

**The Journey to the Cross**  
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Good morning, Lighthouse, are you ready for the Word of God this morning?

**Luke 24:1-8**

1 Now upon the first *day* of the week, very early in the morning, they came unto the sepulchre, bringing the spices which they had prepared, and certain *others* with them.

2 And they found the stone rolled away from the sepulchre.

3 And they entered in, and found not the body of the Lord Jesus.

4 And it came to pass, as they were much perplexed thereabout, behold, two men stood by them in shining garments:

5 And as they were afraid, and bowed down *their* faces to the earth, they said unto them, Why seek ye the living among the dead?

6 He is not here, but is risen: remember how he spake unto you when he was yet in Galilee,

7 Saying, **The Son of man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and the third day rise again.**

8 And they remembered his words,

Who is this “Son of Man” that must be crucified and rise again?

**1 Timothy 3:16** And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory.

Jesus, otherwise known as the *Son of Man*, is the subject of this great mystery. He is God Himself, manifest in flesh.

There are many in this world who do not believe the Bible.

Some have set themselves up as an overt enemy of God’s Word because they simply don’t want to be ruled by it.

Others just don’t know whether the Bible is really the Word of God; or not one way or the other.

Others believe the Bible to be the Word of God but have little understanding of it.

Of the latter of these, many people have the idea that God created man to live in a utopian world with Him to sort of be His pets; and then when man sinned, it all went wrong and God then had to come up with a plan to fix it; thus was born God’s plan of salvation.

No, that's not the way it happened.

God's purpose in our creation was founded in the one thing that makes all our lives worth living...**and that one thing is love.**

**1 John 4:19** We love him, because he first loved us.

God first loved us and then commanded us to love Him back. Now that ought to be pretty reasonable seeing that God has not only given us life but also every good thing we've ever enjoyed.

There is something special God had to *build in* to us when He created us, something that would enable us to love Him back.

That something special is a choice; *freedom of choice*.

Without it, love simply cannot exist.

We tend to forget that God is not like us. Yes, we are created in His image and in His likeness; but that only goes so far.

We go along in life and things happen; events occur...and then we respond to them as best we can.

Not so with God. God has never been surprised; He has never experienced an unexpected event.

Someone well said, "Has it ever occurred to you that nothing has ever occurred to God?"

The journey to the cross did not begin when man sinned and God's plans for us all went wrong...Adam's sin was no surprise to God.

Neither is yours.

God knew that if He built-in the capability of sin, the capability to reject Him; especially with the fact that He left Satan running around loose...that sooner or later man would fall.

So somewhere back in the eons of eternity, before the world even began, the journey to the cross was set in motion.

**Revelation 13:8** And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him [Satan], whose names are not written in the book of life of **the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.**

God's plan to redeem man was in place long before man was ever created.

## **I. The Journey to the Cross has been preached since the world began.**

### *A. Beginning with Adam on down unto today.*

1. John the Baptist was the final prophet before the arrival of the Son of Man.

#### **2. Luke 1:68-80**

68 Blessed *be* the Lord God of Israel; for he hath visited and redeemed his people,

69 And hath raised up an horn of salvation for us in the house of his servant David;

70 As he spake by the mouth of his holy prophets, **which have been since the world began:**

71 That we should be saved from our enemies, and from the hand of all that hate us;

72 To perform the mercy *promised* to our fathers, and to remember his holy covenant;

73 The oath which he sware to our father Abraham,

74 That he would grant unto us, that we being delivered out of the hand of our enemies might serve him without fear,

75 In holiness and righteousness before him, all the days of our life.

76 And thou, child, shalt be called the prophet of the Highest: for thou shalt go before the face of the Lord to prepare his ways;

77 To give knowledge of salvation unto his people by the remission of their sins,

78 Through the tender mercy of our God; whereby the dayspring from on high hath visited us,

79 To give light to them that sit in darkness and *in* the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace.

80 And the child [John] grew, and waxed strong in spirit, and was in the deserts till the day of his shewing unto Israel.

### *B. Today, God's eternal plan is preached through the Son.*

#### **1. Hebrews 1:1-3**

1 God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets,

2 Hath in these last days spoken unto us by *his* Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds;

3 Who being the brightness of *his* glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high;

2. The Bible in your hands is the evidence of God speaking to us through His Son...

#### **3. John 1:1-2**

1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

2 The same was in the beginning with God.

**John 1:14** And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.

#### 4. **Jesus is the Word!**

### II. **The Journey to the Cross is the theme of the New Testament.**

*A. In the fullness of time, the journey to the cross brought God Himself to Earth.*

#### 1. **Luke 1:26-35**

26 And in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God unto a city of Galilee, named Nazareth,

27 To a virgin espoused to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David; and the virgin's name was Mary.

28 And the angel came in unto her, and said, Hail, *thou that art* highly favoured, the Lord *is* with thee: blessed *art* thou among women.

29 And when she saw *him*, she was troubled at his saying, and cast in her mind what manner of salutation this should be.

30 And the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favour with God.

31 And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS.

32 He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David:

33 And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end.

34 Then said Mary unto the angel, How shall this be, seeing I know not a man?

35 And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be **called the Son of God**.

2. In **Isaiah 55:8-9** the Bible declares that God doesn't think like we think nor does He do as we would do.

3. We could imagine God coming to earth in the clouds with a massive army of Angels at his back shining in royal array announcing to the world that their King has arrived at last.

4. But instead He shows up in the poorest of human circumstances as a helpless newborn baby whose family can provide only a feed trough for his bed.

*B. The journey was hard just getting to the Bethlehem manger.*

1. The prophets say that Messiah will come from Bethlehem.

2. **Micah 5:2** But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, *though* thou be little among the thousands of Judah, *yet* out of thee shall he come forth unto me *that is* to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth *have been* from of old, from everlasting.

