

# THE FOURFOLD GOSPEL

## THE LIFE OF CHRIST

### **Bible Study Notes**

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**THE CHURCH OF CHRIST AT BEVERLY SHORES**  
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## THE FOURFOLD GOSPEL - THE LIFE OF CHRIST

EVENT	MATTHEW	MARK	LUKE	JOHN
Introduction to the Study				
<b>PART 1: The period of Christ's life Prior to His Public Ministry</b>				
1. Introductory portions of the several books				
a. John's introduction				1:1-18
b. Luke's preface		1:1-4	3:23-38	
c. The genealogies	1:1-17		3:23-38	
2. Birth of John the Baptist foretold to Zacharias			1:5-25	
3. Birth of Jesus foretold to Mary			1:26-48	
4. Mary visits Elizabeth			1:39-56	
5. Birth and early life of John			1:57-80	
6. Birth of Jesus foretold to Joseph	1:18-25			
7. Birth of Jesus	1:25		2:1-7	
8. The Shepherds			2:8-20	
9. The circumcision and naming of Jesus			2:21	
10. The presentation and purification in the temple			2:22-39	
11. Visit of the Wise Men	2:1-12			
12. Jesus taken to Egypt to escape death	2:13-18			
13. Return to Nazareth	2:19-23		2:39	
14. Visit to Jerusalem at age twelve			2:40-52	
<b>PART 2: Announcement and Introduction of Our Lord's Public Ministry</b>				
15. The forerunner's work	3:1-12	1:1-8	3:1-18	
16. Baptism of Jesus	3:13-17	1:9-11	3:21-22	
17. Temptation of Jesus	4:1-11	1:12-13	4:1-13	
18. John's testimony				1:19-34
19. Jesus calls some disciples				1:35-51
20. First miracle at Cana				2:1-11
21. Visit to Capernaum				2:12
<b>PART 3: Visit to Jerusalem for Passover</b>				
22. Goes to Jerusalem				2:13
a. Cleanses the Temple				2:13-25
b. Discourses with Nicodemas				3:1-21
23. Tarries in Jerusalem and baptizes in Judea				3:22
24. John's testimony				3:23-36
25. John's imprisonment	(14:3-5)	(6:17-20)	3:19-20	
26. Christ departs for Galilee	4:12	1:14		4:1-3
27. Christ in Samaria				4:4-42
28. On to Galilee			4:14-15	4:43-45
<b>PART 4: A Period of Galilean Ministry</b>				
29. Another miracle in Cana				4:46-54
30. Christ rejected at Nazareth			4:16-30	
31. Moved to Capernaum	4:13-16		4:31-32	
32. Jesus preaches and calls four fishermen to follow Him	4:17-22	1:14-20		
33. Jesus preaches at many places	(4:23-25)			
34. Jesus heals demoniac in synagogue		1:21-28	4:33-37	
35. Jesus heals Peter's mother-in-law and many others	8:14-17	1:29-34	4:38-41	
36. A preaching tour in Galilee	(4:23-25)	1:35-39	4:42-44	
37. Draught of fishes			5:1-11	
38. Sermon on the Mount	5:1-8:1		(6:17-49)	
39. Jesus heals a leper	8:2-4	1:40-45	5:12-16	
40. Jesus heals a paralytic at Capernaum	9:1-8	2:1-12	5:17-26	

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41. Jesus teaches by the seaside		2:13		
42. Jesus calls Matthew	9:9	2:14	5:27-28	
<b>PART 5: Jesus at a Feast in Jerusalem (probably the Passover)</b>				
43. Heals on the Sabbath and defends his act				5:1-47
<b>PART 6: A period of Ministry in Galilee and About the Sea of Galilee</b>				
44. Plucking grain on the Sabbath (on the way to Galilee?)	12:1-8	2:23-28	6:1-5	
45. Defends healing on the Sabbath	12:9-14	3:1-6	6:6-11	
46. Jesus teaches and heals many by the Sea	12:15-21	3:7-12		
47. Jesus spends the night in prayer			6:12	
48. Jesus chooses the twelve	10:2-4	3:13-19	6:13-16	
49. Sermon on the Plain	(5,6,7)		6:17-49	
50. Jesus heals the Centurion's servant	8:5-13		7:1-10	
51. Jesus raises the widow's son			7:11-17	
52. John's inquiry and Christ's answer	11:1-19		7:18-35	
53. Jesus upbraids cities of Galilee	11:20-30			
54. The Lord dines with Simon			7:36-50	
55. Woman who ministered to Christ			8:1-3	
56. Concerning blasphemy	(9:32-34); 12:22-37	3:19-30	(11:14-23)	
57. Sign seekers	12:38-45		(11:24-36)	
58. Christ's mother and brethren	12:46-50	3:31-35	8:18-21	
59. Dines with Pharisees			(11:37-54)	
60. Discourses on preparedness, covetousness, hypocrisy, His suffering			(12)	
61. Repent or perish, barren fig tree			(13:1-9)	
62. Parables by the Sea	13:1-52	4:1-34	8:4-18	
63. Stilling the tempest	8:18,23-27 (8:19-22)	4:35-41	8:22-25 (9:57-62)	
64. Jesus heals a demoniac	8:28-34	5:1-20	8:26-39	
65. returns to His own city - Capernaum	9:1	5:21	8:40	
66. Levi's fast - concerning fasting	9:10-17	2:15-22	5:29-39	
67. Jarius' daughter and an invalid women	9:18-34	5:32-43	8:41-46	
68. Rejection at Nazareth	13:53-58	6:1-6	(4:15-30)	
69. Jesus followed by multitudes; taught in villages; sends out the twelve	9:35-11:1	6:7-13	9:1-6	
70. Herod, who had beheaded John, wonders about Christ	14:1-12	6:14-29	9:7-9	
<b>PART 7: Season of Retirement into Districts Around Galilee</b>				
71. First withdrawal from Herod's territory and return				
a. Return of the twelve and retirement beyond the Sea	14:13	6:30-32	9:10	6:1
b. Feeding the five thousand	14:13-21	6:33-44	9:11-17	6:2-14
c. People desire to make Him king				6:15
d. Retires to pray	14:22-23	6:45-46	6:15-17	
e. Walks on the Sea	14:24-34	6:47-53		6:18-21
f. Heals in Genessaret	14:35-36	6:54-56		
72. Discourse on spiritual food, etc. (Capernaum?) Note: About this time there would have been a Passover Feast in Jerusalem, but there is no record of Jesus attending.				6:22-71
73. The Lord reproached for disregarding tradition	15:1-20	7:1-23		7:1
74. Second withdrawal from Herod's territory and return				
a. Withdraws to parts of Tyre and Sidon and heals the Syrophenician woman's daughter	15:21-28	7:24-30		
b. Proceeds to borders of Decapolis, in the mountains, heals many, feeds the 4,000	15:29-39	7:31-8:10		
c. Returns to Galilee via Magadan and Dalmanutha	15:39	8:10		

EVENT	MATTHEW	MARK	LUKE	JOHN
75. Tempted by Pharisees and Sadducees	16:1-4	8:11-13		
76. Third withdrawal from Herod's territory				
a. Departs and warns against the leaven of Herod, the Pharisees and the Sadducees	16:5-12	8:14-21		
b. At Bethsaida heals blind man by degrees		8:22-26		
c. The great confession at Caesarea Philippi	16:13-20	8:27-30	9:18-22	
d. Passion foretold, Peter rebuked	16:21-28	8:31-9:1	9:23-27	
e. The transfiguration and about Elijah	17:1-13	9:2-13	9:28-36	
f. Cures epileptic, disciples failed	17:14-21	9:14-29	9:37-42	
g. Return to Galilee, Passion again foretold	17:22-23	9:30-32	9:43-45	
77. At Capernaum Jesus pays the tribute money	17:24-27			
78. Dispute about rank, Jesus teaches	18:1-14	9:33-50	9:46-50	
79. Concerning forgiveness	18:15-35		(17:1-4)	
80. Our Lord's brethren advise Him to go to Jerusalem				7:2-9
81. Christ goes privately to Jerusalem			9:51-56	7:10
<b>PART 8: Closing Ministry in all Parts of the Holy Land From Feast of Tabernacles to Last Week Before Final Passover</b>				
82. At the Feast of Tabernacles				7:11-52
83. Woman taken in adultery (Jerusalem)				7:53-8:11
84. Further teaching and escape				8:12-59
85. The man born blind				9:1-41
86. Discourse on the Good Shepherd				10:1-21
87. Mission and return of the Seventy			10:1-24	
88. A lawyer and "the Good Samaritan"			10:25-37	
89. Jesus at the home of Mary and Martha			10:38-42	
90. Prayer taught and encouraged			11:1-13	
91. Accused of blasphemy, rebukes Pharisees			11:14-30	
92. Dines with Pharisees			11:37-54	
93. Speaks of covetousness, hypocrisy, preparedness and His suffering			12	
94. Repent or perish, barren fig tree			13:1-9	
95. Healing on the Sabbath			13:10-17	
96. Parables on mustard seed and leaven			13:18-21	
97. At the Feast of Dedication				10:22-38
98. Escapes to places beyond the Jordan				10:39-42
99. In route to Jerusalem, the strait gate, warned against Herod			13:22-35	
100. Dining with a Pharisee			14:1-24	
101. The cost of discipleship			14:25-35	
102. Three parables			15	
103. The unrighteous steward			16:1-18	
104. The rich man and Lazarus			16:19-31	
105. Offenses, faith and service			17:1-10	
106. To Bethany to raise Lazarus				11:1-46
107. The Sanhedrin plot, retires to Ephriam				11:47-54
108. Toward Jerusalem, ten lepers, the kingdom	19:1-2	10:1	17:11-37	
109. Parable of the importunate widow			18:1-8	
110. Parable of the Pharisee and Publican			18:9-14	
111. Concerning divorce	19:3-12	10:2-12		
112. Concerning children	19:13-15	10:13-16	18:15-17	
113. Rich young ruler, peril of riches, reward of sacrifice	19:16-30	10:17-31	18:17-30	
114. Laborers in the vineyard	20:1-16			
115. Again foretells His Passion	20:17-19	10:32-34	18:31-34	
116. Ambitions of James and John	20:20-28	10:35-45		
117. Two blind men at Jericho	20:29-34	10:46-52	18:35-43	
118. Zacchaeus, parable of pounds			19:1-27	
119. On toward Jerusalem			19:28	3

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<b>PART 9: Last Week of Our Lord's Ministry and His Crucifixion</b>				
120. Jesus arrives and is feasted at Bethany	(26:6-13)	(14:3-9)		11:55-12:11
121. Triumphal entry into Jerusalem and return to Bethany	21:1-11	11:1-11	19:29-44	12:12-19
122. Cursing the fig tree	21:18-19	11:12-14		
123. Cleansing Temple and return to Bethany	21:12, 13-17	11:15-19	19:45-48	
124. Lesson of the withered fig tree (road from Bethany to Jerusalem)	21:20-22	11:20-26	21:37-38	
125. Christ's authority questioned	21:23-27	11:27-33	20:1-8	
126. Three parables				
a. Two sons	21:28-32			
b. Wicked husbandmen	21:33-46	12:1-12	20:9-19	
c. Marriage of the King's son	22:1-4			
127. Questions and answers	22:15-46	12:13-37	20:20-44	
128. Denunciation of scribes and Pharisees	23	12:28-40	20:45-47	
129. The widow's mite		12:41-44	21:1-4	
130. Greeks seek Jesus, His discourse				12:20-50
131. Destruction of Jerusalem and the second coming of Christ	24	13	21:5-36	
132. Parables of virgins and talents	25			
133. Christ predicts and Jews plot His death	26:1-5	14:1-2	22:1-2	
134. Christ anointed	(26:6-13)	(14:3-9)		(12:2-8)
135. Judas' bargain (Note: Probably remained in Bethany all day Wednesday)	26:14-16	14:10-11	22:3-6	
136. Preparation for Passover supper	26:17-19	14:12-16	22:7-13	
137. The Lord goes to the Passover	26:20	14:17	22:14-18 (24-30)	
138. Jesus washes the disciples feet				13:1-20
139. The traitor pointed out	26:21-25	14:18-21	22:21-23	13:21-29
140. Judas leaves				13:30-35
141. Strife for precedence			22:24-30	
142. The Lord's Supper (1 Cor. 11:23-26)	26:26-29	14:22-25	22:19-20	
143. Jesus goes out to the Mount of Olives	(26:30)	(14:26)		
144. Peter warned, swords produced	(26:31-35)	(14:27-31)	22:31-38	13:36-38
145. Comfort for the disciples				14
146. Vine and branches, further comfort				15,16
147. The Lord's Prayer				17
148. On to Gethsemane	(26:30-35)	(14:26-31)	22:39	18:1
149. Agony in Gethsemane	26:36-46	14:43-52	22:47-53	18:1-2
150. Jesus betrayed, arrested and forsaken	26:42-56	14:43-53	22:47-53	18:3-11
151. Taken to Annas first				18:12-13(24)
152. Preliminary trial before Caiphas	26:57-66	14:53-64	22:54	18:14,19-24
153. Jesus mocked and smitten	26:67-68	14:65	22:63-65	
154. In the meantime Peter denies three times	26:(58)69-75	14:(54)66-72	22:55-62	18:15-18,25-27
155. Formally condemned by Sanhedrin and led away to Pilate	27:1-2	15:1	22:66-23:1	18:28
156. Remorse and suicide of Judas (Acts 1:18,19)	27:3-10			
157. First trial before Pilate	27:11-14	15:2-5	23:2-6	18:28-38
158. Tried and mocked before Herod			23:7-12	
159. Jesus scourged and condemned by Pilate, mocked and abused by soldiers	27:15-30	15:6-19	23:13-25	18:39-19:16
160. Our Lord led away to place of crucifixion	27:31-33	15:20-22	23:26-32	19:16-17
161. The crucifixion	27:34-50	15:23-37	23:33-46	19:18-30
162. Extraordinary events	27:45,51-56	15:33,38-41	23:45,47-49	19:31-37

EVENTS	MATTHEW	MARK	LUKE	JOHN
<b>PART 10: The Burial, Resurrection, Appearance and Ascension of Our Lord</b>				
163. His burial	27:57-61	15:42-42-47	23:45,47-49	19:38-42
164. Guard at sepulchre	27:62-66			
165. His resurrection, empty tomb discovered	28:1-8	16:1-8	24:1-12	20:1-10
166. Appears to Mary Magdalene		16:9-11		20:11-18
167. Appears to the other women	28:9-10			
168. Report and bribery of the guard	28:11-15			
169. Third and fourth appearances - to Cleophas and another disciple, and to Simon		16:12-13	24:13-35	
170. Appeared same day and ate with disciples		16:14-18	24:36-43(44-49)	20:19-23
171. Thomas, being absent, doubted				20:24-25
172. A week later Christ appeared to disciples, Thomas being present				20:26-31
173. Appears to disciples at the Sea of Tiberius				21
174. On a mountain in Galilee (Acts 1:9-12)	28:16-20	(16:15-18)	(24:44-49)	
175. Acts 1:3-8; 1 Cor. 15:5-7				
176. The ascension of the Lord (Acts 1:4-5; 1 Cor. 15:8)		16:19-20	24:50-53	
177. Appeared to Paul (1 Cor. 15:8)				
178. Appeared to John on the Isle of Patmos (Rev. 1)				

# THE FOURFOLD GOSPEL - THE LIFE OF CHRIST

## INTRODUCTION

1. The Gospels contain almost all we know concerning the life of Christ. Secular history chose to ignore Him for matters they deemed more important at the time.  
The Gospels were written about thirty years after the death of Christ and are a history of BC 4 to AD 33 in the context of Christianity. However, they are not primarily a history, but instead a written means to preach the Gospel to convert the unbelievers and edify the believers.  
The Gospels are not necessarily presented in strict chronological order. Luke's Gospel is somewhat chronological and Matthew stays within certain time frames, but emphasizes subjects first.
2. The Four Pictures of Christ - Christ's greatness could not be described in one book. According to John, even what has been written does not do justice to Christ.
  - a. Matthew's Gospel concerns itself with the relationship of Jesus to the Jews. Matthew shows how Jesus: fulfills the Old Testament, judges the Jews for their hypocrisy, is the son of David, is the promised Messiah, and is the Rabbi of rabbis.
  - b. Mark's Gospel emphasizes action and stresses suffering on the part of the Messiah and the disciples. This Gospel shows that Jesus would be a spiritual leader, not a secular one.
  - c. Luke's Gospel stresses the blessings of salvation brought by Jesus Christ, emphasizes Jesus as the fulfillment of Old Testament prophecy, and shows that the Gospel is for the common man.
  - d. John's Gospel shows that Jesus was sent by the heavenly Father to be the Savior of the earth and that He came with the full authority of heaven even though He was a man.
3. Matthew's Gospel
  - a. The author
    - (1) one of the twelve, also known as Levi (Mk. 2:14)
    - (2) a Jew and a publican (Roman tax collector) (Mt. 10:3)
    - (3) he followed Jesus when he was called (Lk. 5:27,28)
    - (4) held a feast for Christ (Lk. 5:29)
  - b. Addressees - primarily written to the Jews (Mt. 10:5,6; 15:24)
  - c. Purpose - to show that Christ Jesus was indeed the Messiah of Jewish prophecy. Note the use of the words: fulfilled, King, and kingdom.
  - d. Distinctive features
    - (1) ten parables - the tares, hidden treasure, the pearl, the dragnet, the hard-hearted servant, workers in the vineyard, the two sons, marriage of the king's son, the ten bridesmaids, the talents.
    - (2) Three miracles - the two blind men, the dumb man who was possessed, the coin in the fish's mouth.
    - (3) Nine incidents - Joseph's dream, the wise men's visit, the escape to Egypt, Herod's massacre, Pilate's wife's dream, the death of Judas (also recorded in Acts), the saints resurrected in Jerusalem, the bribing of the guard, and the "great commission."
    - (4) Various teachings - "The Sermon on the Mount," "come unto me."
4. Mark's Gospel
  - a. The author
    - (1) the son of Mary of Jerusalem (Acts 12:12)
    - (2) also called John Mark (Acts 12:25)
    - (3) a relative of Barnabas (Col. 4:10)
    - (4) associated with Paul on the first missionary journey (Acts 12:25; 13:5)

- (5) temporarily alienated from Paul (Acts 13:13; 15:37-39)
  - (6) friendship with Paul restored (2 Tim. 4:11)
  - (7) secular history and tradition places Mark as a companion of Peter in later years (1 Pet. 5:13)
- b. Addressees - Possibly the Christians at Rome, suggested by lack of prophecy fulfillment and explanatory material included that would be needed by Gentiles. (Mk. 3:17; 5:41; 7:1-4,11,34)
- c. Main Theme - "Christ, the tireless servant of God and man." Emphasis is on Christ's deeds.
- d. Distinctive features
- (1) the shortest Gospel
  - (2) a vivid, dynamic style
  - (3) lets the work of Christ testify to His deity
  - (4) the most personal Gospel (Mk. 1:13; 3:17; 10:14; 10:32; 12:37; 6:3)
  - (5) alludes to Christ's humanity (Mk. 3:5; 4:38; 6:6; 7:34; 8:12; 10:21)
  - (6) nineteen miracles - eight showing power over disease, five showing power over nature, four showing authority over demons, two showing conquest over death.
5. Luke's Gospel
- a. The author - Luke, the beloved physician (Col. 4:14).
- (1) author of Acts, also addressed to Theophilus
  - (2) close friend and companion of Paul
  - (3) Paul's influence can be seen in the writing of Luke.
- b. Addressee - Theophilus, identity unknown. Probably a Gentile. Since Luke takes time to explain Jewish customs, it is assumed that he was writing primarily to Gentiles.
- c. Purpose - see Lk. 1:1-4. More will be said on these verses in a later lesson.
- d. Distinctive features
- (1) emphasizes the universal grace of God (Lk. 2:32; 3:6; 24:47).
  - (2) "The Son of Man" (Lk. 6:20; 7:37; 8:2; 10:33; 15:1; 16:20,21; 17:12; 23:43) (lowly and outcast)
  - (3) a devotional Gospel, emphasizing prayer.
    - (a) three parables on prayer, (Lk. 11:5-8; 18:1-8; 18: 9-14)
    - (b) prayers of Christ (Lk. 3:21; 5:16; 6:12; 9:29; 11:1; 22:32,44; 23:46)
  - (4) joy and praise - chapter 1 and 2.
  - (5) honors womanhood - chapters 1 and 10 (Lk. 23:27; 2:37; 4:26; 7:12; 18:3; 21:2)
  - (6) almost half the material in this book is only found in this book.
    - (a) examples of incidents: draught of fishes, raising the widow's son, the ten lepers, Malchus' ear healed.
    - (b) Sixteen parables - including the fig tree, the prayer parables, and the rich man and Lazarus.
6. John's Gospel
- a. The author - the apostle John (21:20,24)
- (1) the son of Zebedee
  - (2) the beloved disciple, the brother of James
  - (3) a member of the so-called "inner circle," with his brother and Peter
  - (4) entrusted with the care of Jesus' mother
- b. Addressees - this Gospel does not appear to be addressed to any one group, but it does fill in much material that the other so-called synoptic Gospels do not contain.
- c. Purpose - to inspire the readers to faith in Jesus Christ as the Son of God.

- d. Distinctive features
  - (1) considered to be the "deepest" of the Gospels
  - (2) Christ reveals Himself more completely
    - (a) His person and attributes
    - (b) His divinity
    - (c) The work of the Holy Spirit
    - (d) His divine commission
    - (e) Concerning the Fatherhood of God
  - (3) much emphasis placed on the "last days."
  - (4) certain conversations found only in John: Nicodemus and the woman at the well.
  - (5) discourse on the Good Shepherd (Jn. 10).
  - (6) Eight miracles (six unique to John's Gospel) - water to wine, healing the nobleman's son, blind man at the pool, man born blind, raising Lazarus, second draught of fishes.
  - (7) Two great themes: faith and eternal life.
  
- 7. The Pre-existent Christ - before Christ came to the earth as a man, he existed as part of the Godhood. This can be shown to be true from an examination of scripture.
  - a. Heb. 13:8 - Christ is eternally the same. If He is eternally the same, then He always existed, and therefore he is deity.
  - b. Heb. 7:3 - is further commentary on His eternal existence - He had no beginning. Melchizedek demonstrates this fact as a type of Christ.
  - c. Micah 5:2 - Micah's prophecies show that the activities of the Messiah have been eternal.
  - d. Jn. 8:58 - Christ Himself says that he pre-dates Abraham and entitles Himself, "I Am." The significance of this title is that it equates to the Old Testament "Jehovah."
  - e. Jn. 1:1; 17:5 - Christ pre-dates the world. We learn from verses 1 and 14 of chapter one that the "Word" is Christ and not only was He present at creation, He was an active participant (v.3). In Jn. 17:5 Jesus prays for a return to His former glory - before the world.
  
- 8. The Prophetic Christ - Bible handbooks and other Bible reference materials often have lists of prophecies concerning Christ and show when and how they were fulfilled by Him. The following list of prophecies might be of interest: Gen. 22:18; Ps. 2; 45:2; 110:1; 118:22; 132:11; Isa. 2:4; 9:6; 11:1; 28:16; 42:1; 59:16; 61:1; 63:1; Jer. 23:5; Hag. 2:7; Zech. 3:8; 6:12; 12:10; 13:7; Mal. 3:1

# THE FOURFOLD GOSPEL - THE LIFE OF CHRIST

## PART ONE: THE PERIOD OF CHRIST'S LIFE PRIOR TO HIS PUBLIC MINISTRY

### 1. Introductory Portion of the Several Books

#### a. John's introduction (1:1-18)

- (1) Verse 14 tells us the Word is Christ. The passage affirms: 1-Christ existed before creation, 2-He was present with God, 3-He is Divine, 4-He is the Word, and 5-through Him all things were made (v.3).
- (2) John is showing to his readers that even though the Word is God, he is also a distinct personality.
- (3) Compare with Heb. 1:2 (Col. 1:15-17) and notice how creation came about. God Said! The Word made all things. (Notice the plural pronouns in Gen. 1:26, 3:22, 11:7.) How can we use this verse to show that Jesus is not a creature?
- (4) Life has flowed from the Word since the beginning. When God breathed life into man, the Word was there. The Word has the power of life and death, example: Lazarus. The Word is the spiritual light that guides mankind (Jn. 8:12).
- (5) The Light of the Word pierces the spiritual darkness of this world. Some will refuse to take advantage of the Light, but choose instead to remain in darkness. That is, some will despise and reject Christ.
- (6) John the Baptist was sent as a forerunner to prepare the way for the coming of the Light.
- (7) John's job was as a witness or messenger. He preached repentance and the Kingdom was at hand. His testimony was aimed at converting men to Christ, not himself. Compare John's mission to that of the Apostles.
- (8) Some followers tried to deify John. Even Christ said John was the light (5:35-38). How is this explained? Christ is a self-shining light, while John is a reflected light. Christ shines by His own light while John shines by Christ's light.
- (9) Christ is the universal light (Jn. 12:46). He was sent to light the way for every man, not just one particular group.
- (10) Compare to verse 11. This verse refers to His reception among the world in general. 1-He was in the world, 2-He created the world, and 3-the world did not recognize Him.
- (11) This verse concerns His reception among His own people. 1-He joined the Jewish race in fleshly form, and 2-they rejected Him as well.
- (12) Believers are given the power to become children of God. Notice that we are not made children by simply believing, but believing gives us the ability to become children. (Gal. 3:26; 4:6,7; 1 Jn. 3:1,2)
- (13) Race has nothing to do with salvation and our natural birth has nothing to do with spiritual regeneration. The new birth will be discussed more thoroughly when we study Jesus' discourse with Nicodemus (Jn. 3:1-8).
- (14) The Gnostics were already causing trouble in the church when John wrote this Gospel. If Christ truly came in the flesh, then Gnosticism is a false religion. Peter, James, and John were eyewitnesses of the Transfiguration, while the other Apostles were witnesses of Jesus' sinless and godlike life. The blessings of grace and truth come through Christ, not pomp and grandeur.
- (15) This is John the Baptist's testimony. Even though Christ was at least six months younger than John was, John gave him seniority. Why? His pre-existence.

- (16) Based on his own observations and those of the Baptist, the Apostle John concludes: we have all received of His fullness. "Grace for grace," means a perpetual reception not just a one-time gift. (Compare to Rom. 1:16,17.)
- (17) The Law of Moses was not a system of grace, nor could man become perfect (complete) through it.
- (18) The manifestation of the Word has allowed us to glimpse God the father. It is Christ's continuing duty to reveal God to generations that do not know Him (Jn. 14:9).

**b. Luke's preface (1:1-4)**

- (1) It seems from this introduction that others besides Matthew, Mark, Luke and John were writing gospels of their own.
- (2) The things believed were preached by eyewitnesses, these eyewitnesses would include but not be limited to the Apostles. Luke's inspiration would allow him to recollect perfectly what these eyewitnesses had told him. In turn, their inspiration would allow them to remember what they had seen and heard perfectly.
- (3) Luke has made himself accurately informed on the given subject. Luke will take his narrative back to the "very first," that is, to the pre-existent Christ. While Luke's gospel seems to be chronological, it is probably not exactly chronological event by event. However, the periods of Christ's life seem to be in order by topic.
- (4) Why was the book written? 1-To edify and strengthen Theophilus. Compare to 1 Jn. 5:13. 2-To provide assurance of the things already received. 3-To provide a permanent written record of the life of Christ.

**c. The genealogies (Mt. 1:1-17; Lk. 3:23-38)**

- 1. The genealogy of Matthew (1 Chron. 1:34-2:15; Gen. 21:1-3; 25:21-26; 29:35; 38:29; Ruth 4:18-21) - In verses 1-6 we have fourteen Patriarchs listed, from Abraham to David. By counting David again there are fourteen Kings listed from David to Jecooniah. From Shealtiel to Jesus is fourteen generations. Do we recognize any Old Testament characters in this list? Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Judah, Rahab, Ruth, The Kings, Joseph, Jesus.
- 2. The genealogy of Luke - Why is Luke's genealogy different than Matthew's? Two theories have been proposed:
  - (a) Matthew's genealogy shows Christ coming through the lineage of Joseph and Luke's shows Christ coming through Mary. That is, Matthew's genealogy was to demonstrate to the Jews that His paternal lineage was from Abraham through the Kings of Israel, thus making Him an heir to the throne of David. Luke's genealogy was to demonstrate Romans 1:3, that Christ was heir to David's throne in the flesh.
  - (b) The second theory says that both genealogies come through Joseph, but Luke's is more complete. That is, Matthew listed only the families, while Luke listed the individuals.
- 3. Both theories agree that the difference in purpose has much to do with the difference in the lists. Matthew was establishing Jesus' Jewish heritage, while Luke was establishing Jesus as the "new Adam" for the benefit of the Gentiles. (See also, McGarvey's Commentary on Matthew p. 23.)

**2. Birth of John the Baptist Foretold to Zacharias (Lk. 1:5-25)**

- (5) Herod the Great was appointed King of Judah by the Romans, he was a Jewish proselyte from the lineage of Edom (Idumaen). He was an evil man and the first of a line of ruling Herods of

Judah. He died in 4 BC, the approximate year of the Lord's birth. Zacharias was a Jewish priest of the eighth order (Abijah). His wife Elisabeth was also a Levite, a descendent of Aaron.

- (6) They were righteous in that they followed the Law of Moses by keeping the commandments and ordinances of the Law.
- (7) They were both too old to bear children, but besides age, Elisabeth was barren. We see then that the Baptist's birth was contrary to nature. Compare his situation to that of Isaac, Samson, and Samuel. The birth of each of these men was a foreshadowing of the birth of Christ.
- (8) The miracle which follows occurred while Zacharias was performing his priestly duties.
- (9) These duties included entering the Holy Place and burning incense.
- (10) The hour of incense corresponded to the hour of prayer, so the outer courts of the temple were filled with people.
- (11) The angel Gabriel appears to Zacharias (v.19).
- (12) The sudden appearance of the angel was disconcerting to Zacharias. He was afraid that he had performed his duties in an unworthy manner and that God was going to require his life.
- (13) It is doubtful that Zacharias was praying for a son at this time. However, it seems obvious that he had prayed for a son in the past. The fact that the angel mentions that Elisabeth will have a son points out the object of these past petitions. What is the significance of the name John? It means, "God is gracious" or "graciously bestowed of God."
- (14) The birth of John the Baptist was a reason for many to be joyful. This joy culminated in his ministry, as it was his ministry that brought joy to the people. Of course if he had never been born this joy would have never been available.
- (15) Compare Mt. 11:11- John lived up to the angel's prophecy. John was to be bound with the Nazarite vow (Num. 6:1-20; compare Samson, Jud. 13:2-5). This vow would account for his long hair and abstinence from wine and strong drink. His life and ministry were to be directed by the Holy Spirit from the day of his birth. (See v. 41 for a possible connection.)
- (16) The angel predicts the success of John's ministry. This ministry was to the Jews only. The number of his converts was many (Mt. 3:5,6; Mk. 1:5; Lk. 3:7). Notice that John's work was to turn the people back to God, hence his baptism of repentance and the fulfillment of Mal. 4:5.
- (17) John was to be the new "Elijah" prophesied as the forerunner of the Messiah (Mt. 17:9-13; 2 Ki. 1:8; Mt. 3:4; 1 Ki. 18:21-40). The continuity between the Old Covenant is maintained as this verse takes up where the Old Testament left off (Mal. 4:6). John's preaching would cause some to set aside their differences and prepare for the coming of the Messiah.
- (18) Zacharias wanted assurance that the angel's word was true. This scene reveals a flaw in Zacharias' character and his "sign" would also act as a punishment for doubting the angel. Why did Zacharias not believe the angel? Perhaps because of he and Elisabeth's advanced years. (Think of Abraham and Sarah.)
- (19) By identifying himself as "Gabriel," the angel should have quelled Zacharias' fears. Gabriel means "man of God" and previously appeared to Daniel (Dan. 8:16; 9:21). He was an archangel (Rev. 8:2) or prince of angels.
- (20) Zacharias will be struck dumb and remain that way until eight days after the birth of John. Remember that this punishment was also a sign that the angel spoke the truth.
- (21) It was unusual for the priest to stay long in the Holy Place. The people waiting outside were concerned over his extended stay. Slow service was considered displeasing to God, and the people feared the punishment that would accompany that displeasure (Lev. 16:13).
- (22) His countenance showed the people that he had seen a vision, but because of his dumbness he had to dismiss the congregation by signs. Numbers 6:23-26 shows that it was the duty of the incensing priest to bless the congregation.

- (23) Zacharias had to finish his priestly duties before he could go home. His duties at the temple lasted from one to two weeks and he would be confined to the temple during that time. His home was located somewhere in the hill country surrounding Jerusalem (see v. 39).
- (24) It is hard to determine exactly why Elisabeth hid herself. Perhaps it was because the child was to be a Nazarite (compare to Samson's mother) or perhaps the modesty of the day dictated it. It could be that her advanced years made her more careful, not wanting to lose the child. Her seclusion was interrupted by Mary's visit.
- (25) To be barren was a reproach to a Jewish woman (Gen. 30:23). Each woman hoped that she would be the mother of the Messiah.

### 3. **Birth of Jesus Foretold to Mary (Lk. 1:26-38)**

- (26) This verse indicates that John was six months older than Jesus was. Palestine was divided into three territories: Judea - south, Samaria - central, and Galilee - north (refer to map).
- (27) This engagement period could last up to a year and commenced with a betrothal ceremony. It had all the binding obligations of our marriage ceremony. The "seed of David" may refer to Christ's lineage through Joseph and/or Mary. The fact that Mary was a virgin fulfills the prophecy of Isa. 7:14.
- (28) The angel Gabriel entered Mary's house and saluted (greeted) her. The salutation included the statement of her being highly favored. (How? We shall see directly.)
- (29) The words of the angel confused Mary.
- (30) The fact that Mary had obtained favor in God's eyes indicates that she had not always had this favor. This in turn eliminates the false doctrine of the "Immaculate Conception."
- (31) Verse 35 answers the "how" posed by this statement. Jesus - "the help of Jehovah" or Savior.
- (32) The word for "shall be" in Greek indicates acceptance. Christ will be accepted as the Son of the Most High. How did Christ possess David's throne? David ruled God's people from an earthly throne, Christ rules God's people from a heavenly throne which would include David's earthly throne.
- (33) This is a reference to the spiritual house of Jacob, the true Israel. Only eternity will end this kingdom on earth. (Gal. 3:7-9) comments on spiritual Israel and demonstrates that both Jew and Gentile are included.
- (34) This is not a question of unbelief, like the question of Zacharias', but simply not understanding "how" this thing could happen. Still, why should Zacharias be punished and Mary be left alone?
- (35) Jesus was miraculously conceived, this why He was the "Son of God." The agency of the Holy Spirit is employed as He was at creation (Gen. 1:2).
- (36) Elisabeth was Mary's relative, not necessarily her cousin. Mary becomes informed of Elisabeth's condition. Why had Mary not already received this information?
- (37) Mary must believe that nothing is impossible with God.
- (38) Mary submits to the prophecy, she is willing to become the bondservant of the Lord, that these things might come to pass.

### 4. **Mary Visits Elisabeth (Lk. 1:39-56)**

- (39) It was not long before Mary went to see Elisabeth. The city of Judah referred to here was probably Hebron.
- (40) As was the custom, Mary went into the host and saluted her with a formal greeting, such as: "may God be with you" or "may peace be yours."
- (41) The sound of Mary's voice caused 1) John to leap in the womb and 2) Elisabeth to be inspired by the Holy Spirit to such an extent as to utter the following prophecy.

- (42) "Blessed art thou among women" could be legitimately translated "blessed of God beyond all other women." Elisabeth knew by inspiration that Mary was pregnant.
- (43) Elisabeth inquires as to why she is so honored? She is referring to the honor of being visited by the mother of the Messiah.
- (44) Elisabeth recounts what happened in verse 41. It seems that Mary's salutation caused the baby to "leap for joy" in Elisabeth's womb.
- (45) Elisabeth may be comparing Mary to Zacharias. That is, Mary is blessed because she believed from the beginning.
- (46-56) Most of the recorded words we have spoken by the mother of Jesus occur in these verses. This is Mary's song. (Compare to Hannah's song, 1 Sam. 2:1-10). This poem is a celebration of the Lord's glorious fulfillment of the promise to Israel of a Messiah. Mary rejoiced that she had been elevated from nothing to the mother of the Messiah. Notice verse 48. All generations from that time forward would know that she was the mother of the Lord. In verse 49, Mary's poem begins to look back over the great things that God had done for Israel.

The poem can be divided into three main sections:

1. (vv. 46-48) - Even though Mary was blessed, it is God who deserves the credit.
2. (vv. 49,50) - Here Mary glorifies God for His power, holiness, and mercy.
3. (vv. 51-53) - The changes which the Messiah will make are spoken of as if He had already completed His work.

Mary concludes (vv. 54-56) with an expression of gratitude for God's own faithfulness.

## 5. Birth and Early Life of John (Lk. 1:57-80)

- (57) John was born soon after Mary's departure. The predictions of the angel begin to unfold.
- (58) With the rejoicing of the kinfolk and neighbors, the fulfillment of v. 14 begins. Everyone realized that Elisabeth having a child was a great blessing possible only through "great mercy of the Lord."
- (59) Mosaic Law concerning circumcision can be found in Gen. 17:12, Lev. 12:3, and Jn. 7:22,23. Tradition called for at least ten witnesses. Circumcision served as a mark of Jewish nationality and as a sign of their faith in God.
- (60,61) Zacharias had communicated to Elisabeth that the baby was to be named John or else she was inspired concerning the name. Custom dictated that the son would be named for the father, the naming of both John and Jesus broke with this tradition.
- (62) This verse implies that Zacharias was probably deaf as well as dumb. The witnesses assumed that Zacharias would override Elisabeth in this matter of the name. Some commentators feel that the Greek is saying that the witnesses were asking for a sign from Zacharias, not signing to him.
- (63) Tablet - a clay tablet coated with wax, into which letters were traced with a stylus. Zacharias' simple statement infers that John had already been named. Why would they marvel at this? First, John was not a family name and second, that the parents would agree to such a name.
- (64) When Zacharias affirmed that his son's name was in indeed John, his tongue was loosened. Notice that the first use of his recovered speech was to praise God.
- (65) The active presence of God has always inspired awe in man. The circumstances of John's birth were told throughout all of Judea.
- (66) It could be seen that the Lord was with John. Because the Lord was with John, it was known that he was destined for something - just what, everybody wondered?
- (67) In verses 67-79 we have prophecy uttered by Zacharias. Part 1 - (67-75) Blessing God for the true spiritual salvation in fulfillment of his promises. There had been no recorded prophets

since Malachi. What is a prophet? A forth-teller, one who communicates God's will (Gen. 20:7; Jn. 4:19) God's mouthpiece to the people (2 Pet. 1:21). Sometimes even evil men were inspired as prophets (Num. 23:5; 24:11).

- (68) This verse refers to Jesus Christ. Note: Prophets sometimes spoke of things that were going to happen as if they had already occurred.
- (69) The word "horn" represents strength and honor, power and glory. Zacharias gives precedence in his prophecy to Jesus, even though the occasion is the birth of his own son, John.
- (70) The words of the prophets were the words of God. God first promised the Messiah in Gen. 3:15. Since that time, Christ had been the main subject of prophecy (Rev. 19:10).
- (71) Our true enemies are the ones that can harm us spiritually. The messiah was sent to deliver us from these spiritual enemies.
- (72,73) Christ will bring pardon, peace, and eternal life, thus fulfilling the promise, the covenant, and the oath.
- (74) Christ will indeed conquer our enemies, but even though He is mighty, we need not fear Him.
- (75) "Holiness" involves the duties we owe to God, such as: reverence, devotion, and worship. "Righteousness" has more to do with that which is right between men.
- (76) Part 2 - (76-79) Presenting John as the prophet and herald of the Messiah. Review the aspects of what it means to be a "forerunner."
- (77) John's objective was to awaken the people to see their need for spiritual salvation by starting them on their way through repentance.
- (78) Christ is the dayspring, that is, the dawn of a new era.
- (79) Everyone has the opportunity for this light to shine on them.
- (80) John begins to grow - physically, mentally, and spiritually. "The deserts" means unenclosed, untilled, uninhabited places. They could be mountains, woods, pastures, or desert; anyplace remote would fit the definition. John remained in the deserts until his time of public ministry (at about 30 years of age).

## **6. Birth of Jesus Foretold to Joseph (Mt. 1:18-25)**

- (18) It was probably upon her return from visiting Elisabeth that Mary's pregnancy was discovered (became evident).
- (19) Of course, Joseph supposes that Mary had committed adultery. This left him with two courses of action according to the Law of Moses. Deut. 22:23,24 was the most drastic alternative. The less violent alternative is found in Deut. 24:1 in which Mary would not be punished.
- (20) Obviously, this problem filled Joseph's mind. An angel speaks to Joseph in a dream, addressing him as a son of David. The angel affirms that Mary has not been untrue to Joseph, but is pregnant supernaturally. Why would Joseph "fear" to take Mary as his wife? Because it would have soiled his family name to marry an adulterous woman.
- (21) The angel prophesies a son, to be named Jesus. Also we see that Christ's work is also prophesied: namely, to save us from our sins!
- (22) Why was Mary chosen? So that prophecy such as Isa. 7:14 might be fulfilled. The four main points of this prophecy are: 1- a virgin bears a child, 2- a male child, 3- the child shall be divinely named and 4- the significance of the name would be given.
- (23) For Jesus to be the "Son of God" would demand a miraculous birth. His name Emmanuel means "God with us."
- (24) When Joseph awoke he obeyed the angel. It seems then that Joseph married Mary immediately, some months before the birth of Jesus. By marrying, Joseph saved Jesus from an illegitimate birth.

- (25) They abstained from intercourse until after Jesus was born. The Jews had already had two heroes named Jesus (Joshua and Hosea). One was captain of Israel, while the other was a high priest. Notice that Christ fulfills both of these offices.

## **7. Birth of Jesus (Lk. 2:1-7)**

- (1) Caesar Augustus is the first of four Roman emperors to be mentioned in the NT. The title Caesar is also given to Tiberius (Lk. 3:1), Claudius (Acts 17:7), and Nero (Acts 25:8; 26:32). Augustus either called for a census of the Roman Empire or perhaps an enrollment for tax purposes.
- (2) Quirinius took another census about ten years later (Acts 5:37). Syria included Palestine under Roman rule.
- (3) The census called for each man to proceed to the city of his ancestors.
- (4) Even though Bethlehem was south of Nazareth it was at a higher (up) elevation. Bethlehem translates "house of bread" and thus it was a fitting birthplace for the "bread of life." It is located about six miles south of Jerusalem and 80 miles from Nazareth. Bethlehem was also the birthplace of David (1 Sam. 16:1).
- (5) Mary was either required by law to accompany Joseph or directed to by the Holy Spirit. She was near her term.
- (6) While waiting to be registered, Mary's time came.
- (7) Did Mary have other children? See Mt. 13:55, Mk. 6:3, Lk. 8:20, and Jn. 7:5. "Swaddling clothes" were bands of cloth used to wrap infants. It is reasonable to assume that the manger or crib was probably located in an outbuilding of the inn.

## **8. The Shepherds (Lk. 2:8-20)**

- (8) Shepherding was one of the chief occupations among the Jews. Can you name some famous OT shepherds? Who is the most famous NT shepherd? (Jn. 10:11; Heb. 13:20.) The custom was to divide the night into four watches. The shepherds would take turns throughout the night.
- (9) Suddenly and unexpectedly an angel appears. The bright shining often accompanied the presence of angels (Ex. 24:16; Num. 14:10; Mt. 17:5). The shepherds were fearful.
- (10) The angel tells them that there is no need to be afraid because he is a messenger of good tidings.
- (11) That Christ was born in Bethlehem is a fulfillment of prophecy (Mic. 5:2). The Savior is the Christ (anointed), the ruler or Lord.
- (12) The sign was that the baby would be lying in a manger, not that he would be wrapped in swaddling clothes.
- (13) Now a host of angels appear and begin praising God.
- (14) Peace will come to all men who choose to be pleasing to God.
- (15) Even though the angels did not command them to go to Bethlehem the shepherds wanted to see this thing which had occurred.
- (16) Exactly how far away the shepherds were is hard to say, however they were close enough to arrive the same night. How they found Mary and Joseph is unclear.
- (17) This was proof enough for the shepherds who then began broadcasting the things that they had witnessed.
- (18) Those who heard the shepherd's story did not fully understand it.
- (19) Mary compared what the shepherds said to what the angel had told her. She filed these things away in her mind for future reference.
- (20) As the shepherds returned to their flocks, they rejoiced and praised God because these things had been made known to them.

## 9. The Circumcision and Naming of Jesus (Lk. 2:21)

- (21) Lev. 12:1-8 shows that under the Law the firstborn male child was to be dedicated to the Lord. As the angel had commanded the child was named Jesus.

## 10. The Presentation and Purification in the Temple (Lk. 2:22-39)

- (22) Lev. 12:1-5 shows that the purification process took 40 days. When this time was past, Joseph and Mary took Jesus to the Temple in Jerusalem. All firstborn male children were regarded as belonging to the Lord (Ex. 12:29,30). This child had to be redeemed with money (Ex. 13:11-15; Num. 18:15,16), about five shekels.
- (23) The tribe of Levi took the place of the original household priest (Num. 3:12), thus the firstborn could be redeemed as we noticed in verse 22.
- (24) The law also called for a sacrifice to be made. A year old lamb was called for, however the poor were allowed to substitute two young pigeons or turtledoves (Lev. 12:6-8). Mary's offering shows she was poor.
- (25) The name Simeon means "hearing." He was a cautious man, careful concerning the Law. He was expecting the Messiah to come. "The consolation of Israel" was a Jewish expression referring to the Messiah. Simeon was filled with the Holy Spirit.
- (26) Compare this verse to Mt. 16:28. The Holy Spirit had guaranteed Simeon that the Messiah would come before he died.
- (27) The Spirit had directed Simeon to the Temple, so that he would be there at the same time as Joseph, Mary, and Jesus.
- (28) Simeon recognized Jesus as the Messiah on first sight. He immediately blessed God for fulfilling his vision.
- (29) Simeon realizes that he is free to depart this life because the vision has been fulfilled.
- (30) How does Simeon see salvation? The embodiment of salvation is seen through the baby that Simeon holds in his arms.
- (31) The Jewish ideas concerning the Messiah had been spread throughout the world.
- (32) This salvation (light) will be for all people, Gentile as well as Jew.
- (33) Luke accepts Joseph as Christ's legal earthly guardian. Joseph and Mary were amazed because they did not realize the extent of the power that their Son would one day wield. They were also surprised that a stranger would know things concerning Jesus.
- (34) Why was Jesus a "falling?" (Isa. 8:14; Mt. 21:42,44; Acts 4:11; Rom. 9:33; 1 Cor. 1:23) indicates He would be a stumbling block. Why was He a "rising?" (Rom. 6:4-9; Eph. 2:6) show that many would be raised up to glory and life through Him.
- (35) Here we have prophecy concerning Mary's pain at the crucifixion. Christ's death will manifest the evil in the hearts of His persecutors.
- (36) This Anna (or Hannah) was well known as a prophetess of advanced years. Some believe her to have been over 100 years old.
- (37) Some commentators feel that she was 84 years old and the things mentioned here happened within that time frame. The Jews held widows who chose not to remarry in high esteem. She was obviously very devout as seen by the time that she spent worshipping in the Temple.
- (38) She thanked God and spoke to those present of the Messiah.
- (39) Luke omits to tell that Jesus returned to Galilee via Bethlehem and Egypt. Eventually they do return as we will see in Mt. 2:22,23.

## 11. Visit of the Wise Men (Mt. 2:1-12)

- (1) History shows that Herod died in 4 BC, therefore Christ was born in or before that year. Herod was a puppet king of the Roman government, a half Jew. The wise men were actually priests or philosophers, Magi, from somewhere east of the Euphrates River.
- (2) The "star" was a supernatural source of light, because it behaved as no star could. These men were directed by God, as demonstrated by their knowledge of who would be found under the star.
- (3) Why was Herod "troubled?" His reign was threatened. Christ is the peace of the righteous and the trouble of the wicked.
- (4) Herod realized that the reference here was to the Messiah. The chief priests and the scribes could tell from the OT where the Christ would be born.
- (5) The priests quote Micah 5:2-4.
- (6) Compare this verse to Micah 5:2. Though not a direct translation, the gist of the message is there.
- (7) Herod now consults the Magi as to when the star appeared. This would pinpoint when Christ was born and give him an idea of his age. Notice that Herod held this meeting privately. Why?
- (8) To get an idea of Herod's true nature remove the word "worship" from this quote and insert the word "murder."
- (9) The star returned to guide the Magi, and they followed it the rest of the way to where Jesus was living.
- (10) Finding the star caused them to rejoice and confirmed that they were being guided supernaturally.
- (11) They worshipped Christ and presented Him with gifts. Joseph and Mary could use these gifts as money on their impending flight to Egypt.
- (12) The Magi were warned in a dream not to return to Herod.

## 12. Jesus Taken to Egypt to Escape Death (Mt. 2:13-18)

- (13) The reading seems to indicate that the Magi arrived and departed the same night that Joseph and Mary fled to Egypt. The angel intended for them to leave immediately. There were many Jews in Egypt at this time so refuge among their own people was possible. The trip was between one and two hundred miles. The reason for this flight is explained.
- (14) It is interesting to note that they had to seek refuge in the country of bondage.
- (15) The death of Herod was probably soon after their arrival in Egypt. As for the prophecy, see Hos. 11:1.
- (16) When the Magi did not return, Herod became enraged. He had all the male children 2 years older and under, in and about Bethlehem, put to death. Herod could not know if the star appeared before or after the birth of Jesus, therefore he built in a margin for error. To see the extent of Herod's cruelty see *The Fourfold Gospel* pp. 50,51.
- (17) Jer. 31:15 was originally spoken concerning the Babylonian captivity. This type of prophecy is where the words spoken mean the same thing in the current situation as they did when they were originally spoken, even though they had no reference to this current event. This is a verbal fulfillment.
- (18) Rama was a hill town 6 miles north of Jerusalem. Compare Rachel to the mothers Bethlehem. Thus we have the fulfillment words, not necessarily a prediction.

## 13. The Return to Nazareth (Mt. 2:19-23)

- (19) It was not long until Herod died. Joseph was informed of Herod's death by an angel in a dream.
- (20) Since the enemies were dead, it was safe to return home.
- (21) So they returned to Palestine.

- (22) The land had been divided among Herod's sons. Archelaus controlled Judea. It seems Joseph's original plan was to return to Bethlehem. He decided, with God's approval, to go to Galilee where Antipas ruled.
- (23) Prophecy shows that Jesus should be called a Nazarene. Nazareth comes from a word meaning "lowly" or "despised." (Isa. 11:1; Eze. 15:1-6; Mal. 4:1.) He was called a Nazarene, but was actually a Bethlehemite.

#### **14. Visit to Jerusalem at Age Twelve (Lk. 2:40-52)**

- (40) The humanity of Christ is demonstrated in this verse as His body grew and His mind expanded.
- (41) The Law required that males above the age of 12 attend the Passover feast (Ex. 13:7). It took place at the first full moon following the vernal equinox. The attendance at Jerusalem often exceeded two million.
- (42) This is the only incident that we have recorded from Jesus' childhood. Nazareth to Jerusalem was about 70 miles, uphill.
- (43) The feast lasted eight days (Ex. 12:15, Lev. 23:56). As Joseph and Mary were returning home, they lost track of the boy Christ.
- (44) They expected Him to be among those traveling their way. The first day's journey was usually a short one, so when the evening camp was made, Jesus turned up missing.
- (45) They immediately returned to Jerusalem to try and find Him.
- (46) Compare this loss of the Savior to that of Lk. 24:21. They found Him at the Temple listening and questioning the teachers there. Jesus was not usurping the authority of adults but simply sitting in on a class that probably met daily.
- (47) The teachers were amazed at the questions he asked them and the answers He gave to their questions.
- (48) Joseph and Mary were astonished that Jesus would presume to enter the class of these teachers. Mary was also upset that he had not accompanied the caravan. She expressed the concern that she and Joseph felt.
- (49) Here we have the first recorded words of Jesus. Mary should have known that He would be in the Temple. From this point on, Joseph is not referred to as Jesus' father. Jesus is saying that His being at the Temple was more important than the return to Nazareth.
- (50) Joseph and Mary did not understand what he was saying to them. It seems strange that they did not expect some "different" behavior from their special Son.
- (51) Jesus returns to Nazareth with Joseph and Mary. During the ensuing years Jesus was in subjection to His earthly parents and learned His father's trade (Mk. 6:3). This is the last mention of Joseph. Notice that Mary once again records the sayings of and concerning her Son in her heart.
- (52) During these years He was admired by His fellowmen for His holiness. However, note closely how they react to His teaching as He begins to "activate" His holiness by teaching it to others. How could He increase in favor with God?

## THE FOURFOLD GOSPEL - THE LIFE OF CHRIST

### PART TWO - ANNOUNCEMENT AND INTRODUCTION OF THE LORD'S PUBLIC MINISTRY

#### 15. The Forerunner's Work (Lk. 3:1-18) [Mt. 3:1-12; Mk. 1:1-8]

- (1) According to all reliable historians the date for the beginning of John's ministry would have been around 29 AD. Pontius Pilate became the Roman governor in 25 or 26 AD. Herod Antipas was tetrarch of Galilee. It was Antipas that had John beheaded and mocked Christ. Philip was tetrarch in northeast Palestine and Lysanias was tetrarch of the area northwest of Damascus.
- (2) Why were there two high priests when Jewish Law declared that there would be only one? Annas, the rightful High Priest had been deposed by the Romans. Caiphas, his son-in-law, was fulfilling the actual duties of High Priest. Many Jews still looked to Annas despite the presence of Caiphas. With this historical information in place, the time of John's public ministry is fixed.
- (3) John began his teaching in the Jordan valley. His message was to repent and be baptized as a condition of forgiveness.
- (4) John's ministry was a direct fulfillment of OT prophecy (Isa. 40:3-5; 52:10). This passage defines forerunner and shows that the message is more important than the messenger.
- (5) "To make way for the King," was part of John's message. The road was to be prepared so that the way for the King would be straight and smooth.
- (6) The King's entrance would be so remarkable that all could see salvation by his very coming.
- (7) The multitudes included many of the Pharisees and Sadducees (Mt. 3:7). Referring to them as children of vipers was extremely strong language. This labeled them as deceitful, malignant and holding to false doctrine. They needed to be warned of the wrath of God. This wrath would come on all that would reject the kingdom of heaven. The coming of the Messiah was predicted to bring troublesome times (Isa. 60:12; 63:1; Mal. 3:1; 4:5).
- (8) John demands works of repentance. Abraham cannot protect them. How did the Jews think that he would?
- (9) The tree that would not produce these fruits was ready to be cut down. The worthless trees would then be burned. Because many were expecting a temporal King, John spent much of his time trying to awaken his listener's spiritual thinking.
- (10) Compare to the Pentecost crowd of Acts 2. John's preaching had awakened some to the fact that something must be done.
- (11) Give to the poor, do not be selfish. Look to your brother's physical necessities.
- (12) The tax collectors were often unscrupulous men who would collect more taxes than what were due, keeping the excess for themselves.
- (13) John demanded that they do their work honestly, not that they must give up tax collecting.
- (14) These were Jewish soldiers. They were prone to take what they wanted either by physical force or through bribery. John teaches them to be content with their wages.
- (15) The people wondered whether or not John was the Christ.
- (16) John denies this speculation. John compares his "water only" baptism to that of the true Messiah. In all aspects, the Christ would be mightier than John would, but there would be none greater than John (Mt. 11:9-11). The household servant that had the task of removing the guest's shoes was the least of the servants. The baptism administered by Christ would be of the Holy Spirit (Jn. 16:7; Acts 1:5; 11:16). The baptism of fire is Hell (see v. 17).
- (17) Using the example of the threshing floor, John explains how Christ will separate the good from the worthless, then destroy the worthless.
- (18) These are just a few examples of the teachings of John the Baptist

[Peculiarities of Matthew and Mark: The Kingdom at hand, Mt. 3:2; "Send my messenger," Mk. 1:4; and clothing and food, Mt. 3:4; Mk. 1:6.]

## 16. The Baptism of Jesus (Mt. 3:13-17) [Mk. 1:9-11, Lk. 3:21,22]

- (13) The departure of Jesus from Galilee to the Jordan is the first steps of His public career.
- (14) John's objection was based on his knowledge of Jesus as the Christ.
- (15) Jesus recognizes John's feelings, but asks him to do it anyway. Why did Jesus need to be baptized? Unto repentance? Hardly! He had to fulfill all righteousness; that is, baptism was and is an act of obedience.
- (16) Jesus was immersed; therefore He had to come up out of the water. Was the Holy Spirit visible to others (Jn. 1:33,34)? The voice was probably also heard by all present.
- (17) The voice presented two thoughts: 1) Jesus was God's Son and 2) God was pleased.

[Neither Mark nor Luke adds anything of significance to Matthew's account.]

## 17. The Temptation of Jesus (Lk. 4:1-13) [Mt. 4:1-11; Mk. 1:12,13]

- (1) Jesus had received the Holy Spirit at His baptism. The Spirit led Him to the place where He would be tried by the Devil.
- (2) Jesus was subjected to forty days of temptations. It seems that the full forces of these temptations were applied as the forty days neared their end.
- (3) The Devil was tempting Jesus to prove that He was the Son of God and satisfy His hunger.
- (4) Jesus quotes Deut 8:3. Jesus is not saying bread is worthless, only that spiritual matters take precedence. Why would it have been a sin for Jesus to turn the stone into bread? Then He would be obeying Satan and not His Father.
- (5) A supernatural occurrence allowed Jesus to view all the Kingdoms of the earth simultaneously. These kingdoms were promised to Jesus if He would bow down (worship) to Satan (v.7).
- (6) The temptation was to obtain glory and power on the earth. The sin would have been in acknowledging the Devil as supreme and sovereign.
- (7) See comments on verse 5.
- (8) Here Jesus quotes Deut. 6:13. It would be a sin to recognize as supreme and worthy of worship anyone besides the Father in Heaven.
- (9) The final scene is at the Temple in Jerusalem. The devil once again calls on Jesus to exert His powers.
- (10,11) Now Satan tries to counter Jesus' use of scripture by quoting some himself (Ps. 91:11,12).
- (12) Testing God would mean that faith was lacking. There is nothing wrong with the Devil's quotation, however it does not apply to Jesus knowingly subjecting Himself to danger. The sin would be putting oneself in unnecessary danger to test God and obeying Satan rather than God.
- (13) Heb. 4:15. The devil tried all types of temptations but Jesus succumbed to none of them. The three categories of sin demonstrated in these verses are 1) bodily appetites, 2) earthly ambitions, and 3) intellectual curiosity. The lesson of James 4:7 is learned by the example of our Lord.

