

# WHAT IS IT TO COME TO CHRIST

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JOHN 5:40 • TV188B

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By  
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## **John 5:40**

*“And ye will not come to me, that ye might have life.”*

I would like for you to open your Bible today to the **4<sup>th</sup> chapter of John’s Gospel**. I am going to be reading from one verse of Scripture. This is my text and this is my subject; the text reads in **John 5:40**; *“and you will not come to me and you will not come to me that you might have life.”*

Here is the subject: “WHAT IS IT TO COME TO CHRIST?”

I want to help you today and I want you to listen to this message. I am not just filling in time. I am not just following a vocation; I am here, if possible, to glorify God Almighty. I am here to preach His Word and I am here to help you if I can.

Someone said recently, concerning my ministry; “he’s not much of a preacher but he is a good teacher.” Well, if I can teach you the Word of life, if I can teach you the Word of God, I am very happy about this time that we are spending together.

I am asking some questions and dealing with some subjects that need to be dealt with; “what is it to come to Christ?”

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Really and truly, I am going to use several texts.

First of all: In **John 5:40**, that one I just read, *“you will not come to me that you might have life; our Lord had declared in **verse 24 of John 5**, “he that heareth my word and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life and shall not come into condemnation but is passed from death unto life.”*

He is saying all who come to Christ have life and those who refuse to come to Christ, do not have life but they are in eternal death, eternal condemnation, and separation from God Almighty.

Now, He goes on in this same chapter and says this of John the Baptist (who is the forerunner), *“he bore witness of me.”* And then He says, *“The works that I do; they bear witness of me.”*

Then He says, *“The Father Himself hath borne witness of me.”* The Father said, *“This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him.”*

Then, Christ says, *“the Word of God bears witness of me,”* in spite of all these undeniable witnesses and these infallible witnesses, these heavenly witnesses, the forerunner, John the Baptist, the miracles and the Father Himself. Nicodemus said, *“No man can do what you do except God be with Him.”* Christ said; *“you will not come to me that you might have life.”*

They will come to the church; they will come to the altar; they will come to the priest, and they will come to the preacher. They will come to a law or anything but they won't come to Christ.

These men, to whom He was speaking; came to the Feast Days, the Temple, and to Jerusalem, to the Holy Days, and the ceremonies; they would come to anything religious.

Our Lord said, *“I am the Messiah and the Forerunner. The last of the Old Testament prophets told you that I am the Lamb of God, the Christ. The Father told you, my works tell you, the Word tells you ‘and you will not come to me that you might have life.’”*

In **John 6:37, 44, 45**; (now listen to the Master in the next chapter says), *“All that my Father giveth me shall come to me and him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out. No man can come to me except my Father which sent me draw Him and I will raise him up at the last day. It is written in the prophets; they shall all be taught of God and every man that hath heard and hath learned of the Father, (has been a disciple of the Father, hath been a learner of the Father), cometh unto me.”*

Now, listen to another Scripture: **In Matthew 11:21-24**, our Lord had condemned the cities in which His mighty works had been done. He condemned Capernaum, Bethsaida, and all of these different cities. He said, *“It would be easier for Sodom and Gomorrah, Tyre and Sidon. It would be easier for those wicked cities of the plains in the Day of Judgment than for you.”*

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He lifted His eyes to heaven and He said; *“Father, I thank you, Lord of heaven and earth, that you have hid these things from the wise and the prudent, that you have revealed them unto babes. Even so, Father, it seemed good in your sight.”*

Then, He looked out over the multitude, and He gave this call; *“come unto me all you that labor and are heavy laden and I will give you rest.”*

What is it to come to Christ? I can go on through the Scriptures and read many more texts; “come to Christ; come to Christ.” *“All who has learned of the Father cometh to His Son.”* Christ said, if you will come to Him; *“I will in no wise cast you out.”* Will you come to Christ?

Now then, what is it to come to Christ? If you come to Christ you find life. You find pardon for sin, grace for guilt, salvation from damnation, if you come to Christ. Then, what is it to come to Christ?

I am going to ask four questions. This I think will help you to understand the subject. Here are the four questions that I will be dealing with and if you want to jot these down and then jot down the Scripture references that I give to you.

The first question is this: Why should I come to Christ?

