

# *Basic Christianity*

The CD contains 18 messages simply and clearly presenting salvation in Jesus Christ in the Punjabi language. The first two messages are in audio format and can be played on any CD player. The remaining messages are in mp3 format and require a CD player or PC that can read the mp3 format.

## 1. Jesus the Only Path to God

In John 14:6 Jesus identifies Himself as the only way to God. Jesus is not one among many ways to God: He is the only way. Jesus did not say He came to teach the way, but that He is 'the way'. Heaven is opened to the sinner through His death and resurrection. He is not a mere teacher of truth, but He is the truth and His message is about what He has done for sinners to reconcile them to God. Jesus does not merely teach about how we can obtain life, as other prophets before Him, but He shows that He Himself is the source of life. Jesus became the way to God by providing the salvation of sinners: by suffering for our sins, and by His perfect obedience. That life becomes ours when the Holy Spirit works faith in our heart; this unites us to Christ.

## 2. What Does the Bible Say about God ? (Part 1)

This message is based on Genesis 1:1, "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth". We do not have to guess about God as He has been pleased to reveal Himself to us. This first verse of Genesis denies a host of errors: Atheism, which says there is no God; Polytheism, which is the belief in many gods; Fatalism, which holds that the world came about by chance; Evolution, which believes the world is a product of time plus chance; Pantheism, which says everything that exists is God; Materialism, which teaches that matter always existed.

No, the world is the work of a wise Creator. There was time when the world did not exist. God alone is eternal and He is the Creator of all there is. This is a comforting truth: for then all things are under His control. God is truly sovereign and we need not be afraid of forces independent of Him.

## 3. What Does the Bible Say about God ? (Part 2)

In this message, various Scripture passages are used to speak of the character of God. God is not impersonal (some cosmic force) but a Person to whom we can relate. God had communion with Adam and Eve. After all, He made them in His own image. God is infinite, as there are no bounds for Him in terms of time or space. He is eternal and everywhere present, so we can pray to Him from any place and know we will be heard. God is self-sufficient, He has no need of the created world as if He lacked anything. God is all-powerful, He can do all things consistent with His holy character. God knows all things, which means He knows all about our situation and can comfort us. God is sovereign over all, therefore no one can stop His purposes from being fulfilled. God is good, so that we cannot charge Him with sin. God is holy, which means no sinner can approach Him unless he comes through Jesus Christ His Son (Gen. 3; Ps. 90:1-2; Heb. 13:8; Ps.139; Ps. 50:10-15; Dan. 4:33-35; Rom. 9:15; Rom. 2:4; Is. 6:1-8).

#### 4. Do Christians Believe in Three Gods ?

The Scripture is John 1:1-18. In this message, the doctrine is treated in three simple statements. First, there is one God. Second, there are three Persons in this one God — Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Third, they are equal in power and glory. The objection is answered as to why the Trinity is not explicitly mentioned in the Old Testament. The reason, in part, is that Israel, living in a polytheistic environment, needed to be rooted in the truth that there is only one Being called God. The Old Testament does give clues when it speaks of the Angel of the Covenant and also in the three-fold blessing given by the high priest in Numbers 6:24. The rest of the message proves the deity of the Lord Jesus Christ from the New Testament as well as the deity and personality of the Holy Spirit. Christians do not teach three Gods or that each Person is a part of God, but that this one God exists in three Persons, sharing the same nature of deity. (Deut. 6:4; Is. 48:16; 63:10; John 1:1-3,18; John 15:26; Acts 5:1-4).

#### 5. How Sin and Death Came into the World

Genesis 3:1-6 reveals how sin and death came into the world. A good doctor is not someone who quickly prescribes medicine without first discovering the cause of an illness. So the Bible takes us back to Adam who represented the human race. Adam and Eve were placed in paradise, were given perfect ability to obey God's commands, and yet chose to disobey because they listened to Satan. Sin is transgression of the commands of God and failure to do them. There was no excuse for their rebellion. They had come perfect from the hand of God (Genesis 1:31). They lived in a perfect environment — paradise. They had been warned that if they ate of the forbidden fruit they would die. They had been given full liberty to eat of every tree of the garden, except one. The tree was not magical, but merely a test whether they would obey God simply on the basis that He had forbidden them. They failed and incurred guilt. Adam, representing all mankind, brought death not only on himself but on all mankind (Genesis 2:17; Romans 3:23). Jesus came as the last Adam, who obeyed God perfectly on our behalf, and suffered our penalty for the broken law and reconciled us to God. (Romans 5:12-21; Romans 6:23).

#### 6. God's Response to Sin.

This message is based on Genesis 3:1-15. Here is an explanation of how God responded to the sin of our first parents. God did not immediately cast them out to be reserved for everlasting chains awaiting the judgment, as He did with the angels who fell. God came to Adam and Eve to elicit from them a confession of sin. He came to them to give them the promise of a Deliverer who would destroy the works of the devil. God's grace is manifested in the first gospel promise found in Genesis 3:15. Where Adam failed, even though placed in a perfect environment, Jesus would come and do battle. He would defeat the devil in the wilderness and finally overcome him at the cross (1 John 3:8).

