compare the Spirit to the wind? Have you ever experienced the Spirit?
Thursday	John 3:10-15	Jesus connected new birth and eternal life. Why do you think it was hard to understand rebirth?
Friday	John 3:16-17	From these verses what do you learn of God's attitude toward us? What would you say is the foundational characteristic of God?
Saturday	Romans 6:7	How do you let go of the guilt of sin?
Sunday	Romans 6:8-11	Paul says we are alive to God. Think about God's holiness, our sinfulness and rebirth. How important is it to understand forgiveness to be alive to God?

(Adapted from Essential Truth: Knowing Christ Personally)