That is a good question, the preacher may tell you, “come to Christ, come to Christ.” Why should I come to Christ, why should I? What is there in Christ that would cause me to come to Him?

The second question is this: What it is not to come to Christ. Coming to Christ, what it is not.

Now, people are willing to come to a lot of places, but not to Christ. I am going to tell you what coming to Christ is not.

Thirdly: Then what is it, plainly and clearly preacher? What is the Bible talking about when it says, come to Christ?

Last of all: What are the results of our coming to Jesus Christ?

**Here is the first one: Why should I come to Christ; why should any sinner come to Jesus Christ?**

Well, first of all; here is the reason: God is in Christ. You can't come to God without coming to Christ. Christ is in God and God is in Christ. To come to Christ is to come to God.

To refuse to come to Christ is to have nothing to do with God. That's exactly right! Listen to the Scriptures now; listen to the Word of God, (this is one of the things that raised the eye and anger of the mob against Him).

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In **John 10:30**, He said; *“I and my Father are one.”* In **Matthew 11** Christ said, *“no man knoweth the Father save the Son and he to whom the Son will reveal Him.”* He that hath the Son hath the Father. He that hath not the Son, hath not the Father.

Listen to **John 14:6**; *“No man cometh to the Father but by me.”* Listen to **2<sup>nd</sup> Corinthians 5:19**; *“God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself.”*

Here is the clenching Scripture; here is the one that wraps up the whole thing: When the angel came to Joseph and announced that Mary was with child by the Holy Ghost, he said; *“Joseph, don’t be afraid to take Mary to be thy wife. That holy thing which is born of her shall be called the Son of God. Call his name Jesus; he will save his people from their sin.”*

This is the fulfillment of the Scripture. In **Isaiah 7:14**, when God said; *“Behold, the Lord Himself shall give you a sign, a virgin shall be with child and thou shalt call His name Immanuel.”* In **Matthew 1:23** it says, *“Which being interpreted is God with us.”*

Who is Jesus Christ? He is God Almighty. That is why I invite you to come to Christ. That is why Christ invited sinners to come to Him, God is in Christ, and Christ is in God. *“Unto us a child is born; unto us a son is given. His name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, and the Prince of Peace.”*

In **Hebrews 1:8**, the Father says to the Son, *“But unto the Son he saith, thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever.”*

Paul, in speaking to the heirs of the church of Antioch, said; *“Feed the church of God which He purchased with His own blood.”* God is in Christ. That is how serious this matter is that we are talking about today. Why should I come to Christ? It is because God is in Christ.

*“In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God and the Word was God and all things were made by Him. Without Him was not anything made which was made, and the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.”*

*“He is the express image, (the exact image of the Father) his person.” “He thought it not robbery to be equal with God, yet he made himself of no reputation.”*

Secondly: Why should I come to Christ?

All the spiritual blessings are in Christ. Everything is in Christ. Listen to **Colossians 2:9**; *“In Him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily and you are complete in him.”*

Listen to **1 Corinthians 1:30**: *“Of God are you in Christ Jesus who of God is made unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption.”* That’s all there is; that’s all there is!

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In **Romans 10:4** it says, “*Christ is, the end of the law for righteousness (the goal, the consolation) to them that believeth.*” Christ is our peace, rest, pardon, life, refuge and hope. Everything is in Christ. There is nothing that God has for any human outside of Jesus Christ.

That is the reason you have to come to Christ. He is the fountain of life. He is the source of grace. He is “*all and in all.*” He is God’s eternal “*yes.*” Everything contrary to Him is “*no.*” That is why you should come to Christ. Christ is Prophet, Priest, and King, no man ever occupied those three offices. Moses was a prophet, Levi was a priest, and David was a king. None of them could ever hold two offices. Christ has all three.

He is the prophet to reveal God. “*No man knoweth the Father save the Son and he to whom the Son will reveal Him.*” He is the Priest; “*seeing we have such a high priest, let us come boldly before the throne of Grace.*”

He is the King; “*God hath exalted Him and given Him a name above every name that at the name of Jesus Christ, every knee shall bow and every tongue shall confess that He is Lord of Lord and King of Kings, to the glory of God the Father, that in all things He might have the preeminence.*”

That answers the question for you; why should he come to Christ? I invite you to come to Christ and the Scripture invites you to come to Christ. “*The Spirit of the bride says come. Let him that heareth, say come. Let him that is athirst, come and whosoever will, take the water of life.*”

Let Him come to Christ, why? God is in Christ. All spiritual blessings are in Christ. That is where they are, they are in Jesus Christ.