[Pertinent differences between the three records include:

- 1) The third temptation listed by Matthew is the second one listed by Luke.
- 2) Matthew has "stones and loaves" while Luke has "stone and loaf."
- 3) Matthew quotes Deut. 8:3 more fully.
- 4) Luke quotes Ps. 91:11,12 more fully.
- 5) Matthew quotes Jesus as saying, "get thee hence Satan."

- 6) Mark and Matthew have the angels ministering to Jesus, Mk. 1:13; Mt. 4:11]

## 18. John's Testimony (Jn. 1:19-34)

- (19) Notice that John the Apostle has left out much of what we have already studied in the other Gospels. The rulers among the Jews (the Sanhedrin) sent priests and Levites to inquire of John the Baptist.
- (20) John denies being the Christ. In the latter half of the first century a cult will emerge claiming that John was the Christ.
- (21) If John was not Christ, then some thought he was Elijah returning in the flesh. Mal. 4:5 caused the Jews to expect the return of Elijah. John was not a physical manifestation of Elijah, but he was certainly a spiritual one. "That prophet" refers to Deut. 18:15, but this will later be shown to be Jesus (Acts 3:22; 7:37).
- (22) Since they could not guess his office they asked him to state it plainly for them.
- (23) John answers by quoting Isa. 40:3. Compare to Mt. 3:3, Mk. 1:2, and Lk. 3:4.
- (24) The messengers were Pharisees, which applies to the next question. Why? Because of their concerns with the external rites of Judaism.
- (25) If John was not the Messiah, what authority did he have to institute a new rite (baptism)?
- (26) Some translators read the word "with" here as "in." John chooses to answer indirectly. Christ was now on earth, in Judea.
- (27) John counted himself unworthy to even remove Jesus' shoes (Mt. 3:11), a job usually reserved for the lowliest of servants. What then is John's answer? His authority to baptize is based on the coming of Christ.
- (28) The exact location of Bethabara is unknown, but it was probably located on the east bank of the Jordan between the Dead Sea and Galilee.
- (29) It had been about forty days since Jesus was baptized, when appears again in John's company. Referring to Christ as "the Lamb," John was alluding to the sacrificial nature of Jesus' impending death. Jesus' sacrifice was for all mankind (Heb. 10:4-14; 1 Pet. 1:19).
- (30) Even though John preceded Christ, he is in subjection to Him because of Christ's pre-existence.
- (31) John did not know with certainty that Jesus was the Christ until God pointed Him out. By baptizing Jesus, John found out the truth about His Messiahship.
- (32) The descent of the Spirit served two purposes for John: 1) it identified the Christ and 2) it was God's anointing of Jesus. What would be the significance of Christ's anointment taking place at His baptism?
- (33) The Lord had instructed John so that he would recognize the Messiah. When did Jesus baptize with the Holy Spirit? Only after His ascension (Acts 2:1-4; 10).
- (34) John stands as an eye and ear witness of the Messiahship of Jesus. He saw the Spirit descend and he heard the voice of the Lord declare the Sonship of Jesus.

[Four misconceptions of the Messiah corrected by the teaching of John.

- 1. The spiritual excellence of the Messiah would be supreme, He would not be a normal man in this respect.
- 2. The Jews expected Christ to be lesser or equal to Moses, David and the prophets.
- 3. The Jews were looking for an earthly liberator.
- 4. The Jews were looking for the son of David to be a human Messiah, not a Son of God.]

## 19. Jesus Calls Some Disciples (Jn. 1:35-51)

- (35) This is the third day since the Jews had come to see John. We learn from verse 40 that one of the two disciples was Andrew. Most scholars believe the other disciple was the Apostle John.
- (36) Here John points out Jesus as the Lamb of God. Remember, in the OT a lamb was a common sacrifice, namely a sin offering (Lev. 4:32).
- (37) The two disciples followed Jesus. Why? Curiosity - a desire to know more concerning this so-called "Lamb of God." There are three reasons that the second disciple is thought to be the Apostle John: 1) From this point forward he speaks as an eyewitness, 2) we have no account in this Gospel of his call to discipleship, and 3) on several occasions he withholds his name (Jn. 13:23-26; 19:26,35; 21:7,20,24).
- (38) Notice how Jesus begins the conversation with these men. Rabbi is the lowest of the three degrees of Jewish teacher. They ask where he lives so that they might come and hear what he has to say.
- (39) The tenth hour is about 4 PM, if reckoning by the Jewish method or 10 AM if using the Roman method.
- (40) Notice the emphasis already placed on Peter. Andrew becomes one of the "twelve."
- (41) The spread of good tidings begins at home. A lesson we all need to apply. Andrew goes to find Peter to tell him first. The good news is that the "Anointed One" had been found.
- (42) Cephas is the Hebrew word for "stone" and corresponds to the Greek name Peter. This passage is a prophecy of how Peter would grow from a weak, vacillating individual to the strongest of the twelve.
- (43) Now it is the fourth day since John's conference with the Jews. This Philip is not "The Evangelist," but Philip the Apostle. John gives us the most insight into Philip (6:5; 12:21; 14:8). "Follow me" is the Lord's usual invitation to discipleship.
- (44) Bethsaida was located on the northwest shore of the Sea of Galilee. Mt. 11:21 shows it to be a wicked place. It was also the home of Andrew and Peter.
- (45) Most scholars agree that Nathanael is Bartholomew, one of the twelve. As soon as Philip becomes a disciple he sets about to bring others to Christ. Philip tries to convince Nathanael that he has found the one prophesied by Moses and the prophets. Philip refers to Christ as the Son of Joseph, but this is more identification than a statement of parentage.
- (46) All of Judea despised Galilee and all of Galilee despised Nazareth. It would be hard for Jews not versed in the OT to believe that the Messiah would not come out of Jerusalem. The answer to the skeptic is to bring him to Jesus and let Him prove that He is the Christ. "Investigation removes prejudice."
- (47) Jesus refers to Nathanael as "an Israelite indeed." That is, he is an Israelite in spirit as well as in flesh. He was a true Israelite, without hypocrisy, sincerely worshiping God.
- (48) Nathanael is surprised to hear himself spoken of as if Jesus knows him. Jesus reads Nathanael's heart and related to him an experience that no one could have known about without either being there or via a miracle.
- (49) Nathanael believes! He makes the first recorded (uninspired) confession of the divinity of Jesus Christ. Nathanael probably did not understand the full impact of his confession.
- (50) Nathanael was destined to see greater miracles by following Jesus. There is growth in grace and knowledge for all faithful disciples, not just for the Apostles.
- (51) Nathanael would see that Jesus was the mediator between heaven and earth. Christ calls Himself "Son of Man" about 80 times. Stephen and John also use the term to describe Christ as they saw Him in visions. The expression may have come from Dan. 7:13,14. The phrases expresses the universal humanity and humility of our Lord.

### **[Four Practical Lessons**

1. Jesus is the sacrificial Lamb of God.
2. We should tell the honest doubter to come and see.
3. We should apply the examples of Andrew and Philip in our own lives. We should be striving to save our friends and family.
4. God's ways are not man's ways. God chose shepherds to deliver Israel and begin the line of Kings. Now the Messiah comes from humble beginnings, the humblest town in the humblest province of Palestine.]

### **20. First Miracle at Cana (Jn. 2:1-11)**

- (1) This event took place on the seventh day of the week that began with the Pharisee's visit to John. Marriages usually took place on Wednesday (virgins) or Thursday (widows). The exact location of Cana is not known. Note that John never calls Mary by name.
- (2) Who was invited to the wedding with Jesus? Andrew, John, Peter, Philip, Nathaneal (and possibly James the brother of John).
- (3) They ran out of wine at the wedding feast, which according to Oriental custom would bring disgrace upon the bridegroom. Some commentators speculate that the arrival of Christ and His disciples contributed to the shortage. If so it would account for Mary's appeal to Christ to rectify the situation. It is not unreasonable that Mary already had faith in the power entrusted to her Son.
- (4) "Woman" was a title of courteous respect. Jesus is informing Mary that she is not the "mother" of the powers within Him. Some commentators see this as a mild rebuke. Mary may have had ulterior motives for having Jesus perform a miracle. That is, the miracle may have been more important to her than the wine. This miracle would allow her to boast, "My Son the Messiah!" A miracle however, is only a secondary sign of His Messiahship; His death on the cross stands as the supreme sign and this "time" was not yet come.
- (5) Mary's actions show that 1) Mary must have been a relative of the bridegroom to take authority over the servants and 2) that she understood that Jesus would help the situation.
- (6) Jews ceremonially washed before and after meals, these pots held the water to be used for that purpose.
- (7) Since the feast had begun, some water had already been used from the vessels. This would be between 120 and 180 gallons of water.
- (8) The ruler of the feast was usually a guest chosen as master of ceremonies for the day. When the water was removed from the pots, it was wine.
- (9) When the ruler (governor) tasted the wine he immediately beckoned the bridegroom.
- (10) This is not the teaching of Jesus Christ but an example of the custom of the day. The good wine was to be served first when it could be distinguished, the poor wine was saved until last when taste did not matter. Note: The strongest wine of Palestine had only a fractional alcoholic content and does not even compare to the weakest wine sold today. Compare the Devil with Christ: good first, bad last versus bad first, good last.
- (11) What is a miracle? When a higher power employs, modifies, or suspends the laws of nature. What about the Catholic traditions of the childhood miracles of Jesus? If this was His first miracle then there were no miracles before this. What is the value of a miracle? The value of a miracle is more in what it signified than in its results. The sign had its impact on the disciples - they believed.

**[Five Practical Observations:**

1. Christ's presence at a marriage shows its importance.
2. Christ was not an ascetic (stoic), since He engaged in the festivities of a marriage and even contributed to them.
3. Moses first plague - water to blood. Christ's first miracle - water to wine.
4. The world hands out the best first, so the end of the feast is less enjoyable. With Christ the appetite grows with the food it feeds upon!
5. Do not participate in the things of this world if you would not take Jesus with you as a guest. ]

**21. Visit To Capernaum (Jn. 2:12)**

12. Capernaum was on the shore of the Sea of Galilee and therefore "down" from Cana, a town in the hill country. We understand who His mother and disciples were, but who were "His brethren?" (Mt. 12:46; Mk. 3:32; Lk. 8:19; Mt. 13:55; Mk. 6:3; Jn. 2:12; Jn. 7:3; Acts 1:14; 1 Cor. 9:5; Gal. 1:19) These verses lead us to believe that Jesus was the first-born son of Mary who then went on to have other sons as well as daughters. OBJECTIONS: 1) The perpetual virginity of Mary. 2) Why did Jesus commit the care of His mother to the care of John, if she had other sons? 3) These "brethren" were really His cousins, the sons of Alphaeus as can be seen by the names James and Jude. AFFIRMATIONS: 1) If these were not Mary's children, why were they pictured as attending her? 2) There are no passages of scripture that lead us to believe they are not Jesus' brothers and sisters. 3) The names James and Jude were extremely common. Also, His brethren indicated their unbelief at a time when the sons of Alphaeus were apostles. They did not remain in Capernaum long because the Passover was approaching and Jesus wished to spend it in Jerusalem.

## THE FOURFOLD GOSPEL - THE LIFE OF CHRIST

### PART THREE - VISIT TO JERUSALEM FOR PASSOVER

#### 22. Jesus Goes to Jerusalem

##### a. Cleanses the Temple (Jn. 2:13-25)

- (13) John groups his gospel around six Jewish festivals: four Passovers, one Feast of Tabernacles, and one Feast of Dedication. This is how we arrive at three years for Jesus' ministry.
- (14) Jesus found these businessmen in the court of the Gentiles. They were selling animals for use as sacrifices and had converted the court into a cattle yard. It is estimated that over 200,000 lambs were needed during Passover to fulfill all the sacrifices. The moneychangers exchanged Hebrew currency for foreign coin so that the Jews could pay their Temple tax with "Holy money."
- (15) Jesus probably used bulrushes to fashion the cords of His whip. This weapon was considered more symbolic than violent. Yet, His will could not be resisted. Since they all fled before His face, this is an act of superhuman strength.
- (16) Why did Jesus drive out the sheep and the oxen but ask the dove sellers to remove their property? The answer lies in Christ's object - to cleanse the Temple. He was not there to destroy property. His authority is vested in Him by birth - it is His Father's House. Compare His attitude toward the Temple here to that found in Mt. 23:38. Also note that Jesus purges the Temple again three years later, (Mt. 21:13). The priests were in charge of this marketplace and secular history tells us they cleared a hefty profit.
- (17) Ps. 69:9 came to His disciples' minds as they witnessed this event.
- (18) The one's in authority asked for proof that Jesus had such power. They had just witnessed such a sign and they were blind to it!
- (19) This was Christ's typical answer when pressed for sign. The Jews did not comprehend His words as seen by the following verses. (Mt. 26:61; Mk. 14:58) show how the Jews twisted this prophecy into a false charge against Christ.
- (20) It had been 46 years since Herod the Great began rebuilding the Temple. It was not completely finished until 64 AD. The Jews are actually mocking Jesus here. Three days to do what thousands of workmen could not do in 46 years was a joke to them.
- (21) John interjects his commentary at this point.
- (22) It would take three years before the disciples would understand what Jesus is actually saying. It was then that they believed in the resurrection and Jesus' prophecy concerning it.
- (23) Jesus performed signs and miracles while attending the Passover.
- (24) Jesus was careful not to reveal himself too fully at this time. Man was not quite ready for the full impact of the Messiah. He did not tell them His plans and purposes.
- (25) He knew the time was not right because He could see into their hearts and know they were not sincere believers.

[Three Practical Observations:

- 1) Today men profane the spiritual Temple in a manner similar to that in which the Jews were profaning the physical Temple of Jesus' day. Catholic priests have sold absolutions, extreme unction, burial of the dead, masses, and indulgences. Evangelists go to work for the highest bidder; not necessarily where they are needed the most. Members of congregations decide that bake sales, raffles, bingo, hamburgers, festivals, and shows belong in the church buildings.
- 2) When greed and corruption overtook the Temple, God gave up on it and abandoned it to men. The same can happen with a congregation today.
- 3) The Master still reads the hearts of man, He sees our every thought and motive.]

b. **Discourses with Nicodemus (Jn. 3:1-21)**

- (1) Nicodemus appears three times in John's Gospel: here, 7:51 and 19:38. We know he was a Pharisee and a ruler of the Jews, that is, a member of the Sanhedrin. Verse 10 leads us to believe he was a doctor of the Law.
- (2) Nicodemus probably did not want it known that he was visiting Jesus, therefore he came at night. When Nicodemus says "we," he means himself and the rest of the Sanhedrin. The signs and miracles that Jesus did marked him as "one from God," a prophet.
- (3) "Verily, verily" is an expression that occurs 24 times in John's Gospel. It is used to give emphasis to an unusually solemn and weighty declaration. Jesus preaches the "new birth" to Nicodemus. This is shocking to Nicodemus because why would one of God's chosen, a Jew, a Pharisee, a son of Abraham, need to be reborn?
- (4) His prejudices keep him from seeing the true meaning of Jesus' words. This "new birth" seemed like an impossible requirement to Nicodemus.
- (5) Jesus further explains the new birth: it is a birth by water and the Spirit. This means by baptism and an inward change. For more on "water and the Spirit" see Mt. 28:19; Acts 2:38; Acts 19:1-7; Titus 3:5.
- (6) The flesh gives birth to flesh, but the spiritual gives birth to the spiritual.
- (7) None are exempt; all must be born again.
- (8) The word translated "wind" would be more appropriately translated "Spirit." It is the Greek word *pneuma*, and is identical to the last word in the verse. The teaching then is this; we are born of the Spirit by hearing the voice of the Spirit. Some commentators disagree with this interpretation. However, they reach much the same conclusion but believe the first part of the passage refers to the wind of nature and is comparing it to the working of the "wind of God."
- (9) Nicodemus is dumbstruck by this teaching; he cannot comprehend it.
- (10) Jesus puts Nicodemus in his place. If he is a doctor of the Law, why doesn't he understand this fundamental principle of God's Kingdom? The OT had foreshadowed such changes in passages such as: Deut. 10:16; 1 Sam. 10:9; 16:13; Ps. 51:10; Ezek. 18:31; 36:26,27; Jer. 4:4.
- (11) Jesus changes to the plural to encompass all of those who have testified of Him, past, present, and future and to condemn those who have rejected Him in those same time frames.
- (12) Since Nicodemus could not understand the earthy things concerning the Kingdom, he would not understand the unknown things of heaven.
- (13) Here Jesus testifies concerning His pre-existence.
- (14,15) Reference to Num. 29:4-9. Those who had faith to look upon the brazen serpent lived. In our day we must look upon Christ on the cross and believe. The implication is clear, in Moses' day those who refused to look upon the serpent were lost, in the last days those who reject Christ will be lost.
- (16) Five lessons can be learned from this verse. 1) God is love, 2) God loves the world, He does not hate it, 3) This love is unbounded to the extent He would give up His Son for it, 4) Christ came to prevent perishing, not to cause it, and 5) God's grace is unlimited, even unto the salvation of souls. Encompassed in these five lessons are five more lessons concerning the love of God. 1) Its magnitude-giving His Son, 2) Its reach - to the entire sinful world, 3) Its impartiality - to all equally, Mt. 5:45; Rev. 22:17, 4) Its benefits - eternal life, and 5) Its limitations - for believers only.
- (17) Christ came first to save, then to judge. While we live, Jesus is our advocate, not our prosecutor.
- (18) Belief in Jesus as the Savior is mandatory for salvation. Faith leads to obedience, which puts us in favor with God. The unbeliever condemns himself.
- (19,20) Christ is the true light, but men prefer darkness, because light exposes their evil. Night hides the deeds committed by evildoers. Man rejects this light because it plainly condemns the evil they love.

- (21) Truth can be lived; through this life of truth comes salvation. This man is willing for his deeds to be revealed, because there is no shame in them.

[Five Practical Observations:

- 1) You won't be able to sneak into the Kingdom of Heaven.
- 2) Your earthly birth or station in life means nothing.
- 3) You must be reborn, of water and the Spirit.
- 4) We receive the Spirit by listening to His voice through His inspired (God-breathed) teachers.
- 5) Belief in Jesus leads to this Spiritual rebirth through a truthful and obedient acceptance of Christ and the things He would have us to do.]

### **23. Tarries and Baptizes in Judea (Jn. 3:22)**

- (22) Shortly after the Passover Jesus left Jerusalem and entered the more rural areas of Judea. We know the disciples performed the physical act of baptism, after Jesus taught (see 4:1,2). Among the disciples gathered by Jesus in Judea were Mary, Martha, Lazarus, Simeon, and Judas Iscariot. The baptism being administered at this time was John's baptism, that is a baptism unto repentance. Why could it not be the baptism administered in the church today? (Jn. 7:39; Mt. 28:19; Rom. 6:3)

### **24. John's Testimony (Jn. 3:23-36)**

- (23) Aenon is located northeast of Samaria, not far from the Jordan; the name Aenon signifies "springs." John was baptizing at this location because of the presence of much water. If John was baptizing concurrently with Christ's disciples they must have been administering the same baptism.
- (24) John would be cast into prison shortly after this incident. The significance is that Jesus began His ministry before John's ended. This can only be seen from John's account, it is not indicated in the Synoptic Gospels.
- (25) The context shows that this dispute was somehow caused by knowledge of Jesus' work. The best manuscripts read "a Jew."
- (26) From the preceding dispute John's disciples become jealous of Jesus and quickly complain to John. Why would they be jealous?
- (27) John is indicating here that as a man he can only receive what he has been given. The implication (as we shall see in the next few verses) is that Jesus as the Son of God can take what He chooses.
- (28) John reminds his followers that he is not the Christ, therefore Jesus is only fulfilling the very prophecies that John had made concerning Him.
- (29) The bride is the church, the groom is Christ, and the best man is John. Instead of being envious of Christ, John rejoices. In these times it was part of the best man's duties to see to the wedding preparations.
- (30) Christ will increase because of prophecy, Divine Law, and His very nature. John will decrease in popularity, power and disciples.
- (31) Many commentators feel that the rest of this chapter contains the reflections of the Apostle John. The point to be taken here is very clear: the heavenly outweighs the earthly.
- (32) See Jn. 3:11. Already some are rejecting Christ's testimony including these disciples of John.
- (33,34) Accepting Christ is accepting God. Jesus was in constant touch with the Spirit, receiving continual input; others on earth that received the Spirit received it with measure.
- (35) Jesus asserts this same point in Mt. 28:18.
- (36) In this verse "believeth" contrasts to "obeyeth not." (NASV) The Scriptures never count mental assent as faith unless it is accompanied by obedience (Rom. 1:5).

[Two Practical Observations

1. If Jesus the Divine Being felt it necessary to obey, preach, and practice the baptism of John while it was in force, how much more ought we to obey, preach, and practice the baptism of Jesus Christ today?
2. The true servant of God is not looking for earthly honor. Perhaps we overemphasize the preacher rather than the message preached, thus causing some preachers to be jealous of their following.]

**25. John's Imprisonment (Lk. 3:19,20) [Mt. 14:3-5; Mk. 6:17-20]**

(19,20) Herodias was the wife of Philip, granddaughter of Herod the Great, daughter of Aristobulus and a niece of Herod Antipas (and Philip). Because Philip had been disinherited, Herodias deserted him and married his brother who had divorced his wife to make room for Herodias. This is not the only evil thing that Antipas had done and John reproved him for all these wicked things. Herod imprisoned John for this rebuke. The end result can be seen by looking ahead to Matthew 14 and Mark 6, which we will cover later in our study. However, in conjunction with this reading see Mt. 4:12 and Mk. 1:14 which brings us to our next point.

**26. Christ Departs for Galilee (Jn. 4:1-4) [Mt. 4:12; Mk. 1:14]**

- (1) The Pharisees were noting the increasing influence of Jesus. This gave Jesus three reasons for leaving Judea: 1) to avoid conflict with the jealous disciples of John, 2) to prevent a premature conflict with the Pharisees, and 3) the imprisonment of the Baptist.
- (2) This is the verse that shows that Jesus did not administer the baptism himself. Remember that when it comes to water baptism, it is the act of faith of the one being baptized that is important, not who does the baptizing.
- (3) As well as needing to leave Judea, Christ also needed to go to Galilee. His work in Galilee so far surpassed his work in Judea that Galilee became known as the place of his ministry's beginning (Lk. 23:5).
- (4) Samaria was between Judea and Galilee. Because of their hatred of the Samaritans many Jews would circumvent Samaria on their travels. Jesus on the other hand chose to pass directly through.

**27. Christ in Samaria (Jn. 4:5-42)**

- (5) Who were the Samaritans and why were they despised by the Jews? During the Assyrian captivity the Assyrian king sent foreigners into the territory to occupy it; the Samaritans are their descendants. Their religion was a mixture of Judaism and paganism mainly influenced by the teaching of Manasseh. It was he who set up Mt. Gerizim as a convenient place of worship. The Samaritans accepted only the five books of Moses as scripture. The town of Sychar was the location of Joseph's tomb.
- (6) Jacob's well is not mentioned in the OT, but its existence is proven by this passage of inspired scripture. It was noon and Jesus was tired. This indicates the human side of Christ.
- (7) She was a Samaritan woman of the city of Sychar.
- (8) Jesus initiates the conversation by asking for a drink of water. It was the custom of the day to never refuse a drink of water to anyone, even an enemy. If the disciples had been present they probably would have bartered for use of her pitcher and rope.
- (9) The woman is not refusing the Lord's request, but only expressing astonishment that a Jew would ask a favor of a Samaritan. Though social dealings were restricted we can see from verse 8 that trade was allowed.

- (10) Christ is the gift of God. If the Samaritan woman would have known Him as the Messiah, she might have understood His sayings. "Living Water" literally means running or spring-fed water. In Jn. 7:37-39 the actions of the Holy Spirit are referred to as "living water."
- (11) The woman takes Jesus' words literally and answers as if the feat He spoke of was impossible. The word "Sir" is the same as "Lord."
- (12) The Samaritans claimed descent from Jacob through Joseph. Could Jesus be greater than Jacob, the giver of the well?
- (13) Water must be replenished in the body; this is natural.
- (14) The water Jesus offered however, transcended nature; it would permanently defeat thirst. This water would eventually bring forth eternal life.
- (15) The woman does not fully understand Jesus, but she does believe that the water will permanently quench her thirst and keep her from having to return to the well.
- (16) To make the woman aware of her need for this living water; Jesus brings up a portion of her life that is less than acceptable in God's sight.
- (17) She has a man, but he is not her husband.
- (18) The divorce laws of the times were such that a husband could put away his wife for things as trivial as burning his dinner. Some of these divorces must have been her fault.
- (19) Jesus' knowledge of the intimate details of her past cause her to realize that He is a prophet. This is her confession of the truth of Jesus' previous statements.
- (20) The woman now turns the attention away from her sinful life and toward a great controversy between the Samaritans and the Jews. The ancestors of the Samaritans believed that it was lawful to worship at Mt. Gerizim, while the Jews held that Jerusalem was the only place of sacred worship. Note: What your ancestors do or do not do has nothing to do with what God would have you to do. [See McGarvey p. 147 as to the religious significance of this mountain.]
- (21) In His answer, Jesus implies that no earthly tabernacle is holy in and of itself. 1 Tim. 2:8 gives the criteria for a place of worship.
- (22) How is salvation of the Jews? The seed of David brought forth Jesus. The Samaritans rejected David and all of the Jewish prophets. Remember, even though the Jews of Jesus' day were far from the truth, there was nothing wrong with their religion, only how they chose to practice it.
- (23) The time has come when God demands a spiritual, not ritual form of worship. These are the worshippers that God seeks.
- (24) God is Spirit. He is **not** 1) material (as pagans would have their gods), 2) an abstract force (as some agnostics urge), or 3) a blind impersonal power. God is 1) free from limitations of space and time and 2) He is beyond the need of a temple, sacrifice, etc. The worship man offers to God must correspond to the nature of God.
- (25) The woman knows that the Messiah will make her able to understand these things. Notice that her conception of the Messiah as a Teacher is more correct than that of the Jews who were looking for a world-conqueror.
- (26) This is the first recorded declaration of Jesus as the Messiah. It would be two more years before Peter would make his confession.

#### [Eight Practical Lessons

- 1- We should seize every opportunity to preach the gospel.
- 2- Objects in nature can be used as examples in spiritual lessons.
- 3- Earthly food is not permanent in satisfying our wants.
- 4- We must be thirsty (conscience of our sins) before we realize our need for the "living water."
- 5- God does not guarantee our earthly father's customs.
- 6- God is Spirit.
- 7- Formalized rituals, holy places, symbols, signs, etc. insult God, they do not worship Him.

8- There are only four instances in the Gospels of Jesus teaching outsiders 1) the Samaritan woman, 2) the Roman centurion, 3) the Canaanite woman, and 4) the Greeks at Jerusalem.]

- (27) Not only did Jews avoid talking to Samaritans; they would not talk to any woman, including their wives and children, out of doors. This is what caused the disciples to be surprised. Even though they did not understand what was going on, they respected and revered Jesus to the point that they did not interrupt.
- (28) The woman's taste of living water made her forget her need for physical water.
- (29) She was excited to share the good news concerning Jesus Christ. The things Christ had told her outlined her entire adult life; her conscience filled in the blanks. Notice the way she tactfully asserted Jesus as the Christ in the interrogative form. She wanted them to see for themselves. Verse 9- She calls Him "Jew." Verse 11- She calls Him "Sir." Verse 19- She calls Him "Prophet." Verse 29- She calls "Him Christ!"
- (30) The curiosity of the townspeople was touched; they immediately went out to the well to see the man.
- (31) While the woman was gone the disciples encouraged Jesus to eat.
- (32) This is not supernatural, even today when our emotions are deeply stirred we can ignore the needs of the body for a time.
- (33) The disciples are as ignorant as the Samaritan woman when it comes to distinguishing spiritual things from temporal things!
- (34) "Meat" as used in the scripture can refer to any kind of food, not just flesh. Jesus explains that doing the will of God is food for Him. What is food? 1) Enjoyment, 2) something you long for when hungry, and 3) something that would refresh and strengthen.
- (35) Literally, it was four months until harvest time. However, in a spiritual sense the time was ripe at this moment. The spiritual field would be the approaching Samaritans. From this passage we can determine the time of the year as mid-December.
- (36) As the earthly reaper receives a reward for his work, so will the spiritual reaper. When the crop comes in both the sower and the reaper rejoice. Can we make a practical application of this?
- (37) Perhaps an analogy to what Jesus is saying would be bringing a neighbor to services; having them hear a sermon, and having them answer the gospel call.
- (38) The disciples would be reaping on ground prepared by others. Who? John and Christ had prepared the people in Judea; the disciples had done the baptizing for Jesus.
- (39) The witness of the Samaritan woman caused many to believe. It is ironic that the Jews rejected the word of the prophets, but the Samaritans accepted the word of an adulteress.
- (40) It was a strange occurrence for a Jew to be invited into a Samaritan village. It was stranger still for the Jew to accept! The far-reaching effects of Christ's visit can be seen in Acts 8:5-8.
- (41) Miracles were not needed for these God-fearing Samaritans; they were honestly searching for the true Messiah, and knew they had found Him.
- (42) Notice that the Samaritans do not claim Jesus for themselves, but instead proclaim Him the Savior of the world.

### **[Seven Practical Observations**

- 1. The work of God strengthens and refreshes as food.
- 2. Harvest time is a season of rejoicing.
- 3. The harvest is plenty but the laborers are few.
- 4. Even though Jesus is tired, he is not too tired to speak the good news.
- 5. Christianity breaks down the wall of racial prejudice.
- 6. Christianity elevates woman to equality with man.
- 7. Christianity lifts up the degraded and sinful and gives them an opportunity to repent.]

**28. On to Galilee (Jn. 4:43-45) [Lk. 4:14,15]**

- (43) Jesus remained two days at Sychar, then departed.
- (44) The other three records of this statement (Mt. 13:57; Mk. 6:4; Lk. 4:24) refer to Jesus' rejection in Nazareth. Those passages will be examined in a later lesson.
- (45) Though He was rejected in His hometown the rest of Galilee accepted Him. Compare the reception of the Galileans to the rejection of the priests, rulers and Levites. It is not surprising that 11 of the 12 original Apostles were from Galilee. Which Apostle was not from Galilee? Where was he from?

## THE FOURFOLD GOSPEL - THE LIFE OF CHRIST

### PART FOUR - A PERIOD OF GALILEAN MINISTRY

#### 29. Another Miracle at Cana (Jn. 4:46-54)

- (46) Cana is in the hill country west of the Sea of Galilee. The nobleman was probably an officer of Herod Antipas stationed at Capernaum. Capernaum was located 20 to 25 miles northeast of Cana on the shores of the Sea of Galilee.
- (47) It seems as if Jesus is already accepted as a prophet in Galilee. The nobleman had faith in Jesus' and His ability to heal. He came in person instead of sending servants. He believed Jesus presence would be necessary to heal his son and that Jesus must arrive before the son expired. The nobleman's faith was not yet full.
- (48) Compare the faith of the nobleman to that of the Samaritans. The nobleman's faith was based on the fame of the signs and wonders performed by Jesus. The Samaritan's faith was based on His words and character. Which is stronger? Why? What is the difference between a sign and a wonder?
- (49) The nobleman fears Christ will not come to heal his son and his tone indicates that feeling.
- (50) Jesus answers in a way that only the Son of man would dare presume. Now the nobleman believes the Word of Jesus.
- (51) The father could have returned the same day but his faith let him wait until the next day. As he returned his servants met him on the road.
- (52) The fever had disappeared at the exact hour that Jesus had spoken.
- (53) Here we have the first mention of a believing household. You can see how the nobleman's faith had grown. 1) He believed in the presence of Jesus, 2) then he believed in the power of Jesus' word, and 3) finally he believed generally in Jesus, along with his entire household.
- (54) This was the second recorded miracle performed in Galilee, both at Cana. 1) The water into wine and 2) the healing of the nobleman's son.

#### 30. Christ Rejected at Nazareth (Lk. 4:16-30)

- (16,17) Jesus returns to the place of His youth - Nazareth. We see that Jesus attended the synagogue on a regular basis. It was customary to stand and read the word of God, unless reading from Esther. The appropriate posture for teaching was sitting (see verse 20). Jesus had probably made it known before the service that He wished to read. The custom allowed seven to read each Sabbath. One priest, two Levites, and four Israelites. It is uncertain if Jesus called for the scroll of Isaiah or if it was assigned to Him. He then chose Isa. 61:1ff as His text.
- (18,19) The Jews generally took this to be a Messianic prophecy. The prophecy assures that the Messiah will possess the Holy Spirit. He would come to bring good news to the poor (in spirit) and free those captive (to sin). According to Jesus the time of the Messiah's earthly ministry was as He spoke.
- (20) He rolls up the book, hands it back to the attendant, and sits down. Those in attendance gave Jesus their steadfast attention.
- (21) Here we can see Jesus clearly proclaiming Himself as the Messiah.
- (22) No fault could be found with His speech, however contempt for His pretentiousness quickly began to outweigh their wonderment. How could the carpenter's son make these claims?
- (23) Jesus quotes an old Jewish adage that means to show proof of your claims. They wanted to see the signs and wonders they had been hearing about.
- (24) It is hard for a man to hold someone familiar to him in reverence. This proverb refers to a general attitude and not specifically to all the inhabitants of Nazareth.

- (25-27) Jesus shows two examples from the OT to back up this proverb. Elijah had many opportunities to help Israelite widows during the 3 and one-half years of famine, but he was sent to one in the heathen city of Sidon. Elisha healed a non-Israelite, when many Jewish lepers were available.
- (28) The anger of the people would cause Jesus to leave Nazareth without performing signs.
- (29) They had no thought for the Sabbath Day and seized Jesus. They took Him to a cliff where they intended to throw Him off. To inflict punishment on the Sabbath was wrong and the mode of punishment chosen did not conform to the Law. Their actions demonstrated what Jesus had said in verse 24.
- (30) Did Jesus escape during the confusion of the crowd? Were they awed by His divinity to the point that they made way for Him? Did He resort to a miracle to escape? Compare with Jn. 8:59; 10:39; and 18:6. It is easy to understand why Jesus forsook Nazareth and took up residence in Capernaum.

### **31. Moved To Capernaum (Mt. 4:13-16) [Lk. 4:31,32]**

- (13) Because of His rejection at Nazareth, Jesus moved his headquarters to Capernaum, the most prominent city of Galilee. Capernaum was located on the northwestern shore of the Sea of Galilee. The following verses show why it was important for Jesus to go to the regions of Zebulun and Naphtali.
- (14) See Isa. 8:21,22 and 9:1,2
- (15) From Isaiah's point of view Capernaum would be beyond Jordan because it was north of the source of the Jordan. In Isaiah's day many Gentiles inhabited the region referred to as Galilee.
- (16) These Galileans were prophesied to receive the Gospel. Jesus fulfilled that prophecy by His presence there.

### **32. Jesus Preaches and Calls Four Fishermen (Mt. 4:17-22) [Mk.1:14-20]**

- (17) Notice the continued similarity between the preaching of Jesus and the preaching already done by John the Baptist.
- (18) Peter and Andrew had returned home to Galilee and taken up their previous profession - fishing.
- (19) Jesus tells them to lay aside the tools of their secular trade and come and follow Him to become fishers of men.
- (20) Their previous contact with Jesus contributed to them leaving their nets so abruptly. Some commentators place Lk. 5:1-11 before this incident. We are choosing to examine those verses later.
- (21) James and John were already Christ's disciples. This call was not their call to discipleship, but their call to become Jesus' constant companions. Notice that God traditionally calls the busy to His business. Moses, Gideon, Saul, David, Elijah, Matthew, and Paul are examples of men that were otherwise engaged when God called them to His service. Additionally, please notice that most were called from lowly work (1 Cor. 1:26-29). James was the first Apostle to die (44 AD- Acts 12:1,2) and John was the last (100 AD).
- (22) James and John also immediately answered the call to follow.

### **33. Jesus preaches at Many Places (Mt. 4:23-25)**

- (23) Jesus made the circuit in Galilee 1) teaching in the synagogues, 2) preaching the Gospel, and 3) healing the sick and diseased.
- (24) His fame spread into Syria and they brought many sick people to Him to be healed.

- (25) Among His followers were Galileans, those from Decapolis, Jerusalem, Judea, and Perea. See McGarvey pp. 175,176 and a map of NT lands.

**34. Jesus Heals a Demoniac in a Synagogue (Lk. 4:33-37) [Mk. 1:23-28]**

(33,34) Compare this reading to Mk. 1:23-28. Why did Jesus perform miracles? As proof of His divine mission (Jn. 2:22; 9:3-5; 10:25,37). Were the Jews expecting the Messiah to be a miracle worker? Yes (Mt. 12:38; Lk. 11:16; Jn. 7:31).

- Signs - miracles especially designated as evidence of His divine mission (Jn. 2:11).
- Mighty Works - when His supernatural power was manifested.
- Wonders - when His miracles caused excitement or terror (Mk. 13:22; Jn. 4:48; Acts 2:22).
- Works - a general reference to miracles (Jn. 7:3,21).

Note that the demon testified that Jesus was "the Holy One of God."

(35) Jesus did not need the testimony of a demon so He rebuked it. Jesus gives the demon two commandments: 1) "be quiet" and 2) "come out of the man." There is no doubt from the passage that the man was possessed, not insane.

(36) The power of the Word of Jesus amazed the crowd (Mk. 1:27).

(37) The result of this miracle was that he was spoken of everywhere in the regions around Capernaum.

**35. Jesus Heals Peter's Mother-in-Law and Many Others (Lk. 4:38-41) [Mt. 8:14-17; Mk. 1:29-34]**

(38) From the three readings we determine that the miracle takes place at Peter's house with Andrew, James, and John present. Peter's mother-in-law had a debilitating fever.

(39) We see the healing was instantaneous and complete to the extent that she immediately began her household chore of seeing about her guests.

(40) Jesus' fame continued to spread and as it did many came to Him to be healed. What are diver's (KJV) diseases?

(41) The healings also included exorcism of demons. Why wouldn't Jesus let demons testify that He was the Christ? 1) The time was not right, 2) their support could do more harm than good, and 3) this testimony was reserved for His disciples. Matthew's account mentions the fulfillment of Isa. 53:4, why?

**36. A Preaching Tour in Galilee (Lk. 4:42-44) [Mt. 4:23-25; Mk. 1:35-39]**

(42) Jesus went out to a deserted place so that He might meditate and pray. Peter and the others find Jesus and tell Him that the multitudes are searching for Him. Eventually, the multitudes find Him and ask Him to remain in Capernaum. Contrast the people of Capernaum to the people of Nazareth.

(43) Jesus had work to do beyond Capernaum. Compare "Kingdom of God" with "Kingdom of heaven," (Mt. 3:2) "Kingdom of Christ" and "Kingdom" (Eph. 5:5; Heb. 12:28).

- 1) It is spiritual in nature (Jn. 18:36; Rom. 14:17).
- 2) Its seat is in the hearts of the believers (Lk. 17:21).
- 3) It exists on earth (Lk. 13:18,19,41,47).
- 4) But it extends to another state of existence (Mt. 13:43; 26:29; Phil. 2:10,11).
- 5) It will be fully consummated in a state of glory (Mt. 8:11; 1 Cor. 15:24; 2 Pet. 1:11).
- 6) It embraces the entire reign of Christ: on earth and in heaven. The subjects of the kingdom are all of the redeemed of all ages (Eph. 3:15).

- (44) Jesus continued His practice of speaking in the synagogues, healing the sick and casting out demons.

### **37. Draught of Fishes (Lk. 5:1-11)**

- (1) It is possible that this incident occurred during the calling described in Mt. 4:17-22. The Sea of Galilee (Mk. 1:16) is also known as Gennesaret, Chimmereth (Num. 34:11), Chimmeroth (Josh. 11:2; 1 Kings 15:20), or Sea of Tiberius (Jn. 6:1; 21:1).
- (2,3) The boats were for fishing, but the owners were not on board. The net washing might have been done by hired servants (Mk. 4:20). We will see that they had returned from an unsuccessful night of fishing. Jesus entered the boat belonging to Peter and asked him to push it out so that He might have a better platform from which to lecture. Remember, the multitude was pressing against Him. As previously discussed it was customary for the teacher to sit while teaching.
- (4,5) After finishing His discourse He had the fishermen put out into deep water. He intended this activity as a test of faith for Peter and the others. Peter explained that they had worked hard all night and caught nothing, but they were willing to do what Jesus said.
- (6,7) They brought in enough fish to fill both boats. We learn from this passage that Peter, Andrew, James, and John were partners. There were so many fish that the boats were about to sink.
- (8-10) Peter fell down at Jesus' feet and paid homage to Him and worshipped Him. All aboard were amazed. Jesus particularly addressed Peter and told him he would become a catcher of men.
- (11) Upon reaching land the four fishermen left all, the ships, the fish, their friends servants, family, and work and followed Jesus.

### **38. Sermon on the Mount (Mt. 5:1 - 8:1)**

Note: The Sermon on the Mount is covered in a separate set of notes.

### **39. Jesus Heals a Leper (Lk. 5:12-16) [Mt. 8:2-4; Mk. 1:40-45]**

- (12) This miracle takes place in one of the cities of Galilee. The man in question was a victim of leprosy, a disease of the skin. Anyone with this disease was forced to separate themselves from society.
- (13) Even though it would be ill-considered to touch a leper, Jesus did it anyway. The difference being that Jesus was giving the man a healing touch, while a normal man could do the leper no good and run the risk of contracting the disease himself. Did Jesus violate the Law of Moses here? The cure was instantaneous.
- (14-16) Jesus wanted to avoid creating a sensation at this time so he told the man not to reveal how he had been healed. Jesus did not want His miracle working to supercede His teaching. Jesus sent the man to the priests so that he could ceremonially purified according to the Law of Moses (Lev. 14:1-32). The man and other witnesses did not heed the words of Jesus and spread the story throughout the city. Jesus healed those in the multitude that gathered but was finally forced to depart. Mk. 1:45 indicates that He was unable to enter any of the cities after this because of the uproar His presence caused. He withdrew Himself into the uninhabited areas and prayed.

### **40. Jesus Heals a Paralytic at Capernaum (Lk. 5:17-26) [Mt. 9:1-8; Mk. 2:1-12]**

- (17) From Mark we learn Jesus was in Capernaum. He was fulfilling His mission, namely: to teach. In the audience at the house where He was teaching were Pharisees and lawyers from as far away as Jerusalem.

- (18-20) Four men bring a paralyzed man to the house where Jesus was teaching (Mk. 2:1). They could not get into the house because of the crowd. They made their way to the rooftop, removed the shingles and let the man down into the room where Jesus was teaching. Jesus commended the faith of those who brought the paralyzed man. We have only two accounts in the NT of Jesus saying, "thy sins be forgiven," here and in Lk. 7:48.
- (21) The scribes and the Pharisees took this statement to be blasphemy because it truly is blasphemy for anyone but God to claim to forgive sins.
- (22-24) Jesus could read their minds. The same authority that it takes to miraculously heal the diseased is the same authority that it takes to say, "thy sins be forgiven." That is, both are possible for God, but impossible for man alone. Jesus proposes the overt miracle to satisfy the curiosity or skepticism of the scribes and Pharisees.
- (25,26) The miracle was instantaneous and the healing complete. Not only was the paralysis removed but the man was able to take up his bed and walk out of the room under his own power. This miracle caused the people present to be in a combined state of wonder, fear, and dread. If this miracle had not been of God, then God would not have allowed it to happen. Therefore, the miracle proved what Jesus said it proved, namely: He had the authority to forgive sins.

#### **41. Jesus Teaches By the Seaside (Mk. 2:13)**

- (13) The seaside was a good place for Jesus to teach because the shore sloped down to the sea forming a natural amphitheater. He would speak from the shore or sometimes go out a little ways in a fishing boat.

#### **42. Jesus Calls Matthew (Lk. 5:27,28) [Mt. 9:9; Mk. 2:14]**

- (27) Levi (Matthew) was a publican (tax collector). He was the son of Alphaeus. When Jesus came where Matthew was working, He told him to follow.
- (28) Compare Jesus' address of Matthew to that of Philip, James, John, Peter and Andrew. Note the promptness and obedience of Matthew. We should think that if he was an honest man he would have made some arrangements for his job to be completed and the monies that he already collected to be safely put away. However, some commentators feel that he left his job immediately and undone. But, would Jesus have Matthew violate a law that did not conflict with God's will? It is not probable that James the son of Alphaeus and Matthew were brothers as Alphaeus was a common name.

# THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT

## PREFACE AND FOREWORD

Many hours of study, and not a few prayers, have gone into the pages that follow.

Their primary purpose for existing is because I needed to study the Sermon on the Mount. Secondly, they exist so that I would have something to present to my Adult Bible Study class at Beverly Shores. Finally, they exist because of a need I have perceived during my 25 years of teaching Bible classes the need for teacher's notes.

Yes, there are many workbooks, outlines, and commentaries, but where are the teacher's notes for the adult study materials? The primary, Jr. High, and Sr. High materials all come with "Teacher's editions," but not the majority of adult workbooks.

Perhaps, the brethren who have developed adult study materials over the years have felt that it was not quite right to "keep anything" from the students and to some degree, I agree with that thinking. However, nothing is more frustrating, time wasting, and downright boring, than sitting in a Bible class listening (or trying to listen) to the teacher read from the workbook.

Over the years I have shied away from using workbooks because I did not want to read it or hear it read in class. I have tried using a workbook for homework and referring to it in class only when a question arises. This method has met with some success, yet it has been perplexing to some students who felt that I did not value their work (filled in questions in the workbook).

Another problem I have found with the workbooks is that many questions are nigh impossible to answer, because the writer's mind was obviously way out in left field when he thought them up. As the student attempts to answer such questions, he finds himself saying, "I wonder if that is what the author wants?" This is very unproductive and a general waste of personal time for the student and class time for everyone else.

Here then, is a set of teacher's notes on the Sermon on the Mount. They are not for sale because I have not properly documented them and even if they were footnoted I would be hesitant to sell them because I have no idea what they are worth. To me they are invaluable, to my class they have been helpful, but to you they may be neither.

Using anyone else's Bible materials must be done with caution. This applies to brethren's writings as well as denominational commentators. We must always consider the Holy Text first and foremost, and then if we need additional help, find it!

I would like to thank the class members at Beverly Shores who have always encouraged me, but especially in this effort. I pray to God that these notes are in accordance with His will, but if not, I pray to be corrected.

Carey Dillinger  
Leesburg, Fl.  
11/96

## INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

- A. The Speaker: Jesus Christ, The Prince of Preachers.
1. Qualifications: He is Eternal Wisdom (Jn. 1:18) and the Eternal Word (Jn. 1:1ff.)
  2. Preparation for this sermon was done through the miraculous works of the previous chapter. The people would be disposed to listen and to heed the bearer of this power, (Matthew Henry's *Commentary on the Whole Bible*, vol. 5 p. 37).
- B. The Location: A common mountain in Galilee. The Son of God had no man-made pulpit, nor man-made holy place from which to preach, but instead a God-made mountain. As the Law of Moses came from a mountain, so did the law of Christ.
1. Tradition places the scene at the "Horns of Hattin," a twin peaked elevation overlooking the Sea of Galilee and the plain of Genesareth. Keil has suggested a site near Capernaum as the probable location. (Baker's Bible Atlas, 1974 ed., p. 204)
  2. Use a Bible Atlas or handbook to locate the "Horns of Hattin."
  3. Mountain versus Plain: It is difficult to determine if the Matthew account and Luke account are two versions of the same sermon or the basically the same sermon delivered on two separate occasions. The compilation of both accounts gives us a summary of His main teachings as well as a collection of His representative sayings. (Halley, p.500)
- C. The Occasion: When and Why?
1. When: According to Nelson's Harmony of the Gospels, during the second year of His public ministry, specifically, during the period of His ministry known as the Galilean ministry, perhaps during the midsummer of A.D. 28.
  2. Why: To show that following in His footsteps involves action (beginning with repentance), not just belief. However, this action is based on spiritual precepts rather than rote adherence to the Law of Moses.
- D. The Audience Then: The Disciples and the Multitude.
1. The Disciples (Lu. 6:13) They followed Him because of love and because they wanted to learn. They were willing students, with the ability to understand the lessons given. It was imperative for them to understand because they were destined to teach others.
  2. The Multitude (Mt. 7:28) While the message was directed towards the disciples, the people heard it. The fame of His miracles had gathered this crowd and Jesus would take advantage of their presence to instruct them.
- E. The Audience Now: All Who Would Come to the Father (Jn. 14:6; Gal. 4:7)  
Some have called the Sermon on the Mount God's plan of salvation; others have said it is a "charter for world peace." Some would say that it does not apply today,

but is for a future time. However, Mt. 5:20 gives us the key to its application. The main theme is true righteousness. Righteousness implies proper conduct and proper conduct flows out of a man's character. (Warren Weirsbe, *The Bible Exposition Commentary*, Vol. 1, pp. 20, 21) The application is for every man that would be in a right (eous) relationship with God.

F. More on the Message

1. A detailed exposition for Jesus' hearers of what repentance involves.
2. It is a picture of life in God's Kingdom on earth (the church) and in heaven. Everyone who puts God in charge will live by these guidelines!
3. The most detailed exposition of God's ethical standards to be found in the Bible. By reflecting God's character and revealing His will, these standards become relevant to us today.
4. "The Sermon on the Mount describes the way in which men are freed to live when they commit themselves to the kingdom of Jesus!" (Larry Richards, *The Teacher's Commentary*, p. 540)

## OUTLINE

### I. CHAPTER 5: CHRIST'S DISCIPLES AND HIS MORAL LAW

A. The Beatitudes, (1-12).

1. Introductory statements, (1, 2), [Lu. 6:17-20a].
2. Promises to the subjects of the Messiah, blessings, (3-12), [Lu. 6:20b-23].
  - a. our attitude toward ourselves: the poor in spirit, (3).
  - b. our attitude toward our sins, (4-6):
    - (1). them that mourn, (4).
    - (2). the meek, (5).
    - (3). those that hunger and thirst after righteousness, (6).
  - c. our attitude toward the Lord, (7-9).
    - (1). the merciful, (7).
    - (2). the pure in heart, (8).
    - (3). the peacemakers, (9).
  - d. our attitude toward the world, (10-12) [20b-23].
    - (1). those that have been persecuted for righteousness' sake, (10).
    - (2). the poor, the hungry and, those that weep, [20b - 21].
    - (3). those hated by men, (11), [22].
    - (4). those that rejoice in that day, (12), [23].
3. Promises to the subjects of the Messiah, woe to, [Lu. 6:24-26].
  - a. the rich, [24].
  - b. those now full, [25a].
  - c. those that laugh now, [25b].
  - d. those spoken well of, by men, [26].

B. Relation of the Disciples to the World, Their Influence and Duties, (13-16).

- C. Relation of Messianic Teaching to Old Testament and Traditional Teaching, (17- 48), [Lu. 6:27-30, 32-36].
  - 1. General Statement About the Law of Moses, (17-20).
  - 2. The Moral Law of Christ, (21-48).
    - a. The law against murder, (21-26).
    - b. The law against adultery, (27-30).
    - c. The law of divorce, (31, 32).
    - d. The law of oaths, (33-37).
    - e. The law of retaliation, (38-42).
    - f. The law of love, (43-48), [27-30, 32-36].

## **II. CHAPTER 6: AGAINST HYPOCRISY AND WORLDLY CARE**

- A. Against Hypocrisy, (1-18).
  - 1. In almsgiving, (1-4).
  - 2. In prayer, (5-15).
  - 3. In fasting, (16-18).
- B. Against Worldly Care, (19-34).
  - 1. Concerning riches, (19-24).
  - 2. Concerning necessities of life, (25-34).

## **III. CHAPTER 7:1-12: MISCELLANEOUS PRECEPTS**

- A. Warning Against Being Judgmental, (1-5), [Lu. 6:37-42].
- B. Warning Against Being Undiscriminating, (6).
- C. Warning Against Lacking a Trusting Persistence, (Prayer Encouraged), (7-11).
- D. Summary of the Moral Law, (12), [Lu. 6:31].

## **IV. CHAPTER 7:13-29: CONCLUSION THE WAY OF LIFE**

- A. The Way, (13-27).
  - 1. A narrow way, (13, 14).
  - 2. How to avoid being misguided, (15-20), [Lu. 6:43-45].
  - 3. Not by prayer or miracles only, (21-23).
- B. Conclusion and Application: Two Builders, (24-29).
  - 1. The way pointed out, (24-27), [Lu. 6:46-49].
  - 2. The effect of the sermon, (28, 29).

## NOTES

### MATTHEW CHAPTER 5: CHRIST'S DISCIPLES AND HIS MORAL LAW

- A. The Beatitudes, (1-12).
1. Introductory statements, (1, 2), [Lu. 6:17-20a]. The contrast between Lk. 6:17 and Mt. 5:1 has led many to believe that this was two different occasions where Christ delivered the same sermon. However, their parallel content allows us to study the passages together. From Mt. 5:1 we find the style chosen by Jesus to deliver this sermon: sitting and speaking. This was in keeping with the style of the Jewish teachers, refraining from oratorical tricks and relying on the truth contained in the words spoken. "In all of God's dealings with man He has never influenced him in his moral or spiritual conduct except by the use of words, either written or spoken..." (E.M. Zerr, Bible Commentary, Vol. 5 p.13).
  2. Promises to the subjects of the Messiah, blessings, (3-12), [Lu. 6:20b-23]. These verses are called the "beatitudes" from the Latin word (blessed). However, for us to understand the true meaning, it would help to think of the word as "happy" or "in complete bliss." Please note that most of the beatitudes reverse the world's view on the subject at hand. Refer to SOTM chart 1: The Beatitudes: Matthew 5:3-10. (Richards, p. 541)

#### **SOTM-chart 1: Jesus' Values versus the World's Values**

	Blessed are Those Who...	Blessed are Those Who Are...
(v.3)	are the poor in spirit self-confident	competent self-reliant
(v.4)	mourn pleasure-seeking	hedonistic "the beautiful people"
(v.5)	are meek	proud, powerful important
(v.6)	hunger for righteousness	satisfied, "well adjusted" practical
(v.7)	are merciful	self-righteous, "able to take care of themselves"
(v.8)	are pure in heart	"adult", sophisticated broad-minded
(v.9)	are peacemakers	competitive, aggressive
(v.10)	are persecuted because of righteousness	popular, adaptable "don't rock the boat"

The beatitudes can be divided into two major divisions: the first seven beatitudes are of a spiritual nature, while the last two refer to external circumstances. Because a man possesses any one of these characteristics, does not necessarily put him in a right relationship with God. Jesus is looking for the man who would possess all of the

characteristics, therefore qualifying him to receive all of the blessings, all of which are promised to those who inherit eternal life.

In his two volume work, *Studies in the Sermon on the Mount*, D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones suggests five general lessons that can be drawn from the Beatitudes: (SOTM-chart 2)

**SOTM-chart 2: Five Lessons From the Beatitudes**

- (1). All Christians are to be like this!
- (2). All Christians are meant to manifest all of these characteristics!
- (3). None of these characteristics "come naturally" to man.
- (4). These characteristics utterly distinguish the Christian from the non- Christian.
- (5). The Christian and the non-Christian belong to two entirely different realms.

- a. our attitude toward ourselves: the poor in spirit, (3). Those that realize their spiritual destitution, but hope for improvement. They have a complete absence of pride, self reliance and self- assurance. The kingdom is theirs because they seek it, and once they find it, will accept it and will live in it. This attitude is contrary to the pride of the Pharisees.
- b. our attitude toward our sins, (4-6):
  - (1). *them that mourn*, (4). Not all that mourn, "for the sorrow of the world worketh death." (2 Cor. 7:10) but those that mourn in reference to their sins. This conviction for their sins necessarily precedes their initial conversion, as well as their subsequent repentance. Not only will they mourn their own sins, but also the sins of their brethren, their neighbors, and the world. Their comfort will come from the provisions made for their pardon. The cycle continues: a man sins, he mourns, he repents and returns to Christ, he is comforted now and ultimately through the hope of eternal salvation.
  - (2). *the meek*, (5). As opposed to the arrogant, the able, the self-assured, and the aggressive. The essential quality of true meekness is possessed by a man "who is amazed that God and man can think of him as well as they do and treat him as well as they do," (Lloyd-Jones, p. 69). The meek one is ready to listen and ready to learn. They will inherit the earth in two ways: they will enjoy it more while in it because they will be satisfied with what they have, and as members of the church both here on earth and in the after awhile they will be amazed at what they have! (2 Pet. 3:13)
  - (3). those that hunger and thirst after righteousness, (6). These are those that are not only hungry for spiritual food, but are willing to partake of it. Only Christianity provides such a promise (Rom. 8:3, 4; Heb. 7:11, 19, 25). Righteousness here means "a pattern of life in conformity to God's will." (Carson, p.22) There is a sense in which we can become satisfied (filled) with Jesus and all that He

provides. Jesus teaches a similar lesson elsewhere (Jn. 4:14; 6:35). However, in coming to know Christ, we will want to know Him even better. Compare Paul's thoughts concerning his own knowledge of Christ (2 Tim. 1:12; Phil. 3:10). See SOTM chart 3: Tests of hungering and thirsting after righteousness.

### **SOTM-chart 3: Tests of Hungering and Thirsting After Righteousness**

1. Do We See Through Our Own False Righteousness?
2. Do We Have a Deep Awareness of Our Need of Deliverance a Need for a Savior?
3. Do We Avoid Everything That is Opposed to True Righteousness?
4. Do We Make Time to Examine This Righteousness Everyday?
5. Do We Place Ourselves in the Path of True Righteousness?
  - a. Do we associate with godly people in godly places?
  - b. Do we read our Bibles?
  - c. Do we pray?
  - d. Do we examine the lives the saints gone before?
6. Do We Desire Above All Else to Know God and Emulate Christ?

(This chart is adapted from chapter eight of *Studies in the Sermon on the Mount, Vol. 1* by D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones)

c. our attitude toward the Lord, (7-9)

- (1). *the merciful*, (7). With reference to those willing to forgive the trespasses of others. ("The forgiving will be forgiven," will be discussed in Mt. 6:14, 15). While grace answers the undeserving, mercy answers the miserable. To show mercy, we must be compassionate, helpful, and gentle towards the miserable and wretched. Christians are required to forgive others because Christ has already forgiven them. The realization that constant forgiving from God is needed makes one aware that he must constantly forgive. Characteristics that do not befit the merciful are: superciliousness, hard-nosed, callous, and impatient.
- (2). *the pure in heart*, (8). A heart not mixed with the evil desires and purposes of a sinful world (1 Jn. 3:2, 3). The Biblical "heart" consists of the entire mind, it is the center of man's being and personality; and is made up of three components: the intellect, the emotions, and the will. It is this "mind" that the follower of Christ must purify. Why? "The Christian purifies himself now, because pure is what he will ultimately be. His present efforts are consistent with his future hope." (Carson, p.25) The importance of having a pure heart can be seen in the fact that all of man's troubles come from his heart. (Jesus Mt.15:19f, see also Jer. 17:9.) Purity in the NT has two meanings: without hypocrisy and without defilement (Rev.21:27; 22:14). Purity demands holiness (Heb.

