

(The Sufficiency of the Saviour) 1. the Claims of Christ

by Stephen Olford

Stephen Olford emphasizes the sufficiency of Jesus as the way, truth, and life for a world in need of direction, clarity, and hope.

Duration: 21:43

Scripture: John 14:1, John 14:6-7

Topics: "Sufficiency Of The Saviour"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes that the world is lost and in need of salvation. He explains that Jesus came to seek and save the lost, and that He is the way to God. The preacher shares a personal story from his time in Africa, where a young man blazed a trail through a dark forest, illustrating the concept of Jesus being the way. The sermon also addresses the sad state of the world, with high divorce rates and child suicides, and emphasizes the need for newness of life through Jesus.

Transcript

Jesus said, I am the light of the world. He who follows me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life. Our first scene is the Last Supper.

Jesus is speaking to his disciples. Let not your hearts be troubled. You believe in God, believe also in me.

In my Father's house are many rooms. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to myself, that where I am there you may be also. And you know the way where I am going.

Thomas said to him, Lord, we do not know where you are going. How can we know the way? Jesus said to him, I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father but by me.

If you had known me, you would have known my Father also. Henceforth you know him, and have seen him. This is the word of the Lord.

And there we have it. That's the text. Without the way there is no going.

Without the truth there is no knowing. Without the life there is no living. And it's a tremendous joy to be here with your pastor, Harrison, in this central church, at this great city, and in this wonderful country.

And I appreciate the opportunity to speak this morning on this great theme of the claims of Christ. Truly the most wonderful words he ever uttered on planet earth. I am the way, he said, the truth, and the life.

I'll never forget traveling across the prairies of Canada one night, a very dark, dark night. And mile after mile over those prairies we could see absolutely nothing, when suddenly the headlamps caught a big poster, and the words I've just quoted were emblazoned there. Without the way there is no going.

Without the truth there is no knowing. Without the life there is no living. Words, of course, of a great theologian of the past, but words that interpret these essential words of our Savior.

And I say essential because, as one great commentator has said, Jesus summed up all that he was, all that he came to say, and all that he came to do, in that one glorious statement to that inner circle of his disciples in the upper room. Thomas said to him, Lord, we don't know where you're going. We've lost our way.

We've lost our way. Jesus said unto him, I am the way. And I want to state, first of all, this is his claim, that he is a way in a world that is lost, that is lost.

The flaming prophet Isaiah says, all we like sheep have gone astray. We've turned everyone to his own way. Men and women are lost.

You only have to talk to people today, young people, middle-aged, older ones, businessmen, and they'll tell you, I'm lost. Basically, the world is lost. And that's why the Lord Jesus Christ came to this world, because the revelation teaches the Son of Man came to seek and to save that which was lost.

He opened the way back to God. That was his mission. I always used to wonder, how is it that the Lord Jesus is the way? How can I illustrate that concept of the way? And some of you here in this worshiping congregation may know that I was born in Africa, and for many years I lived in a country known as Angola.

In fact, for some 17 years. My father used to tell the story of an occasion when he was moving from A village to B village, and he did know his way, and he asked the chief whether or not somebody could lead him. He said, no problem, no problem, white man.

And in a moment, he asked a young man to come and lead my father through a very dark forest to village B. And as they plunged into that dark forest, for hours, it seemed, there was no light. Presently, they came to a break in the trees, and my father looked at his chronometer and his watch, and he said, listen, do you know the way, young man? And with a smile on his face, this young African took the axe off his shoulder, and father winced for a moment. He said, Ghana, white man, with this axe, I blazed the trail through this forest.

You see that mark over there? I made that mark. You see that one there? I made that mark. And then I came through, and I cut my way through this dark jungle.

White man, look at me, look at me. Do you see these scratches all up and down my arms, my stubbed toes, these marks on my body? These are marks I suffered when I pressed and pushed my way through this dark jungle. And with this very body and with this axe, I not only blazed the trail, I not only cut the way,

white man, I am the way.

Follow me, follow me. And my listening friend, over this medium of transmission, I want to say, right here now, unseen to natural eyes, but real to faith, there stands someone who says, do you see these marks in my hands? Do you see these marks on my brow? Do you see this scar in my side, and those nail prints in my feet? These are wounds I suffered to blaze a trail, to cut a way back through the dark jungle of sin to God. Man had lost his way.

I've made the way. I am the way. Follow me.

Will you pray a prayer deep down in your heart right now? Lord Jesus, be my way, be my way. He's the open way, but he's also the only way. And this makes Christianity distinct from every other approach to religion.