### **Second: What it is not coming to Christ.**

Let me tell you this: it’s not coming to the law. I know a lot of preachers preach; “do this and do that, don’t do this and don’t do that.” They are giving commandments and laws. There are nothing wrong with commandments and there are nothing wrong with laws, but not as a way of salvation.

You can come to the law and the commandments and perish because the Scripture says, “*by the deeds of the law shall no flesh be justified.*” Even Abraham was not justified by works. I sure don’t want to buck Abraham at the judgment to find some merit, do you?

I sure don’t want to buck Abraham at the judgment to find some means of inheriting heaven. If anybody is going to merit it by works it would be Abraham, not you or me.

Even Abraham was not justified by works. If he was, “*he hath whereof to glory before God.*” The Scripture says, “*No flesh shall glory in His presence,*” no flesh.

So, you need not come to the law. You churches can fill out your standards, your church covenants, your rules and your regulations. You can have your do’s and don’ts. You can hand

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them out to people and say, “do this and be saved, don’t do this and go to hell.” You are deceiving multitudes. You are the blind leading the blind.

The Scripture doesn’t invite you to come to a law. The law cannot save; the law can only show you your sin. That is all that the law can do for you and it is all that it can do for any man, to reveal sin. It is a schoolmaster to point us to Christ.

**Next: It is not coming to the ordinances.**

There are some beautiful ordinances, the Lord’s Table and the Lord’s baptism. They are both symbolic and pictures. When we go beneath the water we are showing Christ’s death, His burial, and His resurrection, our own death to sin, burial and resurrection, to walk in the newness of life in holiness and righteousness, in beauty and integrity.

When we take the Lord’s Table and drink the wine, we are saying “this is His blood shed for the remission of sins.” The broken bread says, “This is my body broken for you.”

My friends; you can drink all the wine in the world, and eat all the wafers, the crackers and the unleavened bread and get baptized, someone said, until, “until the frogs know your middle name,” and still not be saved.

Salvation is not in water and it is not in wafers but it is in Christ. It is not coming to the ordinances, the sacraments, the communion, or whatever you want to call it; you may call it, “confirmation, sprinkling,” or whatever.

I am just saying that those things won’t save a baby and they won’t save an adult. They won’t save and they won’t redeem. They won’t put away sin. Baptism wasn’t crucified for me. The Lord’s Table wasn’t nailed to the cross for me. Even memorizing Scriptures won’t save you.

It is not coming to the church; the church is not the Saviour, Christ is the Saviour. **John 1:11** says, “*He came unto His own (people, the Jews, and the ceremonies) and they received Him not.*” They turned thumbs-down on him.

*“But as many as received him, (not His church, not His ordinances, and not His laws, but Him); as many as received him, (a living person, a living Lord, a sovereign Redeemer), to them gave he the right, (the privilege), to become sons of God.”*

It is not coming to a creed, it is not coming to an altar, it is not coming to a plan, it is not coming to a law, it is not coming to a set of rules; it is coming obediently, lovingly, and believingly to a person, the Lord Jesus Christ. He is our substitute, our sin-offering, and our Saviour.

Some followed Him because of the miracles that He performed. He did not reveal Himself to them. Some followed Him for material gain; they ate of the loaves and were filled.

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Some followed Him because of the kingdom promises. “We want to sit on your right hand or we want to sit on your left hand.” But, those who found Him to be the source of life came to Him not for material gain, miracles, or Kingdom promises; they came to Him for mercy and forgiveness of sins, pardon, grace, and life everlasting.

**Now, here is the third question: What is it to come to Christ? What, then, is it to come to Christ?**

What is the best way to answer this? In preparing this message and I came along with this particular point, I want to know and you want to know, what is it to come to Christ?

How do I answer this so that at least in your head you will understand it from the Scriptures? I think the best way and the best answer is to be found in the attitude of those who came to Christ in the Scriptures. Let’s find some people in God’s Word that came to Christ.