3. In Mary's ninth month, she and Joseph are living in Nazareth when the government announces a new taxation and orders every citizen back to the city of their fathers to register for the tax.

#### 4. **Luke 2:1-7**

1 And it came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus, that all the world should be taxed.

2 (*And this taxing was first made when Cyrenius was governor of Syria.*)

3 And all went to be taxed, every one into his own city.

4 And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judaea, unto the city of David, which is called Bethlehem; (because he was of the house and lineage of David:)

5 To be taxed with Mary his espoused wife, being great with child.

6 And so it was, that, while they were there, the days were accomplished that she should be delivered.

7 And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn.

5. "Come on Preacher, Nazareth to Bethlehem is several weeks' journey in rough country; either on a donkey or walking; do you really believe they were forced there by a taxation?"

*C. Of course I believe it! If you don't want to believe the Bible, believe history.*

#### 1. **I quote the historian Josephus (not a Christian). Antiquities of the Jews book 18, chapter 1.**

1. [A.D. 7.] Now Cyrenius, a Roman senator, and one who had gone through other magistracies, and had passed through them till he had been consul; and one who, on other accounts, was of great dignity, came at this time into Syria, with a few others; being sent by Cesar to be a judge of that nation; and to take an account of their substance. Coponius also, a man of the equestrian order, was sent together with him: to have the supreme power over the Jews. Moreover Cyrenius came himself into Judea, which was now added to the province of Syria, to take an account of their substance, and to dispose of Archelaus's money. But the Jews, although at the beginning they took the report of a taxation heinously; yet did they leave off any farther opposition to it, by the persuasion of Joazar, who was the son of Boethus [pronounced Bow' uh thooze], and High Priest.

2. As you continue to read our Lord's journey to the cross, you will read of Herod and Phillip and Phillip's wife and Salome [Sal o may' or Su lo' me] and others who tried to destroy the Lord...are they real?

3. Of course they are; everything the Bible declares is real!

#### 4. Antiquities of the Jews book 18, chapter 2.

1. [A.D. 8.] When Cyrenius had now disposed of Archelaus's money; and when the taxings were come to a conclusion; which were made in the thirty-seventh year of Cesar's victory over Antony at Actium; (5) he deprived Joazar of the High Priesthood, which dignity had been conferred on him by the multitude: and he appointed Ananus [A non' us], the son of Seth, to be High Priest. [A.D. 9.] While Herod and Philip had each of them received their own tetrarchy, and settled the affairs thereof. [A.D. 10.] Herod also built a wall about Sepphoris: which is the security of all Galilee; and made it the metropolis of the country. He also built a wall round Betharamphtha: which was it self a city also; and called it Julias; from the name of the Emperor's wife. When Philip also had built Paneas, a city at the fountains of Jordan; he named it Cesarea. He also advanced the village Bethsaida, situate at the lake of Gennesareth, unto the dignity of a city; both by the number of inhabitants it contained, and its other grandeur: and called it by the name of Julias; the same name with Cesar's daughter.

Chapter 2; paragraph 2: Marcus Ambivivus... Under whom Salome, the sister of King Herod, died;

Cesarea and the remains of its grandeur still remain and can be visited today.

4. Still don't believe it? I suppose you don't believe there was an Abe Lincoln or a George Washington, either.

5. All the characters, even Pilate is found in the pages of history. I quote Encyclopedia Britannica:

According to the traditional account of his life, Pilate was a Roman equestrian (knight) of the [Samnite](#) clan of the Pontii (hence his name Pontius). He was appointed prefect of Judaea through the intervention of [Sejanus](#), a favourite of the Roman emperor Tiberius. (That his title was *prefect* is confirmed by an inscription from [Caesarea](#).)

Protected by Sejanus, Pilate incurred the [enmity](#) of the [Jews](#) by insulting their religious sensibilities, as when he hung worship images of the emperor throughout [Jerusalem](#) and had [coins](#) bearing pagan religious symbols minted. After Sejanus's fall (31 ce), Pilate was exposed to sharper [criticism](#) from the Jews, who may have capitalized on his vulnerability by obtaining a legal death sentence on Jesus (John 19:12). The [Samaritans](#) reported him to Vitellius, [legate](#) of Syria, after he had attacked them on [Mount Gerizim](#) (36 ce). He was then ordered back to Rome to stand trial for cruelty and oppression, particularly on the charge that he executed men without proper trial. According to [Eusebius of Caesarea](#)'s *Ecclesiastical History*, Pilate killed himself on orders from Emperor [Caligula](#) in 39 ce.

6. Every syllable of God's Holy Scriptures is true and reliable and is backed up by mountains of proof and evidence in agreement from all reputable sources.

7. The journey to the cross began before the world was...and it ended in **John 19:30** when Jesus died and declared to the world, "It is finished".

**Conclusion:**

**History tells us who, what and how...but only the Holy Scriptures tell us why.**

**The why is because God loves you.**

**He died and was buried and rose from the dead...for you!**

**You may be wondering, "If God loves me so much, why has he allowed so much bad to happen to me?"**

**Sin creates bad for everybody, even after we are saved.**

**The same principle declaring that love can exist by choice only is also the principle that will leave you lost and undone.**

**Jesus has died for you, He has paid for your sins, He has provided you an eternal home in heaven with Him.**

**He has proven this again and again with facts and evidence and with His undeniable presence.**

**You know the truth, you know the message we preach is all true and completely real; now you must choose to love Him back; you must choose to place your trust in Him.**

**And choose you must! God will not force you to love Him nor will He force you to be saved...you must choose.**