Jesus said, I am the way by me. No man, by me, no man can reach heaven except through my mediation. No man cometh unto the Father but by me.

There is one God and one mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus. There is no other name unto heaven given amongst men, whereby men and women must be saved, delivered, made whole, find their way back to God. He's the only way.

He is the only way. There's a way back to God from the dark powers of sin. There's a door that is open, and you must go in.

At Calvary's cross is where you begin when you come as a sinner to Jesus. Jesus claimed, I am the way in a world that is lost. But he claimed likewise, I am the truth in a world that is dark.

Do you remember in our service just now we quoted him as saying, I am the light of the world. He that follows me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life. Man is not only straying, but man is stumbling.

With all the knowledge we've accumulated, especially in the last few years, knowledge that compares with all the centuries before, we still, we still haven't learned the wisdom, which is the fear of God. And men are stumbling. Why? Because they don't know the truth.

You see, when Jesus said, I am the truth, he gave expression to the most unbelievable statement, except to those of us who understand and love our Bibles, that you'll find anywhere in any literature or in this very book from Genesis to Revelation. You see, he came, first of all, to reveal truth. Now, truth is essentially moral.

Therefore, truth must have somebody who embodies it, number one, and represents it, number two, and only one person can answer to that, and that is Jesus Christ. That's why Aristotle said, the mind was created for truth as the eye to see light and the ear to hear sound. That's why when any person meets Jesus Christ in a simple commitment of faith in the will and mind and heart, they don't debate it anymore.

They don't discuss it anymore. They just say, I have found truth. In a stumbling world, I want to declare the claim of Jesus Christ, who said, I am the truth.

Not, I'll tell you the truth. I am the truth. He came to reveal the truth.

But something more than that, he came to record the truth. Because his very incarnation put on record the fact that he touched this planet with truth. But more than that, through his mighty spirit, he calls the patriarchs, the psalmists, the prophets, the apostles, to record the truth in order that we might have it in this readable and reliable form, the Holy Bible.

That's why I can come to this book that was read so beautifully this morning and this day and just say, this is God's truth. As a matter of fact, John Wright in this gospel closes this wonderful gospel with the words, these things are written that ye might believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God and that believing in him, you will have eternal life. We can trust this book.

I'm reminded of a little fellow who heard a simple message of the gospel of Jesus Christ, committed himself to this wonderful Savior, and had the sense of relief in knowing that Christ had come into his life by the Holy Spirit, that he had life. The preacher said to him, son, just rest on this verse. It reads this way, he that hath the Son hath life.

He that hath not the Son of God hath not life. God has said it. Rest on it.

He went home and he shared it with his delighted parents. They went to bed and he kind of said to himself, isn't it wonderful? I have life now. The Lord Jesus lives in my heart.

The preacher said, he lives in my heart by his wonderful spirit. And a boy seemed to say underneath the bed, you don't believe that? No, you haven't life. But I have, replied the young lad, looking over the side of the bed.

The voice seemed to repeat, but you haven't life. You know you haven't life, but I have life. And then he realized it was the old devil, you know, who coming along kind of gave that sense that this was being challenged.

Do you know what he did? He picked up his Bible, he found that very verse, he put it under the bed, he said, read it for yourself. Read it for yourself. We can rely on God's reliable word, infallible word.

Jesus said, I am the way for a world that's lost. The open way. The only way.

Jesus said, I am the truth for a world that's dark. We don't see the light, we can't see our way through. The existentialist tells us life is an absurdity.

Life is a bubble, it's about to burst. Life is a dark tunnel that has no end. Jesus says, I am the truth.

I came to reveal the truth by my incarnation. I came to record the truth. It's here for you to read.

But Jesus made another claim. He said, I am the life. I am the life for a world that's sad.

Now, do you know that all those three emotions are reflected in this very passage? Thomas said, I've lost my way. I don't know the way. Can you show me the way, Lord? Jesus said, I am the way.

Philip said, I don't know God. I don't know God. Show us the Father.

Show us the Father, and it'll satisfy me. And Jesus had to rebuke him. He said, have I been so long time with you? And you've not known him.

Anyone who's seen me has seen the Father. The other emotion is earlier in this chapter. Let not your heart be troubled.

You know, this is a sad world. This is a sad world. I picked up your papers and learned that what's true here in Brisbane and Australia is true everywhere else.

One child a week commits suicide in Brisbane. One child a week. Fifty children a year commit suicide.