I don’t mean those who came physically like Nicodemus or some of the others, you know, and went away. Or, like the rich, young ruler, and went away. Or the man who said, “*let me bury my father*” and went away. Or the man who said he bought a piece of land and had to prove it and went away.

I’m talking about those who came and stayed and those who heard Christ say, “Thy sins be forgiven thee.” Huh? Let’s see how they came. If I can find out how they came then I can come the same way that they came because I have the same need and I have the same sins; I have the same Saviour.

First of all: It is to come to Christ as a sinner.

Our Lord gave a parable or a story of two men who went to the Temple to pray. They were to approach God and they came to God. The first man was a religious man and a Pharisee, a very moral, religious, ceremonial, legalist.

He came bursting right into the Temple, right down the aisle, and right down to the altar, right down to the front. He lifted his eyes to heaven and lifted his hands too, I reckon. You see people waving their hands to God.

He says, “God; I sure thank you that I am not like other men. I tithe and I fast and I give alms and I am not an extortioner; I’m not an adulterer. I’m not even like that Publican back there in the back. I sure am grateful that I am so good.”

There was another man, Christ said, a Publican, a very sinful man, who wouldn’t come down the aisle or to the front or to the altar. He stayed afar off, the Scripture says, a way back. He didn’t feel worthy of coming into God’s presence.

He didn’t lift even his eyes, let alone his hands to glory; he just smote on his breast; he just beat his breast and he cried; “*O God; be merciful to me the sinner.*” (That is a definite article there, the

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sinner). “Let thy blood be propitiation for me on the mercy seat. O God be reconciled to me, the sinner.”

Our Lord said, “*That man went home justified (saved), not the other.*” So, that is the first thing that I will advise you in coming to Christ; come as a sinner. He said, “*I didn’t come to call the righteous but sinners to repentance.*”

“*Christ died for the ungodly.*” Paul said, “*Christ came into the world, to save sinners of whom I am chief.*”

Secondly: I come to Him as a sovereign.

What is a sovereign? Well, the meaning is out there in the Word, He r-e-i-g-n-s. He is King, He rules and He gives mercy to whom He will. He doesn’t owe man anything, that’s right; mercy is optional. Justice must be given.

Here is a man in **Matthew chapter 8**, when our Lord came down from the mountain, a leper ran and fell down at his feet and worshipped Him, the Scripture says, he said; “*Lord, (Master); if you will, you can make me whole, (it is in your power).*” “You don’t owe me anything. You are not obligated to me in any way. But, you see my condition. I am helpless and hopeless and I am dying a leper; I am dying. If you will, if it is your will, you can and it is in your power, to make me whole.” Our Lord said, “*I will; be thou whole.*”

You better come that way. Don’t you come proud and haughty and lifted up. You better make your headquarters in the dust and come repenting of your sins as a sinner before a Sovereign who saves whom He will. He shows mercy to whom He will and “*He will be gracious, He said, to whom He will.*”

Thirdly: Salvation is a gift of God, a gift of God.

You have to come to Christ for mercy. A Canaanite woman came to Him one day saying; “Lord, have mercy on me, have mercy.” Our Lord turned but He didn’t speak at first. She kept crying “Have mercy on me.”

I’m not talking about justice. If I get justice I will be damned. I don’t want justice. I don’t want God to judge me according to my works. I want Him to receive me through the mercies of Christ.

This woman kept saying, “Have mercy.” Our Lord turned to her and He said, “*I’m sent to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.*” She said, “Lord; have mercy.” He said, “*It’s not right to give the children’s bread to dogs.*” She said, “But the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from the Master’s table; mercy is all I ask.”

“*Come boldly to the throne of grace that we may find mercy, mercy, and grace to help in time of need.*” What is it to come to Christ? She found mercy. Christ said, “*I haven’t found faith like that in Israel.*”

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Fourthly: Then it is to come to Christ completely.

Now, there was a rich, young, ruler. I'm going to use a reverse this time: There was a man who came and left because he didn't come like I am talking about here, he didn't come completely.

Fourthly: Then it is to come to Christ completely.

Now, there was a rich, young, ruler (I'm going to use a reverse this time). There was a man who came and left because he didn't come, (like I am talking about here), coming completely.