12:14). How can our hearts become pure? Through the grace of God and the work of the Holy Spirit through the Word. On our part, we must draw near to God (Jms. 4:8). The blessedness here comes from a part of the eternal hope seeing God. How we shall see God is unclear in the scriptures, but the guarantee remains for the pure in heart.

- (3). *the peacemakers*, (9). Every scriptural effort must be made to be at peace with one another and the world (Jms. 3:17; Rom. 12:18). Beyond that, we must be the ones to make peace. How can we make peace? Sharing the gospel is one way, but the context of the passage does not restrict peacemaking to gospel peacemaking. A scriptural peacemaker is not an easy going, "peace at all costs," "anything to avoid trouble" person. Instead, he is one who actively strives for peace and its maintenance. He seeks peace between man and man, nation and nation, but most importantly: man and God. The first step to becoming a peacemaker is knowing when to remain silent, (Jms. 1:19). The second step involves viewing every situation that arises in light of the gospel. Next, the peacemaker will take the initiative in mending relationships; he will make the first move to restore unity. Finally, the peacemaker is lovable, selfless and, approachable. These are God's children because they seek to do God's supreme purpose (Lk. 2:14). The word "children" is more specifically translated, "sons," (NKJ). The significance of "sons" is that it designates character as much as it does family relations. The true character of the "sons of God" is to be seen in the ultimate peacemaker Jesus Christ, (Col. 1:20; Eph. 2:14).

d. our attitude toward the world, (10-12) [20b-23].

- (1). *those that have been persecuted for righteousness' sake*, (10). Who are these persecutors? More often than not they are from among those claiming to be Christians, even those within the One True Church. The persecutor believes that some wrong has been committed. When this supposed wrong is really righteousness, then the persecution (harassment, trouble, or molestation, according to Thayer) is for righteousness' sake. Does this persecution come because one is good or noble? Generally, no, it comes because they are different. It is this righteous difference that makes people examine themselves and find themselves lacking. Because they refuse to meet the Godly Standard, they look to find fault with those that do. This persecution can take the form of rigorous physical persecution, but it also includes ridicule by relatives, "friends," neighbors and brethren. Those persecuted in this way possess the Kingdom of Heaven, because righteousness is a requirement for entry into the Kingdom. If a person never experiences any persecution for their beliefs, then what

righteousness is being displayed in their lives? True conformity to God's discipline, will by necessity cause persecution, (Jn. 15:18-20; Phil. 1:29; 2 Tim. 3:12; 1 Thess. 3:3f).

- (2). *the poor, the hungry and, those that weep*, [20b - 21]. These beatitudes repeated by Luke continue to reflect the trying conditions that true disciples will find themselves under from time to time. They are meant to strengthen and encourage those that tolerate earthly persecutions. Complete and eternal satisfaction can be found only in Christ (Mk. 10:28-30).
- (3). *those hated by men*, (11), [22]. The world will hate the Kingdom of God. Since the disciples of Christ represent the Kingdom on earth, the world will hate the disciples. Let's review the characteristics of a Christian that puts him in direct opposition to the world: he is unlike everybody who is not a Christian, not slightly different, but essentially different; his life is controlled and dominated by Jesus Christ, we live for Christ's sake; and the Christian's life is further controlled by thoughts of the heavenly home to come. Three important points are proven by verses 11 and 12 (which are an expansion of verse 10): First, Persecution is not limited to physical opposition and torture, but also includes spoken or written insults. Second, true righteousness of life is found by imitating Jesus. Third, we are commanded to rejoice and be glad under persecution because the reward is great. (Carson, pp. 28, 29.)
- (4). *those that rejoice in that day*, (12), [23]. The rejoicing is not because of the persecution in and of itself, but because it is for Christ's sake and it aligns the "victim" with Christ. The righteous will rejoice under persecution for two additional reasons: the reward in heaven is great, and it puts the disciple in companionship with the heroic prophets of old (2 Cor. 4:17, 18). How then are the righteous not to react to persecution? They must not retaliate, feel resentful, nor become depressed.

3. Promises to the subjects of the Messiah, [Lk. 6:24-26]. These four woes stand in direct contrast to the beatitudes related by Luke. They are expressions of lament and warning. Woe to:
  - a. *the rich*, [24]. Those that trust in this world and its possessions and wealth are deceived by their influence. These people are in the opposite condition of the spiritually poor (1 Jn. 2:15).
  - b. *those now full*, [25a]. As opposed to the spiritually hungry. These will eventually realize their spiritual state of hunger, but for many it will be too late.
  - c. *those that laugh now*, [25b]. As opposed to those that weep. The end of worldly pleasure will be a miserable end (Jms. 4:9).

- d. those spoken well of, by men, [26]. As opposed to the righteous who will be spoken evil of, by men. While a Christian should strive to have "good testimony from them who are without," (1 Tim. 3:7) his words and conduct cannot be designed to please and delight the ungodly (Jms. 4:4). Saying what someone wants to hear just to be in their good graces, regardless of the truth or consequences, is a sin against God (Eze. 13:10,11). The world has an evil name for every virtue that Christ enjoins: earnest contention for the truth bigotry, loyalty to the letter of His ordinances narrowness or Phariseism, strict conformity to the laws of purity Puritanism, liberality in giving an effort to court praise, piety hypocrisy, faith fanaticism (*McGarvey's Fourfold Gospel*, p. 234).
- B. Relation of the Disciples to the World, Their Influence and Duties, (13-16). The believers must become active participants in the Gospel. The characteristics and lifestyle demanded by the beatitudes cannot be lived in isolation, but must be shared. Christ uses two metaphors here to picture how true disciples must live their lives:
1. *Salt*, (13). Salt has two outstanding qualities: to preserve and improve taste. The disciples of Christ have a similar relationship to the world. Eden was lost for lack of salt, as was the world before the flood, Sodom, and the Promised Land. Only God's people can bring the truth among men through teaching and example, thus preserving a remnant for the future. How does salt lose its saltiness? Pure salt cannot, but the salt available in Jesus' time was impure and could become useless without proper care and handling. So it is with His disciples if they do not allow themselves to be an influence for good. They will be rejected and judged for their failure.
  2. *Light*, (14-16). In much the same manner as disciples are salt, they are light, a reflection of Jesus, the ultimate Light, (1 Pet. 2:9, 10). But it is more than just reflected light. Through the power of Jesus, the disciple can generate light as well, (Eph. 5:8-14). Their proper influence illuminates the pathway of righteousness for others to follow, while it eliminates ignorance and prejudice; and exposes evil, (Jn. 3:19-21). The church and its individual members must be visible and secure, as a city built on a hill. The light of Christ is designed to be shared, not hidden away. In the context, "light" involves good deeds, as well as living the Christian lifestyle. A true Christian will let his light shine naturally and unavoidably. Men will come to realize the true source of a Christian's light, and praise and glorify God for providing the light through Christ.

3. Disciples are required to be the salt of the earth and light of the world. (Lloyd-Jones, v. 1, pp.170-179.)
  - a. Why?
    - (1). As Christians, that is what we are meant to be by the Lord's own definition.
    - (2). As Christians, we cannot be hidden. A true Christian will operate in the open, gladly and confidently.
    - (3). To not be salt or light is to render ourselves useless in God's service.
  - b. How?
    - (1). By allowing Christ to dwell in our hearts, (Eph. 3:14-19).
    - (2). Through constant prayer and study.
    - (3). By positive scriptural action, in all humility, meekness and poverty of spirit. Working for the Lord's sake and the Lord's glory; leading men to Him to glorify Him; because we love our fellow man and sympathize with their lost condition.
  
- C. Relation of Messianic Teaching to Old Testament and Traditional Teaching, (17-48), [Lk. 6:27-30, 32-36].
  1. General Statement About the Law of Moses, (17-20).
    - a. First, Jesus says that everything He will teach is in absolute harmony with the entire teaching of the Old Testament. Second, His teaching, while being in perfect harmony with the Old Testament, is utterly in disharmony with the teaching of the Pharisees and scribes, (Lloyd-Jones, v.1, p. 181). Point of logic: If Christ is in harmony with the Law, but the Pharisees and scribes are not in harmony with Christ, then they are not in harmony with the Law.
    - b. Note that Jesus says He has come to "fulfill the law," but does not say that He will perpetuate it. The sense of "fulfillment" here is that Jesus is the object towards which the Law points. If you smash an acorn with a hammer, you destroy it, but if you plant the acorn and help it to grow, then the resulting oak tree is a fulfillment of the acorn. In either case, the acorn is gone, but only in the latter case does the result prove the work of the former. In Jesus, all prophecy of the Old Law was fulfilled or would be fulfilled in His kingdom. Even the smallest points of the Law would be in force until all was fulfilled.
    - c. The attitude displayed by one who would break even the smallest of the commandments, is the kind of attitude that God hates. Even the smallest Christian obeys the big commandments, but only the greatest Christians are careful to keep the small commandments.

- d. For a disciple's righteousness to exceed that of the Pharisees, Jesus expects it to be a better kind - a kind of righteousness, predicted by the prophets, apart from the Law, (Rom. 3:21). What was wrong with the "righteousness of the Pharisees?" First, it was a purely external and formal religion. Second, it was a religion based on ceremony instead of morality. Third, it was a religion of man- made rules and regulations. Fourth, it was a religion self- glorification instead of glory to God. Fifth, it was a religion of self- gratification instead of love of their brethren. In other words, they were more concerned with: the details instead of the principles, the actions rather than the motives, in doing instead of being. See SOTM-chart 4 (Lloyd-Jones, v.1, pp. 202-207.)

#### **SOTM-chart 4: What Was Wrong With Their Religion?**

It was purely external and formal (Lu. 16:15; Mt.23:27)

It was based on ceremony instead of morality (Mt. 23:25, 26)

It consisted of man-made rules and regulations (Mt. 15:3-9)

It was about self-glorification instead of glory to God (Lu 18:9-14)

It was about self-gratification instead of looking out for their neighbor (Mt.23:23)

#### **The Bottom Line**

They were more concerned:

\*with the details instead of the principles \*

\*with the actions rather than the motives \*

\*in doing instead of being \*

(As suggested by D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones in his two volume work, *Studies in the Sermon on the Mount*, v.1, pp. 202-207.)

- e. Only the man who is converted in the heart and acts upon his genuine acceptance of the Lord's commandments can expect to enter the kingdom of heaven. Much of the sermon from this point forward will contrast overt obedience under the Law of Moses with obedience from the heart under the Law of Christ, (1 Jn. 3:15).
2. The Moral Law of Christ, (21 48). Jesus now proceeds to show his listeners that what they have "heard" concerning the Law is not necessarily the full meaning of it. The scribes and the Pharisees had made a fatal error of scriptural interpretation: holding their oral traditions as equal to the scriptures themselves. In interpreting and applying God's Law we must remember the following principles: (See SOTM-chart 5).

### **SOTM-chart 5: Principles Of Interpreting And Applying God's Law**

- Ø The spirit of the law must be applied first (then the letter of the law)
- Ø Conformity to the law includes the transformation of thoughts, motives, and desires (Rom.12:2) (not only actions)
- Ø The true objective of God's law is to lead us to loving and doing right (not merely a list of what not to do)
- Ø The law is about expanding and improving our spiritual character (not holding us to a set of oppressive rules)
- Ø We must ultimately come to know God (not just comply with His will)

(As suggested by D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones in his two volume work, *Studies in the Sermon on the Mount*, v.1, pp. 216-219.)

- a. The law against murder, (21-26). Jesus turns His attention to the sixth commandment and explains the true intent and full extent of it. God's hatred of murder extends back to Cain and Abel, as well as Noah, (Gen. 9:5,6). The fundamental error of the Jewish teachers is that they taught that the divine law prohibited only the external sinful act, not the sinful thought they ignored the spiritual meaning, (Rom. 7:7,14). Their interpretation was too narrow. Christ expands the application of the law to include: heart-murder, anger, and tongue-murder. Anger is not necessarily sinful, but it becomes sinful: when there is no scriptural provocation, when there is no good end to it, or when it exceeds its boundaries. Scornful, abusive language is also condemned by Christ. There is nothing in and of these words that are sinful, but when they are delivered in a spirit of malice they become the instruments of sin. Raca is a scornful word loosely translated "blockhead." It is the kind of language used by the Pharisees with regards to the crowd of Jn. 7:45-52. "Thou fool" is a mean-spirited expression that comes from an attitude of hatred and spite concerning the spiritual condition of its target, (Ps. 64:1-4). Jesus teaches that regardless of the perceived lack of severity of these kinds of sins, they must be resolved or they will be reckoned with. The inference here is that we must be careful to preserve love and peace with our brethren. If a problem does exist it needs to be resolved quickly because: it makes us unfit for worship, it puts us in physical danger from our brother (violence, lawsuit), and it places us in spiritual danger, (Rom. 2:5-9).
- b. The law against adultery, (27-30). Jesus now gives His exposition of the seventh commandment. While God's laws concerning uncleanness certainly extend beyond just the act of adultery, the Pharisees held that only the act itself was sinful. This led them to argue that they were not adulterers, (Lk. 18:11). Christ's teaching would seem strange indeed to those raised on the traditions of the rabbis. First, Christ teaches the

existence of heart-adultery and the sinfulness of it. Besides strictly forbidding the acts of fornication and adultery, Jesus forbids lusting after the forbidden object (any woman that is not your wife). James teaches that lust is the beginning of sin, (Jms. 1:15). Not only is looking and lusting forbidden, but looking until lusting, (2 Pet. 2:14). Furthermore, those who dress in such a way to be looked at and lusted after, hold some responsibility in the matter, (Jezebel, 2Ki. 9:30-37). Second, this sin is serious, (vv.29, 30). While this teaching is probably not literal, it does teach us to take drastic measures against temptation, (Col. 3:5). We cannot treat sin lightly; it is not just a deviation from the proper or expected course, or an illness. It cannot be treated, but must be condemned, suppressed, and repented of. Sin is powerful because it begins in the human mind (heart). Sin is subtle; it has us blame our own shortcomings on our "nature." Sin has a perverting nature; it can make something good bad. Sin is destructive, the victims of sin are not passive, but active participants; their sins will lead them to hell. No wonder Jesus is serious about us taking sin seriously! Note: [1]- hellfire and damnation are scriptural sermon topics, [2]- we need to be totally frightened of some sins, [3]- we need to compare the "hardness" of denying ourselves and crucifying our fleshly lusts with the eternal punishment for failure to do so, [4]- hell provides a complete torment of the whole body, [5]- sometimes the Lord requires duties that are unpleasant for us here on earth, but He knows they are to our advantage. (Henry, v.5, p.50.) See SOTM-chart 6.

#### **SOTM-chart 6: Dealing With the Problem of Sin.**

- Ø Realize the Nature of Sin and Its Consequences
- Ø Realize the Importance of the Soul and Its Destiny (Lu. 14:26; Mt. 10:28)
- Ø Hate Sin and Do All Possible to Destroy It From Within Ourselves (Ps. 97:10)
- Ø Always Strive to Have a Pure and Clean Heart (Mt.5:8)
- Ø Sin Must Be Mortified (Put To Death) (Rom. 8:13; 13:14; Col.3:5)

What Must We Do To Mortify Sin?

- Ø Never "Feed the Flesh"
- Ø Restrain the Flesh (1 Cor. 9:27)
- Ø Realize the Price That Was Paid for Our Deliverance (Gal. 1:4; Titus 2:14; Eph. 1:4)
- Ø Let The Holy Spirit Work in Us and With Us Through the Word (Rom. 8:13; Phil. 2:12)

(As suggested by D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones in his two volume work, *Studies in the Sermon on the Mount*, v.1, pp. 244-251.)

- c. The law of divorce, (31, 32). Jesus now continues His discussion of the seventh commandment. Divorcing one's spouse for a cause other than

adultery causes them to commit adultery. The Jews had basically made divorce a simple matter of issuing a writ of divorcement for any reason, (Mt. 19:3). This was in opposition to Moses (Deut. 24:1-4) who allowed a writ only for the matter of "some uncleanness." Of course it was also in opposition to Christ and His heavenly Father, (Mt. 19:9; Gen. 1:27; 5:2; 2:24). Moses had implemented the writ for two basic reasons: to control rampant, unwarranted, divorce; and to protect the put away wives and children. Note how Jesus takes the whole concept back to the beginning and restores God's original law concerning man and wife. He also puts the blame for the divorced mate's impending adultery on the one who instigated the improper divorce. Leading someone else into temptation and sin is a serious matter that makes the leader accountable for the sins of the follower. To study this subject in it's proper context: first, examine Moses' true teaching; then compare Moses' teaching to the perversion of the Pharisees; finally, consider the teaching of the Lord Himself. See SOTM-chart 7.

### **SOTM-chart 7: Divorce: Moses, The Pharisees, and Jesus**

**MOSES** (Deut. 24:1-4; Mt. 19:8)

Objective: To regulate and control divorce. Compare to "eye for an eye" legislation.

How?

1. divorce would be limited to certain causes proven before two witnesses.
2. a bill of divorcement must be written to protect the wife
3. the husband is forbidden from ever remarrying that wife

Note: No divorce for adultery under the Law. Why? It called for the death penalty. (Lev. 20:10)

**THE PHARISEES**

Misconceptions:

1. Moses commanded (urged) divorce under certain conditions
2. These conditions were basically: any reason (Mt. 19:3)
3. The legality (the writ), is more important than the morality

Results: They had circumvented and perverted the Law so as to conceal its true objective.

**JESUS**

Principles emphasized:

1. The sanctity (sacredness) of marriage: it is beyond a civil contract
  - \* "the two become one flesh," is only acceptable in marriage (1Cor. 6:16)
  - \* it is not to be dissolved (Mt. 19:6)
2. God never commands anyone to divorce, instead stresses love and forgiveness
3. fornication is the only scriptural grounds for divorce (Mt.19:9)

**CONCLUSION:**

1. Under the law of Christ the temporary institution of the death penalty for adultery was rescinded.
  2. Replaced by divorce (if the innocent spouse chooses).
- (As suggested by D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones in his two volume work, *Studies in the Sermon on the Mount*, v.1, pp. 253-260.)

- d. The law of oaths, (33-37). Jesus turns his attention to the third commandment. This is not a direct quotation but an allusion to the teaching of such passages as: Ex. 20:7; Lev. 19:12; Num. 30:2; and Deut. 23:21-24. The Old Testament permitted oaths, even some taken in God's name, (Deut. 10:20). Paul, who was obviously familiar with the teaching of Jesus, regularly swears by the name of God, (Rom. 1:9; 2 Cor. 1; 23; 1 Thess. 2:5, 10; Phil 1:8). God the Father swears, (Gen. 9:9-11; Lk. 1:68, 73; Ps. 16:10; Acts 2:27-31). All of this oath-taking was designed to encourage truthfulness, (Heb. 6:17). Of course, false-swearing or perjury was forbidden. Why then did Jesus say, "Do not swear at all?" The Jews had made a mockery of true swearing, (Mt. 23:16-22). They had made false-swearing into such an art form, that the listener had no way of distinguishing the truth from lies. Basically, the Jews believed that if an oath was not "by God" then it did not have to be kept. Jesus teaches here that any oath is "by God," because everything is from God; therefore every oath is a solemn pledge to speak the truth. For us as Christians, it is best for our "yes" to mean yes and our "no" to mean no. The teaching of the early church implores this same advice, (Jms. 5:12). It is imperative that we avoid all perjury and would be wise to refrain from all unnecessary oath taking. Additionally, using the Lord's name in vain through profanity or cursing must also be avoided. As Jesus teaches, false-swearing is evil (v. 37) and comes from the father of all lies, (Jn. 8:44).
- e. The law of retaliation, (38-42). The Law of Moses provided the law of retaliation to prevent blood feuds and provide proper punishment for crimes committed, (Ex. 21:24; Lev. 24:20; Deut. 19:21). This was to be done under the direction of the judges and not to be done individually. It is even intimated in Num. 35:31 that redemption in some cases could be had by money. The Pharisees had perverted this law by allowing individual retribution. Jesus on the other hand teaches that we are to forgive injury done to ourselves. It is a lesson concerning personal abuse and personal self-sacrifice. We are not to take revenge, but rather be patient with those that treat us unkindly. Jesus is not teaching us to ignore the protection of our family, neighbors, and brethren. Neither is He expecting us to support professional beggars nor disallowing the vocations of soldier, judge, juror, or policeman. The slap to the cheek represents a personal insult that we are to suffer, (2 Cor. 11:16-21). The loss of a coat represents a sin against our earthly possessions that we must be willing to endure. Being constrained to help the government is a sin against our liberty that we must not only tolerate, but be willing to go that extra mile. Our giving and lending must be cheerful and willing and not hinged upon "what's in it for me?" The teaching of this passage is for the followers of Christ as individuals in their personal relationships, not as a citizen of a country. It is not about capital punishment, killing in war, or any other form of killing. In just five verses, Jesus strips us of all of our so-called "inalienable rights."

- f. The law of love, (43-48), [27 -36]. The Law of Moses did command the people to love their neighbor (Lev. 19:18), but did not say to hate every enemy. We do know that the Jews were forbidden to make peace with the Canaanites, (Ex. 34:11-16; Deut. 7:2; 23:6). The Pharisees were not the first pious men to hate the enemies of the people, (1 Chron. 20:3; 2 Ki. 13:19; Ps. 137:8, 9; 139:21, 22). Other teachings indicate that enemies were to be respected and "not abhorred," (Deut. 23:7; Ex. 23:4; Prov. 24:17). How then are we to love our enemies? As a brother, kinsman, or spouse? Perhaps some examples from the scripture would shed light on just what this love involves, (Lk. 10:35-37: The Good Samaritan; Lk. 23:34: Jesus prays for His murderers; Acts 7:60: so does Stephen). This love is not impossible to possess or put into practice. The first aspect of it would be prayer, which we can give on our enemies behalf and they have no power to reject. This attitude is a godly one and is one more characteristic that separates us from the world. No one was more vilified in first century Judea than the Roman tax collectors and their Jewish lackeys. If even they (publicans and sinners) love those that love them, are we not to do better than that? "Christianity is more than humanity" M. Henry. The Gentiles would salute their friends as would a Jew, yet a Jew would not salute a Gentile. Christ wants us to be beyond that. God is our role model through His Son. We are to emulate Him. We are to aspire to be like Him. We must set our sights high and continue to strive towards perfection, (Phil. 3:12). The passage in Luke is a combination of the law of retaliation and the law of love and includes the "Golden Rule," (v. 31). This leads us to the conclusion that these two "laws" are really one and the same, just stated from a different perspective (what you are not to do versus what you are to do).

## **CHAPTER 6: AGAINST HYPOCRISY AND WORLDLY CARE**

- A. Against Hypocrisy, (1-18). The word "alms" or the phrase "charitable deeds" could more appropriately be translated simply "righteousness" in these verses. This would expand the teaching to include any righteous acts and not just the examples given. Jesus has chosen three examples to show how hypocrisy is unacceptable in a righteous disciple. In each case He will offer a description and denunciation of a particular form of false piety, then He will affirm that such activity has very limited results, and finally he will present a contrasting description of true piety and its results. (Carson, p. 56) This battle against hypocrisy in our spiritual lives is just one more way we must avoid the "leaven of the Pharisees." What we do in the name of religion must be done for God's approval and not for the applause of man. The three examples chosen by Jesus represent the three principal interests of man: fasting (his body), prayer (his soul), and almsgiving (his possessions).

1. In almsgiving, (1-4). There will be no reward in heaven for those who perform their righteousness to be seen of men. In the ancient times the rich would have a trumpet blown to gather a crowd together to watch them give their alms. Even today we use the phrase "tooting His own horn" in similar circumstances. Jesus confirms that these hypocrites had their reward and that it was the reward after which they sought the admiration of the people. A more accurate translation would be, "they have in full their reward," indicating there would be nothing else! The phrase "let not your left hand know what your right hand is doing," is often misunderstood and misapplied. It obviously condemns self publication of our own work, but does not condemn the publication of our work by others, (Mk. 12:41-44; Acts 4:36, 37). We know that our salvation comes by the grace of God through faith in the Son, but passages such as these make sure that we understand that the full reward somehow hinges on the activity of the believer as well. Almsgiving is not a choice, it is a duty. It is a duty that must be done properly or the reward that comes with it will be lost.
2. In prayer, (5-15). While almsgiving says much about our relationship with our fellow man, prayer says everything about our relationship with God.
  - a. Not as the hypocrites, (5-8). The hypocrites were guilty of two sins in their prayer life: vain-glory and vain repetitions. Pride in prayer is anathema to God, yet the hypocrites were full of pride. This could be seen by the places (public) they chose to pray and the posture (standing) they used in prayer. While standing is acceptable (Mk. 11:25), kneeling would be more humble and reverent. Of course, the will of the Lord is in direct opposition to the hypocrites' attitude. He demands humility and sincerity. Personal prayer is the duty of all disciples, but it is to be done in private, to and for the Father. It is the Father who will reward us for our prayer life, not man. The Pharisees were noted for making long prayers, in doing so they would resort to repeating the content of the prayer. Christ condemns this practice. All long prayers are not forbidden (Lk. 6:12), but merely prolonging the prayer as if it would make it better and more pleasing to God, is wrong. The repetitious style of prayer is wrong because: it emulates the heathen and it questions God's omniscience. He knows what we have need of, and therefore does not need our prescription, but instead our subscription. (Henry, vol. 5, pg. 58)
  - b. The Lord's Model Prayer, (9-15). Having pointed out the errors which characterized unacceptable prayer, Jesus now gives a brief outline of the contents, arrangement, and expression of proper prayer. (See SOTM-chart 8)

### **SOTM-chart 8: How to Use the Model Prayer**

- (1) Pray in private,
  - (2) No useless repetitions
  - (3) We must forgive those that trespass against us
  - (4) We must place the glory of God and the good of others ahead of our personal wants and even needs.
- (As suggested by J.W. McGarvey in *Commentary on Matthew-Mark*, pp. 64,65 and *The Fourfold Gospel*, pp. 253,254.)

- c. The prayer can be divided into two major sections:
- (1) invocations that God might be glorified:
    - (a) in His name and be universally recognized.
    - (b) in His Kingdom the Kingdom which Jesus came to establish, which will eventually destroy evil.
    - (c) in the hearts of humanity by all men becoming obedient to His will.
  - (2) petitions for humanity, for:
    - (a) their bodies to be sustained in moderation, not luxury.
    - (b) their souls in things concerning the past forgiveness of sins ("trespasses" is the better rendering here) is a precedent for obtaining this petition.
    - (c) their souls as to the future so temptation and sin can be avoided. While God does not tempt us with evil (Jms. 1:13), He permits us to exercise our own will and therefore allow ourselves to be lead into temptation. However, if we are His true child He will shield us to the extent that we can defeat temptation (1 Cor. 10:13; 2 Pet. 2:9). Even to the point that the temptation can prove to be a blessing for us (Jms. 1:12; 5:11).

NOTE: The conclusion of verse 13 ("For thine is the kingdom...") is not found in the most reliable manuscripts and is probably a later addition. Also, since the Kingdom Christ referred to has already come (the church) it is probably unwise to pray for its arrival. Also, Apostolic example would lead us to believe that we are now to pray "in Jesus name," (Jn. 16:24; Col. 3:17). Next, verses 14 and 15 are appended to show why the forgiveness of sins must be conditional. That is, the forgiveness of our sins hinges on our willingness to forgive others. Lastly, there are four points that must be followed if we are to truly use this as our model prayer: 1) pray in private, 2) no useless repetitions, 3) we must forgive those that trespass against us and, 4) we must place the glory of God and the good of others ahead of our personal wants and even needs. Nowhere did the Lord say repeat this prayer word for word!

in 3. In fasting, (16-18). While fasting is not commanded as a regular practice the NT; it was approved by Christ when done voluntarily and prompted by a sincere motive. Examples of those practicing proper fasting include: Anna (Lk. 2:37), Cornelius (Acts 10:30), Christians (Acts 13:3; 14:23). The purpose of fasting was self-denial and humiliation before God. Of course, some would make a sham of fasting, by pretending to fast to impress others or truly fasting, but making such a show of it as to draw undeserved attention to themselves. Jesus stresses the importance of fasting privately, but does not say how often to fast. As far as the outside world is concerned, a fasting day is just like any other day, based on your appearance. That is, no one can tell if you are fasting by looking at or listening to you. The overall lesson of these 18 verses of chapter six is to tell us how to live out the righteousness demanded in chapter 5, namely: humbly, quietly, honestly and to please God. Genuine godliness, plain holiness, and earnest piety are beautiful and clean in God's eyes; hypocrisy will only spoil the beauty of righteousness. (See SOTM-chart 9)

### **SOTM-chart 9: The Pharisees Had Perverted Another Godly Duty!**

#### Definition of Biblical Fasting:

Refraining from food and drink for a period of time for a religious purpose. Specifically, refraining from all fancy, special, or tasty food, (Dan 10:3). Most fasting in the Bible was done by restricting the diet to bread and water.

#### Occasions of Fasting

##### Ordinary fasting versus extraordinary fasting

Ordinary avoiding gluttony (Phil.3:19), being temperate, sober.

Extraordinary fasting can be used publicly in the following circumstances:

Weighty matters such as war, famine, pestilence, (Jud. 20:26; 2 Chron. 20:3, 4; Joel 1:14)

When particular blessings are received (Lev. 23:29-32; Ezra 8:21)

Extraordinary fasting can be used privately in the following circumstances:

Sick children, relatives, brethren or loved ones, (2 Sam. 12:16; Neh. 1:4; Dan. 9:3)

Under persecution (Ps. 35:13)

Additional New Testament example (1 Cor. 7:5)

#### Manner of Fasting

If not from the heart, then worthless to God, (Zech. 7:5; Isa. 58:5, 6; Joel 2:13)

The length of the fast is determined by the circumstances, (2 Sam. 12:16; Est. 4:16; Dan. 10:2, 3)

#### Purpose of Fasting

Deny self, (Ps. 69:10; Lk. 21:34) (Continued top of next page.)

To assist in our devotions, hearing and especially prayers, (Mt. 17:21; Acts 13:3; 14:23)  
To bear witness to the humiliation and contrition of our hearts.  
To admonish us of our guilt and uncleanness, (Jonah 3; Hag. 1:5)

#### How Not To Fast

Hypocritically, to be seen of men  
With counterfeit sadness and pretentious grief  
Going out on a fasting day, just to show men you are fasting  
By disfiguring one's face

#### Conclusion

Fasting has no value to God unless your heart is right, you hate sin, you consider yourself spiritually worthless (see beatitudes) and your grief over these matters is sincere.

(Adapted from chapters 26 and 27 of Arthur W. Pink's book, *An Exposition of the Sermon on the Mount*, pages 172-184.)

- B. Against Worldly Care, (19-34) The first half of this chapter has been mostly negative, that is, do not be a hypocrite. In this section of the sermon Christ takes a more positive approach as He teaches that all life is to be lived and all attitudes to be formed by unswerving loyalty to the Kingdom and uncompromised trust in God.
1. Concerning riches, (19-24). The Lord will use three illustrations to make this point: treasure, light, and slavery
    - a. treasure, (19-21). It is to be noted that Christ does not deprive us of our treasure, but He does direct us as to how it should be chosen. First, it should not be chosen from among earthly wealth because better things can be had. Even an abundance of earthly wealth is worthless when measured by spiritual treasure. Earthly wealth is not eternal and cannot be laid up for eternity. Earthly wealth is subject to decay and theft. The best things then are heavenly treasures, because our hearts are with our treasures. Where our hearts are is where our love, loyalty, trusts, delights, thoughts, and joys will be also. (Col. 3:1f; 1 Tim. 6:17-19) Man naturally tends to move toward an object on which his gaze is fixed. If our hearts are fixed on our treasures, that is where we will eventually be.
    - b. the light of the body, (22, 23). If our eye is "good" then it will be fixed on heavenly things. This will make the possessor of the "good eye" "full of light." That is, in possession of a full understanding of divinely inspired truth. The alternative would be to be "an evil eye" "full of darkness," that is, devoid of purity and understanding. What could be worse than to possess an evil eye, thinking it was good?

- c. slavery, (24). Christ means serving two slave owners, not necessarily two employers. The meaning of hate here is "to love less," but it is still a strong contrast (Lk. 14:26). If it comes to a crisis, then one master will be chosen over the other. If the choice is between God and Mammon, then Mammon is a rival to God, an idol. How many have made their wealth and possessions their god?
2. Concerning necessities of life, (25-34). As double vision and double service are unacceptable, so double-mindedness is also. The word "anxious" here is derived from a word that means a state of doubt or double-mindedness, (Lk. 12:29). Consider these contrasts: Mammon supplies food, God supplies life; Mammon furnishes clothing, God furnishes the body; double-mindedness leads to worry through reliance on Mammon, single-mindedness leads to peace through reliance on God. The birds do not serve Mammon, yet God cares for them. Peace and trust characterize service of God, while the rewards of Mammon are won through anxiety. Choose God's service! To the Jew, no one represented magnificence better than Solomon, yet the common field flowers surpass him in splendor. If God cares for the grass, with a lifespan of a day, then how much more will He care for us, who He fashioned to last for eternity. The heathen have reason to be anxious, but not Christians. The Father promises to take care of us. Instead of life's so-called necessities we need to pursue God's Kingdom. If we serve God today with the strength we used to expend on our worries, troubles, and cares, then God will help us order our affairs for tomorrow. While we are not to fret over many things in life, the Gospel demands that we are responsible for our actions, families, brethren, and spirituality. We must also be concerned about our sins and sin in general, because these types of concerns are God-directed. Notice how they contrast to the selfish type of worries that Jesus is condemning. He is not advocating carefree irresponsibility, but is teaching that concern for daily necessities must take a back seat to our commitment to the Kingdom.

## **CHAPTER 7:1-12: MISCELLANEOUS PRECEPTS**

Before concluding the Sermon with the alternatives that all men face (Mt. 7:13-27), Jesus warns us of three additional dangers: judging, lack of discrimination in spiritual matters, and not continuing to pursue and trust God, especially through the avenue of prayer. Please note as we study these warnings, how they build towards the "Golden Rule," (Mt. 7:12).

- A. Warning Against Being Judgmental, (1-5), [Lk. 6:37-42]. Perhaps we should first consider what this passage is not saying. It is not commanding the Disciples of Christ to hold no opinion concerning right and wrong. Hitler was evil, adultery is wrong, and deceit is a sin. In the next few verses Jesus will call us to exercise some judgment concerning unworthy men and

false prophets. See also such passages as 1 Cor. 5:5; Gal. 1:8f; Phil. 3:2. So every form of judging is not forbidden. Being judgmental or having a prejudiced attitude is what Jesus condemns here. As Christians we must practice discernment, but we do not have free reign to criticize. Jesus says if we are judgmental then we will be treated in a judgmental way by others and be truly judged by God. In these verses Christ is restating a point He already has made twice, (Mt. 5:7; 6:14f.). Namely, a judgmental attitude excludes us from God's pardon! Jesus is not saying we can earn mercy by being merciful, but we can exclude ourselves from mercy by having an attitude that is the opposite of poverty of spirit. Now, we can examine the example of the speck and the beam. King David is a prime candidate for the speck and beam hall of fame, (2 Sam. 12:1-7). We can fall under the same condemnation when we condemn the sins of others as we practice similar behavior. Or when in doctrinal disputes, we become more concerned with winning the argument than saving our soul and that of our brother. We must be willing and able to put our own house in order before we can be qualified to help (note: not condemn) others. The verses in Luke confirm the scriptural precept of reaping as you sow, as it applies to judging, giving, teaching, or receiving a teacher. Verse 38 indicates that an abundance will be returned to one who gives abundantly. "...Give into your bosom," is a reference to the ancient custom of carrying items inside the cloak, (see Ruth 3:15). Verse 39 has a broad application including those who would teach the Gospel. The blind cannot lead the blind. The pupil can only rise to the level of his teacher; therefore the best teacher must be sought. While the Matthew passage concerns being judgmental, the Luke passage concerns the teacher and his attitude toward his pupil. Obviously, the end of both is the attitude of the corrector, be it as a teacher or a brother.

- B. Warning Against Being Undiscriminating, (6). Even though the greater danger lies in being judgmental, we must also be wary of being undiscerning. The dogs and pigs under consideration here are not household pets, but semi-wild animals. The example of swine would especially be an abomination to the Jews listening to the Sermon. The two together represent people who are savage, vicious, devoid of manners, irresponsible, unappreciative, and just profane, (2 Pet. 2:22). The "pearls and that which is sacred," represent the Gospel - the Truth. Jesus tells us to withhold the truth from such as these, (Mt. 15:14). The warning continued in the ministry and teaching of the Apostle Paul, (Acts 18:5f; Titus 3:10f). (See SOTM-chart 10)

### **SOTM-chart 10: Five Implications of Christ's teaching in Matthew 7:6**

1. Jesus said "pearls," (not gravel) => the value of the Gospel.
2. Some will reject these "pearls" => mankind will be divided by the Gospel, Mt. 7:13f.
3. The Gospel is not to be presented to those who mock, argue and ridicule => time is better spent elsewhere.
4. Not everyone who initially balks or mocks is a swine or dog => some can be converted.
5. This passage is not an excuse for us to stop sowing the seeds of the Kingdom => using spiritual discretion and discernment does not mean to stop trying to teach the Gospel.

(As suggested by D.A. Carson in *The Sermon on the Mount, An Evangelical Exposition of Matthew 5-7*, pp. 105-107.)

- C. Warning Against Lacking a Trusting Persistence, (Prayer Encouraged), (7-11). Here Jesus is warning His listeners against being the seed that falls on stony ground, (Mt. 13:20f; cf: 13:1-9). A simple lack of staying power, coupled with an attitude of "I can do it by myself," will lead to an early departure from the faith. So, Jesus tells us to keep on asking, seeking and knocking. Be persistent, but persistent in what? Prayer. "This prayer is a divinely empowered response to God's invitation of Jer. 29:13," (Carson, p. 109). If we lack the things that are required in the Kingdom, (poverty of spirit, purity of heart, etc.) then we must ask for them. This asking, seeking, and knocking involves a complete quest for the Kingdom and God's righteousness. Our prayer lives must be broadened, we must be in a constant attitude of prayer, ("pray without ceasing... 1 Thes. 5:17). This attitude must be one in accordance with God's will, (Jms. 4:2b-3). If we embody the first beatitude we will be eager to look to God for the help we will need to enter and remain in the Kingdom. Some seem frightened to approach God the Father in prayer, yet the words of the Lord here are meant to allay our fears. If human fathers (evil, when compared to God) can give good gifts, then how much better will the gifts of the Heavenly Father be? He has promised to never forget His people, (Isa. 49:15).
- D. Summary of the Moral Law "The Golden Rule," (12), [Lk. 6:31]. Philosophers such as Socrates, Buddha, Confucius, and Hillel have incorporated a version of this rule into their teachings that said, "Do not do to others what you would not have done to you." Theirs is a rule of what not to do, while Christ's is a rule of what to do. An essential part of true religion is righteousness towards our fellow man. If this righteousness is our rule, then we must be ruled by it. In our dealings with others we must be just, fair, honest, lovely, and of good report. Just knowing and believing is not enough, we must be willing to do. Do that which Christ commands us toward Him, God the Father, our brethren, and our fellow man. We are to do good to our neighbor and not to return evil for evil. This is part of the second greatest commandment: "Love your neighbor as yourself." The meaning

of the rule can be seen in three things: (1) We must treat our neighbor in a way that we judge as correct, (2) our neighbor must be put on an even plane with ourselves and, (3) we must put ourselves in our neighbor's place and deal with them from that point of view. Why should this rule be enforced? "It is the law and the prophets." While the "Golden Rule" is not directly quoted from either the law or the prophets, it is the basic teaching of both in a nutshell. Beware while the law of Christ is commended to the world through this rule, Christians not complying with the rule stand condemned.

## **CHAPTER 7:13-29: CONCLUSION THE WAY OF LIFE**

A. The Way, (13-27). With the sermon basically over, Jesus wraps up by showing his listeners the application of it. Here He stresses the importance of practicing and implementing the Sermon in the disciple's everyday lives. The reason this implementation is important is illustrated by Jesus through the use of "twos:" two roads, two trees, two claims, and two houses. Jesus makes it clear to His listeners, both then and now, that there are two and only two alternatives. One alternative ends in life, good fruit, entrance into the kingdom of heaven, and stability; while the other alternative brings forth destruction, bad fruit and fire, exclusion from the kingdom, and ruination. For a man to ignore the weight of these blessings and cursings can only lead to his eternal peril. (Carson, p. 122.)

1. A narrow way, (13, 14). If righteousness towards men is an essential branch of true religion (v. 12), then that religion towards God becomes an essential branch of our universal righteousness. (M. Henry, v. 5, p. 74) There are only two ways, good and evil, right and wrong, the way to heaven and the way to hell. Those that choose the life of sin, choose the wide gate and the broad way. This gate has no turnstile, no ticket is needed, and you may come as you are. The avenue is broad, because there will be many traveling it. Following the crowd, yielding to peer pressure, and doing what others do because that's what others are doing is a sure road sign of Hell's Highway (the road to destruction). Those that choose Jesus, and are born again by attaining remission of their sins achieve entrance at the strait gate. Crossing the Red Sea did not put the children of Israel in the Promised Land and likewise we are not in Heaven directly after passing the strait gate. To continue along the narrow way we must deny ourselves, mortify our sins, endure persecutions and hardships, and generally watch our steps. Some will never find this gate and way, while others will find it but find the terms of entry not to their liking. Even others will enter and start down the narrow way only to turn back. What then is the purpose and ultimate invitation of the narrow way? It leads to life. Jesus makes the true choice plain "enter in at the strait gate." Entrance will not be easy (Lk. 13:24), but one hour in heaven will erase a lifetime of persecution and hardship.

2. How to avoid being misguided, (15-20), [Lk. 6:43-45]. False prophets (teachers) will come claiming Divine authority as Apostles, (Rev. 2:2). They may be teaching the truth or they may be teaching false doctrine. In either case, because of their motives or their methods, they must be avoided. Some false teachers will be hard to detect, because outwardly they will appear legitimate. Their message may sound correct, and their behavior and demeanor righteous, but they have brought a hidden agenda (2 Cor. 11:13; Rev. 13:11; 9:7, 8; Rom. 16:18; Isa. 30:10). The worst enemy of the sheep is the wolf. Then who do these false teachers represent? Satan. Elsewhere, Paul and John warn us to "prove all things," (1 Thess. 5:21) and "you shall know them by their fruits," (1 Jn. 4:1). Even if you cannot tell a tree by its leaves, by its bark, or by its growing season the fruit will identify it. So it is with false teachers. Good fruit cannot be expected from bad men. They might occasionally do an act of righteousness, but their normal or general behavior will be evil. Jesus now quotes the very words of the Baptist (Mt. 3: 10), the evil tree will be cut down and burned. Note: these trees are not fruitless, they have fruit, but it is bad fruit. The significance of the burning must be emphasized here because of the allusions to hellfire. (Compare: Eze. 31:12, 13; Dan. 4:14; Jn. 15:6). But what is this fruit? It is their deeds and words. Furthermore, their fruits are the results of their doctrine. We must ask where will their teachings lead? If to worldliness, pride, and contentiousness, then they are of Satan (Gal. 5:8; Jms. 3:15). But if their doctrine promotes piety, humility, charity, holiness and love then they are of God the Father. The passage in Luke is interesting because of the inclusion of verse 45. Here the good tree is obviously the good man and the evil tree is obviously the bad man. From the good man come good words and deeds, because there is a treasury of goodness in his heart. That is, his thoughts and affections are pure. Because the evil man has stored evil in his heart, out of him will come evil. (Boles, p. 143)
3. Not by prayer or miracles only (21-23). A show of spirituality or righteousness will not be enough to gain entrance into the Kingdom. There were in the first century and still are as we enter the 21st century, those who preach the true gospel, pray to God and perform spiritual acts, but are still not genuine disciples. Of these, many truly expect to gain heaven. Whether their faults are exposed in their lifetime or whether they are exposed on the judgment day, they will be found out and banished from the presence of the Lord. If open profession of faith, spectacular spiritual triumphs, and claims of great spiritual experiences are not the characteristics of true Christians, then what are the essential characteristics? The chief characteristic is obedience. True believers are about their Father's business. (Recall Mt. 5:19ff.) The Father's will cannot simply be admired, discussed, debated, and praised it must be done! We live in a time where the results are more important than the method. This way of thinking spills over into our spiritual lives and perhaps we tinker

with God's will to try and make it work better or make it more accessible for those who will be living in the 21st century. When causes become more important than ethics, then conversions at any costs will outweigh basic, consistent discipleship. We cannot enter the Kingdom based on our own obedience, but neither will we enter the Kingdom if we are not obedient! We are saved by grace through our faith in Christ, but that grace makes itself manifest in our obedience. There can be no true grace when forgiveness is preached without repentance, church membership is preached without church discipline, discipleship and results are preached without obedience, blessings are preached without persecutions, and joy is preached without righteousness. (Carson, pp.129- 131).

- B. Conclusion and Application: Two Builders, (24-29). Repentance is nothing without obedience. The obedience necessary is not a "merit point or chalk up a point for me" type of obedience, but an obedience that bows to Jesus and the will of His Father in every situation, without reservation.
1. The way pointed out, (24-27), [Lk. 6:46-49]. From their outward appearance these two houses are very similar. It is their foundations that will inevitably distinguish them. The most common use of "foundation" in the Bible is Jesus as the sure foundation (Is. 28:16, Acts 4:12). However, He is not the focus of this mini-parable. The focus is on the builders themselves. The man who builds on the sand is like a man who hears the words of the gospel, but will not heed them. The man who builds on the rock is like a man who hears and heeds the words of the Lord. The difference then is the difference between disobedience and obedience. So far, Jesus has promised destruction for those on the broad way, conflagration for unproductive branches, categorical rejection of the disobedient, and now, devastation by storm for the unrepentant hearer. Is He trying to scare His listeners into the Kingdom? In a sense yes, because we must fear Satan and all he stands for, including his eternal home Hell. If you do not believe Hell exists, then you probably dismiss Jesus as a fool and His warnings as fabrications. Perhaps you believe Jesus' warnings, but cannot make the choice to detach yourself from your worldly ways. Either way your choice is made and Christ is rejected. Belief at this point of the Sermon hinges on whether we believe in Hell. Jesus in His ministry speaks twice as often concerning Hell as He does concerning Heaven. The Sermon ends with a threat of judgment which in an honest heart will prompt poverty of spirit which takes us full circle back to the first beatitude. The Sermon is not meant to bring us to despair or some kind of self-salvation, the Sermon is meant to bring us to Jesus Christ. (Carson, pp. 131-135) Luke's version shows a closer connection with the thoughts of verses 21-23 of Matthew chapter 7. The parable becomes a warning against mere profession of faith and at the same time it is a command to make sure our profession and practice agree.

2. The effect of the sermon, (28, 29). The Jews were used to their teachers quoting Moses or the prophets as their authorities as they taught, presenting their lessons in a dry, and rote manner. Jesus presented a vibrant, lively lesson taught by His own "I say unto you". The crowd was amazed. We must also be amazed, but amazement is not enough. We can admire good preaching and yet remain ignorant; we can be astonished and yet remain unsanctified. We must be willing to press on to a deeply rooted commitment to Jesus Christ.

## **RECAPITULATION**

[Based on Wiersbe's outline found in his Bible Exposition Commentary, V. 1, pp. 20-32]

### **A. Chapter 5: True Righteousness**

1. What true righteousness is, (1-16). Attitudes that ought to be in our lives today.
  - a. Our attitude toward ourselves, (3)
  - b. Our attitude toward our sins, (4-6)
  - c. Our attitude toward the Lord, (7-9)
  - d. Our attitude toward the world, (10-16).
2. How true righteousness comes, (17-20). As seen in three possible relationships towards the Law.
  - a. We can seek to destroy the Law, (17a.) like the Pharisees
  - b. We can seek to fulfill the Law, (17b.) by allowing the Holy Spirit to work in us through the Word.
  - c. We can seek to do and teach the Law, (19) nine of the Ten Commandments are repeated with emphasis in the NT.
3. How righteousness works in daily life, (21-48) through the attitudes and intents of the heart, not just through external action.
  - a. Murder, (21-26)
  - b. Adultery, (27-30)
  - c. Divorce, (31-32)
  - d. Swearing, (33-37)
  - e. Retaliation, (38-42)
  - f. Love of enemies, (43-48).

### **B. Chapter 6: True Worship, is not: insincere, dishonest, hypocritical, nor self-serving.**

1. Our giving, (1-4).
2. Our praying, (5-15)
  - a. Secret prayer precedes public prayer, (6)

- b. We must pray sincerely, (7-8)
- c. We must pray in God's will, (9-13)
- d. We must pray with a forgiving spirit toward others, (14-15).

3. Our fasting, (16-18).

4. Our use of wealth, (19-34).

- a. Avoid enslavement of the heart, (19-24)
- b. Covetousness cheapens us, (25-30)
- c. Worry over material things is heathenistic, (31-33)
- d. Worry about tomorrow causes loss of joy today, (34).

### **C. Chapter 7: True Judgment false righteousness leads to false judgment.**

1. Our judgment of ourselves, (1-5).

- a. We shall be judged, (1)
- b. We are being judged, (2)
- c. We must see clearly to help others, (3-5).

2. Our judgment of others, (6-20).

- a. The reason we must judge, (6)
- b. The resources God gives us, (7-11)
- c. The guiding principle, (12).
- d. The basis for judging, (13-20)

3. God's judgment of us, (21-29).

### **D. Questions to ask ourselves as we leave the study:**

1. Have we paid the price to profess faith in Christ? As suggested by the two ways of Mt. 7:13, 14.

2.

- a. Have our lives really changed?
- b. Have our lives produced godly fruit? As suggested by the two trees of Mt. 7:15-20.

3. Do we realize that true faith in Christ in the storms of this lifetime will carry us beyond this lifetime and through the final judgment to a home in heaven with God? As suggested by the two houses of Mt.7:24-27.

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## THE FOURFOLD GOSPEL - THE LIFE OF CHRIST

### PART FIVE - JESUS AT A FEAST IN JERUSALEM - PROBABLY THE PASSOVER

#### 43. Heals on the Sabbath and Defends His Act (Jn. 5:1-47)

- (1) This passage is the first recorded conflict between Jesus and the authorities at Jerusalem. Jesus has returned to Jerusalem to celebrate the Passover, thus ending the first year of His ministry. The feast is not what is important here, the fact that it is a Sabbath however is important. That is why John did not choose to specifically name the feast. Reliable scholars believe the feast to be the Passover.
- (2) The exact location of this pool within the city is not known. "Bethesda" means "house of mercy."
- (3,4) We know that the pool was thought to have had medicinal effects on those that bathed there. However, half of this verse and all of verse four are not in the ancient manuscripts. The additions are thought to have been made during the second century. So, we really do not know how the pool helped these people.
- (5) Among the multitude gathered around the pool that day was a man who had been afflicted for 38 years. He was probably a paralytic.
- (6) Jesus knew the man wanted to be healed, so this question was simply asked to acquire the man's attention. In most of His miracles Jesus requires the attention and an act of will on the part of the subject.
- (7) This verse is probably what led to the insertion of verse four. The waters moved. This could have been caused by a spring that flowed intermittently. The man's illness kept him from getting into the pool quickly enough, before another would get in before him.
- (8) Jesus speaks with authority and imperatively. However, an act of obedience is required. The man must choose to get up or continue to lie there. The "bed" mentioned here is what we would call a pallet.
- (9) Notice the four steps of Christ's healing: 1)- Christ addresses the man, 2)- He commands, 3)- the man is healed and 4)- obeys. Jesus picked the Sabbath day to do this healing because the time was right for the impending confrontation.
- (10) The Law of Moses forbade the carrying of burdens on the Sabbath, Ex. 31:13; Jer. 17:21; Neh. 13:15-19. The authorities questioned this man concerning his actions. The Pharisees had increased the intent of the Law to the extremes, putting more restrictions on the people than required by the Law. The man was probably within the limits of the Law but beyond the limits of tradition.
- (11) The man's defense was simple. If the man (Jesus) is powerful enough to heal me, then His requests are to be obeyed. If He tells me to take my bed, then I take my bed.
- (12) Notice that they care nothing about the healing, but only to try and find someone who had done physical labor on the Sabbath. To the Pharisees the Law outweighed mercy.
- (13) Jesus however was relatively unknown in Jerusalem at this time. The man did not know Him and Jesus easily disappeared into the crowd.
- (14) The man went to the Temple, as did Jesus. It seems as if Jesus is indicating that the man's sins had brought on this disease? Is this possible?
- (15) It was from this meeting that the man knew Jesus' identity. In obedience to the demand of the authorities he returned to them and told them of Jesus and His whereabouts. There was no malicious intent on the part of the man; however, trouble would soon come upon Jesus because of the man's actions.

- (16) The Jews were pursuing Jesus to attack Him. The oldest manuscripts omit "sought to slay Him." Compare this confrontation to the one that occurs in Jn. 2:14. Jesus will justify His actions by making Himself equal with His Father.
- (17) If Jesus is God, then the Laws of the Sabbath do not restrict His divine work.
- (18) The Pharisees were livid. Since they could not accept Jesus as the Son of God, His defense was pure blasphemy in their eyes. "They sought the more to kill Him" indicates that they were planning to get rid of Jesus not by outright murder, but through some deceitful plan.
- (19) Jesus now sets out to show His Divinity through His character, mission, authority, and credentials. These all hinge on Him being the true Son of God. Verses 19-23 declare His relationship to the Father by their 1) unity of action, 2) unity of love, 3) unity in ability to impart life, and 4) unity in judgment. All of these common characteristics leading to their 5) unity in honor. Since He has no will or action apart from the Father it would be impossible for Him to do anything contrary to the Father's will.
- (20) The miracle of healing would be a preview of greater works to come. Here we see the unity of love.
- (21) The Father possesses the power to raise the dead and the Son also possesses this same power, e.g. Lazarus.
- (22) The judgment of the world is delegated to the Son. Does judgment begin in this world? (Jn. 9:39)
- (23) The Son deserves honor because He speaks the words, does the work, and is a physical manifestation of His Father. If the Son possesses the right of concurrent action in the realms of unity, love, power over death, and judgment, then His concurrent use of the Sabbath for His father's business was not to be questioned.
- (24) This verse points to two conditions of eternal life. 1) Knowledge of the revelation of Christ and 2) a belief of it such as to cause acceptance. This verse then indicates that eternal life and eternal condemnation are a present condition.
- (25) This verse is primarily aimed at those that are spiritually dead.
- (26) Jesus had been given a spiritually regenerating power that no other man possessed.
- (27) These powers qualified Jesus to be the perfect judge. Other characteristics of Jesus that make Him the perfect judge are: 1) He has experienced the infirmities and temptations of man and 2) His dual nature (God and man) makes Him the only true mediator between God the Father and man.
- (28) Jesus describes the future literal and final resurrection of the dead.
- (29) All will come forth from the grave - good to eternal life and evil to eternal damnation.
- (30) Here Jesus reasserts His dependence upon the Father to show how His relationship to man is an extension of His relationship to the Father. Because His judgment will be inspired by the will of His Father, it will be a perfect judgment.
- (31) The Jews have other witnesses to listen to, besides Jesus.
- (32) This verse probably refers to John the Baptist (see v. 33) as Christ's witness.
- (33) Comparing this verse to Jn. 1:19 shows that Jesus was addressing the rulers of the Jews. John testified that Jesus is the Christ.
- (34) Jesus is saying that he receives testimony "not from man alone." However, if the Jews were willing to accept Jesus solely on the testimony of John, then so be it.
- (35) The Jews believed John for a time, but rejected him when he testified for Jesus as the Messiah (Lk. 7:33).
- (36) Christ's life and deeds were the second witness on His behalf. This was a more convincing testimony because it manifested itself in tangible evidence, namely, miracles and His sinless life. "Work" would indicate not only His miracles but it would also encompass the entire realm of His life, including His message and His death for our sins.
- (37) The Father bore witness through the prophets (v. 39) and the power He gave to Jesus.
- (38) The Jews however chose to reject all of the witnesses and all of their testimony.

- (39) The very place that they searched to find eternal life contained testimony pointing to Jesus as the Christ.
- (40) But still they refused Jesus. See McGarvey p. 207.
- (41) Jesus did not take His rejection personally, because He was not looking for honor, only for faith.
- (42) Jesus had searched their hearts and knew that they did not truly know or love God. All the evidence in the world would not convict their souls.
- (43) Just as quickly as the Jews reject Jesus they will begin to accept and follow various antichrists. These false christs can be recognized because they come in their own name instead of the Father's.
- (44) Jesus was not offering what the Jews expected of the Messiah. They wanted a Messiah to restore glory to them and their nation, not one who would expect them to humble themselves before all of mankind.
- (45) The Law of Moses, which they have clung to so vigorously, will condemn them in the end.
- (46) How will the testimony of Moses condemn them? Because Moses testified of Christ and the Jews rejected His testimony. Jesus was the essential subject of the Law and the Prophets (Lk. 24:27, 44-46; Rom. 16:25,26).
- (47) Those that would reject Moses would surely reject Jesus as well. Moses specifically wrote concerning Christ in Deut. 18:15-18, but the essence of Christ permeates the whole Law. To reject either Testament is to reject them both. Jesus does not condemn the Jews for holding Moses in reverence, but he does condemn them for ignoring the sayings of Moses.

## THE FOURFOLD GOSPEL - THE LIFE OF CHRIST

### PART SIX - A PERIOD OF MINISTRY IN GALILEE AND ABOUT THE SEA OF GALILEE

#### 44. Plucking Grain on the Sabbath (Lk. 6:1-5) [Mt. 12:1-8; Mk. 2:23-28]

- (1) This is probably the first Sabbath after the Passover. The disciples were probably plucking barley or wheat.
- (2) The objection was not to plucking grain, but to doing it on the Sabbath Day. It was within the Law to eat from any field through which you might be passing (Deut. 23:25). The Pharisees believed this act would be considered reaping, which would be a form of work forbidden on the Sabbath.
- (3,4) It seems that Jesus is asking a rhetorical question, the Pharisees prided themselves on their knowledge of the scriptures. Jesus is referring to an incident in 1 Sam. 21:1ff. According to the Law, only the priests were to eat this bread, but David and his followers ate it anyway. Some commentators say that this passage indicates the unimportance of the ceremonial laws, however, this theory conflicts with 2 Sam. 6:6,7 (Uzzah) and 2 Chron. 26:16-23 (Uzziah). Jesus condemned law breaking of even the smallest kind in Mt. 5:17-20.

