

Christ, or Messiah



Titles of Jesus (Part 7)
by Derek Prince

It's good to be with you again, sharing with you precious truths out of Scripture that are particularly appropriate to this Christmas Season.

Let me state again my sincere desire that each one of you, my listeners, may be truly blessed at this Christmas Season—with blessings that are not merely transient or carnal—but with blessings that truly represent the purpose of God in giving us Christ—blessings that are eternal and spiritual.

It is with this in mind that I've chosen my special theme for this season: Titles of Jesus.

Scripture gives many wonderful titles to Jesus. Each tells us something special and important about Jesus Himself. Each presents us with a distinctive aspect of His many-sided nature. As we put these titles together and meditate on the significance of each, we see Jesus Himself in a much clearer and fuller way. It is keeping our eyes on Jesus in this way that will enable us to enjoy the true beauty and blessedness of Christmas.

The title I spoke about in my talk yesterday was very simple, but infinitely meaningful: Savior.

Today I'm going to speak about another title that is equally simple, and no less meaningful: Christ.

Some people don't realize that Christ is a title. Let me just take a moment to explain to you the background of that word Christ. It's taken from the Greek of the New Testament. The Greek word is christos and that means, very simply and definitely, "anointed," and it implies anointed with oil. The Greek christos, in turn, is a representation of a word already familiar in the Old Testament in Hebrew. The Hebrew word is Mashiach which likewise means exactly the same, "anointed." In English we have changed it into Messiah. So Christ, in the New Testament, and Messiah in the Old Testament mean one and the same thing, the Anointed One. Furthermore, they refer to one and the same person, Jesus. It's remarkable how many Christian people don't realize that Christ is the same as Messiah. It's equally remarkable how many Jewish people don't realize that Messiah is the same as Christ. But which ever title we use, we mean the Anointed One.

Now, let's look at the message that was given by the angels to the shepherds at the time of Jesus' birth. In Luke 2, verse 11, the angel said this:

> "Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; [That's the title we looked at yesterday, Savior] he is Christ the Lord." (NIV)

So the Savior is the Christ, the anointed one. This was the fulfillment of God's long-standing promise to Israel, that He would one day send them an anointed one who would be two things, a Deliverer and a King.

This was familiar to them. For instance, in the Book of Judges, God sent men of His choosing who became deliverers and ruled Israel for awhile. And each one of those judges owed his ability to deliver Israel to the Anointing of the Holy Spirit upon him. And then after that, when God gave Israel kings, the kings were set apart by the ceremony of anointing with oil. This is true of Israel's first king, Saul. We read in 1 Samuel, chapter 10, verse 1:

> "Then Samuel took a flask of oil and poured it on Saul's head and kissed him, saying, 'Has not the Lord anointed you leader over his inheritance?'" (NIV)

To be leader over God's inheritance, a man had to be anointed with oil. The oil, of course, being a picture or a type of the Holy Spirit.

It's brought out even more clearly in the case of Israel's second king, David. God sent Samuel to the house of Jesse to anoint the king, and the appointed king was the youngest son, David. In 1 Samuel 16:13 we read:

> "So Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him [that's David] in the presence of his brothers, and from that day on the Spirit of the Lord came upon David in power." (NIV)

So there we see David being set aside by the anointing with oil to be the deliverer and the king for Israel. And the inner meaning of the anointing is brought out from the subsequent statement, "from that day on the Spirit of the Lord came upon David in power." So, the Christ, the Messiah, is the one anointed with the power of the Holy Spirit to be a deliverer and a ruler.

That there was to be a greater deliverer and ruler to come, even greater than David, is stated various places in the Old Testament. For instance, in Isaiah, chapter 11, verses 1 through 4:

> "Then a shoot will spring from the stem of Jesse, and a branch from his roots will bear fruit. [It promises that this deliverer and king will come from the line of David] And the Spirit of the Lord will rest on Him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and strength, the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord. [That's what makes him the anointed, the Spirit of the Lord resting upon him. Then the result is stated] He will delight in the fear of the Lord, and He will not judge by what His eyes see, nor make a decision by what His ears hear; But with righteousness He will judge the poor, and decide with fairness for the afflicted of the earth; and He will strike the earth with the rod of His mouth, and with the breath of His lips He will slay the wicked." (NASB)

Here's God's righteous king who's absolutely fair, impartial, and totally discerning in all his judgments and in the administration of his kingdom. And the same promise is given again in Isaiah 61, verse 1, where the Messiah is portrayed, speaking in the first person, and He says:

> "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because the Lord has anointed me to bring good news to the afflicted; he has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to captives, and freedom to prisoners." (NASB)

There again, all depends on the anointing of the Holy Spirit. The one who is thus anointed by the Holy Spirit is the one who is sent by God with a message of mercy and love and grace and healing power, to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to captives and freedom to prisoners. That was the promise of the Messiah, the Christ, the Anointed One. All God's promises of the Anointed Messiah, the Christ, the Deliverer, and the King found their fulfillment in Jesus of Nazareth.