#### 7. What was God's Punishment for Sin ?

This message is also based on Genesis 3:1-15. Because Adam represented us in the Covenant of Works, his sin affects all people, in fact all creation. God's response was to cast Adam and Eve out of the Garden of Eden. They were now cut off from spiritual communion with God (Is. 59:2). They were alienated from God; this was shown by their hiding from God in the garden. God cursed the ground: this would affect man in his labour; all work in a sinful world has frustration and he would now eat by the sweat of his brow. Eve would be affected as a mother: she would bear children in pain and would experience pain in raising them. The relationship between the husband and wife was affected: this is shown in the blame-shifting. Death would be their punishment — spiritual, physical and eternal — unless a remedy was found. Thanks be to God, in Genesis 3:15, we have the first gospel promise that one day God would send a Deliverer — the woman's seed. He would destroy the works of the devil who had tempted them to sin. This seed of the woman is Jesus Christ, who indeed fulfilled this promise and brings all those who trust in Him into communion with God. (Heb. 2:14; 1 John 3:8).

## **8. Was Paradise Lost Forever ?**

Genesis 3:22-24 is the passage opened up in this message. God prevented our first parents from taking of the tree of life because they had lost their right to it. The tree of life was there for them if they had been obedient. There are three trees that are important in history: the tree of good and evil (taking from which led man into sin), the tree on which Jesus was crucified to pay for our sins, and the tree of life which is reserved in paradise above for the people of God. The flaming sword which turns every way is the symbol of God's justice. The only way man can enter paradise is if someone fully pays the penalty, satisfies God's just demands, and earns a right to the tree of life. This was done by the Son of God. He endured the sword of God's justice and rose again from the dead. Jesus Christ suffered, the just for the unjust, to bring us to God. The cherubim mentioned here are also mentioned in relation to the Ark of the Covenant, where they look towards the mercy seat. Angels rejoiced at the birth of Christ for here is one who brings glory to God and peace to men, restoring them to paradise. No, paradise is not lost forever! (Zechariah 13:7; John 3:16; Matthew 11:28-30; Exodus 37:1-9.)

## **9. How Did God Enter Our World ?**

The Scripture is Matthew 1:18-25, which speaks about the incarnation of Jesus Christ. We learn that Mary is the mother of our Lord, in that His human nature was derived from her. There is no indication that she was sinless, for she herself speaks of a Saviour (Luke 1:47). Joseph was not Jesus' father as this text makes clear. Jesus did not come in the pomp and splendor to which He was entitled, seeing who He was, but in poverty. He came to save His people from their sins. He was not created as was Adam, for then He would not have identified with our fallen race. He did not come from Adam as the woman did, for then He would be under the curse. He did not come from a couple, for then He would be born a sinner. He came from a woman, fulfilling the promise given in Genesis 3:15. He came to take away the sins of His people (Matthew 1:21), which is what the name Jesus means.

## **10. Songs by Harjit Mahil.**

These are some of the gospel songs used in the CD messages, as well as other songs sung by this Christian sister.

## **11. How Did Jesus Live ?**

This is based on various passages of Scripture showing the ministry of our Lord. He taught the people with authority, as we see in the Sermon on the Mount. Jesus is conscious that men will answer to Him one day (Matthew 7:21-23), for He is God. He also performed every kind of miracle; showing His power over demons, disease, and death, as well as over the forces of nature. His life was one of perfect obedience to God His Father. Both in His teaching and healing ministry, He pointed to the greater work He had come to do, namely, to save men from sin (the cause of their misery). Jesus lived a perfect life in word, thought and deed, so He was qualified to be the perfect sacrifice for our sins. Our salvation could not have been worked out by one who had sinned himself, that is why the Word records His perfect life for us (2 Cor. 8:9; Matt. 25:31-46; Acts 4:12).

## 12. How Could Jesus Die ?

This message is based on Matthew 20:28 and Mark 10:45. In a world made by a Holy God, it is impossible that a perfectly innocent man should suffer such a cruel death as our Lord did. Jesus did not die as if He were a victim, for He had power to put all His enemies to flight by a mere word. He gave up His life as the text tells us as a ransom for many. Isaiah 53 and John 10 tell us Jesus is the good Shepherd, Who lays down His life for the sheep. The Bible tells us death is the wages of sin, but Jesus had no sin, so the question arises, 'how could Jesus die?' He had infinite power, so no man could take His life. We see Jesus offer no resistance as He is led to the cross. The only explanation is that He is bearing our sins, and bearing them away. No other explanation of Jesus' death makes sense (2 Cor. 5:19-21; Romans 5:10; 1 Pet. 1:18-19).