Let's visit the Matthew account (12:1-8). Jesus gives two more examples for our learning.

- (5) The priests worked hard on the Sabbath day. They committed only an apparent profanation of the Sabbath because they were doing the will of God. The law concerning working on the Sabbath probably referred to labor for earthly profit. The disciple's actions did not fit that category.
- (6) The argument here is perhaps this: if the priests could "labor" on the Sabbath to serve the Temple, then perhaps the disciples could "labor" to serve Jesus. It is probable that what the Pharisees are accusing the disciples of violating is tradition, not Law. If the priests can abrogate the Law by serving the Temple, then the disciples can abrogate tradition by serving Jesus.
- (7) Jesus quotes Hos. 6:6. He is suggesting that inward life is superior to outward form. This is the idea Paul presents in 1 Cor. 13:3.

Now let's return to the Luke 6 passage and incorporate Mk. 2:27-28 into our thoughts.

- (5) Only Jesus being the Son of man, God on earth – the infallible One – had the complete understanding of the Sabbath day. Man had added so many traditions to the original Sabbath laws that their lawyers could not sort them out. However, Jesus the Lord of the Sabbath, could explain the difference between man's traditions and His Father's Law.

McGarvey and Chumbley give this explanation of these passages in their Commentaries on Matthew. The disciples were not breaking the Sabbath because they were not laboring for earthly gain. The example of the priests showed that all work was not prohibited. The Jews lacked knowledge of the scriptures or they would have known that the Hosea passage allowed for feeding the hungry on the Sabbath. The Pharisees were being hypocritical because they would not condemn David for a direct violation of the Law, while condemning the disciples for a violation of their man-made tradition.

#### 45. Defends Healing on the Sabbath (Lk. 6:6-11)[Mt. 12:9-14; Mk. 3:1-6]

- (6) "On another Sabbath" means a different one from the one mentioned in verses 1-5. Jesus chose to enter the synagogue and teach. A withered hand would be useless, incapable of work.
- (7) The motives of the scribes and Pharisees were evil. They watched Jesus with malicious intent. They hoped that Jesus would be caught in a dilemma, that is, wrong if he healed or wrong if he refused to do good.

- (8) Jesus could read their minds (Jn. 2:25). The afflicted man was commanded to stand. Notice that Jesus performs the healing itself without a word.
- (9,10) Jesus turns the tables on the Jews by asking them a question that they will not answer. Obviously the answer is that man must do good, and to fail to do good when the opportunity presents itself would be a form of evil. Mt. 12:11,12 inserts the point concerning the sheep that had fallen into the pit. The “look” Jesus gave the Pharisees is further explained by Mk. 3:5. Anger here means righteous indignation because of the hardness of their hearts. Jesus spoke, the man obeyed, the hand was healed.
- (11) The Jews were mad because nothing was done to provide them with the grounds for condemning Jesus publicly. They were so angry they plotted against Jesus with the Herodians, a secular group of Jews that generally Pharisees would avoid contact with (Mk. 3:6). Compare the anger of the Pharisees to the anger of Jesus. Sinful wrath versus righteous indignation.

#### **46. Jesus Teaches and Heals Many by the Seaside (Mt. 12:15-21)[Mk. 3:7-12]**

- (15) Instead of confronting the Pharisees, Jesus chooses to remove Himself from their presence. Jesus continued to do great miracles, healing the entire multitude that followed Him.
- (16) Jesus is still not ready to reveal Himself completely so He forbids the multitude from giving Him unnecessary publicity.
- (17) Their silence would guarantee the fulfillment of Isa. 42:1-4.
- (18) This verse is descriptive of the person and character of Jesus. 1) Chosen servant, 2) loved and obedient, and 3) will bring salvation to the Gentiles.
- (19,20) The fulfillment of these verses is contained within the preceding verses. His retreat from the Pharisees fulfilled verse 19 and His healing of the multitude fulfilled verse 20. A broken stick and a burned out lamp wick represented the ill, lame, and blind. Jesus would continue to heal these people until the Gospel was sent forth.
- (21) This verse is not fulfilled at this time, but refers to the future reception of the Gospel by the Gentiles. Another view says that based on Mark’s account, Gentiles were present at the healings of verse 15. Let’s look at the Mark 3 account.
- 8 – Idumea is Edom, others came from the regions to the east of Jordan as well as Phoenicia. The people of these countries would be considered Gentiles unless of course only Jews living in these countries came to Jesus.
  - 9 – Once again Jesus has a ship at His disposal to use as a speaker’s platform. The ship solved two problems by separating Jesus from the crowd, it made it easier for Jesus to be seen and heard and it gave Jesus some protection from inadvertent physical harm.
  - 10 – The ship also prevented the crowd from pressing together and injuring one another.
  - 11 – Notice the similarity of actions between these unclean spirits and those previously cast out.

#### **47. Jesus Spends a Night in Prayer (Lk. 6:12)**

- (12) “These days” means during the time when Jesus was disputing with the Pharisees and healing the sick. There are several mountains on the western shore of the Sea of Galilee. The significance of this verse is in Jesus’ attitude of prayer. Jesus always prayed before important events (Mk. 6:46; Lk. 22:41-44; Jn. 11:41,42; 17:1)

#### **48. Jesus Chooses the Twelve (Lk. 6:13-16)[Mt. 10:2-4; Mk. 3:13-19]**

- (13) First they were called to discipleship (Jn. 1:35-45); second, to be constant attendants (Mt. 4:18-22) and now, to apostleship. They were endowed with miraculous gifts and sent out on

their so-called “limited commission.” Of all of Christ’s disciples, twelve were chosen. For a discussion of the possible significance of the number twelve see McGarvey’s *Fourfold Gospel* p. 220. (14-16)

The four lists should be compared. Mt.10:2-4; Mk. 3:16-19; Lk. 6:14-16 and Acts 1:13. The apostles can be divided into three classes of four apostles each. The order of these classes is constant among the four lists, as is the name of the apostle that heads each list. Peter heads the first, Philip the second and James the third. Iscariot is always last except in Acts where he is omitted.

1. Peter – given the keys of the kingdom, prominent in the early church, wrote two books of the NT, NOT the first pope.
2. Andrew – brother of Peter.
3. James the “greater.” – the first apostolic martyr.
4. John – the beloved apostle, wrote five books of the NT.
5. Philip – former disciple of John the Baptist.
6. Bartholomew – Nathaniel
7. Matthew – called Levi, a publican, wrote the first book of the NT.
8. Thomas – Didymus (twin), “doubting Thomas.”
9. James the “less” – possibly a cousin of Jesus (Lk. 24:10; Jn. 19:25) and brother to Joses (Mt. 27:56).
10. Simon – the “zealot,” (Canaanite).
11. Judas – (Lebbaeus or Thaddaeus) possible author of Jude however, most believe that Jude was authored by one of the Lord’s brothers.
12. Judas Iscariot – the traitor, probably the only non-Galilean apostle.

### **Peter Not the Pope**

The scriptures do not show Peter to be the supreme apostle. Jesus places the apostles on an equal basis (Mt. 23:8-11). Also examine Mt. 18:18; 19:27,28; 20:25-27; Jn. 20:21; and Acts 1:8. Peter claims only equality with the rest (1 Pet. 5:1,4). Paul withstood Peter to the face and ranked him second to James the Lord’s brother (not one of the twelve), Gal. 2:11-14, 9. Did James defer to Peter in Acts 15:13-21? No, James had the last word in the matter. There are no scriptural facts supporting the Peter as the first pope theory. There are 3 baseless assumptions: 1- Peter had supreme authority, 2- he was the first bishop of Rome, and 3- his powers passed from pope to pope.

### **The Sons of Thunder (Boanerges)**

Why this nickname for James and John? Their temper (Lk. 9:51-56)? We know John had a forceful way with words (1 Jn. 3:9,10) and was not afraid to call the names liar, antichrist, deceiver, children of the devil (1 Jn. 1:6; 2:4,22; 3:15; 2 Jn. 3-11). The word thunder is only found in John’s writing and there it is found eleven times.

#### **49. The Sermon on the Plain (Lk. 6:17-49) [Mt. 5,6,7]**

See notes on the Sermon on the Mount.

#### **50. Jesus Heals the Centurion’s Servant (Lk. 7:1-10) [Mt. 8:1,5-13]**

- (1) Sometime after the Sermon on the Mount Jesus returns to Capernaum. The wording here indicates that he was not far from Capernaum.
- (2,3) What is a centurion? We know from Mt 8:10 that he was a Gentile. Perhaps he was a proselyte, but it cannot be known for certain. Three other centurions are mentioned in the NT, can you name them? (Lk. 23:47; Acts 10:1; 27:1,3,43) The servant was sick and in much pain; he was about to die. The centurion had heard of the powers of Jesus, so he sent elders of the Jews to ask Jesus to heal his servant. Compare to the Matthew account and reconcile the

differences. Something done through representatives is like doing it yourself; you take the fame or the blame.

- (4,5) The elders introduced Jesus to the deeds of the centurion, trying to show that he was worthy of mercy. The centurion had built a synagogue in Capernaum at his own expense.
- (6,7) The centurion is following eastern custom. It was traditional to send messengers continually to one of which you were asking a favor. After agreeing to perform the favor, the messengers were then sent to say that the recipient was unworthy and the one doing the favor was not to put himself out. The centurion knew he was unworthy because he understood the Jews beliefs concerning consorting with Gentiles. Therefore he had a solution that would heal his servant and keep Jesus from violating the Jewish customs.
- (8-10) The centurion understood the power of the word of one with authority. In his civil occupation the centurion could command soldiers and servants and they would obey. Matthew names the disease as palsy, but Luke the physician refrains from naming it. Jesus told his followers that this centurion had greater faith than any Jew that He had found. Does this include the apostles? We have an example of Jesus healing over a distance. By the time the messengers had returned home, the servant was healed.
  - Note on faith – The less faith we have, the less we esteem Jesus. The more faith we have, the less we esteem ourselves. As we decline, Jesus increases. That Jesus would marvel at the centurion’s faith is proof that Jesus did not miraculously bestow faith on him. Faith, or belief in facts, concerning scripture or Jesus comes to a man the same way belief in any facts come, the process is the same.
  - Mt. 8:11,12 contains material not recorded by Luke. First, a prediction of a massive Gentile conversion and second, a great apostasy by the Jews. How do we know the children of the kingdom are the Jews? Jesus is talking about heaven and hell in these two verses.

## **51. Jesus Raises the Widow’s Son (Lk. 7:11-17)**

- (11) It seems that Jesus has been followed by the multitude since He chose the twelve. Nain is located about 20 miles south of Capernaum. Luke is the only writer to record this incident.
- (12) The burial grounds were located outside the city. To the Jews the death of an only child represented an extreme sorrow. The sorrow in this case was increased because the mother was a widow and probably depended on her son for support.
- (13) Jesus and His disciples alongside the funeral procession made a large group of witnesses for this miracle. The eastern people will shriek and scream when they weep for their dead.
- (14) The Jews rarely used a coffin in our sense of the word, but instead usually carried the body on an open pallet. When Jesus touched the bier, the bearers stood still. There are two additional records of Jesus raising the dead: 1- the daughter of Jarius and 2- Lazarus. Overall there are seven instances of the dead being raised in the Bible. In addition to the three mentioned there are 1- the child of the widow of Zarephath (1 Ki. 17:22), 2- the son of the Shunammite woman (2 Ki. 4:33-36), 3- a man raised by touching Elisha’s bones (2 Ki. 13:21), and 4- Peter raises Dorcas/Tabitha (Acts 9:36-42). What distinguishes these resurrections from that of Jesus?
- (15) The son rose and began to speak. Jesus presented the son to his mother.
- (16) The people knew they were in the presence of a man of God, they were yet to realize that He was the Son of God. Remember no dead had been raised since the time of Elisha, this indeed was a rare event.
- (17) The news of this miracle spread to Judea and it seems from what follows that even John the Baptist heard of it while he was imprisoned.

## **52. John's Inquiry and Christ's Answer (Lk. 7:18-35) [Mt. 11:1-19]**

- (18) Word comes to John while he is imprisoned concerning the fame of Jesus (Mt. 11:2).
- (19) John sent two disciples to inquire of Jesus. The question is, if John sent them to relieve his own doubts or to clear up doubts among his disciples. The latter is most likely the case.
- (20) John was imprisoned at Machaerus, about seventy miles from the Sea of Galilee. It would take about two days for John's disciples to make the trip. They were to inquire if Jesus was the Messiah.
- (21) Jesus chose to demonstrate His Messiahship instead of vocalize it. The three categories of illnesses were disease, plagues, and evil spirits. Blindness was also healed.
- (22,23) Jesus charged the disciples of John to report the things that they had seen and heard. This verse indicates other possible resurrections besides the ones previously mentioned (Jn. 21:25). The climax of Jesus' summation is that the gospel is preached to the poor. Blessings come to those who are not put off by the true mission of Christ.
- (24,25) Jesus has some things to say concerning John. Jesus is characterizing John as the opposite of a reed shaken in the wind. He would not be blown about by "changing winds of doctrine;" he was a spiritual oak. John was not a soft man but rather a rough man (Mt. 3:4). He chose to work in the hard places.
- (26,27) Whatever anyone might say of John, he was first and foremost a prophet – a forthteller. Jesus ranked John above the prophets. John was the special messenger and forerunner of Jesus (Mal. 3:1).
- (28) There was none greater than John, his relative position to Jesus, elevated him above all others. However, it is possible for the least in the Kingdom to exceed John. Remember that John was not in the Kingdom (church) so he could not attain the greatness of the least member of the kingdom.
- (29) The people perceived, confessed, and declared God's justice. Had they previously been baptized? Or were they baptized after Jesus' speech?
- (30) The Pharisees and lawyers rejected God and refused the baptism of John.
- (31) What are these men like?
- (32) They were playing games like children. First, the game was a wedding feast, but some refused to play, then they played funeral procession and others refused to play.
- (33) Jesus applies the previous example to John and himself. John was ascetic; they hated him for it and called him demon possessed.
- (34) Now Jesus comes living a life similar to the Jews. This mode of living did not suit them either.
- (35) They were as unreasonable as a group of children.

## **53. Jesus Upbraids Cities of Galilee (Mt. 11:20-30)**

- (20) Jesus is upset with the people of the cities where he had performed the most miracles. Since we have no record of miracles being performed in these two cities it is obvious that we do not have the complete record.
- (21) This is an exclamation of pity more than anger. Chorozin was two miles north of Capernaum and Bethsaida was a suburb of Capernaum. Tyre and Sidon were cities of Phoenicia noted for their impiety. History shows us that the pagan cities eventually accepted Christ while cities such as Tiberias (near Capernaum) became all the more entrenched in Judaism. Sackcloth was a material made from camel's hair and was used to make bags and mourning clothes. The symbol is that these cities would have repented thoroughly.
- (22) Tyre and Sidon were wicked cities, but better in proportion to their opportunities than the Galilean cities.

- (23,24) Capernaum was also in jeopardy. Today the city does not exist. Now we have seen four great truths taught in these verses. 1- Every hearer of the gospel is left either more blessed or more wretched. 2- The miracles of Jesus were performed to lead men to repentance, by demonstrating His authority. 3- There might be degrees of punishment in the after life. 4- God takes into account our opportunities when He measures our guiltiness. See also Mt. 5:21,22; 10:15; Lk. 11:47,48; Jn. 9:41; 15:22-24; Rom. 2:12.
- Note: Capernaum had been exalted because Jesus had picked it as His headquarters. In less than 30 years these cities were destroyed. Sin will destroy cities and nations. Any temporal prosperity of a semi-permanent nature depends upon the righteousness of its inhabitants.
- (25) This time of displeasure brought the following prayer to the mind of Jesus. The gospel had been rejected by the wise and understanding (the selfish, shrewd, scribes and Pharisees). The pure and childlike were the apostles and disciples. How had things been hidden from the "wise?" Through the natural operation of their own corrupted and perverted minds. The "babes" had a more teachable and moral condition.
- (26) Jesus reiterates His thoughts of verse 25.
- (27) Jesus was entrusted with all things needed for the full execution of His office. The glorification of Jesus would be the climax of His investiture of power. (Mt. 28:18; Col. 1:16-19; Heb. 1:8). This authority will be eventually returned (1 Cor. 15:28). Five more great truths: 1- We cannot know Jesus completely as His nature is beyond our comprehension. 2- The only correct knowledge we have concerning deity has come through revelation. 3- The revelation of the Father was begun by Jesus and will not be completed until the after-time. 4- The relationship described in these verses is an assertion of the divinity of Christ. 5- Christ has His power because He is the Christ.
- (28-30) The reasons we should come to Jesus have just been discussed: His nature and His knowledge (which He is willing to share). This labor and rest refers to our souls. Sin imposes a heavy burden; forgiveness of sins provides a rest. A side effect of getting yourself together spiritually is that physical burdens are often relieved. The meekness and lowliness of Jesus makes Him an easier taskmaster. To "take the yoke" means to submit and become a disciple. The yoke is a symbol of servitude. (Jer. 26:3; Isa. 9:4; Acts 15:10; Gal. 5:1; 1 Tim. 6:1.)

#### **54. Our Lord Dines With Simon (Lk. 7:36-50)**

- (36) This account is not to be confused with Mt. 26:6-13; Mk. 14:3-9 and Jn. 12:1-8. Simon was a very common name; the NT mentions nine different men with that name. The Jews had taken up the Greek custom of reclining to eat. The motives of Simon are somewhat similar to Nicodemus, namely, curiosity. We will see that Simon does not provide Jesus with the ordinary courtesies usually paid to an honored guest. Why?
- (37) Some have held that this woman was Mary Magdalene but the evidence does not bear this out. (See Lk. 8:2) Ointment of this type was used by NT people as a cologne or perfume. The vases used to carry the perfume were generically called alabasters whether made of that material or not.
- (38) Jesus is reclining on a couch on His left elbow. The woman stood at His feet. His sandals would have been removed and left at the door. Her weeping caused tears to fall on Jesus' feet - she kissed them and wiped them with her hair - then anointed them with ointment.
- (39) Simon was thinking Jesus might not be a prophet if He could not foresee that this woman was a sinner. If she were a sinner, then the Pharisee tradition would call for Her to be repelled. Simon's conclusion: Jesus had neither knowledge nor holiness, therefore He was not a prophet. Actually, Jesus was condescending Himself just to sit with the Pharisee, much less contact the sinful woman.

- (40) Jesus read Simon's thoughts. Jesus will now answer the doubts Simon has kept within his own mind.
- (41) Jesus uses a story to illustrate His point. Jesus is discussing two debts; one ten times greater than the other does. In terms of their currency, we are talking about the difference between 500 days wages and 50 days wages.
- (42) Who do the principles of this parable represent? The case of Simon was equally hopeless to that of the woman even though she was ten times more sinful. Jesus would be willing to forgive both sinners, but will choose one as we shall see. Notice Jesus' question that causes the Pharisee to convict himself, compare this passage to Lk. 10:36,37; Mt. 21:40,41.
- (43) Notice the noncommittal tone of Simon's answer. Jesus emphatically affirms the truthfulness of Simon's answer.
- (44) Simon will have to contrast the woman's actions to his own. Point 1 - Washing of the feet was a necessity to keep from soiling the home of the host. Simon offered no water while the woman offered her tears.
- (45) Point 2 - A kiss is the ordinary greeting of respect in the Oriental countries. The host omitted even the least familiar kiss on the hand, while the woman administered a kiss that was humble even by Oriental standards.
- (46) Point 3 - An honored guest was usually anointed with oil on the head but Simon neglected this tradition. It was seen as an extreme honor to have one's feet anointed. Note: Ointment was more valuable than oil.
- (47) By coming to Jesus, the woman demonstrated by her contrite heart that she knew she needed a Savior. Simon's attitude demonstrated that he did not have a contrite heart.
- (48) Jesus spoke her sins forgiven.
- (49) Those at the table were surprised at this assumption of authority. They did not express their thoughts aloud however.
- (50) The forgiveness of the woman's sins is attributed to her faith.

#### Four Lessons

- 1- Our sense of our own guilt may differ, but regardless, we are all unable to atone for our own sins.
- 2- Sin is against Christ; therefore He has the right and power to forgive sin.
- 3- Those that do not have the flagrant and open sins should also be conscience of their need of forgiveness.
- 4- Those brought back from the deepest depths are often the most appreciative. However, to say that sin produces love or that much sin produces much love is not in accordance with scripture. "Should we sin more that grace may abound?" God forbid!

### **55. Women Who Ministered to Christ (Lk. 8:1-3)**

- (1) Not long after the events of Luke 7, Jesus continued touring Galilee. His purpose for making this circuit was to preach and bring good tidings concerning the kingdom.
- (2) See also Lk. 23:55; 24:10; Mt. 27:56; and Mk. 15:40. Jesus cast out seven demons from Mary Magdalene (Mk. 16:9).
- (3) Joanna was the wife of Herod's Steward (administrator or superintendent). These women spent their own money and gave of their own goods to see to it that Christ was ministered to. It is thought that Chuzas, Joanna's husband is the nobleman of Jn. 4:46,47 and if so, that would explain her devotion to the Lord.

### **56. Concerning Blasphemy (Mk. 3:19-30) [Mt. 12:22-37; Lk. 11:14-23]**

- (19) Whose house is not known?

- (20) There were so many people following Jesus now that He and the apostles could not take a common meal together without interruption.
- (21) It appears from verse 31 that these friends are His brothers. They felt that Jesus had become fanatical, carried away with religious enthusiasm. They felt that He had no regard for His own safety. Even Mary sympathized with her sons, even though her faith was fuller.
- From Mt. 12:22,23 we see that Jesus is once again casting out demons. The multitudes are once again amazed. The power of this miracle was more than evident since a demon was cast out and the victim's speech and sight was restored.
- (22) The enemies of Jesus are from Jerusalem - the scribes and Pharisees (Mt. 12:24). They accuse Jesus of casting out demons by the power of Satan. It is unknown how Satan came to be called Beelzebub in Jewish history. Notice that they did not deny the miracle, only the power behind it.
- (23) Jesus chooses to use parables to reply to these accusers. His main theme is "How can Satan cast out Satan?"
- (24) The thrust of the Pharisees' argument destroyed the very power that Satan wanted to possess - a triumph over a living man. Jesus' explanation then is that Satan would not destroy what already belonged to his own kingdom.
- (25) Here is a similar illustration.
- (26) From these arguments we see that Jesus professes the following truths: 1- The powers of evil are organized into a kingdom with Satan as its head and 2- Division leads to destruction.
- Two more arguments are gleaned from the Lk. 11:18-20 passage: 1- If there are those among the Pharisees claiming to cast out demons, then by whose power are they doing it? And 2- Jesus argues that if He is not casting out demons by Satan's power, then He must be using God's power.
- (27) One final argument: Jesus had entered the house of Satan and robbed him of his possessions (the demoniac), therefore, Jesus had the power to bind Satan.
- (28) These men had committed the sin of blasphemy against the Holy Spirit.
- (29) If one rejects the Holy Spirit and instead attributes that evidence to Satan, then he has no basis for faith in God and without faith in God there can be no forgiveness.
- (30) The Jews committed this sin when they said Jesus had an unclean spirit. That is, His works were due to a satanic influence. It would be impossible for us to call God - Satan or the Holy Spirit - a demon unless our state of sin was beyond reform.
- Other notes from Mt. 12:33-37
- (33) Either Jesus is an evil tree or He is a good tree. That is, He and His works are evil or He and His works are good.
- (34) Jesus informs these men of the condition of their hearts.
- (35) Summarizes verses 33 and 34.
- (36,37) Notice that Jesus makes "words" as a basis for judgment. Other scriptures show "works" as the basis for judgment (Rom. 2:6; 2 Cor. 5:10). Elsewhere "faith" is said to be the basis for judgment (Rom. 3:28). The bottom line is that faith will finally be based upon one's character. Our character is formed by faith. Our works and words are measures of our character.

## 57. Sign Seekers (Mt. 12:38-45) [Lk. 11:24-36]

- (38) Did the Pharisees want just a miracle? They probably wanted a sign from heaven showing Jesus as the chosen one. Other prophets and leaders had been given such signs (Ex. 9:22-24; 1 Sam. 7:9,10; 1 Ki. 18:36-38). Compare this verse to Jn. 2:18 and the wilderness temptations.

- (39) Jesus is representing Israel as being an adulteress in the spiritual sense. That is, married to God but untrue to Him. (See Ex. 34:15; Jer. 3:14,20.) The only sign that these Pharisees would see would be the sign of Jonah. How was Jonah shown to be a true prophet? How would Jesus be shown in like manner?
- (40) According to Jewish reckoning, Jesus was in the grave three days. "Whale" (KJV) would be better translated "great fish." The phrase "heart of the earth" simply means buried in the ground.
- (41) Those of Nineveh changed their way of living and began to follow a course of life prescribed by Jonah's preaching. In Jewish courts were required to stand when giving testimony. Christ was a greater preacher than Jonah was and Israel knew God better than Nineveh. Nevertheless, Jonah's preaching succeeded with Nineveh while Christ's preaching failed with Israel.
- (42) The queen of Sheba traveled a great distance to listen to Solomon. Jesus brought His wisdom to the Jews and they rejected it.
- (43) When the unclean spirit is out of a man the spirit is like a man in the desert - miserable. He seeks a place to rest.
- (44) The unclean spirit returns to its original resting-place and the place is ripe to be reoccupied.
- (45) The abode is so inviting that the evil spirit finds kindred spirits to help him enjoy this refreshed home. This parable compares two conditions experienced by one man. The comparison is within the existing evil generation. The reference is to the continually increasing wickedness of the Jews.
- From Lk. 11:27,28 we see the following:
- (27) This woman fulfills Mary's prediction of Lk. 1:48. Is the woman suggesting worship of Mary? The woman is simply bragging on the Son by bragging on the mother.
- (28) Jesus does not deny that His mother is blessed, but points out that those who hear God's word and do it are equally, if not more, blessed. Which was more important, Mary's blessedness because she was a disciple or her blessedness because she was the mother of Jesus? (2 Cor. 5:15,16)

#### **58. Christ's Mother and Brethren (Mt. 12:46-50) [Mk. 2:31-35; Lk. 8:19-21]**

- (46) This verse helps show that Jesus had natural brothers.
- (47) The preaching of Jesus was interrupted by a message concerning His mother and brothers. The messenger assumed that the business that Mary had with Jesus was more important than His business with the people. See Mk. 3:21,31.
- (48) Earthly relationships did not take precedence over His spiritual work. Jesus was not subservient to His mother.
- (49,50) Any who do the will of God are counted as brothers, mothers, and relatives of Christ. Do these verses help repudiate the worship of Mary?

#### **59. Dines With a Pharisee (Lk. 11:37-54)**

- (37) The original text shows this meal to be an early meal, such as breakfast.
- (38) Jesus did not follow the tradition of the elders. The Jews at the very least washed their hands before eating.
- (39) Jesus did not object to outward cleansing, only that the inward cleansing was being neglected. As a cleansed body does make a pure heart, fine clothes do not make a noble character.
- (40) If God made both the outward and inward man, then each should be treated equally.
- (41) If you give love, mercy, compassion, etc., these inner gifts will show your true character. The Pharisees believed that they could lawfully use anything no matter how they came to possess it - as long as they gave alms of it.

- (42) The Pharisees were extremely careful in their tithing even down to the herbs in their garden. But while they were careful about these little things they neglected weightier matters such as justice and love of God. Compare to Mt. 23:23.
- (43) The Pharisees loved to be honored by man (Jn. 5:44). They lived to be spoken to in public and envied the best seats in the synagogue.
- (44) The Jews were careful to keep their tombs and graves marked because of Num. 19:16. Jesus says that the Pharisees were like men that touched graves unknowingly, unclean but not aware of it. We see Jesus has pronounced three woes on the Pharisees for three sins: 1- hypocrisy, 2- vainglory and 3- moral corruption.
- (45) The lawyers or interpreters of the Law were usually Pharisees. These lawyers felt Jesus' comments not only condemned them as Pharisees, but also as lawyers.
- (46) Jesus makes sure the lawyers understand that they are condemned. First, he showed them to be hypocrites. They made the law hard for the people to bear but easy for themselves.
- (47) While they say that they honor the prophets, their kind had previously killed them. The lawyers did not condemn their predecessors for killing the prophets.
- (48) You are guilty of the sins of others if you consent to or endorse the crime. Just as their fathers had killed prophets, they would soon have murder on their own minds.
- (49,50) What Jesus says here is not found specifically in any one prophecy, but it is the gist of several prophecies, such as: 2 Chron. 24:19-22; 36:14-16; and Prov. 1:20-33.
- (51) Abel's form of sacrifice pre-figured Christ's. His murder is described in the first historical book while that of Zechariah is described in the last historical book. For Jesus' commentary on this passage, see His parable in Lk. 20:9-16.
- (52) The third woe was pronounced upon the lawyers. The lawyers had taken away the spiritual knowledge of the people by teaching their trifles, hobbies, traditions, etc. and ignoring the contents of the books of the Law. Not only did they refuse to study the scripture correctly; they prevented others from studying it also. Compare this to the Catholic Church of the Dark Ages.
- (53,54) The questions now come hot and heavy. They wanted to entrap Jesus. Matthew 22 shows the methods the Pharisees used to attempt to entrap the Lord.

**60. Discourses on Preparedness, Covetousness, Hypocrisy, and His Sufferings (Lk. 12:1-59)**

This section will be covered under topic # 93.

**61. Repent or Perish, the barren Fig Tree (Lk. 13:1-9)**

This section will be covered under topic # 94.

**62. Parables by the Sea (Mt. 13:1-52) [Mk. 4:1-34; Lk. 8:4-18]**

**Introduction to Parables**

Definition: To put one thing alongside another for the purpose of comparison.

Purpose: To take some situation from everyday life and place it beside a spiritual truth in order for the listener to better understand the spiritual truth.

How to Understand a Parable of Jesus:

- Ø Generally a parable contains only one main point.
- Ø Our understanding must agree with the scriptural explanation, summation, or context.
- Ø If the meaning is obscure, the interpretation cannot be a contradiction of other scripture.

- (1) Verses 1 and 2 constitute an introduction leading us to believe that the events of Chapter 12 caused Jesus to begin to teach in parables.
- (2) The presence of such a large crowd caused Jesus to use a boat as a podium.

- (3) **The Parable of the Sower.** The ancient farmer broadcast the seed by hand, scattering it across the field.
- (4) Some seed would inevitably fall on the well-trodden paths surrounding and running through the tilled fields. The seed would be unable to penetrate this hard-packed soil, so it would be "easy pickings" for the birds.
- (5,6) The stony ground had a thin layer of soil over an underlayment of rock. The seed can germinate here, but it cannot take root. Rootless plants spring up quickly, then die under the heat of the sun.
- (7) Among the thorn bushes, the seeds would have to compete for sunlight, nutrients, and water. The stronger, hardier thorn bushes would choke out the new growth.
- (8) The properly prepared soil will bring forth an abundant harvest.
- (9) If the people were to learn the lessons of the parables they must listen and ponder them carefully. Beyond that, this phrase is a call to obedience. Jesus expects a response.
- (10) **The Purpose of Parables.** The disciples were unsure of the parable's meaning (Mk. 4:10) and were wondering why Jesus chose this method of teaching.
- (11) The disciples had direct access to revelation via the Holy Spirit and Christ. The multitudes do not have this access. Jesus' intent was not to conceal truth, but to make it more understandable by engaging their interest and imaginations.
- (12) Resisting the revelation of God will cause its possession to be lost. (Heb. 6:4-8; 2 Pet. 2:20-22) Being receptive to the truth will bring increased blessings. (Mt. 5:3-12; Prov. 1:5; 9:9)
- (13) The majority of Christ's listeners were Jews. They thought they were in possession of the truth, but actually they had no clue as to the nature of the kingdom.
- (14) Isa. 6:9,10 shows Isaiah prophesying of this very situation, not only among his own people - but as Jesus points out here - among the generation of the first century as well.
- (15) The minds of the people were sluggish. It is their own spiritual ignorance that has caused them to fulfill Isaiah's prophecy.
- (16,17) Here Jesus contrasts the minds of the disciples with the minds of the multitude. Note, as we study the parables in this chapter, these two groups of people are always in view. The disciples were privileged to participate in the coming of the Messianic Kingdom (Heb. 11:39,40; 1 Pet. 1:10,12).
- (18) The parable of the sower explains why the same Gospel produces different results in different hearers. When the Gospel is not received, it is the fault of the ground, not the seed. Jesus names His parable. His primary thrust seems to be aimed at the sower, namely for the sower to keep on sowing and let the results determine the soil. This parable would later stand as an encouragement to the Apostles when they were given the limited and great commissions.
- (19) The seed is the Gospel (Mk. 3:14; Lk. 8:11). The wayside soil represents a closed-minded individual (Eph. 4:18). The devil uses various means to prevent the Word from penetrating this hearer's heart (Col. 2:8; Eph. 4:17-19).
- (20,21) The stony soil represents the hearer who will not finish what he starts. His response is temporary because it is strictly emotion based. Tribulation, persecution and hypocrisy are just the excuses this type of hearer needs to quit the kingdom.
- (22) The world and its cares are the spiritual enemies of this hearer. Anxiety and greed add up to a surefire spiritual crop-killer. The devil brings a four-pronged attack against the Seed: 1-stop the sower, 2-harden the ground, 3-cause tribulation and persecution, and 4-never give up.
- (23) The good soil represents the hearer that welcomes the Word (Mk. 4:20) and obeys it (Lk. 8:15). This hearer's understanding must move beyond mental assent. Good ground will not always yield a consistently good crop, but it will yield a crop. Which soil describes you?
- (24-26) **The Parable of the Tares.** Many Jews were expecting the New Kingdom to come via a miraculous overthrow of the Roman government. This parable teaches that patience will be needed while waiting for the ultimate results of the kingdom to come. In the meantime those of the kingdom will coexist with those of the devil. The phrase "is 50

- likened unto" compares what the kingdom will be like with the parable as a whole. "Tares" probably referred to the weed dandelion, which looks like wheat in its early stages of growth. It was a crime under Roman law to introduce dandelion into someone's field.
- (27-28a) The farmhands wonder where these weeds came from? The owner knows that he planted only good seed, so he immediately realizes that these weeds are the work of an enemy.
- (28b-29) To pull up the weeds prior to the harvest could very well damage the wheat crop. The root systems of the two plants would be intermingled, thus making them hard to separate.
- (30) At harvest time the weeds would be gathered and burned, while the wheat would be stored up.
- (31-32) **The Parable of the Mustard Seed.** This parable along with the next one emphasizes the growth of the kingdom. While the black mustard seed is indeed one of the smallest in the plant kingdom, its resultant (a tree up to ten feet high) is large enough for the nests of birds. The small beginnings of the kingdom would result in unbelievable growth.
- (33) **The Parable of the Leaven.** Three measures of leavened meal would produce enough bread for several days. Often leaven is used in the Bible as an example of an evil influence (Mt. 16:6,11; 1 Cor. 5:7) but here it is used to show how a small agent can unleash a great power. This parable and its predecessor indicate that the beginnings of the kingdom will start with a small source - a source so unexpected that its result would be beyond human comprehension.
- (34,35) **The parables fulfilled prophecy.** Psalms 78:2 predicted that the Messiah would use parables in His teaching. It is clear from v. 35 that parables were meant to reveal the kingdom and not conceal it.
- (36) Now Jesus sends the multitude away, goes back inside the house (v. 1) and answers the disciples' questions concerning the parable of the tares.
- (37-39) In these verses Jesus defines the terms used in the parable. The sower is Jesus. The field is the population of the world, not the church as some teach. The field cannot be the church for at least three reasons. 1-It would contradict Christ's explanation. 2-A congregation could not obey v. 30 without violating Mt. 18:15-17. 3-If the field represents the church then the wicked children of the devil are in the kingdom. The good seed are the righteous and the tares are the children of the devil. The harvest is the judgment day (Jer. 51:33; Joel 3:13). The reapers are God's angels (Mt. 16:27; 24:31).
- (40-43) The wicked are allowed to exist side-by-side with the righteous here on earth. Sometimes it is hard for man to distinguish between the righteous and the unrighteous, but God will cull out the wicked at the judgment day and cast them into a place of "unrelieved torture, lamentation, and agony." The phrase "gnashing of teeth" occurs only once outside of Matthew's Gospel (Lk. 13:38).
- (44) **The Parable of the Treasure in the Field.** The next two parables emphasize the value of God's kingdom. In the ancient world, burying one's wealth was one of the safest methods of protecting and retaining it. If someone were to find a hidden treasure he would be willing to go to any extreme to possess it. The point of the parable is that if something is truly precious it should be sought out and obtained at any price without any consideration as to the sacrifice. (Mt. 6:33; 16:24; Lk. 14:33; Phil. 3:5-8) The man in this parable realized that his potential gain would more than make up for his loss.
- (45,46) **The Parable of the Pearl.** Jesus makes exactly the same point again. To set aside the things of this world is nothing compared to the possession of Christ. It is possible that the Treasure parable refers to the Gentiles and the Pearl parable refers to the Jews. Why?
- (47) **The Parable of the Net.** This parable once again brings to mind the sorting process that will take place at judgment. The net referred to here is a large seine drawn between two boats. The phrase "every kind" means every race. A reminder that the "Gospel is for all!"
- (48) Here the sorting takes place. The good fish are kept and the bad fish are thrown away.

- (49-50) As long as the net is in the water all of the fish remain together, but once the net is removed then the sorting begins.
- (51) **Exhortation.** Jesus asks the disciples if they now understand? They actually give themselves a little too much credit because they will once again misunderstand a parable in Mt. 15:15-16.
- (52) Christ does not dispute their answer but uses an illustration to explain their responsibility. The true disciple must be able to help others understand what the disciples already understand by being able to teach the Gospel (new) as a fulfillment of the prophets (old). See 1 Jn. 2:7,8. Matthew may very well have viewed his own role as a "scribe which is instructed unto the kingdom of heaven."

### 63. **Stilling the Tempest (Mt. 8:18,23-27) [Mk. 4:35-40; Lk. 8:22-25]**

- (18) Jesus decides to temporarily escape the crowds so he commanded the disciples to secure a ship and sail them all to the other side of the Sea of Galilee.
- (23) After a short delay (vv.19-22) Jesus and the disciples board a fairly large ship (lake going vessel) and depart.
- (24) The geography around the Sea of Galilee makes it prone to violent evening storms. The boat was being swamped by the fury of the wind and waves. In direct contrast to both the turbulence of the weather and the fear of the disciples, Jesus slept. The ability to sleep under these circumstances is indicative of His weariness and His faith in His Father's care.
- (25) The disciples are convinced that their survival is at stake. Remember, there were those among the disciples that fished the Sea for a living and would be familiar with the storms that raged there from time to time.
- (26) Jesus awakens and immediately rebukes the disciples and then the storm. He actually accuses the disciples of cowardice based on their inadequate faith. If they truly believed every word that their Savior spoke, then they would have known that they would make it to the other side safely (v. 18 - See Chumbley p. 162). After rebuking the disciples, Jesus calmed the storm. The weather went from a rage to perfect stillness in an instant.
- (27) No body of water behaved in this manner. The disciples realized that the Sea answered only to God (Ps. 107:23-31). Next time He stills a storm (Mt. 14:33) the disciples will display an obvious growth in their faith.

### 64. **Jesus Heals the Demoniacs (Mt. 8:28-34) [Mk. 5:1-20; Lk. 8:26-39]**

- (28) Upon arriving on the other side Jesus performs an exorcism near the village of Gergasa in the district of Gadara. Immediately two men approached Jesus, possessed by many demons. These men were so savage and fierce that people were afraid to travel near the cemetery where they lived (Mk. 5:9).
- (29) These demons did not want Jesus interfering with their possession of these men. They claimed that the time of their dispossession had not yet come. They knew who Jesus was and that His arrival spelled their doom to torment.
- (30) Mark indicates that the nearby swine herd numbered 2000. This has led many scholars to believe that "Legion" was a possession of at least 2000 demons.
- (31) While the reason why the demons asked to be released into the swineherd is not explained, it probably was a tactic to delay their imminent consignment to torment.
- (32) Christ complies with their request. Their respite is short-lived however as the swine herd immediately commits suicide. Critics have said that this incident points out two character flaws in Jesus, an inhumanity towards animals and disrespect for private property. The stampede did prove that the demons really did transfer from the men into the swine thereby proving that NT demon possession is not a psychosomatic illness as some liberal theologians suggest.

(33,34) Upon hearing of Jesus' accomplishments, the entire city asks Him to leave - because they feared Him. The power exhibited by Jesus was just too much for their uneducated minds to comprehend. They understood the demon possession and stayed away from the tombs, but they obviously did not understand Jesus. While Jesus complies with their request, He leaves the two men as His witnesses. (Mk. 5:18-20) Jesus will visit the area again (Mt. 15:30).

**65. Jesus returns To His Own City - Capernaum (Mt. 9:1) [Mk. 5:21; Lk. 8:40]**

(1) See Chumbley p. 168. Leaving the country of the Gergesenes, He returned by boat to Capernaum.

**66. Levi's Feast - Concerning Fasting (Mt. 9:10-17) [Mk. 2:15-22; Lk. 5:29-39]**

- (10) Matthew hosts a reception for Jesus in his home (Lk. 5:29). Among the guests were the disciples, Matthew's colleagues and other so-called sinners. So-called by the Jews for various reasons.
- (11) The Jews believed a rabbi could teach sinners, but not eat with them. Having social intercourse would be seen as endorsing their sins. The fact that they approached the disciples with their accusations shows their true cowardice.
- (12) Jesus replies to their accusation with this rejoinder: The physically sick need a doctor, while the sinners need a spiritual physician. The chance of becoming physically unclean is set aside when the great Physician is at work.
- (13) The Pharisees obviously had no clue as to the meaning of Hos. 6:6 - "I will have mercy, and not sacrifice." Christ was not willing that any should perish in their sins. Jesus was willing to go where the sin was; taking the Good News to where it was needed most - among the sinners.
- (14) The disciples of John also had a question concerning Jesus' failure to fast or have his disciples fast. Fasting was a private matter, but the Pharisees had imposed it on all who would be religious (Lk. 18:12). (See notes on the Sermon on the Mount concerning fasting.)
- (15) Jesus presents His answer in the form of three analogies. 1- For the disciples to fast in Jesus' presence would be no more appropriate than imposing a fast at a wedding. Here Jesus represents Himself as the groom. As long as the groom is among the guests fasting is inappropriate. When the groom is gone, then the time for fasting will be upon the disciples (Jn. 16:5,6).
- (16,17) 2- An old garment cannot be properly patched with new cloth. 3- New wine belongs in a new bottle, as old bottles are brittle, cracked, and contain the dregs of the old wine that would hasten the fermentation of the new wine. Luke includes a fourth analogy concerning the preference of old wine to new (Lk. 5:39). This fourth analogy refutes the argument that Jesus is contrasting the New Law to the Old Law. Jesus' point is simply this: Sometimes fasting is not appropriate. If the situation does not call for it - then why do it? It has always been man's tendency to elevate the less important (sacrifice, v. 13) over the most important (mercy). The only value in fasting (or praying, singing, communing, etc) is if the circumstances demand it and it is in keeping with the teaching of Mt. 6:16-18. Fasting for its own sake is spiritually worthless!

**67. Jairus' Daughter and An Invalid Woman (Mt. 9:18-34) [Mk. 5:32-43; Lk. 8:41-46]**

(18) This section includes the third set of miracles recorded by Matthew. Jesus will perform a miracle that assures, to all that believe, His claim of authority in verse 2. Jesus' conversation with John's disciples is interrupted by Jarius, a ruler of the synagogue (Mk. 5:22). As ruler, he was responsible for maintaining order during meetings, dealing with disturbances, and

assigning duties to those participating in the services. For him to seek help from Jesus at this point in time shows his desperation. This situation was hopeless from a human viewpoint - the girl was dead.

- (19) To demonstrate "mercy" Jesus immediately quits His discussion with the disciples of the Baptist and follows Jairus.
- (20,21) On the way Jesus encounters a woman suffering from a menstrual disorder. She believed even the slightest contact with Jesus would heal her. It was because of her uncleanness that she decided to approach Jesus in a stealthy manner.
- (22) Christ would not let her approach unnoticed. This is the only recorded use of the endearment "daughter." He draws attention to her to show her faith to those in the company. Her disorder was relieved within the hour. No one has ever exhibited the empathetic powers of Jesus Christ. His ability to distinguish between a touch of faith, a touch of curiosity or a touch of hostility speaks to this sensitivity (Mk. 5:30,31; Heb. 4:15)
- (23) When Jesus reached the ruler's house, the professional mourners were already busy. The Jews did not embalm their dead, so they held their funerals and burials within the hour if possible.
- (24) Jesus dismissed the mourners and incurred their derision. They misunderstood His comment concerning the girl's death. To Jesus, her death was not permanent (Lk. 8:49). People even today deride the diagnosis of the Great Physician for the very same reasons - ignorance and lack of faith.
- (25) The unbelievers are shown out the door and the girl is resurrected.
- (26) The news of this miracle spread throughout the country. Jesus Christ solves man's ultimate problem (death).
- (27) Isaiah foretold of a day when the blind would be healed. Here we see that day arriving during the ministry of Jesus. The two blind men are seeking mercy and obviously regard Jesus as the Messiah (Son of David).
- (28) Instead of healing them immediately, he takes them inside a house and challenges their faith - "Do you believe I can do this?" Their answer - "yes Lord."
- (29) Jesus chose to heal these blind men because of their faith, however, it was not the level of their faith that healed them, it was God's will (Heb. 2:4). Jesus performed miracles to strengthen faith (Mk. 9:22-25); in the presence of defective faith (Mt. 14:31); and in the absence of faith (Lk. 22:49-51).
- (30) Their sight is restored immediately. Jesus strongly charges them not to disclose the miracle. Why would Jesus want this miracle kept quiet? John 6 explains that miracles often did more to attract crowds and curiosity than to convert hearts to a life changing faith.
- (31) The blind men did not keep quiet. Now, why do we who are charged with spreading the Word often keep quiet?
- (32,33a) A demon-possessed man was brought before Jesus. The demon held the man speechless. The release of the demon frees the man's tongue.
- (33b,34) Note the contrast in the reactions to the miracle. While the multitudes marveled, the Pharisees attribute Jesus' power to Satan. This was a charge made in desperation.

## **68. Rejection at Nazareth (Mt. 13:53-58) [Mk. 6:1-6; Lk. 4:15-30]**

- (53,54) The polarization of opinion concerning Jesus escalates. Upon finishing His parables He returns to His home country. He had visited earlier (Lk. 4:16-30) but left after an attempt on His life. His teaching in the synagogue caused people to reflect on His wisdom and miracles. Where could He have acquired such insight and power?
- (55,56) Christ's fame did not meet the expectations of His home-folks. He came from an ordinary family. His father had an ordinary occupation. His brothers and sisters lived locally and showed no signs of unusual gifts. His background and training were not of a theological nature. "Where did He get all this?"

- (57) The Nazarenes understood none of what they saw or heard (Mt. 13:13-15). They refused to accept the facts at their face value. Why would the home-folks reject Jesus as the Christ? 1- Familiarity breeds contempt. 2- True prophets bore bad tidings as well as good, because they dealt in truth.
- (58) Because they refused to believe, the Nazarenes lost out on many blessings that could have come their way. Deciding that further miracles were useless, Jesus leaves home for the last time before His death.

**69. Jesus Followed by the Multitudes, Taught in Villages, Sends Out the Twelve (Mt. 9:35-11.1) [Mk. 6:7-13; Lk. 9:1-6]**

**CHAPTER NINE**

- (35) **Summation** - This verse is almost identical to Mt. 4:23. Jesus embarks upon a comprehensive ministry throughout Galilee. The threefold nature of Christ's work can be seen in "teaching, preaching, and healing."
- (36) **The Twelve Commissioned** - The time has come for Christ to prepare His work so it may continue after His departure. He selects twelve men to a special apostleship. These men would learn at His feet and then be sent out with power and authority. Jesus is disheartened at the terrible tribulation the people were under. The Greek wording indicates He was "sick to His stomach" over the people's plight. They had no shepherd because their leaders were incompetent and spiritually negligent.
- (37) While many good hearts existed among the people, there were no teachers available to take advantage of them.
- (38) Jesus asks for the prayers of the disciples. Pray for harvesters. To begin a spiritual harvest without God's blessing would be folly.

**CHAPTER TEN**

- (1) **The Apostles Named** - Jesus follows through on His promise to make some disciples "fishers of men" (Mt. 4:18ff). Jesus responds to the need for laborers by sending out 12 men with powers to heal and cast out evil spirits.
- (2-4) An Apostle is "one sent out on a mission." This is one of four lists of the Apostles found in the Gospels. (Review point #48 to remind us who these men were.) The listing here shows that the Apostles were sent out in pairs. The outstanding characteristic of this group was that they were just ordinary men chosen to do extraordinary work.
- (5) **The Limited Commission** - The Apostles are sent only to the Jews (Acts 3:26; 13:46; Rom. 1:16).
- (6) The very people Jesus referred to as "fainting and scattered" (9:36) are now said to be "lost." The phrase depicts their spiritual state.
- (7,8) **Their Message** - "The Kingdom of Heaven is at hand." Where have we heard this before? Their supernatural powers were to be used to confirm their message. They were not to charge for their services.
- (9,10) **How They Were To Go** - They were to travel light. There were to take no money, luggage, spare clothes, shoes, or a walking staff. Those that received their message would provide their needs. While this passage by no means sets down rules for the traveling preacher today, he should not be held back by "excess baggage."
- (11) **Where They Were To Stay** - They were to find a worthy family in each town and stay with them while in the area. The family's worthiness was probably measured by their open-mindedness, not necessarily their initial commitment to the cause.

- (12-14) **How They Were To Behave** - They were to be gracious guests. When they were accepted they were to bless that household and community. If they were rejected, they were to "shake the dust off their feet." This represents a dramatic gesture of repudiation (2 Jn. 10-11).
- (15) The seriousness of a city rejecting the Gospel is seen here. To fare worse in judgment than Sodom and Gomorrah is a fate beyond comprehension.
- (16) Jesus warns them of the rejection that they might encounter, not only now, but also under the Great Commission (Mt. 28:19). The twelve were sent to sheep as sheep in and among the wolves. Opposition would come from the Jews, the government and their own families. The disposition of the Twelve must exhibit a wariness and innocence - at the same time.
- (17) Jesus warned them of open hostility. They would be handed over to religious councils where they would be beaten with up to forty lashes at a time.
- (18) They would not be safe from Gentile persecution. Examples in the NT include Peter and John before the Sanhedrin and Paul before Felix, Festus, and Agrippa. When they were charged the Apostles were to use the opportunity to bear witness of Christ.
- (19,20) The Apostles did not need to be seasoned public speakers. The Holy Spirit would provide the words they needed to impart the message (1 Cor. 2:1-5).
- (21) Family strife and religious persecution would disrupt the work of the Apostles. Families would turn against one another because of the Gospel.
- (22) The Apostles must not be tempted to avoid doing their duty because of this hatred and strife. Jesus expected His messengers to hold on to the end (Heb. 11:35ff, Rev. 2:10; 12:11).
- (23) Persecution was to be the signal for the Apostles to withdraw. Their message of "the Kingdom coming" would be followed very soon by "the Kingdom is here." It was imperative that their message be spread among all Israel before the Pentecost of Acts 2.
- (24,25) **Motives To Endurance** - If your master or Lord (boss) endures a hardship, then you should endure that same hardship. When we suffer as disciples we need to compare our suffering to Christ's and see that we have no right to complain.
- (26,27) The Gospel will be revealed by the disciples. It would be futile for them to attempt to conceal their faith, because the light of truth cannot be hidden.
- (28) Those that can kill the physical body are not to be feared. The word "destroy" here means, "bring to ruin." Therefore the sense of the verse is that the soul can be brought to ruin by someone and that person deserves to be feared. Hell lies beyond the final judgment due to the statement "body and soul in Hell." It cannot refer to Hades, the resting-place of the disembodied spirits.
- (29-31) Another motive to endure is that God extends His protection to the innocent. We are more valuable to God than the sparrows and He watches over them; how much more is His concern for us?
- (32,33) The final motive to endure is the support Jesus will lend to His disciples when under judgment of the Father. Jesus supports His disciples and condemns His detractors.
- (34) **Persecution Intended as a Test** - The violence Jesus describes here is among His disciples and His enemies. Luke 2:14 concerns the peace among believers. The sword here would be raised by the foes of Jesus against His disciples.
- (35,36) It seems that religious quarrels are some of the few quarrels that will actually split families. Abandoning the religion of your ancestors brings shame upon the family. The family members are upset with the "apostate" in direct proportion to their nearness to that individual.
- (37) The test is to see whether the disciples will cling to earthly affiliations rather than spiritual.
- (38) The cross was a symbol of dishonor; being a disciple of Jesus would be viewed similarly. Jesus may also be alluding to possible death as part of discipleship (see v.28).
- (39) The word "life" is used to mean spiritual and physical life. Reread the verse inserting these words in the appropriate places to see the gist of the verse.

- (40) **Kind Treatment of Disciples to be Rewarded** - Now Jesus switches from detailing persecutions to examining the rewards for discipleship. By receiving a Christian, Christ is received; by receiving Christ, the Father is received.
- (41,42) God is honored by acts of kindness performed for His earthly emissaries, whether prophet, righteous man, or child. The reward mentioned here is not necessarily eternal life.

ASIDE: Would Jesus make a good salesman in today's world? Compare His technique of describing His "product" with today's salesman. Today the salesman would paint a wonderful picture of His product and conceal the bad points. Not so, with Jesus!

[The Apostles' Mission and Christ Continues His Travels. (Mk. 6:12,13; Mt. 11:1)]

Mk. 6:12,13 - The message of the Apostles was that men should repent. The anointing with oil outwardly represented the healing that had been done inwardly. The Jews never used oil on a sick person or one that was fasting. The oil was used only after the healing was complete.

Mt. 11:1 - Most commentators believe that Jesus and the disciples labored separately for a time.

## 70. **Herod Antipas Supposes Jesus to be John (Mt. 14:1-12) [Mk. 6:14-29; Lk. 9:7-9]**

- (1) Antipas controlled Galilee and the land beyond Jordan. Each of the rulers of the divided kingdom is referred to as a tetrarch, which means ruler of a fourth. (See McGarvey p. 128.)
- (2) Read Luke 9:7-9. Antipas adopted this view. Herod believed that Jesus was literally John the Baptist risen from the dead. According to superstition, the dead were empowered with superhuman abilities and Herod believed John was now using these powers.
- (3) Matthew now relates the circumstances surrounding the death of John. The imprisonment of John had been previously mentioned (4:12), but not the cause of it. Here we will examine the cause and the outcome of John's imprisonment.
- (4) Herod was living in adultery with his brother's wife, who was also his niece. John had rebuked Herod for this and was immediately put into prison.
- (5) Herodias would have John killed, but his popularity among the people restrained Herod from executing John. (See Mk. 6:19,20.) The violence, which Herod feared would have occurred except for one thing, we will examine later.
- (6-8) (Mk. 6:24) When the daughter obtained the promise from her stepfather, she consulted with her mother to help select the prize.
- (9,10) The King knew he had made a mistake when the request was made. However, "his oath" and peer pressure won out over his personal feelings. Did the King imagine any such request when he made his promise?
- (11) The commission of this crime gave Herod and Herodias an infamous reputation that the world would have never given them for the sin of adultery. Their loss of standing in the world's eyes is the fruit of their revenge against John.
- (12) The disciples of John sought Jesus as a leader as well as for spiritual reasons. They were ready to revolt and establish Jesus as King. (Jn. 6:1,2,15).

## THE FOURFOLD GOSPEL - THE LIFE OF CHRIST

### PART SEVEN: SEASON OF RETIREMENT INTO DISTRICTS AROUND GALILEE

#### 71. First Withdrawal From Herod's Territory and Return

- a. Return of the twelve and retirement beyond the sea (Mt. 14:13)  
[Mk. 6:30-32; Lk. 9:10; Jn. 6:1]
  - (13) (See Mk. 6:30-32) The disciples return and report to Jesus. The eastern shore of the Sea was thinly settled and made a good place for Jesus and the disciples to rest. When Jesus heard about John's death, He withdrew Himself so that He would not be put up as the leader of a revolt.
- b. Feeding the five thousand (Mt. 14:13-21) [Mk. 6:33; Lk. 9:11-17; Jn. 6:2-14]
  - (13) This miracle marks the height of Jesus' popularity and may account for the fact that it is the only miracle of Christ recorded by all of the Gospel writers.
  - (14) The people followed Jesus and the disciples across the lake. Jesus was not upset at the multitude but instead showed compassion on them by healing their sick.
  - (15) In the late afternoon the disciples realize that the multitude has no way of being fed and they urge Jesus to dismiss them so that they might go to nearby villages and acquire food.
  - (16,17) Jesus rejects the disciples suggestion and directs the disciples to feed the multitude (see Jn. 6:6). The disciples were not as perceptive as they thought; they should have known what to do. Despite their constant companionship with Jesus and their witness of His mighty works, they never thought about using the power of God to feed the 5000 with from a boy's lunch pail.
  - (18,19) Jesus takes control of the situation and has the 5 loaves and two fish brought to Him. From Mark 6:40 and Luke 9:14 we learn how the multitude was told to prepare for supper. Jesus then took the food that the disciples had said was insufficient and blessed it and began to have the disciples distribute it to the multitude.
  - (20) Every person ate his or her fill. Afterwards, twelve baskets (one per apostle?) of leftovers were gathered.
  - (21) The seating arrangement allowed for an accurate count. Including the women and children it is likely that ten thousand or more were present. From John 6 we learn that Jesus used this miracle to teach concerning the bread of life. We should never sell God short! (2 Cor. 12:9; Eph. 3:19,20).
- c. The people desire to make Him King (Jn. 6:15)
  - (15) Jesus knew by the mood of the multitude that were of a mind to make Him King, if possible. To avoid this He withdrew Himself up into the mountains.
- d. Jesus retires to pray (Mt. 14:22,23) [Mk. 6:45,46; Lk. 6:15-17]
  - (22) This passage is clarified by John 6:15. To keep the disciples out of the "king-making mania" He sends them back across the lake by boat.
  - (23) Matthew only describes Jesus in private prayer here and in 26:36-46. Jesus knew that His refusal to be made King, would cool His reception among the Galileans from this point forward.

e. Walks on the Sea (Mt. 14:24-34) [Mk. 6:47-53; Jn. 6:18-21]

- (24) Meanwhile out in the ship, a storm had come up and the sea was tossed. The wind was blowing in such a manner that it would have been easier for the disciples to turn the boat and run with the wind. But, Jesus had commanded them to go to the other side and so they were determined to obey His will.
- (25) Sometime between three and six AM, Jesus came to the disciples walking on the Sea.
- (26) The disciples were not ready for the sight they beheld. The sight of someone walking on the water unnerves them and they scream with fear and conclude they are seeing an apparition (Mk. 6:49).
- (27) Jesus hears their cries and speaks above the wind to reassure them that it is He and all is well. "It is I" is comparable to "I Am" of the Old Testament where God is the speaker.
- (28,29) Matthew includes five incidents concerning Peter that the other Gospel writers do not. The first example of Peter's impulsiveness appears here as Peter asks to walk on the water with the Lord. It is not clear why Peter issues this challenge to the Lord, but Jesus agrees to give Peter a chance to back up his words. Peter begins to walk on the water.
- (30) Profession of faith is easy compared to putting faith into practice. Once upon the water, he was overcome by the circumstances and began to sink.
- (31) Peter allowed his faith to be distracted from the Lord. He did not have the strength in himself to maintain the miracle; he remained above the water only as long as he focused his faith on Jesus.
- (32,33) When Jesus and Peter entered the boat, the winds and waves subsided. Here the disciples have a clearer understanding of the power inherent in Jesus. Remember the first time he calmed a storm in their presence, they asked, "What manner of man is this?" Now they affirm, "Of a truth you are the Son of God!" John's account tells us that as Jesus entered the ship they were immediately at their destination (Jn. 6:21).
- (34) The land of Gennesaret was a plain extending three miles along the western side of the Sea of Galilee. This plain was described by the Jewish historian Josephus as a land whose "nature is wonderful as its beauty."

f. Heals at Gennesaret (Mt. 14:35,36) [Mk. 6:54-56]

- (35,36) The people of the area brought their sick and invalid to Jesus in hopes of touching the hem of His garment. They believed that even marginal contact such as that would be enough to restore their health.

