

There are many ways people welcome Jesus into their lives, but not all of them lead to eternal life. It's crucial to understand the real purpose behind why Jesus came to earth; otherwise, you might think you're walking with God when, in reality, He's not even with you. To truly receive Jesus, one must understand the primary purpose of His coming — it is not just for physical healing, material blessings, or worldly success, but to save humanity from sin and eternal separation from God.

The Purpose of Jesus' Coming

In John 3:16-17 (NIV), we read:

For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him.

This passage underscores that the ultimate purpose of Jesus' coming is salvation—eternal life with God, not temporary blessings. Without this understanding, we risk using Jesus for personal gain or comfort, rather than for true spiritual transformation.

Let's look at a few examples from the Bible to better understand how we should truly receive Jesus.

The Calling of Peter

There was a time when Peter was fishing. After struggling all night with no success, he saw a man he didn't recognize approaching him, teaching people by the shore of the Sea of Galilee. Once He finished teaching, He told Peter to cast the nets into deeper waters. Peter, likely seeing this as a man of God, chose to follow the instructions. And when they cast the nets, they caught so many fish that the nets began to break. They had to call for help from nearby fishermen, who also filled their boats with fish to the point of nearly sinking.

So, what happened next?

In Luke 5:4-11, we read:

Luke 5:4-11

"4 When He had finished speaking, He said to Simon, 'Put out into deep water, and let down the nets for a catch.'

5 Simon answered, 'Master, we've worked hard all night and haven't caught anything. But because you say so, I will let down the nets.'

6 When they did, they caught such a large number of fish that their nets began to break.

7 So they signaled their partners in the other boat to come and help them, and they came and filled both boats so full that they began to sink.

8 When Simon Peter saw this, he fell at Jesus' knees and said, 'Go away from me, Lord; I am a sinful man!'

9 For he and all his companions were astonished at the catch of fish they had taken,

10 and so were James and John, the sons of Zebedee, Simon's partners. Then Jesus said to Simon, 'Don't be afraid; from now on you will fish for people.'

11 So they pulled their boats up on shore, left everything and followed Him.

Theological Insight:

Notice that Peter's response was one of humility and repentance. When faced with the miraculous catch, he immediately recognized his sinfulness and said, "Go away from me, Lord; I am a sinful man!" This mirrors the response of many biblical figures when confronted with God's holiness. Isaiah had a similar reaction when he saw a vision of the Lord in Isaiah 6:5:

"to me!" I cried. "I am ruined! For I am a man of unclean lips, and I live among a people of unclean lips, and my eyes have seen the King, the Lord Almighty."

The miracle caused Peter to see himself clearly—he was a sinner standing in the presence of a holy God. Repentance (a turning away from sin) and humility are essential aspects of genuinely receiving Jesus.

The Crowds and the Miracles: Seeking Jesus for the Wrong Reasons

In John 6:1-32, we see another group of people who received Jesus not out of a desire for salvation but for physical provision. Jesus fed over 5,000 people with five loaves of bread and two fish. The people, amazed by the miracle, wanted to make Him king. However, they didn't seek

Jesus for eternal life or spiritual transformation; they saw Him as a provider for their earthly needs.

John 6:24-27

“24 Once the crowd realized that neither Jesus nor His disciples were there, they got into boats and went to Capernaum in search of Jesus.

25 When they found Him on the other side of the lake, they asked Him, ‘Rabbi, when did you get here?’

26 Jesus answered, ‘Very truly I tell you, you are looking for Me, not because you saw the signs I performed but because you ate the loaves and had your fill.

27 Do not work for food that spoils, but for food that endures to eternal life, which the Son of Man will give you. For on Him God the Father has placed His seal of approval.

Theological Insight:

Jesus rebuked them for focusing on temporary sustenance rather than eternal life. John 6:27 speaks to a crucial point: while God cares for our physical needs, His primary concern is our eternal salvation. He offers us the “food that endures to eternal life”—this is a metaphor for the spiritual nourishment that only He can provide. As Jesus later explains in John 6:35, “I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never go hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty.”

The Man Born Blind: A Journey of True Sight

In John 9, we read the account of a man who was born blind. Jesus healed him, and though he knew that Jesus had healed him, he did not initially recognize who Jesus was. His spiritual journey unfolded as he sought to understand Jesus’ identity. In the end, after being expelled from the synagogue for proclaiming that Jesus was the Messiah, Jesus revealed Himself to the man, and the man truly came to believe.

John 9:35-38

“35 Jesus heard that they had thrown him out, and when He found him, He said, ‘Do you believe in the Son of Man?’

36 'Who is he, sir?' the man asked. 'Tell me so that I may believe in him.'

37 Jesus said, 'You have now seen him; in fact, he is the one speaking with you.'

38 Then the man said, 'Lord, I believe,' and he worshiped Him.

Theological Insight:

This story emphasizes the theme of spiritual blindness—how people can be physically healed but still be blind to the truth of who Jesus is. It's a reminder that Jesus not only heals our bodies but also opens our eyes to spiritual truths. 2 Corinthians 4:4 warns that "the god of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers, so that they cannot see the light of the gospel that displays the glory of Christ." True spiritual sight is the ability to recognize Jesus as the Son of God and the Savior of the world.

Repentance and the True Meaning of Miracles

Many today seek Jesus only for the benefits He offers in this life, whether it be health, wealth, or success. However, the purpose of miracles is not

just to solve temporary problems but to point to Jesus and lead us to repentance. Miracles, signs, and wonders are meant to stir us to a deeper spiritual reality—to recognize our need for salvation and to draw near to God.

Romans 2:4

Or do you show contempt for the riches of his kindness, forbearance and patience, not realizing that God's kindness is intended to lead you to repentance?

When God heals your body, that is not the ultimate blessing. When He blesses your work, that is not the ultimate success. The true miracle is when you come to recognize who Jesus is—the Savior who came to deliver you from sin and death.

Matthew 11:20-24

"20 Then Jesus began to denounce the towns where most of His miracles had been performed, because they did not repent.

21 Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! For if the miracles that were performed in you had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes.

22 But I tell you, it will be more bearable for Tyre and Sidon on the day of judgment than for you.

23 And you, Capernaum, will you be lifted to the heavens? No, you will go down to Hades. For if the miracles performed in you had been done in Sodom, it would still be standing today.

24 But I tell you that it will be more bearable for Sodom on the day of judgment than for you.

Theological Insight:

This passage underscores the danger of unrepentant hearts despite the abundance of God's miracles. Repentance is the key response to God's kindness and miracles. If we miss the call to repentance, we miss the entire point of God's interventions in our lives.

Conclusion: The True Meaning of Jesus' Invitation

Ultimately, the question remains: How do you receive Jesus? Do you receive Him as a means to your worldly success, or do you recognize Him as the Savior

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