This rich young man came to Him and wanted to know what he must do to inherit life. Christ told him to keep the commandments. He said that he had kept all of those. Christ said, *"Go sell what you have and give it to the poor and you come and follow me."*

"You sell all of your distractions. You get rid of those things which divide your affections, you get rid of your heart that is set upon things of this world and you come to Me completely, unreservedly, leaving all others."

That young man turned and walked away because he had great riches and he loved his great riches. Our Lord said, *"No man can serve two masters. A man cannot serve God and mammon."* Now, I don't know what your affections are set on but if you come to Christ you are to forsake all others. You will leave all others. If your right arm, and that is the most precious thing to you, or your right eye; that is what Christ is talking about.

He is not talking about mutilating the body by plucking, actually, the eye out or cutting off the arm; don't you ever do that. God doesn't teach us to mutilate our body.

What He is saying is this; "Anything that is more important to you than your relationship with Christ has to go. You have to come to Him completely, completely."

Fifthly: It is to come to Christ alone whenever everything else fails.

*"There was a woman with an issue of blood for 12 years. She had sought healing from many physicians."* In fact; the Scripture says, *"she spent everything she had and wasn't any better but just grew worse, continually worse."*

Finally, when she heard of Christ, after trying all the other ways, she said; *"if I can get to him I will be made whole."* She made her way to Christ and she touched His garment and she was made whole.

Everything else had failed. Everything else was to no avail. She had spent everything and she came to Christ.

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You can try the law, the church membership, baptism, good works, rededication, and all of these; you can keep trying all of these things. Let me tell you this, if you ever get serious enough and desperate enough and lost enough that you can say with the disciples as one day our Lord said, *“Will you also go away?”* They said *“To whom, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of life.”*

He’s the only fountain:

**“There is a fountain  
Filled with blood  
Drawn from Emanuel’s veins  
And sinners plunged  
Beneath that flood  
Lose all their guilty stain.”**

He is the only hope of the helpless sinner. He is the only grace for the guilty sinner. He is the only mercy for the wicked sinner. He is the only source of life. He is the only refuge. He is the only hiding place. He is the only lot in the time of storm. He is the only resurrection and the life.

I must have Christ; I must have Christ. You come that way. He said, *“You seek me with all your heart and you will find me, you will find me.”*

You haven’t come to that place yet, have you? You still have too many irons in the fire and too many play-pretties and too many childish things and too many toys. When you are ready to load Him down and lay your life down, Christ says; *“He that saveth his life will lose it,”* and that is saving it for the world.

But, he that will lose his life, lost in Christ, dedicated, consecrated, to Christ, he will find it, he will find it. *“Christ is all and in all.”*

Sixthly: It is to come to Christ our atonement:

It is to come to Christ our sacrifice and our sin-offering. The Scripture says, *“By one offering He hath perfected forever them that are sanctified.”*

I know that Christ was our example but that is not why He came into this world. He didn’t need to come to set an example; He wrote one down in his Word.

I know that Christ is our provider but He provided for us before He came.

I know that Christ is our shepherd but led us before He walked upon this earth as our surety. But, Christ is our substitute. That’s how we come to Him, the atonement.

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Just like that great, old, high priest, back in the Old Testament days, he came under the veil on the Day of Atonement into the holy of holies with a blood sacrifice which showed Christ, which pictured Christ.

He put that blood on the mercy seat, on top of that broken Law, saying; *“this is my sacrifice; this is my sin-offering, this is my atonement, oh God. Be reconciled to me a sinner through the death of Thy Son.”*

**I once was lost  
But now I’m found  
By God’s grace  
I’m heaven bound**

**My only hope  
My only plea  
Is that when Jesus Christ died  
He died for me**

**My hope is built on nothing less  
Than Jesus’ blood and His righteousness**

**On Christ the solid rock I stand  
All other ground is sinking sand**

I am saying that as positively as I can say anything. I have been preaching for nearly 35 years, and to the same church for over 30 years. I have nothing to claim but Christ. I have no hope but Christ and I have no foundation but Christ.

What are the results of coming to Christ?

He said, *“I will give you rest,”* rest from your labors, rest from bondage, rest from condemnation, rest from fear of death and judgment, rest in the midst of your trials and afflictions.

*“Come unto Me and drink. Out of your belly will flow rivers of living water. You will be a source of life itself, because I live in you!”*