



## Jesus: Israel's Messiah

Phil Moore



Many Christians remain riddled with guilt over their past or present sins, struggling to believe that God can sweep their sins under the carpet and forgive them for their actions. The reason they struggle to believe it is that they know instinctively that a just God simply cannot act that way. Matthew agrees with their conclusion, but then enlarges their understanding of the Gospel. God does *not* sweep their sin under the carpet at all. He placed their evil deeds on Christ when he crushed him to death at Calvary, and he places Christ's righteous deeds on them so that all he sees through their faith is perfect Law-keeping and unblemished obedience. The Gospel is deep, wide and gloriously perfect. Ignoring the detail about how Christ has redeemed us is to make the Gospel less like the good news that it is.

Many non-Christians struggle at the point of conversion, because they have also failed to grasp the depth of the Gospel. My wife and I met with a non-Christian friend last night who had heard the Lord speaking to her and was on the brink of conversion. She spoke her mind freely and asked, *"How can I become a Christian when I have slept with so many guys that I can't even remember their names?"* Later in the conversation she wondered *"How can I commit my life to Jesus when I don't think I could ever keep up the Christian life?"* The message that she and many other non-Christians need to hear is the Gospel of Jesus' righteous life. God can forgive her every sin and lead her by the hand every day of her new Christian life, because at the end of the evening when she prayed and asked for forgiveness she was not simply saved by grace through faith.

She was saved by grace through faith in the righteous works and perfect Law-keeping of the man Christ Jesus. Now that's what I call *Good News*.

### Footnotes:

1 This is why he starts with a Jewish genealogy, quotes from the Old Testament at least thirty-five times, and uses the phrase *"kingdom of heaven"* as a Hebrew way of saying *"kingdom of God"* without using the divine name.

2 Ephesians 2:8-9; Romans 4:5-6, 16.

3 Romans 3:20-28; 4:13-14; Galatians 2:21; 5:4-5.

4 Genesis 12:2-3; 15:4-5; 22:16-18; 26:2-5; Galatians 3:16.

5 Exodus 1:15-22.

6 1 Corinthians 10:2.

7 Matthew even makes a link in 2:23 between Jesus coming from *Nazareth* and him being the fulfilment of the devout order of *Nazirites*, which included Samson, Samuel and John the Baptist among its number. He is probably quoting from Judges 13:5.

8 Matthew 12:1-14; 15:1-20; 23:1-7, 23-24.

9 Matthew 5:17-20; 8:4; 17:24-27; 18:16; 26:59-60.

10 Matthew 3:15. The other gospels do not include this comment.

11 Isaiah 62:11; Revelation 22:12.

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