Second cause of children's death in our great city here. It's much higher than other parts, especially America. But isn't that sad? Isn't that sad? Fifty percent of marriages are dissolved, broken.

Isn't that sad? We knew this in our heart of hearts. We won't admit it, but that's the sad world we're living in. Jesus said, I've come to bring life into a world of death and sadness.

Life. First of all, newness of life. Newness of life.

That's where you must start. That's why the Lord Jesus addressed the greatest message of life, not to a man in the streets and in the gutter, but to the greatest intellectual of his day. He was a scientist, by the way.

We just discovered this. He was in charge of the waterworks in Jerusalem. He was a theologian.

He was a philosopher. Jesus could check him on any part of the Old Testament. His name was Nicodemus, but it was to this religious philosopher, scientist, intellectual that Jesus said, except ye be born anew, unless you receive this new life from heaven which I've come to bring, you will in no wise enter the kingdom of heaven.

Leave alone see the kingdom of heaven. You must be born again. Born anew.

Born anew. And I would say to this worshiping congregation and to my listening audience all over the place, many of us would have to rise very high, intellectually or otherwise, to hold a candle to Nicodemus. He needed to be born again.

What about you? That's where Jesus starts. Newness of life. Newness of life.

He said, I am come that ye might have life. And that life is not an idea, not a philosophy, but a person. And Jesus wants to step right into your life and bring spiritual life.

This is a life which conquers spiritual death. It does more than that. It does more than that.

It eventually conquers physical death. Because although we all die, disappointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment, we will be raised. Jesus said, because I live, you shall live also.

I am he that liveth and was dead, and behold, I am alive forevermore. He that hears the voice of the Son of God shall live, shall live. But it's not only newness of life.

For the majority of you listening to me right now, what you need is not newness of life. You've received the gift of life initially. Because most of you possibly have asked the Lord Jesus to come into your heart and life.

What you're concerned about and what I'm concerned about as I travel all over the world is this. Have you fullness of life? Fullness of life. Jesus said in that 10th chapter of John, he said this, I am come that you might have life.

And then he added, and that you might have it more abundantly. The other version reads, I am come that you might have life and that you might have it in all its fullness. And you know what makes me awfully sad? As I look across the religious world of our day, in any country, I've clocked some three and a half million miles of travel, so I'm speaking from a wide background.

And I'll tell you this, I see so many who have just life, just life, but not life more abundantly. I was visiting a dying man in a hospital as a pastor, and I was trying to think of something to say to him. Quite obviously, his life was ebbing out.

There's no way his life could be saved, humanly speaking. As I looked out of the window, I saw down there on the courts of the hospital campus and university, some young doctors, some young nurses, full of life, hitting a tennis ball from one side to another. Oh, they looked so fresh, so full of life.

I thought to myself, what a parable. Here's life, and here is life more abundant. And then I checked myself.

I checked myself, and I said, Stephen Alford, you're wrong. Alford, you're wrong. You're wrong.

That's just physical life down there. This dear man lying on the bed with a smiling face, knowing that he's only hours to live. He has life, and he has life more abundant.

He has more than physical life. He has spiritual life in Christ in all its fullness, and he can't wait for heaven to open. He can't wait for heaven to open, and to see his Lord face to face, and then to write in not only to the newness of life he's already received, but the fullness of life, both on the hospital bed and its ultimate fullness in God's glorious presence.

I want to ask you, my listening friend, this morning, have you bowed to the claims of Jesus Christ, the Son of God? He made those claims so clear when he stood there, or perhaps sat there on that memorable occasion, and looked into the eyes of Peter, and of Thomas, and of Philip, men and women just like you and me, and said, and said, I am the way for a stumbling world, a straying world, a world that's lost. I am the truth for a darkened world, a world of night. I've come to reveal truth.

I've come to record truth in my very flesh, and one day in parchments that will be handed down through the centuries of the life of a church to read. I am the truth, and you can trust me, you can trust me, but supremely I'm the light in a world that's not only lost and dark, but a world that's sad. And you, sitting there, driving there, lying there perhaps in some hospital, you can enter into this newness of life, and this fullness of life, because it's all available in the Lord Jesus.

He says, behold, I stand at the door of your life. If you hear my voice, you've heard it, and open the door, I will come in. Isn't that wonderful? And you'll know his way, you'll know his truth, you'll know his life.

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/21/SID21730.mp3>

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/stephen-olford/the-sufficiency-of-the-saviour-1-the-claims-of-christ/>

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

www.sermonindex.net