## **72. Discourse on Spiritual Food, Etc. (Capernaum?) (Jn 6:22-71)**

(Note: About this time there would have been a Passover Feast in Jerusalem, but there is no record of Jesus attending.)

- (22) The day after the feeding of the five thousand and the stormy night on the Sea, the people remained on the shore where the miracle occurred because they believed Jesus was still among them.
- (23,24) Some of the crowd were able to book passage across the Sea to Capernaum in boats sailing out of Tiberias. They were eager to find Jesus again and continue to partake of His glory.
- (25) Upon arriving in Capernaum, they crowds find Jesus once again and inquire as to how He came there.
- (26) Their true motives for seeking Jesus are quickly revealed. They followed Jesus not for teaching, but for food; not for love, but for loaves; not for spiritual guidance, but for secular advantages. (Matthew Henry.)

- (27) Is Jesus prohibiting secular labor here? Obviously, not. He is rather enjoining the multitude to seek first after spiritual things. We should be working for the food of eternal life. Jesus will style Himself here as that food, the Bread of Life. The Father has commissioned and sealed the Son to provide this spiritual food for His people.
- (28) Jesus had impressed upon their minds that there was indeed work that needed to be done. They inquire of Jesus just what this work is?
- (29) The first requirement in pleasing God is to believe on the Son. All other requirements stem from this faith. Without faith works are meaningless, just as without works faith is dead.
- (30) The miracles they had witnessed did not satisfy them, they called for an additional sign to prove the claims of Jesus.
- (31) According to the multitudes Moses had provided their ancestors with manna from heaven, day after day. Could Jesus sustain such a miracle to prove that He was greater than Moses?
- (32) Jesus corrects their assumption - manna came down from God the Father, not Moses. Regardless of that fact however, true bread is not physical manna. The people were in need of food for their souls, not their bodies.
- (33) The marks of the true bread are three: 1)- it comes from heaven, 2)- it bestows and sustains the life of the soul, and 3)- it is for the entire world, not just a single race. Contrast this to the manna: it lasted only one day, those who ate it eventually died, and it was only provided to a single nation.
- (34) They clamored for this bread because they believed it would make them immortal. Compare this incident to the woman of Sychar and the "Living Water." (Jn. 4:5-42.)
- (35) The Bread of Life** - The work of God that they requested to do, was to believe on Jesus as the Bread of Life. We come to Christ by believing in Him. This "coming" and "believing" are equivalent to "eating" and "drinking."
- (36) The one obstacle preventing them from partaking of the living bread was their unbelief.
- (37) The power that belongs to Christ emanates from the Father. The entire body of believers will belong to Jesus. God's gift to men is Christ, but His gifts to Christ are believing men and women. Believers will be accepted by Christ based strictly on their belief, regardless of their station in life, their race, creed or color.
- (38) Jesus came to do the Father's will and all that His Father's will entailed.
- (39) His Father's will was to take all believers in. Those that would believe must be willing to submit their will to Christ and abide in Him as He abides in His Father.
- (40) Here we clearly see that 1)- the will of the Father concerning salvation applies equally to all believers, 2)- the condition of eternal life is a faith that leads one to Christ and causes one to abide in Christ, and 3)- Christ is the "resurrection and the Life." (See B.W. Johnson's *Commentary on John*, pp. 106-07 for seven practical observations concerning this passage.)
- (41) It appears that some from Jerusalem were among the crowd. They found fault with Jesus and tried to stir up the multitude against Him.
- (42) If Jesus was the son of Joseph, then how could He have come down from heaven? He is only a man and thus cannot be whom He claims. Of course they were ignorant of His miraculous conception.
- (43) These men were not making honest inquiries, but only there to stir up the crowd against Jesus. He rebukes their murmuring.
- (44) It takes the surrender of the human will for God to divinely draw man to Christ. If a man refuses to come to God, God will not compel him to come. Where then is this divine drawing power to be found? In the Word, it is God's power unto salvation. In the word we see the manifestation of God's love through Christ's sacrifice. It is through this very sacrifice that Christ will raise believers up in the judgment day.
- (45) Men are drawn by the Father through teaching. Those that receive the teaching will be drawn to it and thus to God through Christ. They are willing to come because of what they have learned.

- (46) Men do not learn of the Father face to face, but instead they gain knowledge of the Father through Jesus Christ.
- (47) If Jesus is the source of knowledge of the Father, then it is imperative that we believe in Christ.
- (48-51) The multitude had broached the subject of the manna from heaven, now Jesus will clarify just where the true bread of life can be found. The manna was not the true bread of life, because all the forefathers had eaten it and had perished. The true bread of life would impart life because it was life. Jesus is the Bread of Life. If a man will eat of this bread he will live forever. Jesus declares that the Bread of Life is His flesh.
- (52) The Jews could not comprehend this statement - how could a man give his flesh as food?
- (53,54) The Jews had already stumbled on "eat my flesh," now Jesus strengthens his previous comment with "drink my blood." (See the cases of Nicodemus and the Samaritan woman at the well.) These statements continue to cause confusion in the religious world today. Jesus had previously revealed Himself as the Life - the giver of immortality. He styled Himself as the giver of the Water of Life and now showed Himself to be the Bread of Life. Those that were willing to partake of this water and bread would have eternal life. How are mortals to partake of these foods? By eating His flesh and drinking His blood. Jesus is not teaching transubstantiation. While the Lord's supper may be a sign that those partaking believe that Jesus is the Bread of Life, it is not the eating and drinking being discussed here. To become Christians we must be willing to sacrifice our "old man" so that the new man can thrive. This involves believing in Christ, His death, and His resurrection. (See Rom. 6:1-8) Verse 63 will point out that Christ is not talking about literal flesh, but a spiritual eating that takes place through ingesting the Word of God. (Heb. 4:12) "By the appropriation of the words of Christ, faith in the crucified and risen Savior, and the incorporation of the will and life, as expressed in His word, into our lives, we are made alive." [Johnson, p. 110.]
- (55) Spiritually speaking, His flesh and His blood are the ultimate food for our souls.
- (56) By eating one enters into Christ and partakes of His life (Rom. 6:1-8).
- (57) The Father - who is the fountain of life, sent Jesus. We partake of Christ by making His will our will.
- (58) Manna would sustain a person physically for a time, but the Bread of Life will sustain a person eternally as long as they continue to partake of it.
- (59) This concludes His discourse in the synagogue at Capernaum.
- (60,61) The disciples were expecting an earthly king, not a crucified Savior, therefore they were offended by Jesus' words.
- (62) A greater marvel will occur than eating of flesh and drinking of blood. Here is the only account of Jesus speaking specifically of His ascension. Usually when He speaks of His return to the Father it is in terms that could be taken as spiritual or literal by the listener, not so here. His words here must be regarded as a prophecy concerning His ascent from the Mount of Olives.
- (63) Johnson's paraphrase: "I shall ascend to the Father so my flesh cannot be literally eaten; the flesh profits nothing. It is the spirit that makes life. The spirits of men must partake of me and thus be made alive by my spirit. My words are spirit and life, and he who feeds upon them makes them his soul food, governs his life by them, and will be made alive." [p.112]
- (64) Jesus always knew which of the disciples did not possess the "lively" faith.
- (65) (See notes on vv. 44,45)
- (66) Many disciples could not accept this great doctrine and turned away from Christ.
- (67,68) Jesus challenged the 12. Peter, ever the impetuous one answers, "to whom shall we go?" Peter realized that only Jesus had the words of eternal life.
- (69) Peter elaborates his good confession. This stands as an example of the kind of confession that Jesus expects from all disciples in all times.
- (70) The word "diabolical" might make more sense here. One of the chosen has fallen away. 61

- (71) John presents an aside that shows the reader that Judas Iscariot was the fallen one.

It is worth our time to review this important discourse. First, Jesus announces that the Bread of God comes from heaven and gives life to the world (v. 38). Second, He declares Himself to be the Bread of Life - come down from heaven so man could eat of it and not die. (vv. 48,50). Third, He shows that the Bread of Life is eaten when one becomes Christ's kindred and allows His word to dwell in him (vv. 51-56). Fourth, This eating and drinking is not literal, but spiritual, because the flesh profits nothing. The spirit of man will be made alive when he feeds on God's (Christ's) words (v. 63).

### 73. The Lord Reproached for Disregarding Tradition (Mt. 15:1-20) [Mk. 7:1-23; Jn. 7:1]

- (1) **Controversy over tradition.** During Christ's visit to Gennesaret a contingent of scribes and Pharisees from Jerusalem confront Jesus with a series of charges.
- (2) First they question the disregard that Christ's disciples have for the traditions of the elders. This is actually an attack against Christ since it was His teaching that His disciples were following. The "traditions" referred to oral and rabbinical writings that had accumulated in the Jewish religion over time. The scribes believed that these traditions acted as guidelines for Jews to follow in implementing the written Law. Eventually, these traditions were held on equal footing with the Law. The issue here was the ritualistic washing of hands. While the Jewish leaders insisted that it must be done, Jesus and the disciples ignored the practice.
- (3) Jesus counters with a question of His own: "Why do they use their traditions to break the Law?" Jesus is very clear in His condemnation of the traditions on the basis that their implementation caused the Law to be broken.
- (4) To sustain this charge Jesus gives an example. According to the Law it was a capital crime to dishonor one's parents. (Ex. 20:12, 21:17.)
- (5,6) Tradition created a loophole so that one could avoid honoring their parents. They would simply declare their assets dedicated to the Lord and therefore out of reach for them to use to take care of their aged or ill parents. It was in this trickery that Jesus exclaimed, "You have made God's Law null and void out of respect for your traditions."
- (7-9) The Jews were hypocrites, pure and simple. Jesus applies the prophecy of Isaiah 29:13 to this group of scribes and Pharisees. Because they did not believe in their hearts, their religion was nothing but a show.  
**PRACTICAL LESSON** - We cannot let our religious traditions become so ingrained in our beliefs that we cannot give them up. When we make the optional mandatory, we have put our opinion on equality with God's Law. Christ condemns this practice. Some of us are swallowed up in our traditions of worship and religious practice and have let expediency rule our spiritual lives.
- (10,11) **Controversy over purity.** After answering the charge of the scribes, Jesus now turns to the disciples and the multitude to explain the spiritual basis for purification. It will come down to which type of purity matters - that which is outward and ritualistic or that which is inward and moral? The Pharisaic position was in conflict with God's position on purity. It is not what goes in his mouth that defiles a man, but what comes out of his mouth. Scriptural purity or defilement is a matter of one's heart.
- (12) The disciples report the reaction of the Pharisees to Christ's teaching on the subject of purity and traditions. Obviously, the Pharisees were offended by Christ's denial of the importance of their long-held beliefs.
- (13) "Any plant that is not planted by God the Father will be torn out by its roots." God will ruthlessly deal with human traditions that are not expediences of His Law.

- (14) The Pharisees should be ignored because they are not reliable guides. They thought of themselves as guides of the blind, but were instead blind guides! To follow such a religious leader would be disastrous for all parties involved.
- (15) Peter asks for a clarification.
- (16) Jesus mildly rebukes the disciples here. They should have understood the lesson that Jesus was teaching, but instead misunderstood because they too had been raised under the very traditions that the Pharisees were defending.
- (17,18) Food only affects us physically. What we cannot use is expelled. Spiritual defilement comes from an evil heart (mind). What we put into our minds will ultimately result in what proceeds out of our mouths. In the computer world they have a saying, "garbage in, garbage out," - this applies spiritually as well!
- (19) True defilement comes from practices such as the ones Christ lists here. In the Gospel's those who considered themselves the cleanest were actually the dirtiest. (Chumbley, p. 283.)
- (20) Jesus concludes this discussion by defining defilement in spiritual terms as opposed to physical ones. A man becomes unclean when he breaks God's rules, not when he violates some man-made tradition (Col. 2:20-23).

#### **74. Second Withdrawal From Herod's Territory and Return**

##### **a. Withdraws to parts of Tyre and Sidon and heals the Syrophenician woman's daughter. (Mt. 15:21-28) [Mk. 7:24-30]**

- (21) Jesus underscores His break with the traditions of the elders concerning uncleanness by making a trip to an area regarded off limits by the traditionalists - Tyre and Sidon. It is about 50 miles northeast from Gennesaret to Tyre and Sidon. Mark 7:24 indicates that Jesus was looking for some privacy. The Pharisees were unlikely to follow Him into this "unclean" region.
- (22) This woman was a descendant of the very people that the Israelites were supposed to have driven out of the Promised Land - the original Canaanites. Under the Law of Moses, God had required the Jews to remain separated from these people (Ex. 23:28; Lev. 20:22-26). Using the address "Son of David" indicates her belief in Jesus as the Messiah. Her daughter was badly demonized and her repeated appeal to Jesus was probably based on the reports that had gone out ahead of Jesus (Mt. 4:24; Mk. 3:8).
- (23) Initially Christ ignored the woman's pleas. The disciples wanted her request satisfied (see next verse) hoping that this would cause her to leave Him alone.
- (24) Jesus reminds the disciples that this woman was outside of the house of Israel and beyond the scope of His personal earth-ministry.
- (25) The woman refuses to give up and returns to worship Him and beg for His help.
- (26) "Dog" was a word the Jews used to deride the Gentiles. Many Bible students through the years have had a very hard time with the exchange between Jesus and this woman. Some have portrayed Jesus as a male-chauvinist, others have determined that He was jesting with the woman, others believe this story is a fabrication and some believe Jesus was simply pointing out that His charity was only available in His homeland. None of these explanations are satisfactory. Jesus has already demonstrated compassion towards women and Gentiles (Mt. 4:24; 8:5; Mk. 2:8; Lk. 6:17). The most likely reason that Jesus behaved in this manner here is to demonstrate for the disciples the despicable consequences of the traditions of the Pharisees.
- (27) The woman humbly accepts her status in the eyes of the Jews and requests the table scraps as her blessing.
- (28) Christ drops the ruse of the "Pharisee traditionalist" and praises the woman for her great faith. Despite His physical presence and mighty works the majority of those he came in contact with

remained unbelievers. Note the lack of faith that is portrayed by scriptures on the part of His family, His hometown, the apostles (Mt. 14:31; 17:17), and the religious establishment. Because of her persistent, enduring faith in the face of persecution and prejudice her daughter was made whole that very moment.

**b. Proceeds to borders of Decapolis, in the mountains, heals many, feeds the 4,000. (Mt. 15:29-39) [Mk. 7:31-8:10]**

- (29,30) To emphasize His teaching on the matter of whom may ultimately receive the blessings of the Messiah regardless of race He takes his entourage into another "unclean" area. Decapolis was located on the southeastern shore of the Sea of Galilee. The multitude gathers and brings their ill, lame, and injured. Jesus healed all that were brought to Him.
- (31) The multitude marveled at the miracles performed by Jesus. They were moved to glorify God. The reference to the "God of Israel" implies the presence of Gentiles in the crowd.
- (32) This is the third instance where Matthew notes the compassion of Jesus for the plight of the multitude (Mt. 9:36; 14:14). The crowd had remained with Him for three days in the wilderness. The fact that they had remained so long indicates the impression Jesus had made on them. Jesus wished for them to be fed before they left, not wanting them to travel hungry.
- (33) Why couldn't the disciples remember the feeding of the 5,000? Their faith is still not sufficient!
- (34,35) Jesus takes the resources available and commands the multitude to sit down.
- (36) Christ gives thanks for the food and has the disciples distribute it among the crowd.
- (37) Once again as in the case of the 5,000, food is left over after everyone eats their fill.
- (38) The count of 4,000 did not include women and children so the total number could have easily reached nine or ten thousand.
- (39) He dismisses the multitude and takes a ship to Magdala.

**c. Returns to Galilee via Magadan and Dalmutha (Mt. 15:39) [Mk. 8:10]**

- (39) Magadan (Magdala) is thought to have been located on the western shore of the Sea of Galilee. The name is derived from the Hebrew word for "tower."

**75. Tempted by Pharisees and Sadducees (Mt. 16:1-4) [Mk. 8:11-13]**

- (1) Since the Pharisees had failed in their attempts to entrap Jesus, they now enlist the aid of their bitter religious rivals - the Sadducees. They obviously agreed to set aside their differences long enough to fight the common enemy - Jesus. The only reason behind their request for a sign was to use it as a way to humiliate Jesus.
- (2,3) Jesus had already provided many signs of His Messiahship and the Jews had refused to "read" those signs. Their minds were blinded to the signs of Jesus by their own evil hearts. While they could predict the weather, they could not read the signs of the coming of the Messianic Kingdom.
- (4) Christ repeats word for word what he previously said in Mt. 12:39. He refuses to give them the sign they want and instead promises them the "sign of Jonah." He does not explain this sign to them, but leaves them to consider it for themselves.

**76. Third Withdrawal From Herod's Territory**

- a. Departs and warns against the leaven of Herod, the Pharisees and the Sadducees (Mt. 16:5-12) [Mk. 8:14-21]**

- (5) **A Caution - Jesus' warning.** Jesus and the disciples set sail for the northern shore of the Sea of Galilee (Mk. 8:13,22) en route to Caesarea Philippi (v. 13). They must have departed in haste as the disciples forgot to pack their lunch.
- (6) Their encounter with the Pharisees and Sadducees caused Jesus to warn the disciples concerning the corrupting influence that both of these groups held over the people.
- (7) **The disciples' misunderstanding.** The disciples thought Jesus was getting on to them for forgetting to bring anything to eat.
- (8) **Jesus addresses the misunderstanding.** Jesus once again characterizes the disciples as possessing little faith. It is caused by their lack of thought and their inability to apply the lessons learned from Jesus' encounters with the Pharisees and Sadducees.
- (9,10) Based on their witnessing the miracles of the feeding of the five and four thousand, the disciples should by this time have been more in tune with what Jesus was teaching. Forgetting to bring bread was of little consequence to someone who fed multitudes with a few loaves.
- (11,12) **Jesus repeats the warning.** Now upon hearing the warning again, the disciples finally get it. While the Pharisees and Sadducees agreed on little, the "doctrine" in common included their inability to see Jesus as the Messiah, their hatred of Him, and their determination to overthrow His teaching if possible. [Leon Morris.]

**b. At Bethsaida heals a blind man by degrees (Mk. 8:22-26)**

- (22) This is another Bethsaida as opposed to the home of Peter Andrew and Philip and is located on the east bank of the Jordan just above river's entrance into the Sea of Galilee.
- (23) Jesus continues to protect His privacy by leading the blind man out of town. Jesus spits on the eyes of the blind man (see Mk. 7:33). Then Jesus asked the man if he could see anything?
- (24,25) The man had obviously not been born blind because he had a concept of what men should look like as compared to what trees looked like. His partially restored sight now gave him a distorted view of the men in the company. Jesus completes the restoration with one more touch of His hand. Why Jesus chose to do this healing in steps is not clear. McGarvey suggests we look at it as "two miracles, each effecting instantaneously what it was intended to do." [Commentary on Mark, p.314]
- (26) If the man had proceeded into town in his healed state it would have brought the multitude in pursuit of Jesus. This would have ruined the privacy that Jesus was seeking to maintain at this time.

**c. The great confession at Caesarea Philippi (Mt. 16:13-20) [Mk. 8:27-30; Lk. 9:18-22]**

- (13) **"Thou art the Christ."** In these verses we will see into the mind of the disciples as to their thinking concerning Christ. Upon their arrival in Caesarea Philippi (located near at the foot of Mt. Hermon, near the source of the Jordan River), Jesus begins to question the disciples as to how He is regarded by the people in general.
- (14) Jesus represented different things to different people. The disciples did not enumerate any of the hostile views proposed by the Jewish religious leaders, but instead reported those that place Jesus among the prophets. To most men any of these comparisons would stand as a compliment, but to the Christ, they fell far short of reality.
- (15) Jesus had asked the previous question for a basis of comparison to the answer the disciples would give to the question posed here - "*who do you say that I am.*"
- (16) In this verse we see the third of the Peter incidents uniquely reported by Matthew. Peter confesses that "*Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God.*" Peter had already confessed the Messiahship of Jesus (Mt. 14:33; Jn. 6:69).

- (17) Peter is called "blessed" by the Lord for this confession. Peter examined the evidence available to him and drew the proper conclusion. The revelation that Peter received was not a special revelation that came to him alone. Anyone could have drawn the same conclusion (Jn. 5:31-39). Peter had seen the same miracles that others had seen and knew that another sign was not needed - Jesus is the Christ!
- (18) Peter (rock) was a nickname given to Simon by the Lord at their first meeting. Jesus gave him the name anticipating the time when Simon would stand as an apostle of strength and stability. The process of transforming Simon the fisher of fish into Peter the fisher of men was not yet complete, but this confession stands as proof that Simon was making progress. This passage and (18:17) are the only times Jesus mentions the church. While the word church is derived from a Greek word meaning "the Lord's," in this passage it is a translation of the Greek word that means "the called out." Jesus is saying that in a time yet to come (as He speaks to Peter) He will build His own "called out body." Satan's authority and power will not hold sway over the one true church. Not even death would stop Christ from building it nor its members from enjoying the fruits of their reward - eternal salvation. [For more on "the rock" see outline: Upon This Rock.]
- (19) The keys to the kingdom represented the authority given to Peter (representing the apostleship) to open the door to the kingdom and show people how to enter. This is in contrast to the scribes who Jesus charged with locking people out of the kingdom (Mt. 23:13; Lk. 11:52). Peter was only to bind on earth what had already been bound in heaven. What Peter was to teach on earth was the will of God in heaven.
- (20) The time was not yet right for the apostles to begin proclaiming Jesus as the Christ. The people were not prepared to hear it and the apostles were not prepared to present it.

**d. Passion foretold, Peter rebuked (Mt. 16:21-28) [Mk. 8:31-9:1; Lk. 9:23-27]**

- (21) The focus of the Lord's work turns towards Jerusalem. The NT uses over 170 references to the death of Christ to set forth the historic events surrounding it and the spiritual consequences concerning it. Here Jesus will make a revelation that will be misunderstood. Further instruction and clarification will follow this.
- Revelation - The Cross.** This passage is the first explicit mention of the Savior's death. From this point forward Jesus will begin to bring out His death and suffering again and again. Jesus mentions five things that must be done: 1- He must proceed to Jerusalem. 2- He must suffer many things. 3- His suffering must be instigated by the Sanhedrin. 4- His sufferings would end in His death. 5- Death would not be His end because He would rise from the dead. When Christ spoke of His death, He always spoke of His resurrection as well. (A point missed by the disciples until after the fact.)
- (22) **Misunderstanding.** Peter is stunned by the revelation because the notion of a suffering savior was unknown to most Jews despite the prophecy of Isaiah (Jn. 12:34; 1 Cor. 1:23). Peter rebukes Jesus and says that His rejection, suffering and death will never take place. Peter had just pronounced Jesus as the savior of the world and now His savior says He must die. The apostles were entirely ignorant at this point of how Jesus would solve the problem of the sins of the whole world.
- (23) To oppose Christ's death even with good motives was the devil's work. Peter was approaching Christ's words from the human standpoint and obviously knew little of God's plan of salvation, since it hinged on Christ's death and resurrection.
- (24) **Instruction - The Demands of Discipleship.** Without the cross there could be no Christ and without our own personal crosses there can be no Christians. Three things are necessary to be a disciple of Christ: 1- self-denial (the decision to remove "self" as the driving force of life and give the controls to God), 2- we must bear our cross by rendering death to sin and

selfishness in our lives, and 3- we must keep on following Christ. (Lk. 9:23 says "take up this cross daily.")

- (25) To reject self-denial, cross bearing and following Jesus sets one on a course of spiritual self-destruction. (Jn. 10:10, Phil 3:7ff; Mt. 7:13-14; Gal. 2:20.) The church will triumph in the death of every true believer. The lives of these believers will be marked by their sacrificial, God-like lifestyles.
- (26) **Two Questions.** Would the possession of the entire world compensate us for the loss of our soul? No! (1 Jn. 2:15-17.) What earthly thing would be worthy to exchange for our soul? Nothing!
- (27) Jesus continues His argument. The final judgment will justify the way of the cross. Those that have lived their life in pursuit of worldly things will have their reward while those that followed Christ will have everlasting life.
- (28) Commentators have suggested at least seven different events to which this verse might apply. 1- The transfiguration, 2- the resurrection and the ascension, 3- Pentecost, 4-the spread of Christianity, 5-the internal development of the Gospel, 6- the destruction of Jerusalem and 7- the second coming. The fact that none of the apostles were dead at the transfiguration and none of them will be alive at the second coming seem to eliminate them as the reference. Most commentators are not dogmatic about which of the other five might be meant, but three facts lend credence to Pentecost. First, Jesus had just introduced the establishment of the church in verse 18. Second, Judas would be dead by then. Third, Mk. 9:1 appears to point to Acts 2 (See also, Lk. 24:49; Acts 1:8, 2:1-4.)

e. **The transfiguration and about Elijah (Mt. 17:1-13) [Mk. 9:2-13; Lk. 9:28-36]**

- (1) **Revelation - Transfiguration.** The purpose of the transfiguration seems to be for the benefit of the apostles. It would bolster their confidence concerning Christ's mission to hear Jesus discuss His death with Moses and Elijah. Jesus chose Peter, James and John to accompany Him on three different occasions (here, Mt. 26:37; Mk. 5:37). In each case it was to correct their false notions concerning death. [Morgan, *The Crises of the Christ*, pp. 247-50.]
- (2) Jesus was transformed for a few moments into a heavenly being, causing His face and clothing to shine. This was not Christ in the spotlight, but it was indeed Christ as the spotlight.
- (3) The significance of the presence of Moses and Elijah has led to various theories. It is unknown how the apostles recognized them, but their presence should have assured them concerning any nagging doubts that they had concerning the way of the cross. The sight of Moses and Elijah appearing after death (Moses) and translation (Elijah) would build up the apostles' faith in the resurrection from the dead. They might begin to believe that Christ's death would not be fatal.
- (4) **Misunderstanding - again.** Peter suggests that three temporary shelters be constructed, one for each of the luminaries. Luke 9:33 says that Peter did know what he was talking about. This illustrates that even apostles with nothing to say - sometimes say it anyway [Chumbley, p. 311.]
- (5) In the OT a cloud often signified the presence of God. From this bright cloud God repeats His testimony that He gave at Jesus' baptism. Here he adds the words, "Hear you Him." Jesus is to take precedence over Moses (the Law), Elijah (the prophets), opinions and traditions.
- (6) The disciples fall down in fear at the presence of God.
- (7) Jesus comforts them with a reassuring touch and a word of encouragement.
- (8) Once they get up, they discover that they are alone with Jesus who has reverted to His normal appearance.
- (9) As they go back down the mountain, Jesus alludes to His death by telling them not to discuss the transfiguration until after the resurrection. He did not want them to speak of it until they had a better grasp of the implications involved.

- (10) Their glimpse of Elijah points out their ignorance concerning the mission of John the Baptist. The scribes had taught that Elijah must precede the Messiah. Perhaps the Apostles were afraid they had missed his arrival.
- (11) Jesus endorses the scribes teaching and agrees that Elijah would begin the restoration of spiritual Israel.
- (12) Indeed, Elijah has already come. Unfortunately, no one except Jesus truly recognized him at his coming. Because John was not recognized as the "new Elijah" he was mistreated and martyred, even as Jesus would be.
- (13) Finally, they understand that John the Baptist is in view here, but their understanding of the suffering of Christ was yet to come.

**f. Cures epileptic, disciples failed (Mt. 17:14-21) [Mk. 9:14-29; Lk. 9:37-42]**

- (14,15) (Read the Mark account and compare the emphasis.) Returning to the nine and the gathered multitude, Jesus meets a man with an epileptic son. The seizures that this boy was prone to caused him danger from both fire and water.
- (16) The disciples had already tried to cure the boy but were unable.
- (17) Jesus rebukes the disciples and has the boy brought to Him. Jesus accused the disciples of being unbelievers and having a twisted or perverted attitude. Jesus wonders aloud, "how long must I suffer this incompetence?" The public nature of their failure brought reproach upon themselves and all believers present.
- (18) Jesus rebukes the unclean spirit and the boy is immediately cured. This is Matthew's last account of Jesus expelling demons.
- (19) Privately, the nine wonder why they failed in their efforts to cast out the spirit.
- (20) They lacked the kind of faith necessary to accomplish such tasks. Perhaps they attempted to remove the demon by their own authority, rather than that of God the Father. The right kind of faith, used in the proper manner carries an awesome amount of power. Great difficulties can only be conquered by the appropriate kind of faith.
- (21) Some evil spirits were more tenacious than others were. This demon was extremely hard to uproot. The type of faith that the disciples would need to employ in the future should they come against such an evil spirit would include prayer and fasting.

**g. Return to Galilee, passion again foretold. (Mt. 17:22-23) [Mk. 9:30-32; Lk. 9:43-45]**

- (22,23) The disciples come again to Galilee where Jesus repeats the prediction that He had earlier made at Caesarea Philippi (16:21). Here He adds that He would be betrayed. Because they still have no understanding of the resurrection, the disciples believe that the death of Jesus will bring an end to the movement. Now there is no protest, but instead the disciples are "crushed with grief."

**77. At Capernaum Jesus Pays the Tribute Money (Mt. 17:24-27)**

- (24) Here we have the fourth account from Matthew that features Peter. Jesus provides us with a valuable lesson concerning surrendering our liberties to avoid offending another (Rom. 14; 1 Cor. 8-10). Here Matthew makes his last reference to Capernaum. Those that collected the Temple tax asked Peter whether or not Jesus would pay the tax. Most commentators see no hidden agenda here as rabbis were not required to pay the tax. Collections were usually taken at Passover, but the collectors began working the outlying areas about one month prior to the feast.
- (25) Without thinking Peter answers, "Yes." Christ challenges Peter's answer. "Who is tribute usually taken from - the King's own children or other people?"

- (26) Peter replies that rulers tax other people, not their own kin. Since Christ is the Son of God, He was exempt from this tax. Peter obviously had not thought this through.
- (27) Jesus would not compromise God's will to give in to human conventions, but in this case since this societal convention did not violate God's precepts He relented. Jesus feared that His not paying the tax would lead the collectors to sin. Matthew does not elaborate as to how this might happen. In the next section of Matthew we will see that avoiding an offense is the main point. The fact that Jesus knew that Peter would catch a fish (which would have a coin in its mouth) that would pay for both His and Peter's tribute was quite a demonstration of the knowledge and power that Jesus actually possessed. Such a miracle would stand as an example to the disciples that Jesus was indeed the Master of His own fate.

**78. Dispute about rank, Jesus teaches (Mt. 18:1-14) [Mk. 9:33-50; Lk. 9:46-50]**

- (1) This begins the fourth major discourse in Matthew that ends with the phrase, "And it came to pass, that when Jesus had finished these sayings" (7:28; 11:1; 13:53; 18:1; 19:1; 26:1). Here Jesus discusses the attitudes that His disciples should have towards one another. While Jesus was speaking about crosses, the twelve seemed to be thinking about thrones. In the Mark passage they can be seen arguing among themselves as to who would hold the top spots in the kingdom. When the Lord does settle the question it is in a way that the apostles did not expect. They were deafened to Christ's message struggles and servitude by their own presuppositions.
- (2,3) Children had no standing in the oriental society of first century Judea. The disciples are called upon to become as little children - with no important or significant status. Their desire for preeminence was exactly backwards of the mindset they should have possessed. Jesus is emphatic here - unless one takes on the status of a "nobody" he cannot even enter the kingdom, much less be great in it!
- (4) To be great in the Kingdom, one must first make themselves little. Jesus is calling for an attitude that is free from self-importance. The first step in entering the kingdom is to become truly humble.
- (5) God views few sins more seriously than the lack of love that leads another to do wrong (Chumbley, p. 323). Christians must be willing to receive one another without prejudice or partiality. Welcoming a disciple of Christ is welcoming Christ himself.
- (6) It is better to drown than to lead another into sin. Paul uses Rom. 14 and 1 Cor. 8-10 to expound on Jesus' teaching here.
- (7) We live in a sinful world and sin will happen, however, the inevitability of sin in no way excuses the one who commits it. There would be no need for Jesus if sins were not held accountable to the ones who commit it and do not repent.
- (8,9) Jesus repeats the teaching of the Sermon on the Mount. We must deal ruthlessly with any flaws in us that would injure our faith. Note how Jesus has shifted from "offending a little one" to offending ourselves. In either case, causing oneself or another to sin places us in jeopardy of eternal damnation.
- (10) Christians are responsible for one another no matter how weak or marginal a brother may be. All disciples have angels concerned on their behalf. The extent of the angel's care and concern is not clear and scripture does not support modern theories of "guardian angels." But, it cannot be denied that angelic concern exists.
- (11) Furthermore, Jesus not only came to save unsanctified sinners, but to protect errant believers as well.
- (12,13) A wandering sheep disrupts the shepherd's routine. This verse does not relegate the majority to second-class Christianity, but simply goes to show the importance of each individual soul in Christ's eyes.

- (14) Finally, those that wander from the fold are not to be scorned, but instead restored. The angels are concerned over a lost sheep because Jesus came to save them and God's will is for them to be saved.

## 79. Concerning forgiveness (Mt. 18:15-35)

- (15) This passage was written to teach us how to win back offenders, not how to get rid of them. (McGuiggan) Jesus outlines three steps for dealing with those that offend us. **Step one** is found in this verse. When a brother sins against us we must not react with resentment or revenge, complain to others or feel sorry for ourselves. Jesus teaches us to privately confront the offender and reprove him. If the offender repents, then the stray sheep is found and the case is closed. Compare this passage to Mt. 5:23,24. The point is that God wants these matters resolved privately and He does not care which of the parties involved initiates the process. It is contrary to God's will for others to know a grievance against us before we are personally approached. Whispering behind a person's back and causing others to think poorly of an individual is a sin in and of itself!
- (16) **Step two.** If step one fails then one or two witnesses can be brought in to hear the grievance and help seek a resolution. The selection of these witnesses must be done with care. They must be of upright character and hopefully be recognized by the accused as being people that are fair and impartial.
- (17) **Step three.** If the accused refuses to hear the witnesses then the matter can be brought before the local congregation. The brother that brought the charge should tell the story and have it corroborated by the witnesses. Then the entire church should appeal to the erring brother in an attempt to bring about his repentance. If this effort fails then the brother is to be regarded as one who is an outsider and subject to the disciplinary measures of the church.
- (18) It is God's will that an erring brother be disciplined. It is through the congregational discipline that God maintains the purity of the church.
- (19,20) This passage is not referring to the number of people necessary to have a church or how many people it takes to make prayer or worship acceptable to the Lord. In the context of the passage Jesus is teaching that when the accuser and the witnesses come to an agreement about the backsliding brother, their recommendation carries the authority of God. If discipline against a brother is to be within the realm of God's will then it must be carried out according to His will.
- (21) Now we come to the last of five scenes involving Peter (as related by Matthew). Peter asks a **question**. Jesus' teaching on how to restore a brother leads to Peter's question. The Rabbis recommended forgiving a brother three times. Peter extends this thinking, but still believes there must be limit. The NEB translates 1 Cor. 13:6 to say that love "keeps no score of wrongs." This is the attitude that the individuals and the church must display toward wayward sheep.
- (22) Jesus rejects Peter's proposal. The number 490 represents an unlimited number of times that a person must be forgiven. Forgiveness then must become a way of life, "not an occasional attitude" (MLK, Jr.).
- (23,24) **An illustration.** Jesus demonstrates His teaching with this parable. A king calls for his servant to repay a debt owed. It is impossible to know in terms of today's money, what this debt equaled. However, it was a huge sum of money that no one could ever repay.
- (25) Unable to repay the debt the servant along with his family will be sold into slavery and all his possessions confiscated to recoup as much of the debt as possible. The amount that could be gained from this would in no way pay off the debt, but would punish the servant and perhaps stand as a warning to the rest of the king's subjects.
- (26) The desperate servant makes a promise that he cannot keep.

- (27) The king is compassionate towards the servant and forgives him his debt. This act of grace demonstrates exactly how God deals with man. (Jonah 4:2; Ps. 103:10; Isa. 55:7; Mic. 7:18; Rom. 3:24; 5:6)
- (28) It is hard to imagine the behavior exhibited by the forgiven servant. He begins to choke a man that owes him One-six hundred-thousandth of the debt he was just forgiven.
- (29,30) This servant pleads in a manner almost identical to how the first obtained mercy from his master. But, instead of being gracious, the first servant has the second imprisoned.
- (31) The other servants were very upset at the first servant's behavior and reported it to the lord.
- (32-34) The king recants his forgiveness and now holds the first servant responsible for the entire debt. He is to be sent to prison to be tortured until the debt is paid (for his debt - a life sentence). The behavior of the first servant is as far away from abiding by the Golden Rule as anyone could get. Did the servant act within the law of the land? Jesus however deems his maintaining his legal rights as "wickedness."
- (35) Each of us has sinned and need forgiveness (1 Jn. 1:8,10). Each of us has been sinned against and need to forgive. Here Jesus indicates that if we refuse to forgive others, then we cannot have forgiveness. This applies to us as a congregation of God's people as well as individual children of God.

#### 80. **Our Lord's brethren advise Him to go to Jerusalem (Jn. 7:2-9)**

- (2) The feast of the tabernacles occurred in the fall after the crops were gathered. It was instituted to commemorate the time when the Israelites dwelt in tents during their years in the wilderness. (Lev. 28).
- (3) His own brothers suggested that he leave Galilee and go to Jerusalem for the feast. Why were his brothers so insistent? Remember, at this time they were not believers. Perhaps they saw this as an excuse to have Him leave their country. Or maybe they felt it was inconsistent with His claims that He had not frequented Jerusalem for over a year. Basically it seems as if they are challenging Him to go to the feast and show what He could do.
- (4) If Jesus is such a mighty teacher and prophet, then it His responsibility to show Himself and His demonstrate His power. The brothers express the fact that they doubt His power by the use of the phrase "if you do these things."
- (5) At this time His earthly brethren were not believers. To teach that these were not the children of Mary, but His cousins is incompatible with Mt. 12:47; Mt. 13:55; and Jn. 2:12. It was not until after His death and resurrection that evidence exists for the conversion of these brothers (Acts 1:14).
- (6) Jesus sates that His time had not yet come. While the apostles, along with various other witnesses had already proclaimed Him as the Messiah, it was not time for His grand finale. This would consist of the cross, the tomb, the resurrection and the Ascension. We are still looking forward to His Second Coming that will bring His time to a fitting climax. He pokes some fun at His brethren here by indicating that since they have no work to do, they are always prepared!
- (7) The world does not hate its own. Yet the world hates Christ because He rebukes its sins. His stand for truth and righteousness condemns the lives of those that live according to the world.
- (8,9) Jesus had determined not to go up to the feast - yet. After the departure of His brethren and the rest of the Galilean pilgrims, He remained in Galilee.

#### 81. **Christ goes privately to Jerusalem (Lk. 9:51-56) [Jn. 7:10]**

- (51) While His time had not yet come, it was just around the corner. Jesus begins His journey towards Jerusalem and the final six months of His life. John 7:10 indicates that He arrives in Jerusalem while the feast of tabernacles is in progress.

- (52) Generally, the Jews from Galilee would circumvent Samaria on their trip to Jerusalem, because of the animosity that had built up over the years and because the Jews felt that the people there were unclean. (Which tells us why there were problems between them.) Jesus did not usually send out messengers, but in this case He did.
- (53) Because Jesus was traveling towards Jerusalem and the feast of the tabernacles, the Samaritans viewed this as a slap in the face. The Jews (including Jesus) repudiated their place of worship (Mt. Gerizim). Because the Jews in general had no dealings with the Samaritans it is not surprising that the Samaritans wanted nothing to do with a party of Jews.
- (54) The Sons of Thunder live up to their nickname. Perhaps they are recalling the incident of 2 Ki. 1:10-12. They were indignant at the behavior of the Pharisees towards Jesus.
- (55,56) Jesus exhibits a spirit of tolerance and rebukes the disciples for not being tolerant themselves. Jesus spirit was one that very different from Elijah and it was not within Jesus to burn and destroy to make converts.

## THE FOURFOLD GOSPEL - THE LIFE OF CHRIST

### PART EIGHT: CLOSING MINISTRY: FROM FEAST OF THE TABERNACLES TO THE LAST WEEK BEFORE THE FINAL PASSOVER

#### 82. At The Feast of the Tabernacles, October, AD 29 (Jn. 7:11-52)

- (11) For more on the Feast of the Tabernacles see Lev. 23. Eighteen months had passed since Jesus last visited Jerusalem. John uses the word "Jews" to refer to the enemies of Christ.
- (12) The *Jews* have already been distinguished. The *disciples* were personal followers and believers in Christ. *His brethren* were His earthly non-believing kin. *The people* were the yet unconvinced majority of the nation of Israel. The *Pharisees* were a Jewish sect that was at the forefront of Jesus' enemies because of religious disagreement. The *chief priests* were the Sadducean hierarchy who hated Christ for more material minded reasons.
- (13) Because the Sanhedrin had not yet passed official judgment on Jesus, many were afraid to choose sides, fearing that they would end up opposed to the Jewish authorities.
- (14) JESUS IN THE TEMPLE - Jesus' sudden appearance somewhere between the third and fifth day of the feast suggests a fulfillment of Mal. 3:1.
- (15) No one was expected to teach publicly unless they had formal schooling. The Jews knew Jesus had not attended rabbinical school, yet he was knowledgeable concerning things that could have been learned nowhere else.
- (16) Jesus derived His teaching from God the Father, not from some earthly school.
- (17) It takes a willing obedience to be in favor with God. Those with pure hearts can discern the true teaching and whether Christ was a purveyor of that teaching.
- (18) Christ came to exalt the One who sent Him. Any true teacher exalts the one who sends him. It is the egomaniac that blows his own horn. The spirit of "I, Me, Mine," cannot be the mark of a true teacher of God's will.
- (19) The Law of Moses stated that murder was wrong, yet the Jews were plotting Jesus' death even as He spoke.
- (20) The multitude was not privy to the plots of the leaders and to them Jesus seemed paranoiac, if not entirely mad or demon possessed.
- (21) Jesus brings up the incident of His last visit that caused the plots of murder to begin (see Jn. 5:1-16).
- (22-24) Circumcision had been passed down to Moses from Abraham. If the eighth day fell on a Sabbath, the Jews gave the rite of circumcision precedence. The benefits to spiritual health that came from the teaching of Jesus outweighed those that accrued from physical circumcision. The Jews judged Jesus by the appearance of what He did, not by the eternal righteousness that He invoked. A law can be set aside to obey a higher law. The Jews knew this according to verse 22. Jesus had set aside the law of the Sabbath to invoke the higher law of mercy, a law older than either circumcision or the Sabbath.
- (25,26) Some of the local people were surprised that the rulers allowed Jesus to speak as if they did not know Him. Perhaps they did not know Him or knowing Him, they were afraid to make a move against Him in the Temple.
- (27) Dan. 7:13 had led some to believe that the true Christ would materialize from nowhere. Because these men "knew" Jesus was from Nazareth they concluded He could not be the Christ (also see Isa. 53:8). However, they did not know where He came from. They were totally unaware of His birthplace (Bethlehem) or His heavenly origins.

- (28,29) Here Jesus asserts their ignorance of His divine origin. These Jews would not know supernatural if they saw it! They had seen the supernatural and did not recognize it for what it was. Jesus came from God, but since they did not truly know God they "knew not from whence He came."
- (30) Because He declared them ignorant of God they were compelled to take Him, however the time was not yet right for Him to fall into their hands.
- (31) Many believed because Jesus had demonstrated His Messiahship through enough convincing signs that if He was not the Christ, it was unbelievable to them that one could come and do more signs.
- (32) The Sanhedrin had heard enough so they sent officers to arrest Jesus.
- (33) Jesus lets it be known that He still has time left in His ministry.
- (34) After they do destroy Jesus, it is then that they would vainly seek Him. The dark days that followed Christ's crucifixion and leading up to the destruction of Jerusalem had many Jews longing for a Messiah to save their city as well as themselves.
- (35,36) The Jews refused to understand what Jesus meant; therefore they misconstrued His words to mean something else. They were actually demeaning Christ by saying He was not good enough to be their Messiah, so He could slip off and become the Messiah of the dispersion or even the Gentiles. To their prejudiced minds this would be joke or a slam against Jesus. Unfortunately for their souls, Christ working through His Apostles would make their words prophetic!
- (37) JESUS THE CHRIST - Jesus is of course speaking figuratively as when He spoke to the Samaritan woman at the well.
- (38) Scriptures such as Isa. 58:11 and Zech. 14:8 need to be held in view here. Taking the *living water* into your heart causes you to become a fountain of living water.
- (39) What Jesus is prophesying will be fulfilled in the actions of Peter and the Apostles as well as the household of Cornelius. The Holy Spirit would be poured out on all people and the gospel would be delivered through the mouths of the believers. How or when Christ would be glorified would be settled when He was raised to the right hand of God the Father.
- (40) *The Prophet* is a reference to Deut. 18:15 and Jn. 1:15. Remember that the Sanhedrin had questioned John the Baptist as to his place in the Messianic scheme. Now Jesus' station is brought into question. Is He the forerunner?
- (41) Some asserted that He was the Christ, not the forerunner. However, this was disputed because He came from Galilee.
- (42) The Jews knew their scripture: The Christ was to be of the seed of David and from Bethlehem (Isa. 11:1, Jer. 23:5; Ps. 89:36; Mic. 5:2).
- (43) The Greek word used here for division implies a violent contention or split.
- (44) Now even some of the multitude were aroused to the point of having Jesus arrested.
- (45) The officers were temple police (Levites) and were under the direction of the chief priests (see v. 32). When they returned without their prisoner, the Sanhedrin questioned them.
- (46) The words of Christ were too powerful for these officers. Notice that the crowd did not restrain the officers; the words of Christ held them back.
- (47,48) The authority and judgment of the council was that Jesus of Nazareth was not the Christ and it was foolish for their officers to believe differently than the rulers. Of the rulers, we know that Nicodemus and Joseph were believers in Christ.
- (49) The rabble and multitudes are ignorant and therefore are easily led astray.
- (50) Nicodemus, of course, had an unbiased picture of Christ due to the fact that he had taken time to get to know Christ personally.
- (51) Nicodemus makes the Sanhedrin mindful that by denying Jesus His rights; they are breaking the very law they wish to protect (Deut. 1:16; Ex. 23:1).

- (52) The rulers use the classic example of how to win an argument by unfair means, that is, attack the man instead of attacking His point. They classify Nicodemus as a Galilean (an insult to any Judean). Contrary to the rulers' assertions, Jonah was probably from the region now known as Galilee (2 Ki. 14:25). Elijah and Nahum were also possibly from Galilee (1 Ki. 17:1; Na. 1:1).

### **83. Woman Taken in Adultery (Jn. 7:53-8:11)**

Note: Some early manuscripts omit these verses.

- (53) The assembly is confused due to the intervention of Nicodemus so they disperse. Whether Jesus went to a residence, a booth, or slept under the trees cannot be determined.
- (1) Perhaps He spent the night in prayer. The Mount of Olives was one valley away from the city of Jerusalem proper.
  - (2) Jesus returned to the temple the next morning and took up the position of the teacher.
  - (3) This is the only place where John mentions the scribes. The scribes were Rabbis, the doctors of the Law. They were a distinct class from the priests since the time of Ezra. Compare the use of the phrase "scribes and Pharisees" to "the Jews."
  - (4) This woman should not have been brought to Jesus. They were under Roman law and adultery was not a crime. It is interesting that the man involved would be guilty of the same sin, but he was not arrested.
  - (5) Indeed the Law of Moses called for stoning (Deut. 22:22; Lev. 20:10). The enforcement of this statute had been dropped even before the Roman takeover. Why were these men resurrecting it now? Of course they meant to entrap Jesus.
  - (6) They have attempted to place Jesus on the horns of a dilemma. Will He set aside the Law of Moses and free the woman or set aside His own law of mercy and have her condemned to death? To condemn her to death would be usurping the authority of the Roman government and then He could be subject to arrest. By writing on the ground He signified to them that their words were not important and that other things occupied His thoughts.
  - (7) The Jews however kept pressing their question. Jesus of course had the perfect answer to turn the tables on the Jews. He called for any that were sinless among them to begin the stoning. These Jews were prominent people and their lives were open to the people. Deut. 17:7 indicates that the witnesses were to cast the first stone.
  - (8) By resuming His former posture the Jews were allowed to ponder their predicament. Rabbinical law forbade a guilty husband from condemning a guilty wife. Jesus had knowledge of guilt within these witnesses making them unfit to administer capital punishment.
  - (9) The eldest of the Jews was the first to realize his folly and so on down to the youngest. They departed, leaving the woman alone with Jesus.
  - (10) Jesus asks a rhetorical question here that paves the way for the woman's dismissal. Without witnesses and evidence there can be no trial.
  - (11) Did Jesus condemn the sin of adultery? If not why did He tell the woman "to go and sin no more?"

### **84. Further Teaching and Escape (Jn. 8:12-59)**

#### **a. Jesus defends his self-witness (vv. 12-20)**

- (12) Jesus is portrayed here as "the light of the world." Light is a symbol of knowledge and life as opposed to darkness, which is a symbol of ignorance and death.
- (13) See John 5:31. No man can be his own witness.

- (14) Jesus however was qualified to testify of himself due to His divine nature. Remember that His miracles also stand as His testimony.
- (15) The Jews were judging superficially and carnally according to appearances. Jesus however allows the deeds of men judge them.
- (16) Contrasting Himself with the Jews, Jesus came to save, not to condemn. If he did choose to judge, at least His judgement would be a true judgement as opposed to their unrighteous judgement.
- (17) Deut. 19:15 declared that the testimony of two witnesses was sufficient. Jesus does not classify Himself with the Jews, even though He lived under their Law. His witnesses included John the Baptist, the Holy Spirit, the prophets and the apostles.
- (18) The Father's witness came through those mentioned above. So two divine voices are added to Christ's own witness of Himself.
- (19) The Jews thought Jesus referred to the testimony of an earthly parent. They wanted Him to physically produce this witness. Jn, 14:6,8 - By not recognizing Jesus they showed their ignorance of God the Father.
- (20) The treasury was located in the court of women, the most public place in the temple. Jesus was teaching within earshot of the hall of Gazith, the headquarters of the Sanhedrin. Still they could not take Him prisoner.

**b. Jesus predicts His departure (vv. 21-29)**

- (21) Those who die in their sins cannot find entrance into heaven. Because these Jews will not find Christ, their sins will not be forgiven and therefore they cannot attain eternal life. These four verses (21-24) teach that the denominational idea of deathbed repentance is foreign to the teaching of Christ.
- (22) This is a scornful saying by the Jews. Suicide was a direct line to eternal destruction according to the teaching of the Rabbis, therefore if Jesus killed Himself He would not be in heaven where all good Pharisees expected to be.
- (23) Jesus increases the severity of His words to counteract their mockery. The Jews were the ones who were worldly, fleshly, and in danger of hellfire. Jesus on the other hand was spiritual by His very nature.
- (24) Their willful blindness condemned their souls. Their only chance for salvation was for them to believe in Christ.
- (25) "Just who do you think you are?" might be a rendering with enough mockery for us to feel the scorn that the Jews had for Jesus. Some translators render Jesus' answer as "Why am I even speaking to you at all?" This answer was good enough for the unrighteous hearts that asked such a hateful question.
- (26) The things Jesus has to say are of a judgmental nature; however, these are the words of His Father.
- (27) It is hard to get a handle on the ignorance of unbelief. The worldly bent of these Jews made them blind to anything that Jesus chose to say or do.
- (28) Here Jesus predicts His crucifixion. Previous to this, in His interview with Nicodemus, He predicted the same thing. The crucifixion would bring more converts to the Way. Fifty days after His death His disciples increased by the thousands. The death of Jesus brought life to the world.
- (29) Remember that Jesus is a physical manifestation of the Godhead; therefore God is always with Him. Jesus was completely resigned to do the will of the Father.

**c. The Truth shall make you free (vv. 30-36)**

- (30) These people were moved to trust and follow Jesus. In the following verses Jesus will try to raise these believers view of the Messiahship from an earthly one to a spiritual one.
- (31) The faith of these new disciples was not yet complete. Obedience was yet to come. The condition is to "continue in my word." The promise is "to be a disciple." "The Jews" indicates that some of the leaders had believed. Discipleship then is a way of life, not a single act.
- (32) The proof of knowing the truth is to obey it. God's freedom (given by truth) is freedom from sin and death. Too often the religions of men bring men into bondage to creeds, traditions, and human forms of religion.
- (33) This may have been those that opposed Jesus from within the crowd. The Jew's boasted of their heritage. They trusted in their blood rather than God. Their supposition was of course false; they had been in captivity to Persia, Macedonia, Syria, and now Rome. Additionally, in times past, they had bound themselves over to idolatry. Jesus knows that they are politically captive to Rome and spiritually captive to the Rabbis, their traditions, human commandments, and to sin.
- (34) Jesus answers them indirectly - the sinner is the slave of sin. The freedom Jesus is preaching is spiritual.
- (35) The bondservant can be sold from family to family, but the blood-kin remains in the family. (Gal. 4:19-21) God was about to dismiss the Jews as unfaithful servants (Lk. 20:16-19).
- (36) To be truly free, only the freedom bestowed by the Son would be permanent.

**d. Abraham's Seed and Satan's (vv. 37-47)**

- (37) Outwardly, these Jews were indeed Abraham's children. Inwardly they were far from being true sons of Abraham. Abraham was a friend of God (Jas. 2:23), but these Jews sought to kill God's son because they could not bear His words.
- (38) This is an introductory statement to verse 44. Jesus will disclose two households: one divine, the other diabolical.
- (39) The Jews reassert their parentage.
- (40) These descendants of Abraham did not follow in their father's footsteps. The true descent is spiritual - the works of the Jews denied their spiritual descent from Abraham.
- (41) This father is yet to be named (v. 44). Here fornication is used as a symbol of idolatry (Ex. 34:15,16; Hos. 1:2; 2:4). The Jews claim to be followers of God.
- (42) Jesus is God-derived and God-sent! The Jews should have recognized this if they were "of God."
- (43) "Speech" refers to the outward expression of an idea or thought, while "word" refers to the idea itself. They literally heard words, but did not understand them.
- (44) All who hear Christ's voice become God's children by adoption (Rom. 8:15-17), all others remain children of Satan. The Jews had murder in their hearts; a lust of the devil. Satan was the original murderer - it was he who introduced sin into the world - and the consequences of sin was (and is) death.
- (45) Those whose father is a liar raised them to believe only lies and reject the truth.
- (46) If Jesus is not the Son of God, then where is His sin; His human defect. If He has none, then He is a truthsayer.
- (47) God's children would receive (hear) God's word. These Jews reject God's word therefore they reject God. Compare to Jn. 3:20,21.

**e. Before Abraham was, I AM (vv. 48-59)**

- (48) This scornful language is to retaliate against Jesus saying the Jews were not sons of Abraham or God. No one was more hated by the Jews than the Samaritans, coupled with demon possession this made Jesus an evil man indeed.
- (49) Jesus chose not to deny the charge of being a Samaritan because He refused to recognize their class-consciousness. If you honor the Father, then you are opposed to demons who could not do that.
- (50) Their abuse really did nothing to Jesus; His Father would protect His reputation. Even today, unrighteous judgements should be disregarded in favor of God's righteous judgment.
- (51) Jesus restates vv. 31 and 32. "To keep," means to cherish and obey. Jesus of course is speaking of eternal, spiritual life. But where does this life begin? It begins in this world (Jn. 5:24). Notice the condition and promise:
- 1) Universal - If anyone
  - 2) The condition - keep my word
  - 3) The result - shall not see death
- (52) Their ignorance and Jesus' words only confirm their former statement of His demon possession. If the best and the greatest (Abraham, prophets) have died, how can anyone escape?
- (53) They could not believe that Jesus was placing Himself on a plane with Abraham, much less even a greater plane. "If those who have heard the word of God are dead, then surely those who hear your words will also die."
- (54) The Father will finally settle this question once and for all time with the death, burial, resurrection, and ascension of Christ.
- (55) They claimed to be worshippers of Abraham's God. However, they do not know God, because their teaching conflicts with that of Jesus. Someone is a liar and it cannot be Jesus, therefore it is the Jews. There is a difference in the words "known" and "know." "Known," indicates knowledge that is acquired, while "know," indicates cognitive knowledge, that is knowledge gained by direct contact.
- (56) Abraham's promise of blessing through his seed, made him rejoice to know that he would beget the Messiah.
- (57) Since it was two thousand years since Abraham and Jesus was less than 50 years old, how could Abraham rejoice at something he would never see? How could Jesus know Abraham?
- (58) "I AM" marks timeless existence and indicates Jesus claim to deity. This statement identifies Jesus with the "I AM" of the Old Testament.
- (59) The Jews understood that Jesus was claiming to be Godhood and counted it a blasphemy so they were prepared to stone Him on the spot. Whether Jesus used miraculous means to hide Himself or just melted into the crowd while His antagonists were gathering stones is unimportant. His time was not yet come, so He was spared.
- B.W. Johnson makes six practical observations in his *Commentary on the Gospel of John* (p. 147) that are interest to our study.