We'll look at three passages from the fourth chapter of Luke's gospel which bring out this fact. Jesus became, when the Holy Spirit came upon him at the River Jordan, the Anointed, the Messiah. From eternity he was the one destined to be the anointed but a certain point in history, when the Holy Spirit came upon Him, he became in actual effect, the Anointed. This is the description of what happened to Jesus after His baptism in Jordan by John the Baptist. Luke 4:1:

> "And Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led about by the Spirit in the wilderness. [Note He was filled; he was led by the Holy Spirit. The anointing was upon Him. And then in Luke 4:14, after His temptation in the wilderness, it says this:] Jesus returned to Galilee in the power of the Spirit; and news about Him spread through all the surrounding districts." (NASB)

So, He was filled with the Spirit, led by the Spirit, and empowered by the Holy Spirit. He was truly the Mashia, the Messiah, the Christos, the Anointed. And then, thirdly, in Luke, chapter 4, verses 17 and 18, we read how He Himself declared that He was the fulfillment of God's promise and He Himself entered into the synagogue in Nazareth and took the Scripture which we've already read in Isaiah 61:1 and applied it to Himself. Let's see what Luke says here; Luke 4:17 and 18:

> "The book of the prophet Isaish was handed to Him. [That's Jesus] He opened the book, and found the place where it was written, 'The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives, and recovery of sight to the blind, to set free those who are downtrodden, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord.'" (NASB)

Then He closed the book and in words of tremendous historical significance he said to them, "Today this prophesy is fulfilled in your ears." He said, "I am the one; I am the Anointed; The Spirit of the Lord is Upon me", and he went forth from that moment as the Deliverer bringing release to the captives, recovery of sight to the blind, setting free those who were downtrodden, bringing the Gospel to the poor. This marvelous ministry of Jesus, the Anointed, the Christ, the Messiah, is summed up by Peter in one verse. As he was speaking to the house of Cornelius, he described to them what he'd witnessed in the ministry of Jesus. Acts 10:38:

> "You know of Jesus of Nazareth, how God anointed Him with the Holy Spirit and with power, and how He went about doing good, and healing all who were oppressed by the devil; for God was with Him." (NASB)

That's the summation of the ministry of Jesus as the Messiah, the Anointed, the Christ. God anointed Him with the Holy Spirit. God was with Him. And in the power of that anointing, He went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed of the devil. It always blesses me to see that healing is attributed to God; sickness to the devil. Also in that verse we have all three persons of the Godhead. God the Father anointed Jesus the Son with the Spirit, and the result; healing and deliverance for all humanity. What a blessed message; the message of the Christ.

Well our time is up for today. I'll be back with you again tomorrow at this time. Tomorrow I'll be speaking about yet another wonderful title of Jesus.

Radio Program

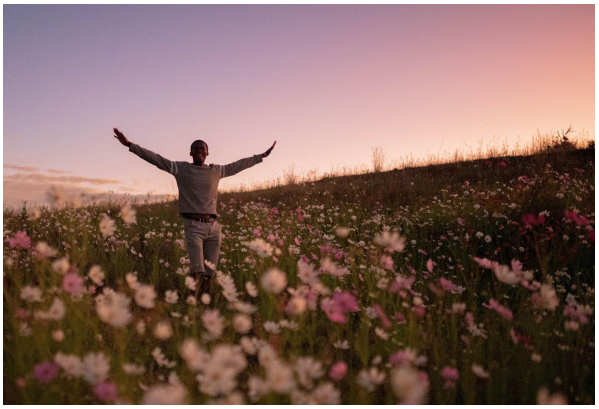
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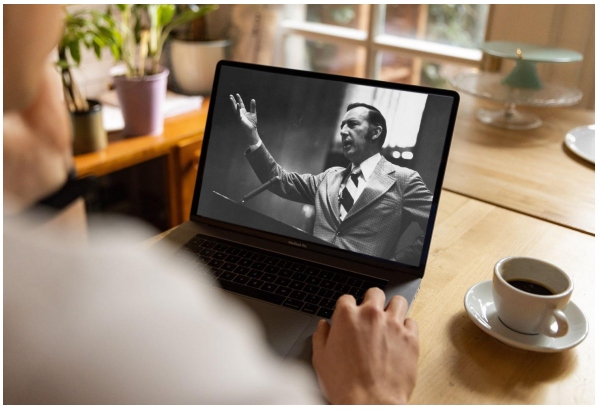
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