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**SUNDAY SCHOOL
LESSON**

**WHAT WE KNOW ABOUT JESUS
HIS WORK OF SALVATION**

by Rev. E. C. Todd

LESSON ... Isa. 53:3-6; Matt. 1: 21; 20:26-28; Heb. 4:15,16

This week's lesson gives four reasons for Christ's coming into the world, which we note briefly.

1. He came to save people from their sins (Mt. 1:21). The name Jesus in the Hebrew language is Yehoshua which means "Jehovah is salvation." He fulfils the sketch of the divine Redeemer given by the prophet in Isaiah 53:4-6. He delivers us from evil in three ways; by bearing our sins and giving us the assurance of forgiveness, by captivating our wills so that we say 'no' to the voice of evil and 'yes' to the voice of good; and by giving us a new interest for the old interest. We become God-centred instead of self-centred—the interest of others takes the place of self-interest. (see last week's lesson on the work of reconciliation).

2. He came also to carry the Jewish law to completion (Mt. 5:17). The world owes a great debt to the Jewish people for the high ethical standard of the Old Testament law. They have influenced the legislation of every country in the world. But Jesus introduced a new spirit into morality. With him the spirit rather than the letter of the law became the guide in moral conduct. For instance "Ye have heard that it was said unto you that whosoever shall be angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger ..." (Mt. 5:21, 22). And in the same chapter there are other illustrations in the same vein. With Jesus "love" became "the fulfilling of the law", and it was a law which had its root and source in the law of God.

3. Again, Jesus came to furnish mankind with a pattern of life. (Mt. 20:26-28). He gave the world a new and higher standard of greatness. "Whosoever would be great among you, must be your servant." In his own life he exemplified this standard. Among the people he was as one who served and gave his life as a ransom for the multitude. The world measures greatness in terms of money, size, power. Jesus reverses this. A man is great according as he serves his fellow-men and gives what he has and is, for their well-being, morally, spiritually and physically. Paul has this in mind when he reminds the Christians of Corinth in his epistle: "Not many of you were wise according to the standards of the world, not many were powerful, not many were of noble birth, but God chose what is foolish to shame the wise. God chose that which is weak in the world, to shame the strong. God chose what is low and despised in the world, even things that are not, to bring to nothing things that are, so that no human being might boast in the presence of God."

4. Christ came to exercise a ministry among men of all ages. His sacrifice for sin is an eternal and perpetual sacrifice. He came to be man's eternal High Priest, his Advocate, his Mediator. (Heb. 4:15). His ministry is not confined to Palestine. It was not confined to a period of three years or less. He is the Lord of all times and all places, the same yesterday, today and forever.

Jesus is a Saviour today, and his presence and ministry is revealed in the personal experience and witness of many and in the present conquest of evil which many are able to make through him. "I felt I did trust in Christ, Christ alone for salvation, and an assurance was given me that he had taken away my sins, even mine, and saved me from the law of sin and death", wrote John Wesley, hundreds of years after Christ's Advent. The Christ whose ministry was active in the time of Wesley, is able to exercise a saving ministry today. And he is also the Christ of tomorrow. There is no limit to the scope of his influence in life, except that which may be set by our unwillingness to trust Him and Him alone, to give, to work, and to pray.

There is one aspect of Christ's work upon which the lesson text does not touch, but which we think ought to be mentioned. That is his healing ministry. He ministered to the whole man. And in that ministry he healed men of their diseases, both mental and physical. We are learning—but we have a long distance to go yet in our endeavour to learn that a human being is a unit. Body, mind, and spirit are one. Our moral behaviour, or lack of it, affects our bodies. Our physical condition often affects our moral behaviour, and our spiritual outlook on life. And our spiritual outlook affects our moral behaviour and our spiritual outlook on life. And our spiritual outlook affects our moral behaviour and our bodies. We may discredit the theory of demon possession held in the first century, and the relating of demon possession to bodily and mental ills. But if the average man knew as much of the interaction between body, mind and spirit, today, as men knew in the time of

Jesus, and at the same time were willing to exercise a deep faith in the redemptive ministry of Christ, we might see more works of healing wrought in our time by faith in Christ, than we think. The achievement of Jesus certainly went beyond anything to which therapists of all kinds have attained today.

—We close this lesson with a question. What limits are there to Christ's work of salvation? Is His work barred from the political field? The economic field? Is His work barred from international politics? For the work of an omnipotent God, we believe there are no limits.

Her Sweetie: "How long will it be until your sister makes her appearance?"
Her younger Sister: "She's upstairs making it now."

DOWN A LANE

Down a lane studded with bricks;
Past fields where empty hay-ricks,
Standing at ease in the sun
Of eventide, their work done,
Seeming an army stopped:
At rest, asleep where they dropped:
Past the white-washed cattle barns;
Past the house where grandmaw
darns:
Round a bend gently curving,
Past dragonflies a-swerving:
Down a slope rather broken,
Past bullfrogs all a-croakin';
Through rich meadows, soft and
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Goes the farmer and his dog,
To fetch the stray from the bog.

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