**85. The Man Born Blind (Jn. 9:1-41)**

**a. A man born blind receives his sight (vv. 1-12)**

- (1) From verse 8 we learn that the blind man was a beggar. Jesus encountered him as he was leaving the scene in chapter 8.

- (2) The Jews believed that extreme illness, disease or handicap was punishment for sin. See Job. Perhaps even the parents' sin caused the man to be afflicted. Obviously, the disciples did know that the man was born blind. Why? Even today the sins of the parents can cause problems of a physical nature for a child.
- (3) Jesus denies these two alternatives and suggests a third possibility. Providence played a part in this man's afflictions, so God could use him for the purpose of proving Jesus was the Christ.
- (4) The "day" referred to here by Jesus is the short span of His life. When "night" (death) comes there will be no work done. We have no record of Jesus performing miracles of healing after His resurrection.
- (5) Jesus shed moral and spiritual light on the world. It was prophesied that He would give sight to the blind. The gift of sight to the physically blind would be a type of spiritual sight to the spiritually blind.
- (6) Why did Jesus choose this method of returning the man's sight? Probably so that the man would have a reason to go to the pool of Siloam to wash. Notice the conditions placed on this gift.
- (7) Siloam was perhaps the same pool mentioned in Neh. 3:15 and Isa. 8:6. This pool was located south of the temple. It is interesting that the interpretative meaning of the word Siloam is "Sent" which was also a name given to Christ. The man rendered obedience to Christ and received the promise. Anointing the eyes with clay was not an unknown medication for eye problems during the first century.
- (8,9) The beggar returned home and even his neighbors were confused. The impossibility of such a cure would raise doubts in the mind of anyone. That is, they could not believe their eyes! This is where we learn that the blind man was indeed a beggar.
- (10) Finally, they realize that he is their neighbor. The next question in their minds is obvious, how did this healing come about?
- (11) The beggar knew it was Jesus who had sent him to the pool. He rehearses the events of his healing as they occurred.
- (12) Since these questioners were his neighbors and not the Jewish leaders, perhaps this was an inquiry of curiosity and not one of vengeance.

**b. The Pharisees excommunicate the healed man. (vv. 13-34)**

- (13) The people wanted the Pharisees to investigate this "miracle." The Pharisees held the greatest religious influence at this time in Jewish history.
- (14) Conduct such as this healing performed on the Sabbath day would be considered unlawful by the Pharisees. Compare to the healing at the pool of Bethesda.
- (15) The Pharisees learned nothing more than the neighbors from the man's testimony.
- (16) They declare that Jesus has broken the Sabbath. However, some among the Pharisees disagreed because of the powerful nature of the miracle.
- (17) To try and understand exactly what has happened, the Pharisees (after some debate among themselves) turn again to the man. We will see the man's convictions deepen as time passes. Here he declares Jesus "a prophet," whereas previously he referred to Jesus as simply "the man."
- (18) If Jesus is to have credit for performing this miracle then the Jews must discredit the miracle. They try to claim that the man was never blind in the first place. The Jews suspected collusion between Jesus and the man.
- (19) They inquired three things of the man's parents: sonship, blindness, and cure.
- (20) The parents give clear replies to the first two questions.
- (21) But as to the third question they are careful to leave their answer as vague as possible, so the Jews would not implicate them.

- (22) The Jews (the Sanhedrin) have already decided to excommunicate anyone who confesses Jesus as the Christ. The parents feared the Jews and therefore answered in such a way as to protect themselves. This rule was made permanent after the crucifixion and was previously prophesied by Jesus Mt. 10:17.
- (23) Because the parents would not answer, the accusers turn again to the young man.
- (24) The Jews are calling for the man to confess that he and Jesus are indeed in collusion and to turn to God for forgiveness. See Josh 7:19 and 1 Sam 6:5 on the use of the phrase “Give glory to God.” Their “proof” of Jesus being a sinner was the fact that He healed on the Sabbath.
- (25) The man could only testify of his own personal benefits in having met Jesus.
- (26) They begin to cross-examine the man and apparently try to get him to contradict his own testimony concerning the miracle.
- (27) The young man is on to the Jews’ lawyer tricks by refusing to repeat his testimony. His final comment, “will you too be His disciples?” is sarcastic in nature and implies that he might already be a disciple himself.
- (28) They were upset by this comment and confessed Moses, then accused the young man.
- (29) To forsake Moses for another prophet would be considered apostasy by the Jews.
- (30) Here is a wonderful scene from the Gospel of John – the beggar man giving the Sanhedrin a lesson concerning the true nature of deity. The proof of his argument – such a miracle could only come from God.
- (31) Compare the beggars logic to that of Nicodemus in John 3:2. The OT taught that God answered the prayers of the righteous. (Prov. 15:29; Isa. 1:15; Mic. 3:4.)
- (32) There was no historical record of such a miracle as this ever being performed.
- (33) A false, fraudulent, demon-possessed man could not have performed such a miracle. (Compare to the more perceptive Pharisees in verse 16.)
- (34) The Jewish answer to the question posed in verse 2 arises here. The man was born a sinner. They originally argued that he was never blind, but now that they were proved wrong on that count, they turn the blindness against the man. Most commentators feel that the man is formally excommunicated, mainly for presuming to teach them! See Tholuck’s remarks quoted by Johnson, pp. 154,155.

**c. True vision and true blindness (vv. 35-41)**

- (35) Jesus knew that the man would make a good convert. The man was now as a heathen to the Jews and would be without a country and religious fellowship in the eyes of the rulers. Jesus offers the man an alternative to Moses – life through God’s Son.
- (36) The man has confidence in Jesus as a forth-teller (prophet) but does not understand that He is the Son of God.
- (37) Jesus fully reveals Himself to the man. The only parallel case we have in the Gospels is when Jesus revealed Himself to the Samaritan woman at the well (Jn. 4:26).
- (38) The man immediately confesses Christ and worships Him.
- (39) Jesus now sums up the entire incident. The needy are always attracted to Jesus, while the self-satisfied are repelled by Him. By this comparison who are the blind and who are the ones that can see?
- (40) The Pharisees want Jesus to specifically spell out whom He is talking about.
- (41) The Pharisees always claimed that they were enlightened but they were indeed sinners. Their responsibilities were measured by their opportunities. See Johnson’s practical observations p. 156.

## 86. Discourse on the Good Shepherd (Jn. 10:1-21)

### a. Jesus the True Shepherd (vv. 1-6)

- (1) The figure of a shepherd is often used in the scriptures. Why? This section immediately follows the preceding story of the man born blind. Jesus will compare Himself (as a Shepherd) to the rulers who were poor shepherds indeed. Point 1- false shepherds would arise and injure the flock of God. (Ezek. 34:1-6; Jer. 33:1-6; Zech. 11:4-11) Point 2 – A true shepherd, the Messiah would rise up. (Ps. 23; Jer. 31:10; Ezek. 34:31; Mic. 7:14) Who fulfilled these prophecies? What is the difference between a thief and a robber? Thief – cunning, while no one watches. Robber – resorts to violence. How do the Pharisees fit both of these patterns?
- (2) The true Shepherd enters by the door; someone with evil motives would use another entry.
- (3) The gatekeeper was instructed to let only the shepherd into the sheepfold. Who is the porter of the church? God. Christ is the Good Shepherd and the sheepfold is the church. The sheep are trained to respond to their master's voice. In the Eastern countries the shepherds lead their flocks. These people also named their sheep as we do our pets. The sheep could then be called individually or as a group.
- (4) Disciples are led as sheep. Jesus treads the pathway ahead of us and we follow in His footsteps. See Johnson on verse 4, p. 159.
- (5) The sheep will refuse to follow a stranger. The Pharisees were strangers trying to lead God's sheep. How do you prove yourself to be one of God's sheep?
- (6) Jesus spoke here in an allegory (symbolic or emblematic language), not a true parable in the sense of those used in the Synoptics. The hearers could not understand Jesus' sayings, but He will explain Himself in verses 7-21.

### b. Jesus the Good Shepherd (vv. 7-21)

- (7) Not only is Jesus the Shepherd, He is also the door to the sheepfold. He is the door in which any wishing to enter the fold must enter. "There is no other name...whereby we must be saved."
- (8) Not only are the false prophets that preceded Jesus included in this condemnation, but also any and all who would put their teachings "before" Christ's. This would include Satan, the Pharisees of Jesus' time, and false religions and false teachers of our time. Only the goats would follow such leaders.
- (9) In addition to being the shepherd and the door, Christ is also the pasture where His sheep will feed. He is the bread and water of life.
- (10) The objective of the false shepherds is to destroy the flock for their own purposes. By robbing the flock of their spiritual guidance the false shepherds destroy the faith and ultimately the souls of the flock.
- (11) See Ps. 23 and Ezek. 34:12 again. Christ now applies the term to Himself. The true good shepherd will be willing to die defending His sheep.
- (12,13) A hireling is one who would not work if it were not for the pay. He is bound to the sheep only by his own self-interest, not by love for the sheep. This attitude helps us to distinguish between the true and false shepherd more easily.
- (14) God, in times past had used other shepherds to lead His flock, but none other was or is the Good Shepherd. Only He knows every one of the sheep – tenderly, personally, lovingly, by name.
- (15) The same bond exists between the Good Shepherd and His flock as exists between Jesus and the Father.

- (16) The Messiah has meant from the beginning to be the Savior of the world. This is clear from His discourse with Nicodemus and the Samaritan woman at the well, as well as OT prophecy and the later teaching of the Apostles. The other sheep are then non-Jews – the Gentiles.
- (17) God loves His son because of His willingness to die for His sheep.
- (18) Of His own free will he dies for the world. Then He was resurrected, so His life was “taken up again.” As early as Jn. 3:14, references to His need to die for the church can be seen.
- (19) Note how Jesus’ words continually divide the group to which He is speaking (Jn. 7:48; 9:16). For the rulers to accept Jesus they would have to abandon their national hope and look forward to a hope that would encompass the entire world.
- (20) It was commonly held among the Jews that demon possession could have supernatural side effects (Mt. 12:24). It was an easy way out for them to accuse Jesus of this very thing.
- (21) No demoniac had ever taught like Christ. The examples of demon possession in the NT show us that demoniacs were out of control. No demon had ever been known to heal a blind man. This called for a display of power beyond that commonly believed to be held by demons. See Johnson p. 163 for his 7 practical observations. There will be a 2-month interval between verse 21 and verse 22.

## **87. Mission and Return of the Seventy (Lk. 10:1-24)**

### **a. The Seventy sent out (vv. 1-12)**

- (1) Jesus chooses an additional seventy disciples to go before Him in His travels. The number seventy (or seventy-two) reminds us of the elders appointed by Moses (Num. 11:16) and the Sanhedrin. Exactly where these disciples traveled is not known.
- (2) Jesus repeats the language He used when He sent the twelve (also two by two, Mt. 9:37,38). They were to pray that the number of “harvesters” would be sufficient. Christ was the Lord of Harvest and “the harvest” referred to the multitudes of people who were actually eager to learn of the Messiah.
- (3) They were to go in the gentleness and simplicity of lambs. They were putting their lives in jeopardy for the Lord, as they would be among the malicious and cruel (wolves).
- (4,5) They were to proceed as they were and not to make preparations. They were not to stop and visit on the way, but be about their purpose. When they entered a house they were to give the proscribed greeting of “peace.” This greeting was both a prayer and a blessing.
- (6,7) If they received peace and blessing at a particular house they should remain at that house until their work in that village was completed. While their teaching might take them house to house, they were to reside only in one house per town. They would be worthy of their hire by remaining in one place and not have their time consumed by moving from house to house.
- (8,9) They should expect to live the simple life upon entering a city. They were not to attend feasts, but were to be about the business of healing the sick and preach to them concerning the kingdom. The purpose of the healing as always was to draw attention to the message preached.
- (10,11) If they should come into a city and not be received, Jesus instructs them how to behave in the presence of those who refused to accept them. Shaking off the dust represented to the city that the disciples did not want anything to do with them as well, even to the point of not carry off the dust of the city on the bottom of their shoes. Yet, they were to leave a verbal message as well as the symbolic one. The kingdom is coming and this city rejects it, therefore inviting the condemnation of the kingdom upon their heads.

- (12) Their witness was greater than Lot's witness to Sodom, therefore the condemnation against these cities would be greater than that brought against Sodom! The more light and truth rejected – the greater the condemnation (Lk. 12:47). Do not underestimate the wickedness of Sodom and God's retribution against it. To be compared to Sodom, would be an eye opener to any Jewish city.

**b. Woe to impenitent cities (vv. 13-16)**

- (13,14) Jesus had done many miracles and much preaching in the areas of Chorazin and Bethsaida (possibly near the birthplace of Peter, Andrew, and Philip). Yet, these cities had not repented. Tyre and Sidon were ancient heathen cities located on the Mediterranean Sea. (Isa. 23; Ezek. 26:27,28; 29:18) If similar works had done in these old cities, they would have repented wearing their mourning clothes.
- (15,16) Capernaum was even more pitiful than Chorazin and Bethsaida because Jesus had used it as His northern headquarters and had spent a large amount of time and effort there. Capernaum would be reduced from a place of exaltation to a place of low estate (Hades – the land of the dead, not merely the realm of the wicked). With solemn words Jesus closes His instructions to the seventy. God will reject anyone and anyplace who rejects Christ and His messengers. Today, if one rejects the New Testament, he is making the same mistake.

**c. The Seventy return with joy (vv. 17-20)**

- (17) The seventy went on their mission and returned with joy because of the success they met. Even the demons were subject to the power they had been given. They were not expecting to be able to do this because of the previous experience of the nine apostles (Lk. 9:40).
- (18-20) The fact that the demons were cast out by the seventy gave Jesus an occasion to give a prophecy concerning the ultimate downfall of Satan. If the seventy could defeat Satan's agents, then Christ could defeat Satan Himself. Jesus now enlarges the power of the seventy by issuing them protection of a physical nature. Yet this protection from physical harm is not the main weapon in man's struggle against Satan (Mt. 13:25; Rom. 16:20; 1 Pet. 5:8). No agent or weapon of Satan can touch a believer's spiritual life, unless that believer allows it to (Rom. 8:27-39).

**d. Jesus rejoices in the Spirit (vv. 21-24)**

- (21) Jesus follows His own advice and rejoices in the Holy Spirit. (Mt. 11:25-27). Jesus acknowledges God as the "Lord of heaven and earth." Jesus is thankful that God had given his wisdom to the unlearned and not the "wise." Why? Those wise in their own minds will refuse to receive spiritual truth and ultimately render themselves unable to understand it. "Babes" on the other hand, will feed on the previously unknown and grow in their knowledge.
- (22) See Mt. 28:18; Jn. 1:1-5, 41; 17:2. The authority possessed by Jesus included Him being the: Revealer, Creator, Redeemer and Judge. No one other than Jesus Christ ever spoke words like these. They help us to understand the deity of Christ and His relationship to God the Father. Also, these words indicate that we can only understand the things of God that he chooses to reveal to us.
- (23,24) Jesus concludes His public prayer before the seventy and now turns privately to the twelve apostles. Their presence as witnesses at these events caused them to be especially blessed. The scribes and Pharisees hated the revealed truths concerning the Messiah in part because they were not first revealed to them. The OT prophets had longed to see the fulfillment of their Messianic prophecies. They lived and died in hope and faith that their prophecies would indeed come true. ( 2 Sam. 23:5; Job 19:23,24; Isa. 52:7; 1 Pet. 1:10)

## 88. A Lawyer and “The Good Samaritan” (Lk. 10:25-37)

- (25) This man was a scholar and teacher of the Law of Moses. The fact that he stood up to speak indicates that the meeting took place in a formal setting. His purpose was not to find out the truth concerning his question, but to “make trial” of Jesus. Jesus’ answer coupled with the lawyer’s answer and the parable gives a truer view of God’s law and prepares the way for the acceptance of Gentiles as members of the Kingdom.
- (26,27) Jesus answers the lawyer’s question of “What shall I do to inherit eternal life?” with two questions of His own. “What is written in the Law?” and “How readest thou?” Jesus asked how the lawyer understood the Law with the regards to this matter. The lawyer quotes Deut. 6:3; 11:13 and Lev. 19:18. Jesus Himself used a similar summary of the law in Mt. 22:34-40 when answering another lawyer bent on entrapping Jesus with his question.
- (28,29) Jesus did not give the expected answer and the lawyer was caught off guard. (Compare to the rich, young ruler.) The lawyer did not believe that the law would lead him to Jesus as the Messiah and so he was probably expecting an answer that would indicate that Jesus was the Christ. Now the lawyer is set back on his heels so he is looking for a loophole and replies, “Who is my neighbor?” The Pharisees restricted the term neighbor to exclude Gentiles, Samaritans, publicans, and anyone else who did not share their particular views. While the word neighbor does mean “one who lives nearby,” Jesus broadens the meaning to apply to a fellow man in need.
- (30) To explain, “Who we must love as ourselves,” Jesus tells the following parable. It is the story of a Jew traveling down the steep narrow road from Jerusalem to Jericho; a road that drops over 3,300 feet in just 16 miles along a deep ravine riddled with holes and caves.
- (31) Over 12,000 priests lived in the city of Jericho and served in Jerusalem, so their presence along this road was not uncommon, though most usually traveled the longer but safer route via Bethlehem. The priest was under moral obligation to help this man, but because of his deviant view on physical cleanness, chose to pass on the other side.
- (32) A Levite (priest’s assistant or temple guard) also passed by and failed to render assistance. He too showed a selfish indifference to his countryman’s plight. Their conduct was in violation of the law (Ex. 23:4,5; Deut. 22:1-4; Isa. 58:7; Mal. 2:6,7).
- (33-35) A Samaritan traveling the road sees the man and has mercy on him. He treated him, took him to an inn, took care of him through the remainder of the day and night, and paid for further treatment that might be necessary. A Jew would certainly not expect such an act of neighborliness from a Samaritan. Oil and wine were commonly used as medicines and travelers usually stock a supply of both for just such purposes.
- (36,37) Now the lawyer can answer his own question. The neighbor to the man was the one who showed him mercy. There was no honest way for the lawyer to answer this question wrong. The lawyer was caught in the very trap he had laid for Jesus. To inherit eternal life the lawyer must “go and do likewise.” Note however, that the lawyer avoid saying “the Samaritan” by saying instead “the one who showed mercy.”

## 89. Jesus at the Home of Mary and Martha (Lk. 10:38-42)

- (38) Jesus was touring Judea at this time. Jn. 11:1 indicates that Mary and Martha lived in Bethany, a village two miles from Jerusalem.
- (39) Martha was probably the eldest of the two sisters. Mary was sitting at Jesus’ feet, which was the traditional place of the student.
- (40) Martha was worried and anxious that everything in the household would be in order, so her honored guest could be taken care of acceptably. In her frustration she almost reproaches Jesus for distracting her sister from her chores.

- (41) By repeating her name, Jesus calls attention to the fact that what He is about to say is for her hearing. Jesus tells Martha that physical cares are not the most important thing that she should have on her mind. Her preoccupation with them has distracted her from what is truly important.
- (42) Contrasted to the “many things” over which Martha was troubled was the “one thing” which is needful. What was this “one thing?” The proper state of mind for receiving Jesus and His words.

**90. Prayer Taught and Encouraged (Lk. 11:1-13)**

- a. The Model Prayer (vv. 1-4) – Compare these verses to Mt. 6:9-13.**
  - (1) The Lord’s prayerful attitude reminded the disciples of John the Baptist (Lk. 5:33).
  - (2) The model prayer first calls upon the Holy Father, the addressee of the prayer. What does “hallow” mean? The petition for the kingdom to come is only relevant to us today in the sense of the end time. The kingdom exists now, as the church. From the Apostles perspective at the time of this prayer, they were looking forward to the kingdom coming.
  - (3) After spiritual requests were made, then physical needs could be sought.
  - (4) Forgiveness on our part is mandatory if we want to be forgiven. God will not tempt us but His providence might take us down a road where temptations exist. We know that we will not be tempted beyond that which we are able to bear (1 Cor. 10:13; 2Pet. 2:9). Must we say “in Jesus name” when we conclude a prayer? (Jn. 16:23)
- b. A friend comes at midnight (vv. 5-8)**
  - (5,6) This passage teaches us that persistence in prayer is important.
  - (7,8) It would be a great bother for the man to get up and give the friend his three loaves, but where friendship might not get him out of bed, his friend’s shamelessness will. Compare to the apostles’ later teachings such as, “pray without ceasing,” Praying always,” and “praying everywhere.”
- c. Keep asking, seeking, knocking (vv. 9-13)**
  - (9,10) Asking must be followed by seeking and searching (Deut. 4:29). When asking does not bring relief, then we must seek and ask (Jn. 15:7; 16:23). When obstacles present themselves, as closed doorways then knocking must be employed. Apply these three procedures to the previous story of the friend at midnight. Asking, seeking and knocking emphasize the persistency and earnestness with which prayer must be pursued.
  - (11-13) A loaf of bread resembled a large flat stone; some fish resemble snakes (compare Mt. 7:9,10). A scorpion of the white variety could roll itself into the shape of an egg. If an earthly parent would not give his child a harmful imitation in place of needed food, then God certainly would not give useless or harmful spiritual gifts to His children.

**91. Accused of Blasphemy, Rebukes the Pharisees (Lk. 11:14-30)**

- (14) This is possibly the same case recorded in Mt. 12:22. The demon caused the man to be dumb.
- (15,16) Those who object to Jesus healing can be divided into two categories: 1- those who accused Him of being in league with the devil and 2- those who wanted additional signs. Jesus will deal with these sign-seekers in vv. 29ff.
- (17-20) Jesus will first answer the charge concerning His powers coming from Satan. Basically, He is saying that Satan could not cast out Satan. How could Satan be consciously engaged in destroying his own kingdom? Some of the Pharisees were casting out demons; if demons were cast out by the power of Satan then these Pharisees were also employing Satan. “Finger

of God” – compare Ex. 8:19. Note Matthew’s use of “Spirit of God,” namely the power of God.

- (21-23) Satan is the strong man – Jesus is the stronger man. The stronger man defeats the strong man and takes his possessions for his own. There is no middle ground when it comes to belief in Jesus.
- (24-26) The cast-out demon seeks another favorable place to dwell. If he finds no suitable new home, he might return back to his original home. If the person has not replaced the unclean spirit with a clean converted heart, what is there to stop the unclean spirit from returning?
- (27,28) A woman in the crowd was overcome with the truthfulness of Jesus’ teaching and His demonstration of power. Her expressions indicate she was a mother, because these sayings contain motherly instincts and feelings. (Compare Lk. 1:42) Is this incident a fulfillment of Lk. 1:48? Jesus can be praised by praising His mother. The mother-child relationship is indeed a cherished one, but not the most important. Mary is not to be worshipped. Hearing and keeping the commandments of God are of the utmost importance.
- (29) Jesus now turns to answer the sign-seekers (v. 16). Why was the generation evil? 1- They were unbelieving and, 2- they demanded unreasonable evidences of the Divinity of Jesus. The sign they did receive was the sign of Jonah. How would this sign be displayed?
- (30) As Jonah was in the belly of the large fish for three days, so Jesus would be in the heart of the earth. Jonah came forth and saved Nineveh; Jesus would come forth and save the world.
- (31) See 1 Ki. 10:1. The queen of Sheba traveled a great distance to hear Solomon. Faith carried her on that journey. The preaching of Jesus was greater than any wisdom that Solomon possessed.
- (32) Jesus is greater than Jonah. Compared to the Ninevites, those that heard the preaching of Jesus should have been ready to repent.
- (33) Jesus uses this illustration often. A light is worthless unless it is put somewhere where it would be used.
- (34) Our eye compares to the lamp of the illustration. We use our eye for vision but if it is blurred we cannot find our way. The good eye is single (clear, well focused), but the evil eye has double vision (confused, mixed together). The Pharisees had spiritual double vision.
- (35,36) A light that consists of darkness is no light at all. The light must illuminate the inner man, as a candle illuminates the outer man. These Pharisees had been disputing the signs and works that Jesus was doing. They were in darkness, blind, and given over to evil (Jn. 3:19; 2 Cor. 4:4)

**92. Dines With a Pharisee (Lk. 11:37-54)** – This was previously covered under topic #59.

**93. Speaks of Covetousness, Hypocrisy, Preparedness, and His Suffering (Lk. 12:1-59)**

**a. A charge to His disciples (vv. 1-12)**

- (1) Beware of hypocrisy – While Jesus was dining with the Pharisee (Lk. 11:37-54), a crowd was gathering. They were so eager to see and hear Jesus that they trampled each other. Jesus addresses His disciples concerning the “leaven of the Pharisees,” namely hypocrisy. The Pharisees sought to honor men rather than God. They showed a pretense of being religious but were actually devoid of spirituality.
- (2) Mt. 10:26-33 parallels this passage. Jesus is saying that the truth would unmask all things, good and evil, pure and hypocritical.
- (3) Many would soon be going into hiding because of persecution. Bold speech would be the best for the cause. In Eastern homes the rooftops were used to make public proclamations.
- (4,5) Jesus teaches the fear of God – Fear of God must overcome fear of man. Even though fear of man would cause silence, the fear of God should cause them to speak out. Man can only condemn the temporal body to destruction; God can condemn the spiritual body to eternal destruction.

- (6) Sparrows had hardly any worth to the Jewish people, but God did not forget them.
- (7) Nothing is too small for God to take note of it. If God will not overlook even the smallest or insignificant creatures, then he certainly will not overlook man.
- (8,9) Confess Christ before man. The confession or denial of Jesus involved eternal honor or everlasting disgrace. The disciples will have to take a stand. A time was fast approaching when such a confession could lead to physical death.
- (10) The persecutors would urge the disciples to blaspheme. Blasphemy can be forgiven as long as the point of no return is not passed. One commentator says that “blasphemy of the Holy Spirit” is the total rejection of the New Testament, which of course would include rejection of the plan of salvation, which in turn would preclude forgiveness of sins.
- (11,12) The Holy Spirit would supply the disciples with their defenses against the persecutors. Compare Stephen’s defense and Paul’s defenses before the tribunals of Felix and Agrippa.

**b. Parable of the Rich Fool (a warning against covetousness) (Lk. 12:13-21)**

- (13) A man calls on Jesus to give a decision against his brother. The man’s claim was probably just or he would have not brought before someone so well known to oppose injustice.
- (14) Jesus refuses to judge secular matters (compare Lk. 20:25). His kingdom was not of this world (Jn. 18:36). This incident gave Jesus the chance to deliver the following parable against covetousness.
- (15) What is covetousness? It can be described as greedy and unlawful desire. The use of the word “all” implies that there is more than one type of covetousness. Worldly possessions will not prolong physical life. How does covetousness apply to the brother who refused to divide his inheritance? How about to the brother that demanded the division?
- (16) The man of the parable is honestly wealthy.
- (17) Along with his wealth came anxiety, caused by not having the appropriate place to store his wealth.
- (18) Instead of helping the needy or distributing his wealth, the man chose to hoard his goods.
- (19) With his goods safely stored away the man could take it easy because he would have no worldly cares. Why is this covetousness? He did certainly not desire his neighbor’s possessions. The key word here is greed.
- (20) The man’s earthly “wisdom” can be defined as spiritual folly. In all actuality, he lacked good judgment. His life goals were not in alignment with God’s will. Compare the rich man’s plans for himself, with the plan that God had in store for him.
- (21) We should be accumulating spiritual riches such as faith, love, and good works. These riches and others like them are the ones that will carry us beyond the grave.

**c. Do not worry (Lk. 12:22-34)**

- (22,23) This teaching appears in a different context as part of the Sermon on the Mount, Mt. 6:25-33. The point of the parable of the rich man is now brought home to the disciples. They must have their priorities aligned with God’s. Instead of focusing on this earth-life, they should have their sights set on the Eternal Kingdom.
- (24) The birds do not “fret” over their next meal; God provides it for them. The birds must still work; they must seek their food. Jesus is not discouraging work, just anxiety.
- (25,26) If worry will not increase your height or lengthen your life (two spiritually unimportant things), then how will it help you in spiritual matters? The short answer is – it won’t!
- (27,28) The lilies are a colorful group of plants, with more than a dozen varieties growing in Palestine. Jesus has taken his argument from food (ravens) to clothing (lilies). The lilies did nothing to achieve their beauty while Solomon and his servants had to work continuously to keep up his appearance. The dried grass and flowers were used as fuel. They served a useful purpose besides being something to look at. The disciples have a longer existence and an even

more important work, so surely God will take care of them. Only the faithless would fail to see this fact.

- (29,30) Jesus warns against anxiously seeking those things that perish with the using. A firm faith is required, material things that are needed will be provided. People who are ignorant of God are the ones caught up in worldly cares. They believe that pleasure comes from the things of the world.
- (31) The emphasis must be on the kingdom, if so, then material possessions (such as needed) will be provided. God will support our earthly life and give eternal life to the righteous.
- (32) This is a term of endearment; the kingdom was yet to be given. As a flock of sheep is dependent on their shepherd, so are Christ's disciples dependent on Him.
- (33,34) Riches are not to be hoarded. Earthly wallets will eventually rot away. A spiritual wallet however, will last forever. Spiritual treasures cannot be tampered with by outside forces without the consent of the owner. Needless to say our worldly possessions might be stolen or destroyed at any moment. Paul paraphrases Jesus – see Col. 3:2.

**d. The Faithful Servant and the Evil Servant (vv. 35-48)**

- (35,36) Notice these three points: The necessity of being 1-constantly and 2- thoroughly prepared for the return of the Savior and the 3- blessedness of watching for it. What does “gird your loins” mean? Compare the similar lesson taught in the parable of the ten virgins (Mt. 25:1-13).
- (37,38) Watchfulness is further encouraged by the description of these servants. Their fidelity makes them become honored guests. Compare Jn. 13:4-8. The Romans divided night into four watches; the second and third watches would be awfully late for the arrival of a guest. The Jews originally divided the day into three watches.
- (39,40) The necessity of constant vigilance is illustrated (see parallel in Mt. 24:43-51). The clay and thatch of their roofs made their houses easy prey for thieves. The coming of Christ and the death of the individual cannot be predicted; therefore we must always be prepared.
- (41) Verses 22 to 40 have been generally directed to disciples, but Peter wanted to know if these parables had broader applications. Jesus will not answer directly, but through a continuation of His current teaching.
- (42-44) Jesus is especially addressing His disciples, but not exclusively. A steward has two requirements he must fulfill: 1-fidelity and 2-wisdom. All Christians can and must be stewards. Think about Joseph as Pharaoh's steward.
- (45,46) The unfaithful steward would take advantage of the master's absence; he would betray his master's trust. This servant will receive a terrible punishment. Note the fall of this servant: 1- a servant of the Lord, 2- entertains an evil thought which 3-results in wickedness, and 4- ends in retribution. “Cutting asunder” represents the figure of punishment and not necessarily the exact punishment inflicted on the evildoer.
- (47,48) It seems that Jesus is teaching that rewards and punishments will vary according to opportunities and abilities (Mt. 25:14-30). The Law of Moses called for different degrees of punishment not to exceed 40 stripes. Note: even the ignorant will be punished because ignorance is a sin (Lev. 5:17).

**e. Christ Brings Division (vv. 49-59)**

- (49) Jesus has just stressed the necessity of vigilance and preparedness; this led Him to refer to His suffering and the divisions that the gospel would cause. The gospel was the fire; it initiated the process of purification, eventually culminating in judgment. Jesus' work is almost complete, the fire is already kindled at this point in His ministry.
- (50) This baptism will be an immersion in suffering, namely the agony of the cross. Remember His challenge to James and John as to whether they could withstand His baptism or not (Mt. 20:22; Mk. 10:32). Jesus lived daily with the cross on His mind.

- (51,52) Strife and persecution are to be expected as results of preaching and practicing the gospel of Christ. Peace can be brought to an evil world by destroying error; thus there will be strife and division, even within families and households.
- (53) Even those bound by the closest blood ties would be divided.
- (54) Compare to Mt. 5:25ff and 16:1ff. This is a sign that was familiar to the people. Jesus is rebuking the people because they claim to be able to discern the signs portending the Messiah.
- (55) The south wind came off the Arabian Desert and the west wind came off the Great Sea (job 37:17). They should have been able to understand the coming of Christ.
- (56,57) “This time” – began with John the Baptist. Two storms were rising, political and spiritual. They could have easily seen the storms brewing, but they made no provisions for the trouble ahead. The teachings of John and Jesus were so plain that no further warning should have been necessary.
- (58,59) Jesus appeals to the people to avert the coming disasters. Some scholars feel that Jesus is saying the people could be reconciled to God the Father if they did so before the judgment. However, most commentators feel that Jesus is specifically discussing His Messiahship and the impending destruction of Jerusalem.

#### **94. Repent or Perish: Barren Fig Tree (Lk. 13:1-9)**

- (1) The specific Galileans mentioned here are not identified. For a man’s blood to be mingled with his own sacrifice would stand as a curse to the Jewish people.
- (2) These who were bringing up this incident were trying to divert Jesus’ attention and teaching in another direction. Many wish to talk of other problems (death, sins) rather than focus on their own. The prevalent idea was that suffering was caused by sin. Jesus does not deny that these Galileans were sinners, but only that their sins were no greater than the sins of those present.
- (3) Jesus brings their sins to the forefront. This is a warning and a rebuke to these men who brought up this story to Jesus. The choice is clear: repent or perish.
- (4,5) The location of this tower or the identities of these 18 people are not important, but the point is to reemphasize the lesson.
- (6) (This parable is only recorded by Luke.) Compare to the parable of Isaiah 5. The fig tree was taken care of and cultivated; it was expected to bear fruit.
- (7-9) Three years represents the time given for the tree to produce. Could the three years also correspond to Jesus’ ministry? By the end of three years the tree should have brought forth fruit. The owner refused to waste anymore time or labor on the tree. The barren tree would be removed to make way for something more fruitful. The gardener begged for one more chance to cultivate the tree to fruitfulness. How does this parable apply to the Jewish nation? To sinners in general?

#### **95. Healing on the Sabbath (Lk. 13:10-17)**

- (10) Jesus frequently taught in the synagogue, a practice continued by His apostles after His ascension.
- (11) The woman had curvature of the spine, which was attributed to demonic possession. She was a Jewess and had suffered the ailment for 18 years.
- (12,13) Jesus performs this miracle publicly and the effects as usual are immediate. There is no evidence to show that the woman came to Jesus with the intentions of being healed, but only by the providence of God arrive did she arrive at the synagogue at this very moment. The widow at Nain is another example of an unsolicited miracle.

- (14) The ruler of the synagogue was a coward. While his anger was directed at Jesus, his wrath was directed toward the people. Each synagogue had a ruler in charge to make sure that the services were held in an orderly fashion. Note: Nothing done here broke the Sabbath. The rebuke was unfounded in the first place and directed towards the wrong party in the second place.
- (15) Jesus condemns the entire class of people who believed as this ruler believed. Compare “adversaries” in verse 17. How were they hypocrites? 1-They disguised their hatred for Jesus under a pretended zeal for the Sabbath. 2- Their zeal for the Sabbath was insincere, as Jesus points out. Jesus had broken their tradition, not the Sabbath.
- (16) Jesus presents three contrasts that show that His actions are superior to theirs. 1- Jesus blessed a woman, while they blessed an ox. 2- He loosed the woman from a debilitating disease, while they let the ox out of a comfortable stall. 3- He relieved an affliction of 18 years, while they relieved a problem that was only a few hours old at the most! Jesus also mentions Satan’s hand in this woman’s affliction.
- (17) This wisdom silenced the narrow-minded rulers. The following two parables indicate the nature of victories yet to come.

**96. Parables on Mustard Seed and Leaven (Lk. 13:18-21)**

(18,19) See also Mt. 13:31-33 and Mk. 4:31,32. The point is well taken from the Matthew passage; namely, the greatest of herbs comes from the smallest of seeds. It is the nature of God’s Kingdom to grow.

(20,21) The kingdom is like leaven because it will influence whatever it comes in contact with. The truth of God implanted will influence a life and that life will influence other lives around it.

**97. At the Feast of Dedication (Jn. 10:22-38) – See Johnson’s comments on this feast p. 164.**

(22,23) The feast occurred during December. Since this feast celebrated national deliverance and was very patriotic (from the Jewish standpoint), the rulers used it as an opportune time to tempt Jesus. Solomon’s porch was under cover and sheltered from the winter weather.

(24) The Jews were trying to get “evidence” against Jesus. Verse 31 indicates that their minds were already made up.

(25) His teachings and works proved that Jesus was the Messiah of the OT; unfortunately the Pharisees were looking for a different kind of Messiah. (See Jn. 5:19; 8:36, 56, 58.)

(26) Lack of proof did not cause their unbelief, but their unwillingness to accept that proof. Jn. 7:17 indicates who will recognize Jesus as the Son of God.

(27,28) “Eternal life” occurs 44 times in the NT, with 23 of these occurrences attributed to John. It implies a blessed immortality, an endless existence in a state of bliss as opposed to an endless existence in a state of punishment (Mt. 25:46). Our existence never ceases, it only moves down one of these pathways. Spiritual life is a gift from Christ. Eternal life is the inheritance of all who have been born of water and the Spirit.

(29) Does this verse teach the impossibility of apostasy? Compare this passage to Rom. 8:38,39 in light of Heb. 6:4-8 and Lk. 8:13. We cannot be taken from God against our will, but we can choose to leave.

(30) This unity of power described in verse 29 carries over from the general unity between Jesus and the Father.

(31) They based their intentions on Lev. 24:14-16 and 1 Kings 21:10.

(32) What crime has Jesus committed? Which of His good works was sin?

(33) They claimed Jesus was merely human and not God, therefore He was a blasphemer in their eyes. They would have been right – if Jesus was only a man!

- (34) Ps. 82:6 – If you call your judges gods and your people children of God, what blasphemy is there in being the Son of God.
- (35,36) The OT coupled with the works and life of Jesus gave Him the right to this title, while these Pharisees were laying claim to titles that they did not deserve. (Ex. 22:28) Remember, to try and learn the complete character of Jesus from His confrontations with the angry mobs would be a mistake. Faithful conclusions concerning His character can only be reached upon a study of His entire life.
- (37,38) Once again Jesus calls for them to judge Him on His works and manner of life, not just His words. How is the Father in Christ? The Father is the Divine life that animated and controls the man Christ. How is Christ in the Father? Because Jesus is a complete partner in the Divine nature of the Godhood, He is in the Father.

**98. Escapes to a Place Beyond Jordan (Jn. 10:39-42)**

- (39) They wanted to arrest Jesus. This escape was probably not miraculous, but obviously providential. This concludes Jesus' three months of ministry in Jerusalem. During this ministry he had been mobbed twice and subjected to two arrest attempts. During this time the Jews had begun to plan for His assassination.
- (40) Perhaps a more friendly reception could be had in this region where John had preached so thoroughly.
- (41) Jesus' presence brought John back to the minds of the people of the region. While John had used no overt miracles to prove his ministry, his prophecies concerning Jesus were now seen to be true.
- (42) Note the contrast to the few Jesus was able to convince during the Jerusalem ministry.

**99. Enroute to Jerusalem, The Narrow Gate, Warned Against Herod (Lk. 13:22-35)**

**a. The Narrow Way (vv. 22-33)**

- (22) It is hard to ascertain exactly where Jesus was touring. It might have been either Galilee or Peria. However, His destination was clear – Jerusalem.
- (23) A Jew, because of the narrow view he possessed of God's chosen ones, probably posed this question. The story of the conversion of Cornelius shows that even Jewish proselytes held this view of exclusivity. Jesus turns the point of the question away from the actual number to be saved and towards how to be among that number.
- (24) Compare to Mt. 13:13,14. These people should strive (literally agonize) to enter the narrow gate. Jesus indicates here that many will not be saved.
- (25) The time to enter the narrow way is limited; when it expires no one can enter no matter what. So promptness is part of the act of obedience that it takes to gain entrance.
- (26) Those left outside will plead that they do know the Lord and will bring up instances where they communed with Him. They will make excuses as to why they are not prepared.
- (27) No amount of pleading will save them after their fate is sealed. "The door would not be narrow if it opened to excuses."
- (28) Gnashing indicates intense pain and anguish. Not only will they weep because of their rejection, but because of other's acceptance.
- (29) Salvation is not for the Jews only, but for all the earth. (Isa. 45:6; 49:6) Gentiles can become spiritual descendants through faith (Heb. 11:8-19) and can participate in the Kingdom of God on earth (Col. 1:13) and in heaven (2 Pet. 1:11). This answers the ethnocentrism of the Jews.
- (30) The present relations will be so reversed as to exclude those who would have been most favored guests and allow those who would have been least likely to be invited to attend.

- (31) This was probably a ruse by Herod Antipas to get Jesus out of his territory. It is very unlikely these Pharisees were really trying to protect Jesus, but instead were doing the bidding of Herod. The reply made by Jesus substantiates this thinking.
- (32) Jesus recognizing the cunning of Herod sends him a message in reply.
- (33) Jesus predicts His own end. He was headed for His end and that end must take place in Jerusalem.

**b. Jesus laments over Jerusalem (vv. 34,35)**

- (34) Compare Mt. 23:37-39. The history of Jerusalem was that the inhabitants had always persecuted the prophets of God. This lamentation shows the love that Jesus possessed for this city and her people.
- (35) The Jews and Jerusalem had rejected Jesus, therefore their city, their temple, and even their race was doomed to destruction.

**100. Dining With A Pharisee (Lk. 14:1-24)**

**a. A man with dropsy healed on the Sabbath (vv. 1-6)**

- (1) This Pharisee probably lived in Perea. The Sabbath could be kept in quiet conversation (Neh. 8:10). The purpose of inviting Jesus was probably to try and find evidence against Him.
- (2) This man's presence may have been planned, but verse four shows that he had not been invited to eat. Dropsy was a disease that caused water blisters over the entire body.
- (3) Jesus turns the tables on the Pharisees and lawyers by asking them if it is lawful to heal on the Sabbath. They would not answer because regardless of how they replied, their case would not be served. If they said "yes," then they could not accuse Jesus; if they said "no," they would appear unmerciful and heartless.
- (4) By keeping their peace they allowed Jesus to perform the healing unhindered. Because of the way Jesus posed His question their silence acted as their consent. Jesus laid hands on the man and he was healed.
- (5,6) Compare Mt. 12:11,12. The Jews would use much labor to save an ox on the Sabbath day. Once again the Pharisee chose silence as the least form of embarrassment.

**b. Take the lowly place (vv. 7-14)**

This section contains the first two of three parables to be delivered on this occasion. 1- (vv. 7-11) The conduct of those invited to a feast. 2-(vv. 12-14) Against those who would invite only those from whom they could receive something. And, 3-(vv. 16-24) corrections of false views concerning blessings of the Messianic Kingdom.

- (7) The chief seat was at the center of the table and designated for the guest of honor.
- (8,9) The seating arrangement should be left to the host; a humble seat should be taken if not designated. Only an egocentric person would presume to take the chief seat. The host could ask you to move if you took a seat above your station. It is better to be invited to higher place than to be requested to move to a lower one. The only seat left will be the seat furthest from the center.
- (10) If on the other hand you take the humblest seat, you may be invited to move up. The truth being taught in this parable is that humility leads to exaltation.
- (11) Pride comes before the fall. The principle can be applied in secular and spiritual affairs. Compare Prov. 16:18; Ezek. 21:26; Lk. 18:14; Mt. 23:12.

- (12) Many have selfish motives when inviting guests. What can they return to me? Jesus lists four groups who would probably invite you back. If these any of these groups are chosen and then they invite you back, then you have accomplished nothing as far as charity is concerned.
- (13) These groups should be chosen so that charity can be shown not to mock them. Those in need of charity should take precedence over those just wanting to be social.
- (14) A reward will come to the charitable. The exchange of entertainments has its earthly rewards, while a feast prepared for the downcast has a heavenly reward (Mt. 25:31-46).

**c. The Parable of the Great Supper (vv. 15-24)**

- (15) What this man meant is subject to much discussion among the commentators. 1- A literal earthly feast ushering in an earthly Messianic Kingdom. 2- Spiritual bread in a spiritual kingdom.
- (16) This parable will contradict the notion that all Jews will be partakers of the kingdom and that no Gentiles will be present.
- (17) This was the second invitation. Compare to Esther 5:8; 6:14. The guests were to come at once.
- (18-20) Each made excuses of the following nature: 1- Their business or pleasure was more important than the banquet, 2- they set little value on the feast or its host (and note that the disrespect progresses as we examine the excuses) a- necessity, b- a reason, c- impudently blunt. Note the element of newness. Could Paul have had this parable in mind when he wrote 1 Cor. 7:29-33? We must be warned by these excuses not to be hindered by 1- love of possessions, 2- affairs of business or 3- social ties.
- (21) These people could have lain aside their earthly cares long enough to attend the feast. The feast would not be wasted; people from the streets would be invited, including those of the lowest classes.
- (22) The servant obeyed his master and still the feast was not full.
- (23) The servant was sent to the places where the lowest of all classes could be found.
- (24) Those that rejected the feast showed themselves unworthy of the feast in the first place. The gospel had been offered to the Jews and they refused it. Gentiles and others more worthy would now receive the blessings first extended to the Jews.

**101. The Cost of Discipleship (Lk. 14:25-35)**

**a. Leaving all to follow Christ (vv. 25-33)**

- (25) As Jesus continued his journey to Jerusalem a great crowd followed. A similar speech in a different context can be found in Mt. 10:37,38 and Mk. 9:50.
- (26) "Hate not" would be more understandably translated "loves less." Jesus is simply telling the disciples that He must come first on their priority list. (Compare Mt. 10:37.) Paul displayed this attitude in Acts 20:24.
- (27) Nothing can come between Christ and us, not family, friends, possessions or even our own lives. Each will have his own cross to bear. How can we have different crosses?
- (28) A wise man will calculate the costs before launching a project. Prudence and wisdom are part of being a Christian. Contrast this to our charismatic friends today.
- (29,30) Jesus is not trying to discourage discipleship, but instead warning us against undertaking such a job unprepared or in a lighthearted or frivolous manner. Those who set out to be disciples, but cannot complete their task will be mocked by the world.
- (31) Jesus repeats the same thought. You do not enter a battle headlong, but plan strategically and carefully.
- (32) If the enemy cannot be met on common ground, then terms should be met while the enemy is afar off and has not yet discovered your weaknesses.

(33) A false start or a hopeless stand are not things that a true disciple of Christ will attempt.

**b. Tasteless salt is worthless (vv. 34,35)**

(34,35) Salt is used as an example of a preservative (Mt. 5:13; Mk. 9:50). A true disciple is like good salt, but the Lord will discard a useless or false disciple. They are not even good enough to be put on the compost pile! “He who has ears to hear, let him hear,” warns the listener of the deep meaning in Christ’s words. Compare the context of Mt. 11:15; 13:43; Lk. 8:8.

**102. Three Parables (Lk. 15:1-32)**

**a. Introduction (vv. 1,2)**

- (1) These parables were probably delivered the day after Jesus dined with the Pharisee. The publicans were tax collectors who more often than not exacted more tax than necessary from the Jews. They were hated for their occupation; the sinners were hated because of their offences against the Law. The context leads us to believe that these people were more than curious, but indeed felt a need to know more of Jesus.
- (2) The Pharisees (or separatists) had been in existence as a sect for about 150 years at the time of Christ’s ministry. The scribes (sometimes called the lawyers or doctors of the Law) preserved, copied and expounded the Law and the traditions. Both of these groups were frequently heard murmuring against Jesus on account of His eating with sinners and instructing them. These publicans and sinners were the very ones from which the Pharisees would separate themselves. Jesus speaks three parables to address the feelings of the Pharisees and make it known to the publicans and the sinners that they could be acceptable in His sight.

**b. Parable of the Lost Sheep (vv. 3-7)**

- (3) Jesus had previously spoken this parable in Mt. 18:12,13.
- (4) Jesus knows that if the circumstances He describes occurred, that these men would take action; how much quicker would God take action if one of His sheep were endangered? The 99 represents respectability in the eyes of the Jews and the one represents a departure from that respectability.
- (5) The sheep is weak and the shepherd demonstrates His willing affection.
- (6) The neighbors knew of the loss and were concerned. The Pharisees were not very good neighbors or they would have sympathized with his actions.
- (7) Jesus concludes and applies the parable: one sinner returned causes joy in heaven. Contrast this to the grumbling of the Pharisees. For the sake of the argument Jesus allows the Pharisees to be compared to the 99. Then by their own words condemn them!

**c. Parable of the Lost Coin (vv. 8-10)**

- (8) The coin was lost and its hiding place was concealed from human sight. The former parable would have been interesting to the men present while this one was directed towards the women to make the same point.
- (9) The woman was poor; she searched diligently for her (17¢) coin. She and her neighbors rejoiced upon finding the coin.
- (10) Joy among the angels corresponds to joy in heaven. Perhaps Jesus sought to shame the Pharisees out of their murmuring?

**d. The Parable of the Lost Son (vv. 11-32)**

- (11) It would be safe to say that the eldest son represents the Pharisees (those that profess religion) and the younger son represents the publicans and sinners (those who are irreligious).
- (12) The more childish and easily deceived son asked for his portion, probably 1/3 of the inheritance. It was not general practice for the Jews to divide their worth during their lifetimes, but it was not unheard of (Abraham, Gen. 25:1-6).
- (13) The younger son sought to escape the authority of his father as sinners seek to escape God's authority. Note how the parable depicts the pathway of sin: 1- indulgence (vv. 12,13), 2- misery (vv. 14-16), 3- repentance (vv. 17-20), and 4- forgiveness (vv. 20-24).
- (14) Sin will not satisfy for long, look at drug addiction for example. When sin brings us to this point of famine and want, we begin to search for a way out. The easiest and quickest way to recovery would be to reach out to the Father, however the lost son still thinks he can take care of himself.
- (15) This was the bottom of the barrel, especially to a Jew. They abhorred pigs and refused to even call them by their name, but instead referred to them as "the other thing."
- (16) The swine were probably fed with carob bean pods or husks; the young man was so hungry he was ready to eat this food fit only for the swine.
- (17) The young man finally realizes the sad state of his existence. He sees the folly of wasting his inheritance. While his father's servants were warm and filled, he was starving.
- (18,19) The son repented and now rehearses his confession. The son still trusted the father to take care of him regardless of the sins he had committed. He makes no excuses or apologies for sin but confesses them fully and takes the blame for them on his own shoulders. The connection between confession and repentance can be seen in such passages as 2 Sam. 12:13; Prov. 28:13; Hos. 14:2; 1 Jn. 1:9,10. He truly was not worthy to be called a son; he had forfeited his rights to that title. However, he was willing to become a hired servant.
- (20) Repentance is more than an impulse, but instead a journey. The father was waiting and expecting his son; the father was moved with compassion to receive his son. He was welcomed home as if he was a model son.
- (21) The son makes his confession as he had rehearsed it; some versions omit "make me as one of the hired servants."
- (22-24) The father was prepared to accept the return of his son. The best robe was brought as well as a ring and shoes. This honorable dress was an outward sign of the son's inward change. The fatted calf was customarily killed for an honored guest. The father testifies that his son has been reborn. He was dead to that which was righteous, now alive to that which is good. Compare this parable to that of the lost sheep and the lost coin.
- (25) The evidences of joy (see vv. 7 and 10) in this case were music and dancing. This is the joy at which the Pharisees had murmured, namely the repentance of the publicans and sinners.
- (26,27) Instead of investigating on his own, the older brother betrays his selfishness by sending a "footboy" to see what is going on. The news returned by the servant should have been good news. The attitude of the servant seems to indicate that he thought it was.
- (28) The word for angry here is "deep-seated wrath" as opposed to a temporary fit of passion. He refused to participate in the celebration, or even enter the house. He lacked brotherly love and respect for his father. The father not wishing that anyone be unhappy now goes out to entreat the older son.
- (29) The elder son justifies himself in the true Pharisaic spirit (Lk. 18:11,12; Rom. 3:9). He feels his father has cheated him.
- (30) He disclaims his brother, continues to contrast his righteous life to his brother's sinful life. The elder brother has tried to condemn his father for sanctioning the life of the younger brother while being ungrateful to him. He feels neglected and abused.

- (31) The father addresses the son calmly. The father reminds his son that all his possessions are co-owned by the son. The father was not proposing to give away the elder sons inheritance.
- (32) The father explains that the situation called for merrymaking; remember the elder son did not hear his brother's confession of sin. We do not know how the older brother reacted to his father's explanation, but we do know how the Pharisees reacted to the teaching of Jesus. Only 40 years will pass before the Jews lost their inheritance. Note the efforts of the Savior displayed in the Parable of the Lost Sheep (compassion) and the Lost Coin (value of the soul). Then note the efforts of man in the Parable of the Lost Son. Also note the progression from 1 out of 100 sheep to 1 out of 10 coins to 1 out of 2 sons.

### **103. The Unrighteous Steward (Lk. 16:1-18)**

- (1) A steward was in charge of the household stores; he had the authority to buy and sell in the name of the master. This steward was accused of wasting his master's goods. The steward does not deny the charge.
- (2) The master demands an accounting of the steward's work and then fires him from his job.
- (3) The steward did not know how he would make his living; he was too weak to do physical labor and too proud to beg. It seems that the steward would rather cheat and lie to secure his living than work or beg.
- (4) If he were to be fired, then he would make some friends using his position. Then he would rely on these new found friends to take care of him when he was without a job.
- (5-7) He put his plan into effect quickly, because he did not know how much longer he had. He began seeing his master's debtors one by one. The first owed about 800 gallons of oil. The steward reduced the debt by one-half. The second debtor owed 1100 bushels of wheat and the steward reduced his debt by 20%.
- (8) Even though he was cheated the lord admired the shrewdness of this steward. The steward is still dismissed. Jesus is not condoning the man's unrighteousness, but instead is making a point concerning making the best of a bad situation. The point: Men of the world sometimes use better judgment when dealing with worldly matters than disciples of Jesus do with respect to spiritual matters.
- (9) Jesus says that believers should show better judgment in their dealings with one another than crooks do with other crooks. Even our worldly possessions must be dealt with sensibly. Those who we help in this world will welcome us with open arms into heaven.
- (10) The right use of money and seeking the welfare of others applies not only to those who have abundance, but also to those who have little. Those who are not faithful concerning little things cannot be expected to be faithful concerning more important things.
- (11) Notice the contrast between "unrighteous mammon" and "true riches." If the disciples cannot be trusted with money, they certainly cannot be trusted with spiritual riches.
- (12) You must prove you deserve something of your own by taking care of that which belongs to others.
- (13) See Gal. 1:10 and Jas. 4:4. How can you travel north and south at the same time? You go nowhere. Equal service cannot be given, therefore one master must be chosen.
- (14) The Law, the prophets and the kingdom. The Pharisees were covetous when it came to money. To "scoff" means to "turn up your nose." Jesus' teaching concerning the use of money was a joke to them.
- (15) God despises inward unrighteousness no matter how the outer man appears. That is, the Pharisees were no better off the sinners and publicans in God's eyes.
- (16) Jesus introduces the idea of the new dispensation. The Pharisees had perverted the Law to the degree that in men's eyes they appeared righteous.
- (17) Jesus did not destroy the law or set it aside, he fulfilled the Law. Col. 2:14. Even the smallest requirements of the Law must be completed and adhere to.

- (18) As an illustration of a flagrant violation of God's natural law for man, Jesus uses divorce and remarriage.

#### **104. The Rich Man and Lazarus (Lk. 16:19-31)**

- (19) If the preceding parable illustrates how riches are to be used, then this parable teaches the consequences of not using them correctly. To be able to clothe yourself in purple and linen was a mark of both riches and royalty. His continual banqueting further shows the luxury in this man's life. He is a Jew and believes he is entitled to every blessing because of his heritage.
- (20) The word for beggar (one who crouches) is usually translated "poor." No proof to show that is Lazarus of John 11. He was in dire straits with physical problems that caused him to be handicapped, as well as be covered with sores.
- (21) The contrast between the rich man and Lazarus is obvious: 1-clothing, fine apparel vs. sores; 2- food, banquet vs. crumbs; 3-companions, brethren and servants vs. dogs; 4-attitude, self-satisfied vs. humble; and 5-wants, luxuries vs. necessities.
- (22) Relief came to the beggar in the form of death. His soul was carried to paradise.
- (23) Hades is the land or place of the departed spirits. Since both the beggar and rich man had died they were in Hades, however the Hadean world is divided into two distinct sections. The contrast between the rich man and the beggar are reversed in the after-life. To the Jew there could be no higher position of honor than reaching Abraham's bosom.
- (24) The rich man is now the beggar and asks for a crumb of comfort. This parable well describes the nature of eternal suffering. Because the rich man had abused his stewardship, he has no eternal reward other than punishment. (See v. 9.)
- (25) Abraham acknowledges his kinship with the rich man, but this blood bond will not avail him anything after death. Abraham continues the contrast.
- (26) The separation between paradise and torments is fixed and cannot be bridged, contrary to many beliefs held in the religious world.
- (27) The rich man's second request is on behalf of his brethren.
- (28) The rich man believes that Lazarus could return from the grave and save his five brothers. God does not count kindness to kindred for righteousness sake, it is expected (Lk. 6:32-35).
- (29) The Law of Moses was sufficient for these brethren; either they followed it or they would end up alongside their brother. The phrase "let them hear them" infers obedience.
- (30) The rich man argues for the miraculous sign. Compare to the Pharisees always calling on Jesus for a sign. Scriptural guidance is better than a sign.
- (31) Abraham gives the final answer: if Moses is rejected then so would one raised from the dead also be rejected. This is a direct prophecy of the rejection of the risen Christ by the majority of the Jews. Also note that Jesus had already raised the dead and was about to demonstrate this power again with a man aptly named Lazarus.

#### **105. Offenses, Faith and Service (Lk. 17:1-10)**

- (1) By this time some of Jesus' disciples had become unfaithful. Compare 1 Cor. 11:19 and Rom. 14:13.
- (2) It is better to suffer physical death than to cause a child of God to stumble. The millstone mentioned here is a small hand stone, but it is of a size large enough to hold a man underwater. The "little ones" represent beginners in the faith.
- (3) We should be responsible for our own actions, but if we know of a brother sinning then he should be rebuked ("to charge under penalty"). If he repents then he is forgiven.

