



Jesus is . . . the Messiah, the Christ

John 1:41

"We have found the Messiah" (that is, the Christ).

Many expressions of love and affection will be exchanged once again this Valentine's Day. Yet, there is no greater act of love than the life, death and resurrection of Christ Jesus for our salvation. The whole of Scripture revolves around this one supreme act of unconditional love!

But why is it that Christians associate the title Christ with God's love in Jesus? What does the word Christ mean? A look at God's Word will help explain this. The Gospel of Matthew begins by recording the genealogy of Jesus, "...and Jacob the father of Joseph, the husband of Mary, of whom was born Jesus, who is called Christ." (Matthew 1:16).

As Matthew sets the tone for his Gospel, he is careful to note that Jesus was revered as Christ. This familiar title is actually a form of the Greek word *chrío* meaning "to pour or anoint." To anoint was to pour sacred oil over someone's head as a visible sign that God had set him aside for a special task. Jesus bore the title Christ because he was the one God anointed to be the world's Savior.

The Gospel of John in the first chapter reveals Jesus, the Word made flesh, and describes Andrew's excitement at having met Jesus: "The first thing Andrew did was to find his brother Simon and tell him, 'We have found the Messiah'

(that is, the Christ)" (John 1:41). Andrew bursts forth in joyful acclamation, using the title Messiah which is the Hebrew equivalent of Christ, "the Anointed One."

The Gospel writer John is keen to point out that from the beginning of Jesus' public ministry the hope of the ages was intimately associated with salvation in Jesus. Yes, at the time of his baptism Jesus was consecrated for his messianic ministry in a remarkable way..."heaven was opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and lighting on him. And a voice from heaven said, "This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased" (Matthew 3:16-17). Jesus was anointed by the Spirit of God and received the clear approval of his heavenly Father. Talk about divine endorsement!

Because Jesus is The Anointed One, he is the one foretold in ancient prophecy who would bring salvation, redeeming us from the curse of sin! There is no greater act of love—true love! Now that's a magnificent valentine!