## 13. Did Jesus Rise From the Dead ?

Matthew 28:1-20 gives at least six points of evidence for the resurrection of our Lord. First, we are told He was buried. Second, the location of the tomb was known. Third, the tomb was empty on the third day, certified both by His disciples and the failure of His enemies to produce the body. There was absolutely no motive for the disciples stealing the body, especially when many of them died for their faith. Fourth, all theories to disprove it are unsatisfactory. Fifth, the tomb was not quite empty, for the linen with which he had been bound for his burial was left behind. This showed that Jesus had risen; leaving a hollow shell, from which His body had vanished. Sixth, Jesus appears to his disciples and 500 at one time, which could not be explained by hallucination. He only appeared to them for forty days. If it was an hallucination, why would it occur for such a fixed period? The disciples preached the resurrection right in Jerusalem and if Jesus had not risen their enemies could have silenced them by producing the body. Resurrection is the central fact of Christianity, for if Jesus did not rise, then we are still in our sins. Thanks be to God, Jesus is risen from the dead!

## 14. How Can I Be Born Again ?

The Scripture is John 3. We are all born and conceived in sin. We sin daily. Sin is not only transgression but also omission. Belshazzar was judged in these terms, "The God in whose hand thy breath is, and whose are all thy ways, hast thou not glorified" (Dan. 5:22-23). We cannot change our own nature. Jesus said to Nicodemus that he must be born again, which was not calling him to do something to bring it about. We had nothing to do with our natural birth. We cannot give ourselves new birth, but we can flee to Christ who can give us what He demands. We see how Jesus called forth Lazarus who was certainly incapable of giving himself life. The Israelites, bitten by snakes for their sins, could not heal themselves, but God provided a remedy in the brass serpent to which they had to look. God has provided the remedy for sin, and He commands us to look to Jesus and be saved. The person who believes in Jesus will discover it is only because God's Holy Spirit has given him new birth. No one can know the secret work of the Spirit except by His results, namely faith and repentance in our hearts. So we must not wait passively, but obey the command to flee to Christ; and when we do, it evidences our new birth.

## 15. How Can Man Be Just Before God ?

Job 9:2; Psalm 143:1-2 and Romans 5:12-21 are the texts on which this message is based. How can man,, who has rebelled against God and daily commits sin, ever be just before God? Man is condemned by the law of God and by his own conscience, because of his sins. Some people answer that God is merciful and He will just overlook our sins. The example is given of a man, who has murdered another man's son. He is brought to justice and, having been declared guilty, the judge pardons him. What would the father (whose son was murdered) think of such a judge? He would consider him wicked. Jesus, as our representative, has kept the law perfectly. That law, Adam failed to keep; and Jesus paid the penalty our sins deserved, accomplishing our redemption. We are justified before God when we are united by faith to Christ. God accepts all Christ did on our behalf. Jesus' perfect obedience fulfills the precepts of God for us, and His death on the cross satisfies the penalty that we deserve for our sins. In this way we are made just before God.

## 16. How Can We Prepare For Death ?

Hebrews 9:27-28 is explained. The saying goes that only two things in life are certain — death and taxes. Some even manage to evade taxes, but there is no one who can cheat death. It is strange that the one event of which we are certain, few make preparations for. The reason why death is so terrible is that it ushers us before the judgment seat of God. It would not be terrible if we had no sin, but all are sinners, not only by birth, but also by our own actions. If there was a prairie fire and you had nowhere to run, what would you do? You would light a fire behind you and stand on burnt ground. This is how we can prepare for death. We must be found in Jesus Christ, who suffered the wrath of God for sinners. United by faith to Him, we will never come under condemnation because Christ has suffered in our place.

## 17. How Can I Be Saved From Hell ?

This is based on the Bible passage, Luke 16:19-31, the parable of the rich man and Lazarus. The rich man went to hell because, knowing God's way of salvation, he never exercised faith in God. Lazarus means 'God is my help' and even though this man was helpless, yet he found refuge in God and rested in His promised way of salvation. The rich man did not take seriously the Word of God and actually blamed God that he did not have sufficient evidence for believing. Many put forth the same argument today, but as Abraham replies in the parable, they would not believe even if one rose from the dead. This is true because when Jesus raised Lazarus in John 11, we read that the Pharisees wanted to kill Lazarus because many believed on Jesus as a result of the miracle. God has provided a way of escape from hell and yet men do not believe, or they trust in their own good works to keep them from hell.

## 18. How Can I Go to Heaven ?

The Scripture is John 14:1-14; here Jesus speaks about going to His Father to prepare a place for His people. One day He will come to receive them to Himself. This is Heaven, a place prepared only for those who belong to Jesus Christ. Heaven is described as being 'with Jesus' and anyone who does not have Jesus as Saviour and Lord has no interest in being with Jesus. The only way sinners can go to heaven is if their sins are dealt with and they have a righteousness that entitles them to heaven. No one is righteous, no not one, so none are fit for heaven. But God has sent His Son, who by His obedience and death earned a righteousness that entitles all who receive Him, to enter heaven. It does not matter how much you have sinned, if you flee to Jesus Christ, you will be saved as certainly as the thief on the cross (Luke 23:43).

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