- (4) The seven times simply represents a great number of times. The meaning is that as often as one sins and repents they are forgiven. Notice that forgiveness of sins is conditional upon the sinner's repentance.
- (5) The Apostles felt that they were deficient in this area and wanted more faith. This is a prayer that we all should be praying today.
- (6) Jesus tells of the power of faith. For the mulberry tree to be uprooted and moved would be a great undertaking because it is a deeply rooted tree. Some commentators feel that Jesus is specifically referring to the measure of faith that the Apostles needed to fulfill their duties. Compare to Mt. 17:20.
- (7) The Apostles should not get puffed up over their faith; they are still servants of a higher master. Not even the Apostles could complete their whole duty; their work is never finished. Explain how Paul "finished his course." (2 Tim. 4:7)
- (8) Sometimes a servant is called upon to perform extra duties. But a faithful servant will obey every command of his master.
- (9) Special thanks are not in order. The faithful servant gives of his time and energy and expects nothing in return.
- (10) The servants of Christ are to serve Him faithfully, no matter what the service. Sometimes the service will be pleasant (singing, praying, worshipping) but other times unpleasant (bearing heavy burdens, suffering persecutions). Some servants will perform services others cannot. For example: miracles. Even when we have done God a great service, we are still unprofitable (not useless). In this context "unprofitable" means "having rendered no service beyond that which is due."

## **106. To Bethany to Raise Lazarus (Jn. 11:1-46)**

### **a. The Death of Lazarus (vv. 1-16)**

- (1) Many commentators have speculated as to why only John recorded such a powerful story as the resurrection of Lazarus. Because of Jn 12:10 many believe that Matthew, Mark, and Luke were directed by the Holy Spirit to shield the resurrected Lazarus and his family from harm by not recording the events. John who wrote much later than the other three would have published his Gospel after the danger had passed. By reading Jn.12:1-11, Mt. 26:6-13 and Mk. 14:1-9 we get a good picture of this family whom Jesus loved. It appears they were somewhat rich in earthly possessions. Bethany was located about two miles across a valley from Jerusalem on the Eastern slope of the Mount of Olives.
- (2) John will describe this anointment of the Lord in Jn. 12:1-11. The New Testament refers to five prominent women named Mary. 1- The mother of Jesus, 2- Magdalene, 3-the mother of Mark, 4- the wife of Cleophas, and 5- the sister of Lazarus and Martha.
- (3) Notice that they only report their troubles and do not request any action on Jesus' part.
- (4) The reason for the sickness was so Jesus could demonstrate the glory of God. The death was merely a preceding incident so that the real purpose could be manifested, namely, the resurrection and the teaching that followed it.
- (5) Jesus loved this family. This explains why they contacted Jesus and that He delayed coming to them for some other reason than indifference.
- (6) Jesus delayed for two possible reasons: 1- to finish His Perea ministry and 2- by delaying His blessing He might enlarge it. Was it immoral for Christ to do this?
- (7,8) The disciples would be opposed to returning to the land of His enemies. They had come under much persecution the last time they were in Judea; even to the point of Jesus being assaulted.
- (9,10) "Day" represents the period of time Jesus was allotted to walk this earth. "Night" represents the time when the Jews could bring Him into custody, try Him, and have Him crucified. As long as God purposed Jesus to walk this earth no man could alter His progress.

- (11,12) Jesus speaks of death as sleep (Lk. 8:52). The reason the disciples misunderstood Jesus was because of what was said in verse 4. They saw sleep as the conclusion of the sickness and the beginning of the road to recovery.
- (13,14) Jesus must correct the disciples' misconception; Lazarus is dead. If Lazarus were literally sleeping the disciples would have reason to believe that he was getting better and Jesus would not be needed to return to Judea.
- (15) If Jesus had been present before Lazarus' death, He would have been encouraged to heal him. To resurrect Lazarus would stand as striking proof of His divine power.
- (16) Thomas means to die with Christ (v. 8). He could not mean to die with Lazarus since he was already dead. Thomas gives us an early indication of his lack of faith in the true powers of Jesus Christ. Even the resurrection of Lazarus would not sustain his faith (Jn. 20:24-29). One thing about Thomas that cannot be questioned however is his loyalty since he was willing to return and die.

**b. I Am the Resurrection and the Life (vv. 17-27)**

- (17) The two previous records of Jesus raising someone from the dead occurred immediately or soon after the death. In this case four days have passed. This is a miracle to be only surpassed by His resurrection.
- (18) Bethany was about two miles from Jerusalem, taking a furlong to be about 600 feet.
- (19) Jewish custom provided for seven days of public mourning for near relatives. However, the custom was for burial to be performed on the day of death. A total of 30 days of private mourning were also prescribed.
- (20) Martha, as always impetuous, goes out to meet Jesus. Exactly why Jesus paused is not known. Mary remained in the house.
- (21,22) Martha gives a lament, states a conviction concerning faith in Jesus and adds a reproach concerning His tardiness – all in two sentences. What she had in mind in v. 22 is hard to say. Based on vv. 24 and 39 it is hard to believe that she meant for Jesus to pray for Lazarus to be raised from the dead.
- (23,24) The Jews (with the exception of the Sadducees) believed in the ultimate resurrection. Jesus is setting Martha up for the teaching of v. 25.
- (25) Jesus makes a claim to be the Resurrection. That is, He will open every grave and call the dead out. His resurrection was for all humanity, and through it we have our victory over death. Jesus is declaring the same truth here as He did to the Samaritans (the Water of Life) and the Galileans (Bread of Life).
- (26) Those dead and alive in Christ will be given eternal life. Physical death will only be a change to a better existence.
- (27) Martha repeats the only creed of the true Apostolic New Testament Church of Christ: Jesus is the Son of God. (Mt. 16:16; Jn. 6:68,69; 20:31; 1 Jn. 5:1-5.)

**c. Jesus and Death; the Lost Enemy (vv. 28-37)**

- (28) The secrecy was so that Mary might have a private word with Jesus. Jesus had asked to see her.
- (29) Mary was quick to go to Jesus.
- (30) Jesus was still waiting some two miles outside of Bethany.
- (31) The Jewish custom would have mourners accompany Mary; they presumed they were going to the tomb. Their presence prevented Mary from having a private interview with Jesus.
- (32) The act of falling at His feet depicts: 1- her grief, 2- her dependence on Jesus and 3- her faith in Him. If the Lord had been present, Mary and Martha believed their brother would not have died.

- (33) The wailing of the hypocritical Jews filled Jesus with indignation.
- (34) Instead of pausing to console Mary, he asked for the location of the tomb. He wanted all present to come to the tomb so that they might witness His true reason for coming.
- (35) Jesus shed tears of sympathy and grief. In this short verse we can clearly see the kinship of Jesus to mankind.
- (36,37) The Jews knew of the miracle of Jn. 9:1-13. They saw no reason why Jesus could not have performed a similar one here. Perhaps they were showing contempt for Jesus by thinking something like, “If He could heal a blind man, why couldn’t He heal Lazarus?”

**d. Lazarus Raised From the Dead (vv. 38-46)**

- (38) The tomb was sealed with a stone. It was probably a natural cave.
- (39) Martha probably thought that Jesus only wished to view the remains; therefore she suggested that the smell would be unbearable. These words show that she did not anticipate her brother’s resurrection.
- (40) Jesus recounts vv. 25,26 and 4. Notice the conditional nature of the promise.
- (41,42) Martha showed her faith by ceasing to object and allowing the stone to be rolled back. Jesus knew that the Father was in agreement to raise Lazarus; the public prayer was for the benefit of the crowd, the disciples and the family. This miracle would prove that the Father and Jesus were in complete concordance. This prayer was not done “to be seen of men,” but calculated to induce faith.
- (43) Jesus calls Lazarus forth from the grave.
- (44) This binding of grave-clothes resembles the Egyptian mummification process, but was not as severe. (See Johnson’s commentary for 5 practical observations, pp. 179,180.
- (45) Many of the Jews mentioned in vv. 19 and 31 believed on Jesus.
- (46) Others, unable to understand the miracle, went at once to report this to the Pharisees. Their action is unquestionably hostile as we see John has categorized them as other than believers.

**107. The Sanhedrin Plot; Return to Ephraim (Jn. 11:47-54)**

- (47) This is the first account in the Gospels of a Sanhedrin council being called. The plans that will eventually lead to the arrest, trial and condemnation of Jesus began to take shape at this very meeting. Note that they do not deny the miracles of Jesus, only that they are doing nothing to counteract them.
- (48) Jesus continued to win disciples despite all threats of excommunication by the Jewish officials. These officials knew the purpose of miracles better than many modern-day “miracle workers!” The Romans were in control of the government, but tolerated the council running the religious affairs of Israel. The Jewish leaders feared that these powers would be taken and the Sanhedrin disbanded.
- (49) Caiaphas was high priest from AD 18 until AD 36, so “that year” refers to the year in which Jesus died. In his mind the only safe road was for Jesus to die.
- (50) Expediency outweighs justice! The “good” of the people and the country outweigh the worth of one man’s life.
- (51) Note the unwitting prophecy of Caiaphas: “Jesus shall die for that nation.”
- (52) Gal. 3:28; Col. 3:11 - We can compare Caiaphas to Balaam and Saul, to other Bible characters that performed their office without honor. What Rome could not do with the sword, Christ did with His death on the cross – He united all races!
- (53) So they have their official plan. John has traced the steps of this plan throughout his Gospel: 5:16-18; 7:32,45; 8:59; 9:22; 10:39.
- (54) Jesus removed Himself to a place about 16 miles N.E. of Jerusalem. He remained there until six days before the Passover.

**108. Toward Jerusalem, Ten Lepers, The Kingdom (Lk. 17:11-37) [Mt. 19:1,2; Mk. 10:1]**

**a. Ten Lepers Cleansed (vv. 11-19)**

- (11) Jesus is making a circuit north from Ephraim through Samaria and Galilee, across the Jordan and through Perea to Jerusalem.
- (12,13) Lepers were not allowed in towns and villages, but often begged at the gate. It was not uncommon for them to travel in groups. They stood back from the highway so as not to pollute passersby as required by law (Lev. 13:45,46; Num. 5:2; 2 Ki. 15:5). They cried out for mercy, not alms. This mercy that they sought was to be healed.
- (14) Their healing was conditional. They must go to the priest. Under the Old Law, the leper was to show himself to the priest so that he could be certified as healed (Lev. 13:1-6; 14:1-32; Lk. 5:14). As the lepers went on their way, the cleansing took place so that when they reached the priest they were healed.
- (15,16) As they journeyed to the priest their healing became evident. One of lepers could not contain himself from returning to Jesus to praise Him. Note that the returning leper was a Samaritan, which is surprising due to the animosity between the Samaritans and the Jews.
- (17) Only one out of the ten lepers returned the gratitude due for the service rendered. All ten were anxious to receive mercy, but nine were not willing to return praise and thanksgiving.
- (18,19) Of the ten healed, only the alien returned. The Samaritan was humble, grateful, and full of faith; therefore he was made whole. Some commentators say this passage implies that his sins were forgiven as well.

**b. The Coming of the Kingdom (vv. 20-37)**

- (20,21) Jesus had been preaching, “the kingdom is at hand.” Compare “Kingdom of God” to Mt. 3:2; Eph. 5:5; and Heb. 12:28. A spiritual kingdom had been foretold; the Jews had misunderstood the nature of the kingdom and were expecting an earthly one (Jn. 18:36; Rom. 14:17). The progress of the kingdom would mark no physical boundaries and no military or political triumphs. The fleshly senses cannot locate the kingdom. Jesus says instead, “the kingdom is within you.” What does this statement mean?
- (22) Jesus directs His next thoughts to the disciples. A time will come when the disciples will wish that Jesus would be among them physically as He was at the present time. But He would not be there in person.
- (23,24) False christs would arise and Jesus warns the disciples not to be misled. When Jesus does return it will not be in a certain place, but everywhere – all at once (Mt. 24:30,31; 25:31). The second coming will have no doubt surrounding it. It will be clear, sudden, and unmistakable to all true believers.
- (25) The second coming would come after the cross. Jesus is predicting His future. For the second coming to emanate from Heaven, Jesus must of necessity ascend there in the first place. How did His generation reject Him?
- (26,27) A similarity exists between the people in the times of Noah and those when Jesus comes again. What are the comparisons?
- (28,29) A similarity is drawn between the Sodomites and those at the second coming.
- (30) Just as suddenly as the Flood came and as fire and brimstone hailed down on Sodom, so shall be the return of Christ. The destruction of Jerusalem could also be put in parallel with these previous events.
- (31) At the second coming there will be no sense in trying to save our earthly possessions.
- (32) The hesitancy that caused Lot’s wife’s destruction is recalled. She became a literal monument to the fearful consequences of delaying or refusing to obey God.

- (33) The earthly life and natural blessings will have to be sacrificed. Those with this attitude will be saved. The opposite attitude will belong to the unbelievers.
- (34-36) Jesus will return when He will not be expected (1 Thess 5:2; Mt. 24:44). The one man might be saved while the other man might be lost. Note: v. 36 is omitted by most reliable authorities. However, it parallels Mt. 24:40.
- (37) Where will this take place? Wherever vultures gather at a dead carcass. That is where Jesus will appear at His second coming. Namely, He will appear everywhere on earth that is inhabited by man.

**109. Parable of the Importunate Widow (Lk. 18:1-8)**

- (1) Most commentators feel that this parable is told as a result of the previous conversation. Jesus once again encourages the disciples to pray. While He recommends prayer at regular and stated times, there is no time when a disciple might not pray (1 Thess. 5:17). Disciples are not to give up or fail because of opposition to the cause of Christ.
- (2) The Law of Moses provided that each city should have a judge to administer impartial justice (Ex. 18:21; Deut. 16:18; 2 Chron. 19:6,7). This judge did not hold God in awe. Neither did he respect man. By disrespecting God's law, this judge disrespected God (Ex. 23:6-9; Lev. 19:15; Deut. 1:16,17).
- (3) God has always looked down the widow with favor (Ex. 22:22; Mk. 12:40), yet this judge gave this widow no regard. She was poor and had no way to avenge herself against her adversaries. She also had no way to bribe this unrighteous judge to help her. So, she determined to frequently pester the judge.
- (4,5) For a while the judge resisted her pleas, but he finally came to the conclusion that the only way to be rid of her would be to give into her pleas. Note that his reasons for giving into the widow were entirely selfish.
- (6,7) Jesus calls on his listeners to reflect on what the unrighteous judge had done. Jesus would expect His listeners to reflect upon the judge's motives, selfishness, and actions. The truth Jesus wished to teach was if a wicked judge would grant justice, how much more will the Judge of all the earth be just?
- (8) Exactly what Jesus means here is unclear. Does He imply that there will be few faithful during the Christian dispensation or that he will find few faithful at His second coming? Other passages of scripture would indicate that both of these conclusions are warranted.

**110. Parable of the Pharisee and the Publican (Lk. 18:9-14)**

- (9) Jesus spoke this parable for the benefit of the Pharisees in the audience. They believed God would answer their prayers based on their righteous merit. They believed that all others amounted to nothing in God's eyes.
- (10) These two men represent those who are in a covenant relationship with God. They do not represent the Christian and the alien sinner. They both went up to the temple to attend the daily services. The contrast is between the types of attitudes possessed by worshipers. Jesus has already pointed out that Pharisees were characteristically self-righteous, hypocritical, and given to religious formality imposed by their own traditions. Most Jews, including the Pharisees, would see the publican as an outcast and a sinner.
- (11,12) The Pharisee assumed a pose where those gathered could easily see him. His posture and prayer showed no humility, piety, or reverence. He did give thanks to God. He was not seeking God's pardon, because he felt himself to be righteous as he was. He condemned the publican to God on sight. There is no evidence that he knew anything about the tax collector other than his occupation. To conclude his prayer, the Pharisee relates what he believes are his positive attributes. Note his use of the pronoun "I" in this short prayer.

- (13) While the Pharisee was posing for all to see, the publican stood back from the crowd. His posture showed his humility. Hitting himself in the chest indicated his sincerity and an open confession of his sins. He acknowledges his sins by confessing them in his prayer.
- (14) According to Jesus, the Pharisee was not justified – he offered no petition and requested no blessing. On the other hand the publican was the kind of man indicated in Isa. 66:2. He was poor in spirit and trembled at the word of God. Jesus concludes: “those that think themselves to be something are nothing, while those that are humble are something indeed! (Prov. 16:18; Lk. 14:11.)

## 111. Concerning Divorce (Mt. 19:3-12) [Mk. 10:2-12]

### (a) The Question (vv. 3-10)

- (3) Jesus’ teaching on marriage, divorce, and remarriage can be found here, Mt. 5:31,32; Mk. 10:11,12; and Lk. 16:18. This passage is considered to be the most comprehensive. These Pharisees were trying to trap Jesus. If he answers “yes” to their question he would antagonize those that followed the school of Shammai (5:32); if he said “no” then those of the school of Hillel would be offended. Herod might even be brought into the fray if Jesus gives a negative answer. Why? The Pharisees figure that they have put Jesus in “lose-lose” situation. This is the second of three challenges recorded by Matthew (here, 12:10 and 22:17).
- (4,5) God established the pattern for marriage in the beginning. He created male and female, then instructed the married couple to “leave and cleave.” The pattern set by Adam and Eve is to be followed – an indissoluble union between one man and one woman for life. (Chumbley p. 337.) To leave the parents indicates the relationship and not the responsibility. Primary allegiance is to be shifted from parents to spouse. To cleave to ones spouse means to be welded together.
- (6) This welding together of man and wife by God is not to be undone by divorce. To be responsible for a marriage coming to an unlawful end is sin in the eyes of God. Christ’s answer to the Pharisees then is – “NO, a man cannot divorce his wife for every cause.”
- (7) “If Gen. 1:27 and 2:24 meant what Jesus said they did, then how would he explain Deut. 24:1?” The Jewish writings of divorcement had to include provision that the put-away wife was free to remarry, be witnessed and served legally.
- (8) Due to the sinful, human obstinacy of the children of Israel, a practice was allowed under the Law that was not according to God’s original design. Why God made this concession under the Law is hard to determine. However, Jesus confirms in Mk. 10:2-5 that Moses indeed made this concession under God’s auspices.
- (9) Situation 1: Any man who divorces his wife and marries another commits adultery (or the remarriage of the divorced wife, 5:32. See also Mk. 10:12). Situation 2: A man who divorces his wife for the sin of fornication may remarry without sinning. Situation 3: Marrying an improperly divorced woman constitutes adultery. “Only those whose spouse commits fornication have the God-given right to divorce, regardless of the laws of the land.” Divorce is never desirable. It is no accident that this lesson follows one on forgiveness and humility. Even in the case of fornication every avenue of reconciliation should be explored before resorting to divorce. With God’s help a broken marriage can be repaired.

### (b) The Reaction (vv. 10-12)

- (10) The disciples had been conditioned all their lives by the ease in which the Jews obtained a divorce. Jesus’ teaching here staggers their imaginations. Their “off the cuff” conclusion is that it would be better to remain single.

- (11) Jesus agrees that it is better to remain single, but He then indicates that everyone will not be willing to accept that as a way of life.
- (12) Jesus lists three groups who live the celibate life for various reasons: 1)-those born with a physical dysfunction; 2)- those that have been made dysfunctional, typically to serve the ruler's harem; and 3)- those who volunteer to live as eunuchs for the sake of the kingdom (1 Cor. 7:7,8, 32-38). This third group could include those that chose to live a life of celibacy rather than enter into an unlawful marriage. Celibacy is not holier than marriage (1 Tim. 4:1-3; Heb. 13:4), but marriage is not required if one believes they can live in accordance with God's word and remain celibate.

**112. Concerning Children (Mt. 19:13-15) [Mk. 10:13-16; Lk.18:15-17]**

- (13) These parents wanted Jesus to bless their children. The disciples seemed to think that they were annoying Jesus or calling for Him to do something beneath His dignity.
- (14) Jesus disagreed with the disciples and had the children brought to Him. Jesus took this opportunity to teach that the kingdom was composed of people with a child-like nature. (See the Mark and Luke accounts.)
- (15) Their parents would long remember this blessing given to their children by Jesus. It is not a coincidence that this blessing of the children (the product of holy wedlock) follows the discourse on divorce.

**113. Rich Young Ruler; Peril of Riches, Reward of Sacrifice. (Mt. 19:16-30) [Mk. 10:17-31; Lk. 18:18-30]**

- (16) This young man was anxious and reverent. He thought that one good work would save Him. Eternal life is a reward for "being" not a reward for "doing."
- (17) The young man had been very loose with his use of the word "Good;" if he had been sincere then he would have known he was equating Jesus with God. The young ruler had unwittingly confessed the divinity of Jesus. For the ruler to accept what Jesus was about to say he would need much faith. Jesus told him to do what had already been given – the commandments.
- (18) The young ruler still sought a prominent commandment. Jesus enumerates the last six of the ten.
- (19) Jesus summarizes the all with "love thy neighbor" (Rom. 13:9).
- (20) The young ruler had kept the Law, but felt he was still lacking.
- (21) Jesus says he does need to do one thing to be complete. The command was a specific one needed in the case of this young man. The command showed that the young man had deceived himself; if he wished to be a disciple of Jesus he must obey the command.
- (22) Even though the ruler turned from Jesus, he did not turn away with a hard heart, but instead a broken one. Here we see a would-be disciple trying to walk that fine line between Jesus and the world and slipping off the wrong side.
- (23) **With God all things are possible** (vv. 23-30) See 1 Tim. 6:9, 10, 17-19.
- (24) When possessions control the possessor, they become sin. It is impossible for the one who trusts in possessions to enter the kingdom of heaven.
- (25,26) The Jews felt that riches meant divine favor, if not, who then could be saved? God can use the true heart of a rich man to dispense blessings on others. God must assist the man in his salvation no matter what his station in life.
- (27) Peter contrasts the behavior of the disciples to that of the rich man. What would be their reward?
- (28) When Jesus ascended to heaven to sit on the right hand of the Father He delegated the government of the Kingdom to the Apostles. The Apostles carried out their duties in this

regard by participating in penning the New Testament and spreading the gospel to the world. Christians are considered to be the twelve tribes in that as an aggregate we are God's chosen people living under a system that was initially administered by the twelve Apostles.

- (29) The rewards of being a Christian and practicing self-denial comes in two parts: 1)-temporal and 2)- eternal. List some examples.
- (30) The following parable will illustrate the point Jesus is making.

#### **114. Laborers in the Vineyard (Mt. 20:1-16)**

- (1) Here is the illustration of the previous point. Note: The work began at sunrise.
- (2) The value of the wages was perhaps less than 20 cents. However the exact value is not important other than it represented a day's wages for those hired first.
- (3) The third hour would be 9:00 AM. The householder needed more workers, so he went to the marketplace and found those in need of work.
- (4) The laborers agreed to work for "whatever was right."
- (5) At noon and 3:00 PM, the householder returned to the marketplace and secured more workers at the same wage.
- (6) At 5:00 PM (an hour before quitting time) he hired more workers.
- (7) The reason that these last laborers had not worked was that they had not been asked. Why is this important when discussing this verse as a "proof" for deathbed repentance?
- (8) According to Lev. 19:13 and Deut. 24:15, evening was the time of payment. There is no rule of business that calls for the last hired to be the first paid. However, taken with 19:30 it makes this parable even more applicable. How?
- (9) Those that began work at 5:00 PM received their 20 cents.
- (10) Those that had been working longer supposed that they would be paid more (2 Cor. 10:12). However, they were paid exactly what they had agreed to work for.
- (11) They complained against the very man to whom they agreed to work a day for 20 cents.
- (12) The householder fulfilled his part of the contract. Everyone who went to work at their first opportunity (main point) received the "full day's wage."
- (13) The householder was innocent of any wrongdoing. Why?
- (14) These men obviously wanted more than what was coming to them. Anything beyond the agreed upon amount would be undeserved, based on the original contract.
- (15) (Key: Evil Eye = Jealousy) If the householder chose to pay those who had no opportunity to work all day a full days wage that was his prerogative.
- (16) Notice that both the first and the last hired were received and rewarded by the master. Both terms, the last and the first, include accepted laborers. Therefore, 1)- the coin represents eternal life, 2)- the vineyard is the Lord's field of work, and 3)- evening is the close of the Christian dispensation and the time for the judge to come. The wages were not necessarily earned, but were bestowed by the grace of the Lord. Longer labor in God's kingdom will not claim a higher reward because their can be no higher reward than eternal life.

#### **115. Again Foretells His Passion – Third Prediction (Mt. 20:17-19) [Mk. 10:32-34; Lk. 18:31-34]**

- (17) Mark's account tells us that they were headed for Jerusalem and that the disciples were amazed (fearful) that he would even go there.
- (18) Jesus predicts how He will be arrested.
- (19) The Jews could condemn a man to death, but did not have the authority from the Roman government to execute the criminal. This is how it came about that the Romans performed the crucifixion. Mark adds, "spit upon Him" and Luke adds that prophecy would be fulfilled. We can count seven details of Christ's betrayal and death: 1)- betrayal, 2)- condemnation,

3)- delivered to the Gentiles, 4)- mocked, 5)-scourged, 6)-death by crucifixion, and 7)- resurrection on the third day. Jesus was trying to make the Apostles understand that there would be no materialistic hopes. Luke tells us that the apostles could not comprehend that Jesus was telling them something literal.

#### **116. Ambitions of James and John (Mt. 20:20-28) [Mk. 10: 35-45]**

- (20) The mother of James and John accompanies them to see Jesus. Note how they treat Jesus as an earthly ruler instead of deity. Compare to 1 Kings 2:19,20.
- (21) Jesus refused her request, but He wanted to expose their attitude publicly, so He made them state it. The family of Zebedee must have presumed that the teaching concerning the 12 thrones was physical in nature. They wanted the two most prominent seats.
- (22) “Cup” – means, “portion assigned.” Jesus would be “immersed” in suffering. This use of the word baptism helps to understand that the physical meaning of the word cannot include sprinkling or pouring. The brothers affirm that they can withstand these things.
- (23) Jesus rebuked James and John gently because He knew what was to come in their lives. Future rewards are based on the Father’s will. How do we make this passage correspond with others such as: 2 Tim. 4:8; Rev. 2:10,17,26,28; 3:12,21. Each of these passages teaches that the hand of Christ will distribute rewards.
- (24) The ten were probably equal in ambition to the two and resented their efforts to take unfair advantage of the Lord’s affection for them.
- (25) Jesus must once again take opportunity to distinguish the spiritual kingdom from an earthly one.
- (26) True greatness in the spiritual kingdom would involve making oneself a servant. To make the rebuke carry more weight, Jesus compares their attitudes to the heathens.
- (27) The word “slave” here is stronger than the word “servant” in the previous verse.
- (28) Jesus’ own example demonstrates this notion of Christians as servants. We also see Christ’s death termed as a ransom. Compare Isa. 53:12.

#### **117. Two Blind Men at Jericho (Mt. 20:29-34) [Mk. 10:46-52; Lk. 18:35-43]**

- (29) Luke tells us that the blind men heard of Jesus when He entered Jericho, while Matthew tells that the men called out to Jesus as He left. The crowd with Jesus could be due in part to the fact that the Passover was near and many were on their way to Jerusalem for the feast.
- (30) From Mark we see one of the men was named Bartimaeus. Matthew includes a companion. “Son of David” was a common Jewish reference to the Messiah. His title for Jesus was much more in keeping with Christ’s nature than those standing by who referred to Jesus as “the one of Nazareth.”
- (31) The multitude did not want their journey interrupted; others probably did not like the blind man confessing Jesus as the Messiah. Others among the disciples probably thought the beggars were below Christ’s dignity. Compare their attitudes to the woman in Mt. 15:22-28.
- (32) Jesus chose to deal with the beggars.
- (33) He asked the beggars what specific mercy they would have bestowed upon them. They replied, “our sight.”
- (34) The faith of Bartimaeus and his companion caused them to approach Jesus and request their sight. Faith leads to proper actions that in turn result in the mercies of God. Due to the gratitude they must have felt, they chose to follow Jesus.

## 118. Zacchaeus and the Parable of the Pounds (Lk. 19:1-27)

### a. Jesus comes to the house of Zacchaeus (vv. 1-10)

- (1) Chronologically, this event took place between the time when blind Bartimaeus first heard of Jesus and when he was healed. (That is, while Jesus was in Jericho). In real time it is about one week prior to the crucifixion.
- (2) Zacchaeus was a tax collector. Jericho was a center of trade and taxes were apt to be great, therefore the collectors there were generally rich.
- (3) Because of the crowd and his lack of height, Zacchaeus could not see Jesus.
- (4) The sycamore tree was easy to climb due to its low spreading branches. Technically, the tree was a wild fig and not related to the sycamore (buttonwood) located in the USA.
- (5) Jesus invites himself to the house of Zacchaeus. This was not presumptuous on Jesus' part, as He knew the heart of Zacchaeus.
- (6) The little man was overjoyed. Being an outcast, it was beyond his dreams that the Teacher would socialize with him.
- (7) The onlookers were disappointed that Jesus would socialize with a sinner. As a whole the publicans were known to be crooked.
- (8) Zacchaeus defended himself concerning these charges. Additionally he promised to give half of his goods to the poor and repay anyone that he had cheated four times the amount.
- (9,10) Salvation was at the house of Zacchaeus due to his repentance. Even though he was a publican, Zacchaeus was also a Jew and therefore fit the description of "a lost sheep of the house of Israel;" the very group to which Jesus was sent.

### b. The Parable of the Pounds (vv. 11-27)

- (11) Jesus did not want the multitude to think that he was on the way to Jerusalem to receive a physical crown.
- (12) This is a representation of Jesus going to the right hand of God after His resurrection. Notice that He must go to the far country to receive the kingdom.
- (13) The amount of money given each of the servants was small compared to what the nobleman might possess. Compare to the parable of the talents in Mt. 25. Think about the responsibility of the individual.
- (14) Besides His servants, there were citizens who did not want the nobleman as their ruler. Compare these citizens to the Jews or anyone else who would deny the authority of Jesus.
- (15) Jesus shall call us to account (2 Cor. 4:17). Notice that the reward is great for the good and faithful servant.
- (16,17) The faithful servants become rulers themselves (2 Tim. 2:12).
- (18,19) See Phil. 2:7.
- (20) The unfaithful servant did nothing with his money.
- (21) The servant is criticizing the Lord for being too harsh, too hard to please and one who expects others to do his work. This servant represents those that would make the labor and hardship that comes with the Christian life as an excuse for doing nothing.
- (22,23) The servant's actions do not justify him. You cannot contend with God. If you cannot do what the master wants you to do, then seek help!
- (24-26) If you make use of what you have, then your power to do more will increase.
- (27) Addressing the Jews and unbelievers, Jesus asks which would be more fearful: that sinners would be destroyed or that sin would be tolerated forever?

## 119. On Toward Jerusalem (Lk. 19:28)

- (28) Jesus now continues His journey to Jerusalem, leading the accompanying multitude as He goes.

## THE FOURFOLD GOSPEL - THE LIFE OF CHRIST

### PART NINE: LAST WEEK OF OUR LORD'S MINISTRY AND HIS CRUCIFIXION

#### 120. Jesus Arrives and is Feasted at Bethany (Jn. 11:55-12:11) [Mt. 26:6-13; Mk. 14:3-9]

##### a. Arrival (vv. 55-57)

- (55) The Jews would arrive for the feast early so they could be ceremonially purified before the Passover began. (Ex. 19:10,11; 2 Chron. 30:13-20; Jn. 18:28)
- (56) The Jews gathering at Jerusalem were curious concerning Jesus.
- (57) It was known among the people that the Sanhedrin was plotting against Jesus and was seeking to arrest Him.

##### b. The Anointing at Bethany (Jn. 12:1-8)

- (1) Jesus returns to Jerusalem via Bethany.
- (2) A feast is prepared at the house of Simon the Leper, served by Martha and attended by Lazarus. Mary anoints Jesus.
- (3) The oil was scented and very expensive, it was probably imported. The container itself was very costly. This was a humble act performed by Mary.
- (4) While Matthew and Mark refrain from pointing the finger of blame, John lets his readers know that Judas was the culprit. Judas could not see the honor bestowed upon Jesus; he only saw the cost of the oil.
- (5) It seems others sided with Judas. Judas priced the oil at 300 pieces of silver, ten times more than the amount he would later reckon for the life of Christ. The possession of this oil is a further indication of the wealth of this family.
- (6) We know that Judas' motives are not pure as he was already cheating the treasury of the disciples. By pleading the case of the poor, he won other disciples to his side.
- (7) Mary took the brunt of this attack, but Jesus steps in to defend her.
- (8) The opportunities to aid the poor would continue, but Jesus' time on this earth was coming to a close.

##### c. The plot to kill Lazarus (vv. 9-11)

- (9) When the common people learned of the whereabouts of Jesus they came to see Him and Lazarus as well.
- (10,11) The resurrection of Lazarus caused many of the people to believe in Jesus. This belief caused much jealousy (envy) among the Jewish leaders.

#### 121. Triumphal Entry into Jerusalem and Return to Bethany (Mt. 21:1-11) [Mk. 11:1-11; Lk. 19:29-44; Jn. 12:12-19]

- (1) The journey to Jerusalem continues.
- (2) Mark tells us that no man sat upon the young colt. The donkey was a means of travel fit for a King in this part of the East.
- (3) Jesus provides the disciples with information for procuring the animal without stealing or violence. It is possible that the owner was a disciple. Notice that Jesus requests both animals.
- (4,5) A prophecy is fulfilled (Isa. 62:11; Zech. 9:9). The donkey was a vehicle of peace as opposed to a horse, which was seen as a vehicle of war. This is the only record we have of Jesus riding an animal.
- (6,7) The disciples carry out Jesus' orders. From Mark and Luke's accounts we see that the disciples were challenged for taking the animals, but were let go when they made their purpose clear to the animals' owner. They covered the beasts with their own coats.

- (8) For more details read Jn. 12:13-19. The palm branch is an emblem of triumph and victory. We see that it was a very great multitude that came out to meet Jesus. This was not a highly organized, gaudy parade put on for some visiting dignitary, but instead was a gathering of common people for a common purpose – to see if this truly was the Messiah.
- (9) “Hosanna” means “save now.” The saying is an expression of good will to Jesus. He is able to save others because He is the Messiah of the lineage of David.
- (10) Jesus came into Jerusalem bringing two multitudes, the one that followed Him from Bethany and the one that came out of the city. From Luke’s account (19:39-44) we see the despair of the Pharisees and Jesus weeping for the city of Jerusalem.
- (11) The multitudes identified Jesus to the questioners as He entered the city. Note: “a prophet from Nazareth.”

**122. Cursing the Fig Tree (Mt. 21:18,19) [Mk. 11:12-14]**

- (18) Jesus was preoccupied and not taking regular meals.
- (19) Because the tree had leaves it was possible that it might have fruit even though it was early in the season. Jesus cursed the fig tree as a “type” of the Jewish religion (people). The tree pretentiously looked as if it were fruitful. From a distance it appeared to be fruitful, but upon closer examination it was barren.

**123. Cleansing the Temple and Returning to Bethany (Mt. 21:12-17) [Mk. 11:15-19; Lk. 19:45-48]**

- (12) Compare with Deut. 14:24-26. What the people were doing was not wrong in and of itself. But to set up shop in the Temple and deal unjustly was certainly wrong. This crooked business called for their immediate expulsion.
- (13) Isa. 56:7. This is where we see that the moneychangers were charging exorbitant fees for their services.
- (14) Compare the work of Jesus to that of the ones He removed.
- (15) The people were shouting out their good wishes for Jesus. The chief priests (Sadducees) were envious of this attention.
- (16) The chief priests called on Jesus to reprimand the people. Instead Jesus quotes Ps. 8:2, meaning that a childlike kind of trust and attitude led these people to “perfected praise.”
- (17) Jesus returns to Bethany to sleep.

**124. Lesson of the Withered Fig Tree (Mt. 21:20-22) [Mk. 11:20-26; Lk. 21:37-38]**

From Luke we see Jesus was teaching in the Temple on a daily basis and that many people came to hear Him. From Mark we see that they observed the tree a day or two after Jesus cursed it. The tree was dead to the root.

- (20) The disciples could not believe the effect of the curse. Peter is surprised by the suddenness and fullness of judgment. (Mark) Jesus calls for faith in God.
- (21) Other scriptures put certain limitations on the general rule set forth in this passage. We cannot use faith to obtain: 1)- that which is unlawful (Jas. 4:2,3); 2)- that which is unwise (2 Cor. 12:7-9); 3)- that which is selfishly against God’s will (1 Jn. 5:14,15); and 4)- we should not be expecting a miracle today.
- (22) Our prayers will not alter our relationship between ourselves as servants, and God as our Ruler. The job ahead for the disciples would seem to be a mountain. This passage assures them that they can overcome the immorality of the Gentiles and the bigotry of Judaism. Note Mark’s additional thoughts on prayer (11:25).

## 125. Christ's Authority Questioned (Mt. 21:23-27) [Mk. 11:27-33; Lk. 20:1-8]

- (23) Scholars believe that the events that take place from this verse and into the 26<sup>th</sup> chapter of Matthew took place on Tuesday prior to the crucifixion. The Sanhedrin confronts Jesus in the Temple. This was for the people's benefit. The Temple was under the control of the Levites. The Sanhedrin knew that Jesus did not have permission to cleanse it nor preach in it. They were hoping for Jesus to declare Himself the Messiah so that they could arrest Him.
- (24-26) The bond between Jesus and John was solid. If the Sanhedrin said John was heaven sent, then they were admitting that Jesus was the Messiah because that is what John taught. If they rejected John, then the multitude would reject them because John was universally received among the Jewish multitudes.
- 27) Their answer is a non-answer. Note that the truth was irrelevant to the leaders. They were interested only in what suited their purposes. It is a waste of time to debate dishonest men, because their motives (hearts) are impure. Their true answer was "we will not say." Jesus answers, "Neither will I!"

## 126. Three Parables (Mt. 21:28 – 22:14)

### a. Two Sons (Mt. 21:28-32)

- (28) Now Jesus will question the chief priests and elders. Note that the two sons represent the Jewish rulers and the Jewish common people.
- (29) The first son represents the common people. They had been very lax in their service to God. But at the preaching of John the Baptist, many repented (Mt. 3:5,6).
- (30) The second son represents the rulers, who profess to do what is right, but reject John and Jesus (Mt. 3:7-9).
- (31) The rulers gave the true answer to the parable but obviously did not realize that they were condemning themselves. Jesus promises that the publicans and harlots will be in line ahead of the rulers at the judgment day.
- (32) John presented his teaching in a way that should have been accepted by these Sadducees because he stressed almsgiving and prayer. They believed in an ascetic lifestyle, but they still rejected John. It is interesting that this parable draws the same conclusion concerning John that the rulers had admitted in vv. 25,26.

### b. Wicked husbandmen (Mt. 21:33-46) [Mk. 12:1-12; Lk. 20:9-19]

- (33) God is the landowner, the vineyard represents God's children and the husbandmen are the rulers, chief priests and elders. Notice that God's withdrawal from visible presence is always a test of faith. Think of some examples such as Eve, etc.
- (34) The servants are God's prophets. The children of Israel should have shown godly fruits. It was the ruler's job to see to this and the prophet's job to encourage them.
- (35,36) The prophets had been treated just as described, see: 1 Ki. 18:13; 22:24-27; 2 Ki. 6:31; 2 Chron. 24:19-22; 36:15. Also see a summary in Heb. 11:35-38.
- (37) The beloved son is Jesus. The conduct of these vinedressers was outrageous. The Lord felt that his son would represent him in such a way that surely the vinedressers would do what was right.
- (38) The vinedressers however took the opposing view. In their evil minds they saw the death of the son as a means of their retaining the vineyard as their own possession. Notice that this compares to the council of vv. 25,26. Also see Jn. 12:19; 11:47-50. Jesus is proclaiming that it was possible for such a thing to happen.
- (39) In three days, the Jews would fulfill this parable/prophecy by doing this to Jesus.
- (40,41) Part of the multitude was quick to pass judgment. According to Luke, some denied that the judgment would be correct.

- (42) Jesus addresses these doubters in this verse. Jesus quotes Ps. 118:22,23, applying the prophecy to the Pharisees.
- (43,44) The stone represents Jesus. Whether falling on Jesus (the stone) or being fallen on by Jesus, either will result in disaster.
- (45,46) Despite the very parable that Jesus had just spoken, the chief priests and Pharisees begin to fulfill the prophecy (as God knew they would). They were not even fazed by the prophecy of the Psalm showing the mistake of rejecting the chief cornerstone. They feared that the people would physically abuse them. Mark says they left and went away. They will however, send spies to take their place.
- c. Marriage of the King's Son (Mt. 22:1-14) – Compare to the parable in Lk. 14:16-24. This parable is more severe due to the strained relations that existed at the current time.**
- (1) This parable was spoken to the multitudes in general.
- (2,3) The parable showed the attitude of the Jews toward the kingdom of heaven as contrasted to the Gentiles. The invitations had already been sent, now the time was near so the guests were summoned.
- (4) The guests did not take the invitation seriously or thought that the time was not nigh. The point is that Jesus had pleaded with the Jews to come back to the kingdom, but so far they had refused.
- (5) Worldly possessions can cause a person to give up their spiritual possessions.
- (6) Others in the parable were violently opposed to the king, to the point of persecuting his servants (such as John the Baptist, the apostles, prophets, and Jesus).
- (7) History bears out the fact that Jerusalem would be destroyed in AD 70.
- (8) Those originally invited were shown to be unworthy so their invitations were rescinded.
- (9) When the Jews rejected the teaching of the apostle Paul, he turned to the Gentiles. (Note Peter in Acts 3:26, then see 13:46; 28:27,28 – Isaiah quote.)
- (10) The invitation goes into the world. No man is so bad that the gospel cannot help him, while no man is so good that he does not need the gospel.
- (11) One man had come to the wedding unprepared.
- (12) The man was without excuse, which means he had the ability to possess such a garment, but had not bothered to do so.
- (13) It will be impossible to escape divine judgment. Those found wanting would be sent to eternal punishment.
- (14) Many guests were invited, but few were accepted. What is our “wedding garment?” See Eph. 4:24; Col. 3:10; Gal. 3:27; Jn. 3:5 and Rev. 19:8,9. The character of Christ reflected in ourselves will serve as a wedding garment on the judgment day. The righteousness of the “new man” will have correctly attired him for the marriage of the Lamb of God.

## 127. Questions and Answers (Mt. 22:15-46) [Mk. 12:13-37; Lk. 20:20-44]

- a. The Pharisees: “Is it lawful to pay taxes to Caesar?” (vv. 15-22)**
- (15) The Pharisees wanted to “ensnare” (entrap, entangle) Jesus by getting Him to say something they could use against Him.
- (16) The Herodians supported the Roman government. Their presence was a ploy by the Pharisees. The Herodians would naturally get upset if Jesus answered the question in any way that could be construed as treasonous to Rome. Note the preface of the question. They are baiting Jesus by saying that He speaks His mind no matter whom it might offend. They were trying to use the “truth” which they perceived Jesus would reply as a means to his destruction.
- (17) The question: Is it lawful to pay taxes? The Jews were required to pay an annual tax to Rome.

The people bitterly opposed the tax so these Pharisees presumed they were placing Jesus in a dilemma. Their ignorance of the true nature of the Messiah led them to believe Jesus would be against any government that held sway over Israel.

- (18) Jesus of course can read their hearts and knows that they have impure motives. They were hypocrites because they only pretended to want information.
- (19) The Roman tax was to be paid in a Roman coin, so Jesus calls for one.
- (20) The denarius had the head of Caesar stamped on it along with the inscription, "Tiberius Caesar, the August son of the Divine Augustus."
- (21) They answer the only way they truthfully can. Since Roman sovereignty was established, they were naturally using Roman money to do business throughout the empire. Therefore, their taxes were due to the Romans, but things of a religious nature were still under God's rule. That is, if you use Caesar's coin, then you are obligated to pay his taxes. However, this does not affect your allegiance to God (Rom. 13:1,7).
- (22) Jesus stumped these Herodians and Pharisees. They were astonished at His answer, not because they respected Jesus, but because He had defeated them. They may also have been amazed at how much wiser Jesus was than the teachers that sent them!

**b. The Sadducees: What about the resurrection? (vv.23-33)**

- (23) The Sadducees did not believe in resurrection of the dead at the end time. They misunderstood this teaching on the subject. Extra-biblical sources indicate that some of their number proposed a resurrection limited to the resumption of this earth-life.
- (24) Moses commanded this law, to preserve lineage (Deut. 25:5,6). This custom preceded the Law (Gen. 38:6-11).
- (25-28) This story is based on the errant belief that the martial state will resume in the after-life. If this were true then heaven would be in a state of confusion, pitting brother against brother. How does the thinking of the Sadducees compare to the teachings of Paul and John? (1 Cor. 15:42-54; Phil. 3:21; 1 Jn. 3:2.)
- (29) Ignorance of the scriptures (Law) can cause a man to err. Of course Jesus is referring to the Old Testament. When the earth does not exist, there will be no need for the marriage relationship. Not only were these Sadducees misunderstanding the scriptures, they were limiting God's power (Gen. 18:14).
- (30) The saved of earth will become as angels (not angels). There will be no marriage in heaven.
- (31) Jesus now calls their attention to a specific scripture.
- (32) (Ex. 3:6) If God is not the God of the dead, then Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob must have still been alive when God spoke this to Moses. Since their bodies were gone, then their spirits must be living on, outside of their bodies. (See McGarvey p. 602.)
- (33) The people were amazed at the teaching of Jesus; it had silenced the Sadducees. Luke's account reveals that the scribes commended Jesus' answer.

**c. The Scribes: Which is the first commandment of all? (vv. 34-40)**

- (34,35) The Pharisees were still not willing to give up, even though their question concerning Caesar had backfired and their rivals the Sadducees had also been rebutted. It seems that this particular lawyer was chosen from among the gathering to pose this question to Jesus.
- (36) Jewish history shows us that the rabbis had argued for years as to which commandment was most important. They numbered the commandments of Moses to be over 600 and there was much dispute as to which commandment was "number one." Since there was much dispute, the Pharisees reasoned that no matter how Jesus answered the question, it would cause uproar.
- (37) Jesus quotes Deut. 6:4-9.
- (38) This law is first, because it is the foundation of the entire Law. This law is greatest, because it includes all other laws.

Adherence to this law automatically prohibits: polytheism, atheism, idolatry or any other sin against God. Indirectly it prohibits sins against man, because man is an object of God's love (1 Jn. 4:20).

- (39) Love is the cure for sin. If we love someone as we love ourselves we will always have their best interests at heart. This is AGAPE.
- (40) Also see Rom. 13:8-10. Love causes a desire to bless, the law guides one to accomplish those desires. Love without law = power without direction, while Law without love = a lawnmower without an engine.

Now note Mark 12:32-34

- (32,33) The scribes totally agreed with Jesus' answer.
- (34) The lawyer was close to becoming a disciple. The Pharisees found it expedient to not question Jesus further because their questions only exposed their ignorance and spotlighted the wisdom of Jesus.

**d. Jesus: How can David call his descendant Lord? (Mt. 22:41-46)**

- (41) Jesus asked the Pharisees a question. Was He retaliating or trying to teach them a lesson?
- (42) Whose son is the Christ? Their answer: "David's."
- (43,44) Jesus then quotes Ps. 110. In Jesus' day the Jews accepted this Psalm as Messianic and written by David. Modern Jews however, reject this teaching.
- (45) This Psalm calls the Messiah, David's Lord and other scriptures do indeed say he will be David's son. How can this apparent discrepancy be reconciled? Please note that the Christ is also described as conquering, yet suffering; divine yet human, etc.
- (46) Even though they had tried to weaken Christ's position among the people, they had only made him more popular.

**128. Denunciation of Scribes and Pharisees (Mt. 23:1-39) [Mk. 12:28-40; Lk. 20:45-47]**

- (1) This is Jesus' last recorded public sermon.
- (2,3) The scribes and Pharisees were teachers of the Law. As such, the people were obliged to listen to their teaching. Jesus warns the people not to look on the scribes and Pharisees as living examples of how to live according to the Law.
- (4) We know from Acts 15:10 that the Law was a heavy burden, but the vast number of traditions that the Pharisees had added made the Law unbearable. The Pharisees themselves did not abide by these traditions.
- (5) They did try to keep the public aspects of the Law so that others could be impressed by their zeal. For a discussion of "phylacteries," see McGarvey p. 607. The borders or "fringes" mentioned in Num. 15:38,39 were another way the Pharisees would use to outwardly show themselves more religious than others. Luke includes "long robes" which were the dress of the professional of the day.
- (6) They wanted prominent places wherever they went, whether it was a social or religious occasion.
- (7) When in a crowd, such as the marketplace, these men wanted special distinction. The Jews had created the term "Rabbi" which literally meant "my great honorable one." The Pharisees wanted this title repeated for more emphasis.
- (8) Using the term Rabbi in the sense of one as a great leader or one more honorable is inconsistent with God's teaching.
- (9) This is not referring to our earthly fathers, nor is it a condemnation of a relationship such as the one between Paul and Timothy (1 Tim. 1:1). Father is not to be used as a religious title.

- (10) The word “master” denotes not only a leader, but also a great and authoritative teacher (28:18).
- (11) Compare to when James and John wanted preeminence (Mt. 20).
- (12) True greatness is linked to true humility and a desire to serve others. Religion is not a matter of praise seeking through position, wardrobe or titles. This is the sin of ostentation (bragging on oneself, thinking more highly of oneself, etc.).
- (13) Jesus now directs His sermon to the scribes and Pharisees. What is a hypocrite? “Woe” is a term of grief and dismay. Jesus pronounces eight such woes on the scribes and Pharisees in this chapter. Jesus is indicating that there is a calamity coming that will strike these listeners. The scribes and Pharisees not only did not want to enter the kingdom themselves, they were blocking the paths of others as well.
- (14) These scribes and Pharisees took advantage of widows. After using these widows for their own gain, then they pray pretentiously. What about degrees of punishment?
- (15) Commentators disagree as to whether those referenced here are Gentile proselytes to Judaism or Jewish proselytes to the Pharisees. The students however end up more corrupt than their masters.
- (16) Now Jesus denounces them for their self-imposed ignorance. The Pharisees had taken the laws concerning oath taking and watered them down so that the oath could be broken if it was not sworn to just so. In this case the oath taker could renege if he swore by the temple, but must keep his oath if he swore by the gold of the temple. The Pharisees graded the importance of the oath based on the worth they placed on the object they were swearing by.
- (17) Jesus demonstrates that if the gold of the temple was sacred, it was the fact that it was part of the temple that made it so.
- (18-22) Jesus continues to teach that all oaths are binding. Whether the altar or the gift upon it; the temple or the One who dwells in it; heaven; the throne of God; or the throne’s occupant makes no difference. All oaths are equal in God’s sight.
- (23) Jesus is not condemning the tithing of mint, anise and cumin, but He is indicating that other matters were equally if not more important. These items were used as condiments and medicines. Jesus expects them to observe both the large and the small things.
- (24) Jesus reiterates the point with another example. Compare to “the beam in your brother’s eye to the mote in your eye.”
- (25) On the outside the Pharisees appeared clean but inwardly they practiced extortion and excess. Keeping the outside of the cup clean would make it useful for appearances only. To be functional both the outside and the inside would have to be cleaned.
- (26) The pure inner life would lead to a truly pure outward life.
- (27,28) A sepulcher was kept whitewashed to warn passersby that it was indeed a tomb. Its outward appearance was just the opposite of its inward contents – just like these Pharisees!
- (29) The Pharisees were careful to rebuild and decorate the tombs of the prophets. Was there anything wrong with that?
- (30) They claimed that they would have treated the prophets right if they had only lived back in those days.
- (31) The Pharisees show their hypocrisy here because they continually boasted of their ancestry and their “fathers” were the ones who had murdered the prophets.
- (32) Jesus is challenging them to measure up to the deeds that their ancestors, which they so clearly loved, had committed.
- (33) The characteristics of these creatures are: deception, poison and filthiness. John also described them this way (Mt. 3:7). Their final destruction would be Hell.
- (34) Jesus now predicts the future activities of the Pharisees, including how they would abuse the prophets that were yet to come.

- (35) They would continue the long line of assassinations that began with Abel.
- (36) The charges of the two preceding verses would soon come to pass. When?
- (37) Jerusalem symbolizes the entire nation. Jesus is broken-hearted over the destruction that he knows is coming. He was prepared to take Israel under His wing, if they would only repent.
- (38) God had already deserted their Temple. The destruction the city would culminate God's repudiation of the city.
- (39) Jesus points to the beginning of a new situation. His earthly ministry is over; He has come to the city for the last time. From here on out, the Jews can approach Christ just like the Gentiles – through their faith.

**129. The Widow's Mite (Lk. 21:1-4) [Mk. 12:41-44]**

- (1) Now Jesus takes an opportunity to observe the rich as they brought gifts to the Temple treasury. This is His last recorded appearance in the Temple.
- (2) This widow threw in all that she had. It amounted to perhaps ½ cent in today's money.
- (3,4) According to Jesus she "cast in more than they all" (Mark). Her contribution is contrasted with the sum total of all the contributions of the rich. The rich had only put in their excess, but the widow put in her entire livelihood. Who trusted in God's providence?

**130. Greeks Seek Jesus, His Discourse (Jn. 12:20-50)**

- (20) A group of Greeks sought an audience with Jesus. These were not Jews, but Gentiles. Jerusalem was the hotbed of Gentile intolerance. For these Greeks to approach Jesus here is noteworthy.
- (21) They approached Philip and asked for an audience with Jesus.
- (22) Philip then told Andrew and together they told Jesus of the request. It is not clear whether Jesus granted their request, but it obviously gave rise to the following discourse. It has been noted by commentators that Gentiles were among the first to herald His birth (the wise men) and also among the last to pay Him homage prior to His death.
- (23) Upon the glorification of Christ, the wall of partition would exist no more.
- (24) A grain of wheat is only fruitful when it gives itself up to the ground. The only way for Christ to impart His fruits to all nations was for Him to die.
- (25) To dedicate oneself to this life is folly. Only by dedicating oneself wholly to the Lord, can the ultimate rewards of heaven be attained.
- (26) "The Christian's true ambition should be to follow Christ, to be Christ-like, to serve Him well, and to leave all else to the will of the Father" (Johnson, p.194).
- (27) Now Jesus is covered by the shadow of the cross and the tomb. Compare this verse with His agony in Gethsemane.
- (28) Now the Father's voice adds His approval. Name the three times the father's voice was heard in the sky. At Jesus' baptism, at His transfiguration, and here. These incidents confirm the Father's interest and support of the Son. The resurrection, the exaltation, Pentecost and the victory of the church will glorify the name of Christ for eternity.
- (29) Those standing by heard the voice but did not seem to comprehend who it was or the message that it brought. Some thought it was the voice of an angel. Compare to Saul/Paul on the road to Damascus.
- (30) Jesus did not need the voice, but those standing by would look back to this day as a confirmation of their belief on the Son.
- (31) The time for the cross had come. The cross becomes the throne of Jesus as He defeats Satan for time eternity.
- (32) First the cross, then the grave and finally the eternal throne. The exalted Son becomes the spiritual magnet to draw men of every race to God the Father.

- (33) John confirms that Jesus is prophesying concerning the manner in which He would die.
- (34) The multitude could not understand that the “eternal King” would die. They did not understand the “lifting up” nor “who is the Son of Man.”
- (35) Jesus does not answer their questions directly but gives them something more to think on. Jesus was the “light” and was currently with them and shining on them. When He was gone, their access to the light will not be as readily available.
- (36) Belief is the key to receiving the “light of the world,” and becoming children of the light. (Note Johnson’s practical observations p. 196.)
- (37) **The Cause of Unbelief** – Regardless of the signs, miracles and wonders that Jesus had performed to establish Himself as the true Messiah, many chose not to trust and devote their lives to Him.
- (38) Isa. 53:1 is quoted by John to show that even in their unbelief the people were fulfilling prophecies of the Old Testament.
- (39) Isa. 6:1 points out exactly what would be the cause of their unbelief – through their own choices in rejecting God’s will, they had made themselves incapable of belief.
- (40,41) In turning from the light, they allowed themselves to be struck blind by the darkness of their own unbelief. *“The Lord, having constituted as the righteous law of moral government, that sin should produce darkness of heart and moral insensibility, declared that he would allow the law to take its course.”* (Trench)
- (42,43) Even among the Sanhedrin there were men who intellectually believed on Christ. Yet they refused to confess Jesus with their mouths, showing that their faith was not from the heart (Rom. 10:10). These members of the council were more concerned with being excommunicated and losing their station than they were in being in a right relationship with God.
- (44,45) Jesus insists that belief on Him was indeed belief in God the Father. He reiterates that He and the Father are one.
- (46) The mission and purpose of the Messiah was to make everything concerning life and godliness and the pursuit of salvation perfectly clear. Note His use of “I am.” Each of the titles that He has used to describe Himself have shed light on His character and mission.
- (47,48) Jesus is not inconsistent when He says that He came not to judge. It is His words that will determine the fate of each person.
- (49) Jesus came to the earth to do and say exactly what His Father sent here to do and say.
- (50) Because the commandments of the Father are life, they are capable of bestowing life to those who would follow them. This verse closes John’s record of Jesus revealing His Father’s will to the world. The rest of this Gospel shows the fuller revelation He reserved for His disciples.

### 131. **Destruction of Jerusalem and the Second Coming of Christ (Mt. 24:1-51)**

This chapter is full of apocalyptic writing similar to John’s revelation. This type of writing was used to disguise the meaning of the text from the enemies of the writer, but would be clear to its intended readers. Many commentators feel that 24:1-41 deal specifically with the destruction of Jerusalem, while 25:31-46 have implications concerning the final judgment. There are three reasons why some scholars feel that the second coming is not the subject of chapter 24: 1)- the preceding context has set the stage for the condemnation of Israel, 2)- Luke’s parallel account specifically identifies Jerusalem as the subject of this prophecy (Lk. 21:20-24), and 3)- the time frame (v. 34) is not compatible with Christ’s final coming. (Chumbley, p. 414,415.)

- (1) Jesus leaves the temple for the last time. The disciples are concerned that Jesus is condemning the Temple to destruction and call His attention to its structure. (See Chumbley pp. 415-16 for a description of the glory of Herod’s masterpiece.)

- (2) Jesus indicates in no uncertain terms that the temple will come all the way down to its foundations.
- (3) Mk. 13:4 and Lk. 21:7 indicate that the disciples are asking a when will the destruction of Jerusalem take place. It is unlikely that they are interested in “Christ’s second coming,” because they did not accept the fact that He would die in the first place. Remember that NT usage of the phrase “end of the world” can be interpreted as “end of the age.” “Thy coming” or “God’s coming” is an expression of judgment and does not mean that God (or Jesus) needs to be physically present for that judgment to be carried out through human or natural agencies. (Isa. 19:23, Jer. 49:14, Dan. 1:1,2; Hab. 1:5-11.) Jesus will answer by taking up the *sign* question first, then the *time* question.

### **The sign question answered (vv. 4-31)**

- (4,5) In verses 4-14 Jesus will enumerate seven things that would precede the sign, then in verses 15-31 he identifies the sign and tells the disciples how to deal with it. History bears out the fact that as tension between Rome and Judea escalated, false christs arose (Acts 5:36,37; 21:38).
- (6,7) Wars and natural disasters occur in every generation so these things are not signs of the end of the world. However, these things happening in the Roman Empire would tell the disciples that the destruction of Jerusalem was on the horizon, “*but the end is not yet.*”
- (8) These wars and disasters are the prelude to the destruction of Jerusalem.
- (9) During this prelude disciples will be jailed and murdered (Acts 7:54-59) and hated for their faith (1 Cor. 4:13). Christians would suffer for what they were, not what they had done (1 Pet. 2:11,12).
- (10) Many will backslide and apostatize during this prelude due to the persecutions. Brethren will turn against each other.
- (11) False prophets will come claiming not to be the Messiah, but to be His spokesperson. (2 Thes. 2:3, 1 Tim. 1:3-7; 2 Pet. 1-3; Jude 4-16.)
- (12,13) “End” here means end of the trial. Many will not have the faith necessary to endure these adverse conditions (Jas. 1:2-4, 12).
- (14) The disciples would spread the Gospel throughout the world before the destruction of Jerusalem. This work was done by the sixth decade of the first century (Col. 1:6, 23).
- (15) Here is the sign: “the abomination of desolation.” This “appalling horror” will be an idolatrous destructive force approaching Jerusalem. This took place during the years 66-70 AD as the Romans defeated the “Great Revolt” in Judea and the outlying areas. The siege and final destruction of Jerusalem culminated this revolt and brought the Jewish dispensation to its final end. (See Chumbley, p.423.) Note Jesus’ assumption that His words would be read in conjunction with Daniel’s and seen as the fulfillment of that prophecy.
- (16) When the Roman armies appeared, those in the country should flee into the hills. They should not seek refuge behind the city walls of Jerusalem.
- (17) There will be no time to pack or even go into the house.
- (18) Those working in the field must not go home, flee directly from their location.
- (19) The pregnant women and nursing mothers would deserve special pity during this time.
- (20) During winter in Judea, the creeks and rivers flood and become impassable to those on foot. Orthodox Jews trying to enforce the Sabbath laws concerning travel could impede fleeing on that day of the week. Jesus emphasizes the power of prayer in this matter.
- (21) This desolation will be like nothing ever seen in Jewish history. (See Chumbley, p.425.) The siege and eventual surrender of the city of Jerusalem would be unbelievably gruesome and percentage-wise the most destructive action ever taken against the Jewish people.

- (22) Jesus predicts that the tribulation will not run its full course, even though the typical Roman answer to rebellion was complete destruction. The presence of Christians tempered the severity of God's judgment on Jerusalem.
- (23-26) In times of crisis would-be messiahs raise themselves up. Regardless of their appearance and abilities, first century Christians were not to be swayed. Man's ability to fake "signs and wonders" has been seen in every generation.
- (27) There is no secrecy involved when Christ comes in judgment (Isa. 30:30,31; Zech. 9:14).
- (28) Christ's judgment on Jerusalem would be as a bird falling on dead prey. This figure is typical of God's prophets (Deut. 28:49; Isa. 46:11; Jer. 19:7; Eze. 17:3; Hos. 8:1; Rev. 19:17-18).
- (29) The tribulation would end with the fall of Jerusalem and the entire political and religious system that it represented. Once again this language is typical of God's prophets as they look ahead towards judgments on cities and nations (Isa. 13:10 – Babylon; 34:4-6 – Edom; Eze. 32:7 – Egypt; Joel 2:30,31 – Judah, etc.). One commentator refers to these works of judgment as "de-creation."
- (30) Christ's presence at the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 AD was via the Roman Legions. Their appearance, as God's hand of judgment, would be cause for great mourning. All tribes of Jews throughout the world would feel the effect of this judgment. Obviously, history bears out the fact that many Gentiles rejoiced at the destruction of Jerusalem. The destruction gave rise to increased anti-Semitism.
- (31) God's elect are now people of every nation, from every corner of the globe. This is a prophecy of the worldwide growth of the church and it is likely that "angels" here represent Gospel preachers. Even the destruction of Jerusalem was Christ's work; it was not His primary work. His primary work has always been redemption (Jn. 3:17; Rom. 11:1ff).
- (32,33) Jesus now proceeds to answer the question of "when?" The signs listed in verses 15ff would show the coming destruction of the Temple and all that was to follow was indeed near.
- (34) "This generation" clarifies that "these things" will take place within the lifetime of many of Christ's listeners.
- (35) Christ's words are eternal – His words will not fail.
- (36) Even though the destruction was to take place within the generation, the exact date was not to be revealed. Even the man Jesus did not know the exact hour (Mk. 13:32). For more thoughts on the dual nature of Jesus as the God/Man see Chumbley p. 429.
- (37) Jesus compares the lack of preparation in His day to the same lack of preparation in the days of Noah.
- (38,39) Those in Noah's day refused to heed the warnings of God's prophet. The saying "those who refuse to learn history are doomed to repeat it," rings true.
- (40,41) The deciding factor as to whether one would be saved or lost during the tribulation and destruction was whether or not the individual was prepared to obey Christ's directions. The need then is for men to be watchful. He will use the following verses to suggest how that watching might be accomplished.
- (42) By not knowing the time of the Lord's return, the disciples had to stay alert and prepared.
- (43) Thieves do not advertise their coming because the element of surprise gives them the advantage. This is how Christ will come (1 Thes. 5:2; 2Pet. 3:10; Rev. 3:3).
- (44) Barclay comments on this verse: "to live without watchfulness invites disaster."
- (45-47) Note the four common figures used in the following three parables (24:45-25:30): 1)- an absentee figure whose coming is delayed; 2)- two groups, one prepared, one not prepared; 3)- an explanation of what it would take to be prepared versus what exemplified unpreparedness; 4)- the rewards for the faithful are described as well as the punishment for the wicked. Jesus will use these parables to move from a discussion of the judgment against Jerusalem to the final judgment of the world. It is a faithful and wise servant that tends to his duties even in the absence of the Lord. His reward for maintaining preparations in his Lord's absence is promotion.

- (48-50) The evil servant will try and take advantage of his Master's absence. He believes his accountability is a long way off.
- (51) The evil servant will be caught and his end will not be a pretty sight to see. The destruction Jerusalem involved savage butchery and "weeping and gnashing of teeth." This last phrase is a figure that represents the anguish of the lost.

### 132. Parables of Virgins and Talents (Mt 25:1-46)

- (1) The **parable of the virgins** again shows the need to be ready for the Lord's return. When Christ comes to demonstrate his rule in judgment, it will compare to the story told here. Apparently, weddings taking place at night came through a processional of friends and loved ones bearing lamps (torches).
- (2-4) In this parable wise = faithful and foolish = unfaithful. The faithful virgins were well prepared while the foolish were not.
- (5,6) The groom did not appear when he was expected (compare 24:48-50) so the virgins fall asleep. They are awakened in the middle of the night by a shout announcing the bridegroom's approach.
- (7,8) As the virgins begin to put their lamps in order the foolish ones realize that they will not have enough oil. They ask for the others to share with them.
- (9) If the wise gave their oil away, there might be no light left for the ceremony. This parable is about spiritual preparedness and that cannot be transferred from one to another.
- (10) While the foolish ones are gone the groom arrives and the wise ones are admitted to the reception. Upon their return the foolish are refused entry and the door is locked.
- (11-13) The bridegroom refuses to let them in. Disciples must "watch" – be on the alert. The next coming of Jesus will mark an end to preparation and only those that are ready will be admitted.
- (14) The parable of the talents shows that just watchful waiting is not enough. The Lord expects His servants to be active while awaiting His return.
- (15) These talents represent a unit of weight. The worth of these talents would depend on what metal they were made of. The Lord gave each servant all that he was capable of handling. He dispensed the talents based on the skills that the servants already possessed. While each was not assigned the same responsibilities, each was obligated to take advantage of their opportunities.
- (16-18) The two more capable servants put their talents to work immediately and doubled their principal. The third servant buries his obligation.
- (19) It was more than a few years when the Lord returns. It is clear from Matthew the publican's account that the Lord had expected them to trade with the talent while he was away.
- (20,21) The fact that the first servant had doubled his Lord's talents brings high praise from the Master. This servant has good character and faithful service and so he is given even a greater assignment and a share of the Master's happiness.
- (22,23) Even though the second servant did not make as much with his trading, he achieved the same percentage of gain (100%). His reward was equal to that of the "five talent" servant.
- (24,25) The third servant has made no profit and blames the master for his failure. He justifies his inactivity on "fear." While he did nothing evil, by doing nothing he failed in his responsibility.
- (26) The third servant is characterized as wicked and slothful, that is idle, reluctant, and hesitant. This servant stands condemned by his own words – he should have known better! The Master did not expect great things from this servant but he expected some things!
- (27) Burying the talent was inexcusable; the bankers would have paid interest on it if he had deposited it with them.

- (28,29) The one talent servant suffered punishment in two ways. First, he lost what he had. By failing to use his talent, he forfeited it.
- (30) Second, he was cast into outer darkness. In addition to be wicked and lazy, he is styled as unprofitable. He was good for nothing in the Master's eyes. God expects us to be willing to take risks with our faith – if that risk is at His command.
- (31,32) The discussion of the end of Jerusalem leads to a discussion of the end of the world. Both of these occurrences show Christ as the rightful king and Judge (Jn. 5:25-29; Acts 10:42; 2 Tim. 4:1). Four events will occur on the last day. 1)- Christ, the Son of Man will appear in glory; 2)- all nations will be gathered before Him; 3)- all will be divided into two groups; and 4)- Christ will explain the reason for the division and pronounce the appropriate reward for each group. (See Chumbley p. 445.)
- (33) The sheep will be moved to Christ's right hand and the goats to His left. The right hand was the traditional place of the innocent in the Jewish courts.
- (34) Note that Christ signifies that He is indeed the King. He will bless the sheep and invite them to enter heaven; a place that God has set aside for this moment since the beginning.
- (35,36) The sheep receive their reward because they have been merciful to Christ. The next verse will show that Christ expects these mercies to be shown to our fellow man. Christians who live in mercy shall receive mercy (Jas. 2:13).
- (37-39) The righteous will not ever recall meeting Christ and performing these mercies on His behalf.
- (40) By serving and loving the least in Christ's family, the righteous had been serving and loving Christ. It is likely that "brethren" here should be viewed in a wide context – namely, anyone we find in need.
- (41) The goats are sent from the presence of the Lord. Hell is a place prepared for the Devil and his angels, but room will be made there for the unrighteous.
- (42,43) The behavior of the unrighteous is contrasted with that of the righteous. Heaven is not available to those that live a loveless life (1 Jn. 3:16-18).
- (44) The goats are just as surprised as the sheep at the outcome of their lives.
- (45) Note that nothing is said about vicious crimes or obvious sins; these people will be condemned for burying their talent! By withholding their love from the "insignificant," they withheld their love from Christ.
- (46) Both punishment and reward are set to last forever. This verse holds little comfort for those that see heaven as everlasting and punishment as limited in some way. This passage teaches us that the Lord expects us to live our daily lives so that it will make an eternal difference. How we treat the lowly and important during Christ's absence will make the difference between heaven and hell at His return.

### **133. Christ Predicts and Jews Plot His Death (Lk. 22:1,2) [Mt. 26:1-5; Mk. 14:1,2]**

- (1) The feast of the unleavened bread and the Passover are a combination of two Old Testament feasts (Lev. 23:5,6; Num. 28: 16,17).
- (2) Read Mt. 26:1-5. Jesus had previously predicted His death in Lk. 9:22. The Sanhedrin wanted to put Jesus to death, but were afraid of the uproar it would cause among the people. They knew that they should avoid doing anything overt on the feast day. So at this point they were looking for a way to take Jesus quietly and kill him.

### **134. Christ Anointed (See point 120) [Mt. 26:6-13; Mk. 14:3-9; Jn. 11:55-12:11]**

**135. Judas' Bargain (Lk. 22:3-6) [Mt. 26:14-16; Mk. 14:10,11]**

- (3) Perhaps Judas took offense at the rebuke of Jesus in Jn. 12:4-8 or perhaps his lust for gold just got the better of him – regardless, he allowed Satan into his heart. The fact that he was one of the 12 Apostles only makes his crime dastardlier in our eyes.
- (4) Judas went to the temple to confer with the chief priests and the captains (sergeant at arms) to propose a plan that would allow him to secretly betray Jesus into their hands.
- (5) The chief priests were happy that one so close to Jesus would help them in their fiendish plot. From Mt. 26:15 we know that they contracted with him for 30 pieces of silver. According to Ex. 21:32 this was comparable to the price of a slave. Many commentators feel that this price was a fulfillment of Zech. 11:12.
- (6) Judas agreed to this price. See Mt. 26:6-13 for the argument over the price of the ointment and Jesus' rebuke to Judas and others. Boles (*Commentary on Luke*, p. 410) suggests five steps to this corrupt bargain: 1)- Judas sought the chief priests; 2)- he offered to betray Jesus; 3)- they gladly made the bargain for money; 4)- Judas agreed to the bargain; and 5)- he sought to fulfill his wicked pledge. Note that Judas sought an occasion where the multitude could not be brought into play to defend Jesus.

**136. Preparation for the Passover Supper (Lk. 22:7-13) [Mt. 26:17-19; Mk. 14:12-16]**

- (7) The Passover came on the 14<sup>th</sup> day of the first month of the Jewish calendar (late March to early April). See Deut 16:5,6; Ex. 12:2,6; 13:4.
- (8) Jesus sent Peter and John to make arrangements for celebrating the Passover. These arrangements included: 1)- selecting a room; 2)- removing all leaven; 3)- killing and roasting the lamb; and 4)- any other arrangements that might have been necessary.
- (9,10) The disciples were concerned as to where they could have the Passover meal. Jesus gives them a miraculous way to find the appropriate place. This would be a rare sight on two counts: 1)- women usually carried water and 2)- it was usually carried in a leather vessel.
- (11,12) It is not necessary to think that Jesus had made prior arrangements with this man. They were to request a guest chamber, but would be shown instead to “a large upper room.” The room would be furnished; that is, have all things necessary to have a Passover meal.
- (13) The lamb had to be killed in the temple, its blood sprinkled at the foot of the altar and its fat burned there. The bitter herbs, the unleavened bread and the wine were prepared.

**137. Our Lord Goes to the Passover (Lk. 22:14-18) [Mt. 26:20; Mk. 14:17]**

- (14) The usual time of eating the Passover Supper was Thursday evening after sundown. The Jews reclined to eat. The early Passovers followed the command of Ex. 12:11, but after Mt. Sinai the posture requirement was dropped.
- (15,16) Jesus has had a strong desire to eat this Passover with His disciples before His crucifixion. This would be His last literal eating of the Passover. Note that Christ figuratively represents our Passover or sacrificial lamb. The Lord's Supper now eliminates the need for the Passover just as Christ's crucifixion eliminates the need for the death of the Passover lamb.
- (17,18) The cup here mentioned is probably the “cup of blessing” and not the commencement of “the Lord's supper.” Some have criticized Luke for reordering the Supper by having it begin before Judas' departure, but this is easily explained by the tradition of passing the cup several times during the Passover meal. Luke is emphasizing the parallelism between the two suppers.

### 138. Jesus Washes the Disciple's Feet (Jn. 13:1-20)

#### a. The Master becomes the servant (vv.1-11)

- (1) The apparent discrepancy between John and the other gospel writers as to when Jesus ate the Passover meal can be explained by the different ways the phrase "Passover Feast" was used. It could refer to the meal itself or to the entire eight-day feast that followed it. John must be using it in this second sense.
- (2,3) Jesus had knowledge of the threefold glory that the Father had bestowed upon Him, namely: 1)- He had all authority; 2)- His nature was Divine; and 3)- He was about to resume His Divine exaltation that He had temporarily laid aside for our sakes.
- (4,5) Jesus washes the disciples' feet as an act of humility. This will contrast sharply with the disciples' attitude seen in Lk. 22:24-30.
- (6) Leave it to Peter to challenge the actions of Jesus. Peter felt that Jesus washing their feet was too base and low for His station.
- (7) This was an example of humility and a symbol of purification. At this point, the disciples perceived this action as "only foot washing."
- (8,9) Peter refused to have his feet washed by Jesus. Jesus in turned refused to have an unwashed Peter as disciple. Peter then desired to have Jesus wash his head and hands as well as his feet, that he might entirely have a part with Christ.
- (10,11) The language implies that the disciples had previously bathed and only their feet were in need of washing, due to their walk from Bethany. After we submit to the general cleansing of our sins via baptism, particular sins can be forgiven by confession and repentance. Jesus knows that Judas does not have a pure heart; therefore this washing has no spiritual effect on him – only physical.

#### b. We Also Must Serve (vv. 12-20)

- (12) Obviously, the disciples knew that Jesus had washed their feet, but did they comprehend the meaning behind the action?
- (13,14) If the Lord and Master sets examples of humility, self-sacrifice and service, then the disciples should emulate those examples. (When we study Lk. 22:24-30, we will contrast the disciples' behavior with that of Jesus.)
- (15) Is the example one of foot washing or of humility and service? History bears out the fact that foot washing never became a church ordinance. Not until the 4<sup>th</sup> century AD can it be found in any religious group calling itself Christian.
- (16) If the Lord is willing to administer such service, then how much more should the servant be willing to serve?
- (17) If the disciples could understand the meaning of Christ's action and put it into practice in their own lives, then they would be happy. This is another Beatitude.
- (18) Judas was not a surprise to Jesus. Why was Judas even chosen? 1)- To fulfill prophecy. 2)- To manage the disciples' business affairs. 3)- If Jesus was a fraud; the traitor would reveal His deception. 4)- Judas had the opportunity to "do good." 5)- The gospel can and will succeed, even if evil men are among the flock.
- (19) Jesus uses the prediction of the traitor as one more proof of His Deity. Jesus does not want His betrayal and impending crucifixion to shake the faith of the disciples.
- (20) By receiving the messengers of Christ we are receiving Christ. By receiving Him (as the messenger of the Father) we are receiving the Father. See *Johnson's Commentary* p. 207 for eight practical observations.

### 139. The Traitor Pointed Out (Jn. 13:21-29) [Mt. 26:21-25; Mk. 14:18-21; Lk. 22:21-23]

- (21) Jesus tells the Apostles that He will be betrayed by one of them.
- (22) Who could it be? Matthew notes that they were sorrowful. Why? On two counts: 1)- that Jesus would be betrayed, and 2)- that one of them would be responsible.  
Note **Matthew**: Jesus identifies the man as one who dips his hand into the dish with Him. This limits the number of possibilities to those near Jesus at the table.  
Note **Mark**: Even though Jesus says the betrayal was a fulfillment of prophecy, it did not lessen the guilt of the betrayer. “It would have been good for that man not to have been born.”
- (23) This verse refers to John.
- (24-26) Peter motions to John to ask specifically who this betrayer would be. John leans back and inquires of Jesus. Jesus will point out the betrayer by dipping sop and handing it to him. Traditionally, this is a way to honor a special guest. Judas receives the bread. However, this warning does not stop him from his purpose, as we shall see. Note **Matthew 26:25**: It seems strange that the other disciples do not try and stop Judas.
- (27) His exposure only hardened his heart further, allowing Satan to take control. Jesus dismisses Judas from the supper.
- (28) The other disciples are slow to comprehend what is going on. Seemingly, only Jesus and Judas knew.
- (29) They thought Jesus had dismissed Judas from some purpose such as making purchases for the feast or giving money to the poor.

### 140. Judas Leaves (Jn.13:30-35)

- (30) Judas received the piece of bread and left. Is there any significance to it being night?
- (31,32) Jesus now looks forward to His end, to the glory that will be brought to God through His sacrifice. It will be a glory of humility, charity, service, and self-sacrifice.
- (33-35) Jesus looked upon the Apostles as ones about to be orphaned. Jesus now invokes a new commandment of love, even stronger than Lk. 10:27. The new love is a familial love as contrasted to a national or neighborly love. This is the love that marks the Disciples of Christ for the world to see.

### 141. Strife for Precedence (Lk. 22:24-30)

- (24) The Apostles had argued about this subject before (Mt. 18, 20 and Lk. 9). The mention of the Kingdom and Jesus’ time being at hand had the disciples thinking that the earthly kingdom was about to begin. They were jockeying for position. It is possible that the seating arrangement at the supper had rekindled the old argument.
- (25) Jesus hears this contention and points out that all human governments have leaders who assume puffed titles such as “Benefactors.” Compare to Mt. 20:25-26.
- (26,27) In Christ’s Kingdom the hierarchy will be different. The leaders are not to love or seek superiority. The “greatest” will be the one who performs the most service. Jesus shows some examples of how to become “great.” If the Apostles ascribed greatness to Jesus (as they surely did), then they should follow His example to greatness – through service!
- (28,29) The disciples had continued with Him throughout His ministry. His life had been filled with temptation since the time of His baptism (Heb. 4:15; Lk. 4:13). The disciples will receive the Kingdom in a manner similar to how Jesus received it – through trials and service. These disciples would be charter members of the new Kingdom, from the day it would be established.
- (30) Jesus is guaranteeing a type of pre-eminence to the faithful disciples. It is unclear what this pre-eminence might entail. See Boles p. 418-19 on “set on thrones.”

**142. The Lord's Supper Instituted (Mt. 26:26-29) [Mk. 14:22-25, Lk. 22:19,20; 1 Cor. 11:23-26]**

**a. Mt. 26:26-29**

- (26) Jesus did not bestow a miraculous quality upon the bread; He gave thanks for it. To break bread means to divide the loaf so that more than one can partake from it. The bread is not literally Christ's body; it is a remembrance and representation of His body.
- (27) Giving thanks is equated with "*blessing*." Each one present was to drink of the cup.
- (28) Under the Old Law, the blood of beasts was shed, while under the New Law, Jesus' blood was shed. As the bread represented His body, so does the cup represent His blood. Note: The blood of an animal sacrifice was only effective for the one who made the sacrifice. Jesus' blood is effective for all who believe on His name and obey His will.
- (29) Jesus would partake of the cup only in a spiritual sense after His resurrection.

**b. Mk. 14:22-25**

(22,23) Same as Mt. 26:26,27.

(24) This verse omits "*remission of sins*."

(25) Most scholars believe that Jesus spoke this verse earlier in the Passover meal.

**c. Lk. 22:19-20**

- (19) Luke says Jesus "gave thanks" instead of "blessed." He adds, "*This do in remembrance of me*," which Paul also quotes in 1 Cor. 11:24.
- (20) A similar thought to that of v. 19, with cup in the place of bread.

**d. 1 Cor. 11:23-26**

(23) This was Jesus betrayal night.

(24,25) This parallels Lk. 22:19,20.

(26) Paul comments on Jesus' meaning of "*This do in remembrance of me*."

Read McGarvey's Fourfold Gospel pp. 657-660

Also note Zerr's chronology: Lk. 22:14-18; 21-23; Jn. 13:23-30; Lk. 22:19,20.

**143. Jesus Goes Out o the Mount of Olives (Mt. 26:30) [Mk. 14:26]**

- (30) It was traditional for the Jews to conclude the Passover by singing Psalms 114-118, but it is not known whether this was the selection or not. After the hymn they Jesus and the Eleven departed for the Mount of Olives.

**144. Peter Warned, Swords Produced (Lk. 22:31-38) [Mt. 26:31-35; Mk. 14:27-31; Jn. 13:36-38]**

- (31) Jesus forewarns Peter that he will eventually deny Him. Satan has asked for Peter as He once asked for Job (Job 1:6-12; 2:1-6). Some think "to have you" implies that Satan asked for all the disciples.
- (32) Jesus predicts Peter's fall and recovery. Note that Peter was not infallible as some teach, but prone to sin just like any other man. Jesus prayed on Peter's behalf that after his repentance that he would teach and encourage the brethren.
- (33) Peter is still overconfident. He needed to learn the lesson that he must rely on God and not himself. It will be just a few hours until Peter denies the Lord three times.
- (34) Jesus predicts that Peter will deny Him three times before the cockcrows. It would still be early in the morning when Peter denies Jesus.

- (35) When Jesus sent the disciples out on the “limited commission” they had nothing, but lacked nothing. Now the circumstances have changed and new requirements will have to be met.
- (36) Jesus now warns them of imminent danger from their enemies, not just during the night to follow, but also throughout their ministries. The procurement of a sword was probably only for the upcoming betrayal scene as we know that elsewhere Christ taught “resist not evil.”
- (37) Jesus now quotes Isa. 53:12. Jesus is pointing to His death as a fulfillment of prophecy, as well as the mode of His death. He is trying to prepare them for the inevitable.
- (38) The disciples were in possession of two swords and Jesus said they were enough. Of course, Peter had one of the swords. Why were two swords enough?

#### **145. Comfort for the Disciples (Jn. 14:1-31)**

##### **a. The House of Many Mansions (vv. 1-14)**

- (1) With all the pain and agony ahead of Him, Jesus still finds time to give comfort. They still did not understand how Christ’s end would initiate the Kingdom and so He gives them solace in their sorrow. Even though they do not yet understand, Jesus implores them to believe in Him as they believe in God the Father.
- (2) A heavenly abode is prepared for the disciples. He will go ahead and prepare a place where they all can be together again. Not only did Christ prepare a place for those disciples, but He has prepared a place for us as well. Additionally, He has prepared the way.
- (3) Here Christ references the Second Coming. Death will simply be a “going home” to be with Christ.
- (4) This statement will provoke questions from the disciples. In light of Mt. 16:21; 17:22 and 20:17, they should have understood exactly where he was going.
- (5) Thomas (the doubter) could not comprehend this statement much as he could not later understand or believe in the resurrection.
- (6) Jesus points Thomas toward his goal. Thomas must follow Christ if he is to obtain the eternal home. “I am the Way” shows Christ as possessing what is needed for immortality. To follow in Jesus’ footsteps is to tread a sure trial. “I am the Truth” makes Jesus the key to all truth, both here on earth and in heaven. “And I am the Life” styles Christ as the source of all life, both physical and especially spiritual. He is the only avenue along which we can approach the Father.
- (7) To know God, Christ must be known. The disciples had not yet come to a full realization of this fact. The death, burial, resurrection, and ascension along with the coming of the Comforter would finally clarify these facts to the disciples.
- (8) Philip does not understand that the Father is to be seen in and through Christ. He was calling for a vision of God, perhaps like the one Moses witnessed (Ex. 33:18).
- (9) How could Philip ask to be shown the Father when he had accompanied Jesus for so long? Philip did not realize that he had been walking with the God-Man for three years! Christ was not God’s ambassador, but instead “God with us.”
- (10) Philip could not comprehend the complete union of the personalities of God the Father and God the Son (Col. 2:9). The words of Christ were the words of the Father, as was the source of his wisdom and authority.
- (11) If they could not come to a full belief of His Godhood based on His words, then they only had to see His works to believe.
- (12) At the time of His death Jesus had perhaps five hundred disciples, on the day of Pentecost, the Apostles baptized over 3000. While the Apostles might not perform greater miracles, their preaching would result in many more converts than the three-year tour that Jesus was now completing.

(13,14) No man could make such a promise as this. The promise is limited by 1)- faith, 2)- willingness to ask in His name, and 3)- be submissive to the will of the Father – Thy will be done!

**b. The Advocate Promised (vv. 15-31)**

- (15) Obedience proves love, while disobedience proves love is not in the heart (1 Jn. 5:3).
- (16) Jesus will pray to the Father to send the Comforter (The Holy Spirit). The “Comforter” comes from two Greek words that combined means “call to one’s side.” Only John uses it. Many modern students of the Greek prefer the word “Advocate,” as a more accurate translation. The Spirit is more than a comforter or an advocate – He is our strength, our source of knowledge, our peace-giver and witness of God and Christ. He is our Helper.
- (17) The Spirit of truth speaks truth (Jn. 17:19; 1 Cor. 2:4; 1 Thess. 1:5). The gift of the Holy Spirit is dependent on belief, repentance and baptism (Acts 2:38); the world will never receive this teaching and thus be without the Comforter.
- (18) Jesus will not leave the disciples orphaned. He will be with them always in spirit and via the Spirit. The “coming” mentioned here could not be the second coming where every eye shall see, but instead He will be manifested in their hearts through the Holy Spirit.
- (19) After the following evening the world would see Him no more, but the disciples would not only witness His resurrection, but also see Him by letting the Spirit into their hearts.
- (20) It would be on the next Pentecost when the Apostles would receive their full measure of the Holy Spirit. We too receive our measure of the Spirit when we repent and are baptized for the remission of our sins.
- (21) Obedience and love are essential. Active obedience is proof of love. Loving the Savior has its wonderful consequences, being pleasing in God’s sight. One of these consequences is the abiding sense of Christ’s presence.
- (22) The other Judas questions Jesus as to how He will appear to the disciples but not to the world. Judas has the typical view of the Messiah as one who would be known to the world as the physical Savior of Israel. It would take the Pentecost miracle to teach him differently.
- (23) Those that love Christ and are obedient will have both He and His Father dwelling in their heart. The steps to this indwelling are as follows: 1)- Love of Christ, 2)- keeping His words, 3)- having the Father’s love bestowed, 4)- the Father and the Son will come, 5)- They will indwell in the loving heart.
- (24) Disobedience springs from the absence of love of Christ, because Christ only manifests Himself in those that love Him. Refusing to obey the words of Christ is equal to refusing to obey God the Father.
- (25,26) Now Jesus names the Comforter, namely The Holy Spirit. God would send the Holy Spirit in Jesus’ name. His purpose, as far as the Apostles were concerned, was to teach them and help them remember all that Jesus had said and done. Note that the Apostles would not receive any new doctrine, but would be able to recall exactly what was taught to them by Jesus.
- (27) Jesus now delivers a solemn and affectionate benediction. He bestowed on them the kind of peace that Stephen would need during his stoning, that Paul and Silas would need in prison and that Peter and John would need in Herod’s dungeon.
- (28) The disciples were somewhat selfish in wanting to keep Christ with them. Jesus suggests that if they truly love Him, that they would wish Him well as He returns to His Father. Because of His station as the Son, he must do the will of His Father.
- (29) Because Jesus foretold His leaving, they would be able to accept it when it happened because it would be prophecy fulfilled.
- (30) His mind is soon to be on other things, so what He has to say directly to them is about to end. Satan is coming to deliver his final challenge and Jesus must prepare His mind for this one last battle.

- (31) His death would stand as the ultimate self-sacrifice, never to be duplicated.

**146. Vine and the Branches, Further Comfort (Jn. 15:1- 16: 33)**

**a. The True Vine (15:1-16)**

- (1) While the OT often styles Israel as the Vine tended by God the Almighty Husbandman (Isa. 5:1; Ps. 80; Jer. 2:21), Jesus indicates that He is the True Vine. The relationship between the Vine and the branches is similar to that of the Head and the body described by Paul (Eph. 5:23 and Col. 2:19). That God is Husbandman of the Vine, reminds us of Paul's statement, "I planted, Apollos watered, but God gives the increase."
- (2) Unfruitful branches will be severed from the Son. Sometimes a branch will fall off by itself, but other times it must be cut off. The Father will prune and dress the branches of the Vine to purify it so that it may be fruitful. How this is to be done is described in the following verses.
- (3) It is via the spoken Word that God has chosen to cleanse the soul. The Word is where the sinner finds out what he must do to be saved. The Word must be received in obedient faith. (Acts 2:38, Mk. 16:16.)
- (4) For Christ to abide in us, we must abide in Him. We abide in Him by keeping His commandments (words). We need Christ's life in us because without it we would be a dead branch. Without the Christ-life we are dead fruitless branches.
- (5) Here Jesus declares that every true disciple is a branch. Denominationalists may say that individual churches are the branches, but this passage teaches the truth of the matter – individual Christians are the branches. Disciples of Christ can do nothing according to God's will separate from The Vine.
- (6) This passage clearly teaches that one may "fall from grace." 1)- These have been branches of the Vine, 2)- but they did not abide (remain) in the Vine, 3)- therefore they were cut off, and 4)- at the end they will be burned. Without this possibility there would be no need for watchful, prayerful diligence.
- (7,8) "The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much." If we abide in the Vine, our prayers are heard and answered.
- (9) We have an opportunity as branches of the True Vine to enjoy the same mutual love with Christ that he shares with His Father. How can we abide in this love? Read on.
- (10) Jesus remained in the Father's love by a life of perfect obedience. We must obey all of Christ's commandments to abide in His love.
- (11) Even on the verge of death Jesus contemplates His joy; namely, His union with the Father. The disciples can have this same joy based on their union with Christ.
- (12) Since love is the bond between the Father and the Son and the Son and the disciples, then they must love one another as well. They are bound by mutual love and mutual submission (Eph. 5:23).
- (13,14) Not only did Christ die for his friends, he also died for His enemies (Rom. 5:6). By following His commands they remain His friends. That is the condition.
- (15) Servants of Christ become His friends and are privy to knowledge reserved for friends; in this case, knowledge of the Father.
- (16) The Lord had specifically called each of the eleven Apostles. He chose them specifically to bring the Gospel to the world. We too have been called by Christ, through the word. If we hear and obey then we are chosen to do His work. While this promise of help is given directly to the eleven, it has general application to Christians today – men of prayer will bring forth the most fruit for the Lord.

**b. The Church and the World (15:17-27)**

- (17) Christ's mission was and is to fill man's heart with an abiding love for God and love for mankind (1 Jn. 3:4; Mt. 22:37-40; Rom. 13:8-10; 1 Cor. 13).
- (18) The unconverted will hate the Apostles. Because Christ rebuked the sins of the world, they persecuted and crucified Him. The Apostles (and to some degree, all Christians) were in for some of the same treatment.
- (19) When the church is not in conflict with the world it has become complacent towards sin. (Note: Jn. 7:7; 1 Pet. 4:12,13; 1 Jn. 3:13,14; 4:4,5).
- (20) If the Lord would be persecuted by the world, then so would the disciples. Some will accept the Gospel, while others will reject it and thus become the enemies of the Lord. See Paul's experience in Acts 13:42-45.
- (21) It will not be long after this that the Sanhedrin will command the Peter and John not to teach in the name of Jesus. The enemies had rejected Christ because they did not believe that He was the Son of God; men today reject Him for exactly the same reason.
- (22) The coming of Jesus Christ revealed the hearts of men to be sinful. He is the Light of the world and in Him there is no darkness. Through His Light each man stands responsible for his own sins. By rejecting Christ man accepts his sinful condition and its consequences.
- (23) If Christ is "God with us" and man chooses to hate Him, then they must also hate the One who sent Him – God the Father.
- (24) Because of the work that Jesus had done among them, the Jews were without excuse. Only one man who has ever lived was sinless, taught unerringly, raised the dead, and forgave sins - Jesus of Nazareth! Therefore He is more than man, He is Divine.
- (25) The undeserved hatred of the Jews for Jesus was a fulfillment of Ps. 35:19. It is beyond our understanding that the God of love could be hated, but indeed He was hated even unto the death of His Son.
- (26) Just as Christ came from the Father so shall the Comforter come as well. The Comforter is called the Spirit of God and the Spirit of Christ (Rom. 8:9; Gal. 4:6; Phil. 1:19; 1 Pet. 1:11). The Spirit testifies of Christ through the holy men of God that He moved to preach the word of God. This is the only method of testimony by the Spirit recorded in the Bible.
- (27) The disciples were eyewitnesses of Christ. They were in possession of all of the facts concerning His life, teaching, miracles and good works. It would be the Comforter that would clarify their thoughts as to what they had witnessed.

**c. The Holy Spirit and the World (16:1-33)**

- (1) Jesus was warning the disciples of their impending persecution so that they would be prepared and not stumble ("be offended").
- (2) The Jews will be the first to persecute the church and the first thing they will do is throw the Christians out of the synagogues. Remember that Saul of Tarsus thought he was doing God's will when he sought to imprison and kill the saints. A cruel spirit is not unknown in religious persecutions through the ages, even among those calling themselves Christians! Note the crusades and the Spanish Inquisition as examples.
- (3) These persecutions will occur because the perpetrators do not truly know God and reject the Son. Such intolerance comes from spiritual pride, selfish ambition and self-worship.
- (4) When the disciples would come under persecution, they would remember the words of encouragement from Jesus. While he was among them, His presence deflected the hatred from the disciples. After He leaves, they will be in for the full brunt of the attack.
- (5,6) The way that Jesus must travel to His Father included: the Cross, the tomb, the Resurrection, and the Ascension. They had not even considered asking Him where He was going because of their own sorrow of heart.

- (7) The disciples needed to understand that they could not receive the Holy Spirit unless Christ departed. It would be ten days after His Ascension that the Apostles would receive the Power of the Advocate.
- (8) The Holy Spirit will convict the world of sin. According to Peter's sermon on Pentecost (Acts 2) the Holy Spirit convicted the world of sin due to their rejection of the Lord. The world would also be convicted concerning righteousness and judgment through the manifestations of power seen by them on Pentecost and the assurance given of the "wrath to come."
- (9) Since all sin comes forth from unbelief, it is named here. One must first believe before he can repent and be baptized for remission of sins.
- (10) By returning to God His Father, Jesus disproved the false charges of the Sanhedrin concerning blasphemy. He was innocent and by His ascension the world was convicted of unrighteousness.
- (11) By the resurrection, Satan the prince of this world was defeated and therefore the world was convicted of the judgment of Christ.
- (12) Even after three and one-half years of teaching the Apostles were still not ready for all the lessons that Christ had to teach them.
- (13) The Advocate will continue to bring the teachings of Christ to their minds. The activities of the Apostles as seen in Acts, the Epistles and Revelation demonstrate how the Spirit brought them into all knowledge concerning "things to come."
- (14,15) The union of the Godhead is demonstrated here, as one acts so do the other two.
- (16,17) He would be crucified the next day, then be gone for three days. After the Resurrection he would be among them for 40 days and then gone again until the Second Coming. The disciples could not understand this itinerary.
- (18,19) The disciples were scared to ask Jesus what he meant by this saying, so Jesus took up their unasked question.
- (20) It would be a few hours until this prophecy would be fulfilled. First, His death would bring them sorrow (while bringing their enemies joy), then His resurrection would bring them joy.
- (21) Their joy will emulate that of a mother giving birth. The travail of birth will be forgotten at the sight of the newborn. Beyond the immediate reference, the death of Christ stood as a point where everything prior looked forward to it and everything since looks back.
- (22) Their current sorrow was needful as they traveled the pathway towards everlasting joy. Jesus would be back in a little while and then their joy could begin to be realized.
- (23) It would be at the day of Pentecost when the Apostles would begin their time of joy. Then they would be in possession of the power and the knowledge needed to truly complete the Great Commission. The indwelling of the Holy Spirit among the Apostles will eliminate the need to ask questions directly of Christ.
- (24) It is here at the end of His earth-life that He directs the disciples to pray in His name (Eph. 1:21; Phil. 2:9,10).
- (25) Jesus has been speaking to them in figures since chapter 15. The stories of the True Vine and the woman in travail will make complete sense when the Comforter comes.
- (26) From Pentecost forward the Apostles would know exactly what they needed to ask from the Father. They will be able to approach the Father directly through their prayers due to the presence of the Comforter.
- (27) Jesus is not saying that He will not pray to the Father for them, but only that because of the relationship that they have with the Father His prayers would not be necessary. The love that the Father has for the prodigal is very different from the love promised to the penitent, obedient, righteous believer.
- (28) It is time for Him to return to the place from whence He came – the abode of the Father.
- (29) The disciples now thought that they understood what he was trying to tell them.
- (30) The fact that Jesus had so readily discerned their thoughts coupled with His discourse had confirmed the disciples' faith in Him as the Christ.

- (31,32) Jesus recognized that their faith was incomplete. The betrayal, arrest, and trials that were coming would scatter them instead of bind them closer to Jesus. Even when they deserted Him He would still not be alone – His Father would be at His side.
- (33) Everything Jesus has said to them beginning in chapter 14 was meant as comfort for them in the hours and days to come. Because Christ has overcome the world through His death, disciples can face the tribulations found there with joy. [See Johnson’s *Commentary on John* pp. 249-51 for more on The Holy Spirit.]

#### **147. The Lord’s Prayer (Jn. 17:1-26)**

While this prayer is obviously given in three parts, each part directs its subjects to glorify the Father by completing His purposes and tying the spiritual union of all in the bonds of love. [See Johnson’s *Commentary on John* pp. 251-52 for more on The Lord’s Prayer]

##### **(a) He prays for Himself (vv. 1-5)**

- (1) He begins by asking the Father to glorify Him, not for His own sake, but so that Jesus’ death will prove God’s will concerning His Son to be true. The resurrection and exaltation of the Son stands as proof of His sinless life, His humility, His love of the Father and Mankind, and His self-sacrifice.
- (2) The Son will be glorified by being given power over all things in heaven and on earth.
- (3) The first step to salvation is to recognize Jesus as the Christ. An intellectual knowledge of Christ is not enough; it must be fortified by faith, obedience, and love.
- (4) Jesus glorified the Father by finishing the work He had been given to do.
- (5) Jesus asks for a restoration of His former glory; the glory He possessed before he became human.

##### **(b) He prays for the Disciples (vv. 6-19)**

- (6) This verse indicates that he is especially praying for the Apostles.
- (7) The Apostles were now beginning to comprehend that Jesus and the Father were one.
- (8) The life, miracles and teaching of Jesus had brought the Apostles to the necessary level of faith to accomplish the tasks for which they had been chosen.
- (9) Here Jesus is confining His thoughts to the Apostles. He is not saying that he would never pray for the world (Mt. 5:44). Paul tells us to pray for all men.
- (10) The disciples are the manifestation of Christ’s glory on earth. Because they are His, they are also the Father’s. It will be their work to proclaim the Gospel to the world.
- (11) The disciples are left behind to preach the word and establish the kingdom. Jesus prays for the disciples to remain united, setting aside their jealousies and personal ambitions.
- (12) Yet even one of their number had already been lost – the son of perdition, Judas Iscariot (Ps. 41:9).
- (13) Before He leaves this world Christ sends this petition up to the Father, that the disciples might fulfill His will and therefore His joy.
- (14) Jesus entrusted the word of God to the Apostles; which they were to preach to men.
- (15,16) The world would seek to slay the Apostles as they were about to slay their Master. Jesus prays for their protection and that remain “in the world, but not of the world.”
- (17,18) The Apostles are to be consecrated by having the word of truth embedded in their hearts (minds). The need for this consecration was so that they might go into a world of trial and tribulation perfectly equipped as soldiers of the cross.
- (19) We sanctify ourselves in a likeness of Christ when “we present our bodies as a living sacrifice.”

(c) **He prays for all believers (vv. 20-26)**

- (20) Here Jesus prays for every disciple of every age. Let us all seek for the very things that he prays for us to possess.
- (21) He prays for the unity of the saints. Just as the Father and Son have no separate will, kingdom or interests, then neither should we as members of Christ's church. This is a prayer against not only denominationalism, but factions within local congregations as well. The main source of skepticism concerning Christianity is the division, sectarianism, and fighting among its so-called practitioners.
- (22,23) The unity between God and Christ is His Sonship. It is our ability to become sons of God that allow us to partake in His glory (Jn. 1:12; 1 Jn. 3:1). If Christ is in us and God is in Christ, then we ought to be perfectly joined together in the unity of the Spirit. The most powerful argument that the infidel or atheist has to offer is that Christ is not powerful enough to unite His so-called followers.
- (24) Jesus prays that all of His disciples will eventually follow him to Heaven.
- (25) The world did not know God, but when Christ revealed God to the world, these disciples believed.
- (26) By declaring the name of God, Jesus declared His nature, character, love and blessings of his service. [See Johnson's *Commentary on John* pp. 257-60 for more on The Prayer for Unity.]

**148. On to Gethsemane (Lk. 22:39) [Jn. 18:1]**

- (39) Gethsemane – the place of oil presses, was located about ½ mile from Jerusalem. It was a place that Jesus often frequented when in the area. References to this mount in the OT include: 2 Sam. 15:30; Neh. 8:15; Ezek. 11:23; Zech. 14:4. Gethsemane is prophetic of Jesus' agony (Isa. 63:3; Rev. 14:20). Jesus left eight of the disciples near the entrance to the garden (where they were to pray to be spared temptation) and brought Peter, James, and John a little farther in (where they also were instructed to watch and pray).

**149. Agony in Gethsemane (Lk. 22:40-46) [Mt. 26:36-46; Mk. 14:32-42; Jn. 18:1,2]**

- (40) From Mt. 26 we see that Jesus took Peter, James and John a little further into the garden and left the eight behind. In His absence He instructed the eight to pray and then withdraw.
- (41,42) Jesus left Peter, James and John and went even a short distance further, where He kneeled and prayed. According to Matthew and Mark's accounts He fell to the ground. Jesus prayed for the removal of His cup of anguish (or sorrow). What did this "cup" contain? Some say only sorrow and anguish, but other commentators feel He also meant His death. Whatever He actually meant the conclusion is clear – He is willing to submit to the Father's will. Jesus evidences His human nature in this prayer.
- (43) This verse stands as a fulfillment of Ps. 91:11. How the angel ministered to Jesus is not clear, however, his presence somehow strengthens Jesus.
- (44) This bloody sweat is a phenomenon known to accompany fits of mental anguish. Luke the physician is the only Gospel writer to mention this occurrence.
- (45,46) Matthew and Mark indicate that Jesus prayed three times, returning each time to the disciples only to find them asleep. The Apostles were mentally exhausted from their sorrow, which caused them to be sleepy. Jesus was not actually belittling them when He called for them to rise and pray. Jesus probably could sense the coming of the betrayer.

**150. Jesus Betrayed, Arrested, and Forsaken (Lk. 26:47-53)  
[Mt. 26:42-56; Mk. 14:43-52; Jn. 18:3-11]**

- (47) Among the multitude were Roman soldiers, temple guards, chief priests, elders, and servants such as Malchus. Try to picture Judas leading this mob in the night to the peaceful, isolated garden. Judas drew near to kiss Jesus.
- (48) Contrast the kiss for what it should have meant with the purpose Judas used it for.
- (49,50) The disciples were prepared to defend Jesus with two swords versus the entire multitude. Only John identifies Peter as the one wielding the sword. Read Jn. 18:4-9 as well as the Matthew and Mark accounts to get the entire picture, especially concerning Malchus' ear.
- (51) It seems that Jesus is reprimanding His disciples for using violence.
- (52) Jesus rebuked the chief priests for their cowardice because they chose to capture Him at night. They could have taken Him anytime he was in or near the Temple.
- (53) They feared the multitude, so they resorted to sneaking around in the night.

**151. Taken to Annas First (Jn. 18:12,13)**

- (12) When the disciples fled (Mk. 14:50) the soldiers used the opportunity to seize and bind Jesus.
- (13) The high priest was actually Caiaphas, but Annas was the previous high priest who had been ousted by the Romans.

**152. Preliminary Trial Before Caiaphas (Jn. 18:14, 19-24) [Mt. 26:57-66; Mk. 14:53-64; Lk. 22:54]**

- (14) Caiaphas had already committed himself to seeking the death of Jesus (Jn. 11:50). He was strictly a puppet of the Roman government.
- (19) The high priest now questions Jesus concerning His doctrine.
- (20,21) Jesus rebukes the high priest. Jesus ignores the question concerning the disciples and answers the part about His doctrine. Jesus had taught openly and many knew His teaching. He calls for the high priest to call witnesses.
- (22) Jesus receives His first blow. The officer of the high priest was not used to hearing a prisoner answer in plain, independent language; therefore he struck Jesus and rebuked Him.
- (23) Compare the demeanor of Jesus to that of Paul in similar circumstances (Acts 23:3). Jesus had done nothing evil yet He was subjected to violent treatment. Such violence is the resort of those that are in the wrong.
- (24) The high priest dismisses Jesus from his presence.

**153. Jesus Mocked and Smitten (Lk. 22:63-65) [Mt. 26:67,68; Mk. 14:65]**

- (63) The soldiers treated Jesus shamefully – mocking and beating Him. These beatings were probably taking place at the same time Peter was denying Jesus.
- (64,65) He was struck by servants with their fists, blindfolded and mocked. They hit Him in the face, spit on Him and hurled abusive language at Him. Their blasphemy was extreme. They were guilty of everything they had charged Jesus with! See McGarvey's FFG pp. 700-702, before beginning the next section.

**154. In the Meantime Peter Denies Jesus Three Times (Lk. 22:55-62)  
[Mt. 26:69-75; Mk. 14:66-72; Jn. 18:15-18, 25-27]**

- (55) Peter had been following afar off when Jesus was seized. John went directly into the house of the high priest, but Peter lingered outside. Because John spoke to the door maid, Peter was

admitted to the court (Jn. 18:15,16). When those in the courtyard started a fire to ward off the chill, Peter was standing among them.

- (56,57) This maid (a servant of the high priest according to Mk. 14:66) recognized Peter in the light of the fire. She either asked Peter (John's account) or accused him of being a disciple of Jesus. Peter bluntly denies it – denial #1.
- (58) Another person charges Peter with being a close disciple of Jesus. Peter had moved out of the light and by the gate by this time (Mt. 26:71). Peter makes his denial even more emphatically than the first time – denial #2.
- (59,60) A kinsman of Malchus now accuses Peter of being a disciple (Jn. 18:26). This was about an hour after the second charge at the gate. They recognized Peter as a Galilean because of his accent. Peter claimed total ignorance of Jesus. Not only did Peter lie, but he began to curse and swear (Mt. 14:71) – denial #3.
- (61,62) Jesus was in eye contact with the place where Peter stood. He looked at Peter as Peter made the third denial. Was it a look of pity or of regret? The “look” had its effect on Peter; he left the place and began to weep bitterly. From Mark's account we see that the rooster did crow and Jesus' prophecy of Lk. 22:34 is fulfilled.

**155. Formally Condemned by the Sanhedrin and Led Away to Pilate. (Lk. 22:66-23:1)**  
**[Mt. 27:1,2; Mk. 15:1; Jn. 18:28]**

- (66) The nighttime trials before Annas and Caiaphas were illegal, so to formalize the proceedings the meeting had to begin officially in the morning. The Sanhedrin could condemn Jesus to death, but they did not have the authority to carry out capital punishment under Roman law (Jn. 18:31).
- (67,68) They were asking for Jesus to condemn Himself because no matter how He answered they would have Him on charges of blasphemy, treason, or both. Jesus says that it does not matter how He answers, they would call Him a liar. On the other hand they would not let Him ask questions that could clear Him of their charges. At this point they were bent on His death and no further proof of His Messiahship would do any good.
- (69) Jesus quotes the prophecy of Ps. 110:1 and Dan. 7:9-14. He would fulfill this prophecy. Jesus was of course referring to a time after His resurrection. The right hand of God signifies the power, honor, and favor.
- (70) So they ask Him, “Are you the son of God?” He replies, “It is as you say.” See Mt. 26:64 and Mk. 14:62.
- (71) The declaration from Jesus was “proof” to the Sanhedrin. Mt. 26:65 indicates that the high priest tore his garments. This is in spite of the fact that it was against the Law of Moses for the high priest to rend his garments (Lev. 21:10). It seems that the high priests ignored this command in times of great calamity. The practice was based on 2 Ki. 18:37. The high priest was accusing Jesus of blasphemy.

**Reviewing Jesus' Threefold Trial Before the Jews and Previewing His Threefold Trial Before the Romans.**

- 1)- Before Annas
- 2)- Before Caiaphas and some of the Sanhedrin
- 3)- Before the entire Sanhedrin after daylight.
  
- 4)- Appearance before Pilate.
- 5)- Appearance before the native ruler, Herod Antipas.
- 6)- Final appearance before Pilate.

Read Jn. 18:28. Pilate was the Roman governor appointed by Caesar to rule Judea. Most commentators feel that Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathea were not part of these trials. It also should be noted that Pilate was not well liked among the Jews.

**156. Remorse and Suicide of Judas (Mt. 27:3-10) [Acts 1:18,19]**

- (3) Judas realized that Jesus was condemned. He was probably present at the Jewish trials of Jesus. He was remorseful in that he regretted what he had done. This is distinguished from the usual Biblical use of the word “repent.” He returned the money to the chief priests.
- (4) Judas understood that Jesus was innocent of all charges brought against Him. The chief priests rejected the testimony of Judas.
- (5) Judas threw the money into the sanctuary and left the premises and went out and hanged himself.
- (6) The priests would not return the “blood money” to the treasury. This is really an admission by the priests that Jesus’ guilt was in doubt, other wise this would have been “justice money.”
- (7) They used the money to purchase a field to be used as a gravesite for foreigners, thus keeping the Jewish graveyards free of Gentiles.
- (8) This verse shows that Matthew’s gospel was written some time after the crucifixion.
- (9,10) Jeremiah never says the quote attributed to him here in our versions of the Bible. However, Zechariah did say this in his prophecy (Zech. 11:12,13). Scholars attribute this to a transcriber’s error. In Greek there is only two letters difference in the two prophets’ names.

**Acts 1:18,19**

(18,19)From Luke’s account in Acts we learn three things about the hanging of Judas. 1)- He hung until the rope broke and the fall was so far or his body was so decomposed that his body burst into pieces on impact. 2)- Judas purchased the field indirectly through the priests. 3)- This added a second reason to name the field the “Field of Blood,” namely the death of Judas as well as the betrayal of Jesus.

**157. First Trial Before Pilate (Lk. 23:2-7) [Mt. 27:11-14; Mk. 15:2-5; Jn. 18:28-38]**

The accounts of Matthew, Mark, and Luke are very similar, but John provides additional information not found in the others.

- (2) Since the Jews would not enter the Praetorium, Pilate came out to them. They wanted Pilate to stand behind their decision, but he refused to accommodate them without first hearing the evidence. Compare the charges before the Sanhedrin to those brought before Pilate. Note: all of these charges were false.

<b>Sanhedrin</b>	<b>Romans</b>
Blasphemy	Perverting the nation
	Forbidding tribute to Caesar
	Calling Himself the King

- (3) Pilate asked if Jesus was King. Now see Jn. 18:36. Jesus answers Pilate’s question in the affirmative.
- (4) Pilate finds no guilt in Jesus. Pilate made this judgment based on the private interview that only John records (Jn. 18:33-38). By this time a multitude had assembled in addition to the Sanhedrin. Mk. 15:8 appears to suggest that there were friend of Jesus present.

- (5) The Jews perceived that Pilate was taking this matter lightly. Since Pilate was not concerned with the religious squabbles of the Jews, they tried to emphasize their charge of insurrection against the Roman government to persuade him. Them wanting to get a quick judgment, before the crowd had a chance to turn against them, may also have fueled their urgency.
- (6,7) When Pilate heard that Jesus had caused trouble in Galilee he asked if Jesus was a Galilean. Since Galilee was in Herod's jurisdiction and Herod was present in Jerusalem, Pilate sent Jesus to Herod to be tried. Scholars disagree as to whether Pilate did this to irritate or ingratiate Herod.

**158. Second Trial – This Time Before Herod. (Lk. 23:7-12)**

- (7) See comments above.
- (8) Herod no longer believed that Jesus was the resurrected John the Baptist (Mt. 14:1,2). Herod however had selfish motives for wanting to see Jesus. From different passages as well as secular history we know Herod was characteristically weak, worldly, crafty, superstitious and cruel as well as vengeful. Herod was interested in being entertained not edified.
- (9-11) Jesus had no desire to answer such a one as Herod. While Jesus would not answer, the chief priests and scribes had plenty to say. Herod was disappointed in Jesus so he and his soldiers mocked Jesus, dressed Him in royal apparel and sent Him back to Pilate. To them He was an object of contempt and derision, but certainly not the "Son of God."
- (12) From Luke's account we see that previous to this day Herod and Pilate had been enemies. The reason for this enmity is unknown, but the arrest of Jesus stood as common ground between them. Many scholars feel that Pilate deferred to Herod in this matter to purposely mend the rift. Conflicts make strange allies as we have already seen in the case of Jesus versus the world. See Lk. 13:31,32 to see how Jesus felt about Herod. These are the most contemptuous things Jesus ever said about a person that are recorded.

**159. Jesus Scourged and Condemned by Pilate: Mocked and Abused by Soldiers (Lk. 23:13-25) [Mt. 27:15-30; Mk. 15:6-19; Jn. 18:39-19:16]**

- (13-15) Herod sent Jesus back to Pilate. He called for the chief priests, the ruler and the people. Perhaps Pilate called for the people because he felt he could release Jesus with less resistance. Pilate plainly states that the charges preferred against Jesus were unfounded. Also, he states that Herod found Jesus not guilty as well. Jesus had done nothing to violate Roman law.
- (16) Pilate did offer to appease the Jews by chastising Jesus with a scourging. Scourging was usually used to exact a confession before crucifixion. The Roman scourging was more severe than the Jewish whipping. The whip was fitted with bone fragments to cause cuts and the beating was applied to the bare back. The pre-crucifixion scourging was extremely cruel – some of its victims died from the scourging.
- (17) This verse is omitted in the best manuscripts, however it is found in Mt. 27:15; Mk. 15:6 and Jn. 18:39. History establishes this custom. The Romans used it to calm the Jews during the feast time. Feasts were a likely time of the year for the Jews to be rebellious.
- (18,19) According to Matthew's account Pilate suggested Barabbas. This made the Jewish rulers choice between two men even more astonishing. Jesus was innocent of insurrection, murder, and robbery, yet Barabbas was guilty of all three. However, the rulers made their decision regardless of the evidence – release Barabbas. See Mt. 27:19 concerning the dream of Pilate's wife. Note that the Romans took stock in dreams and premonitions.
- (20,21) The people's choice opposed Pilate's judgment. Seeing that the Jews wanted Jesus detained, Pilate asked them what should be done with Him. Their answer – "Crucify Him!"
- (22) Pilate again attempts to sway the people to release Jesus. Pilate now lays aside his position as the judge and allows the people to choose. He recommends chastisement.

(23,24) The Jews shout Pilate down. Pilate relents to their wishes. He was too weak to exercise good judgment and too wicked to exercise righteous judgment. See Mt. 27:24 and Deut. 21:6-9. Did this action release Pilate from his responsibility?

### **John 19:1-16**

- (1) Pilate scourged Jesus, believing that this would bring the crowd to pity Jesus.
- (2,3) These soldiers had nothing in particular against Jesus, but it was the usual practice to mock the victims. Knowing that Jesus was called “the King of the Jews” only added ammunition to their mockery. The thorny crown and the robes were used to give Jesus an appearance of a pretender, not a real king. How would this conduct favor Pilate’s plan?
- (4) Jesus did not confess to any crime while being scourged.
- (5) Pilate speaks of Jesus as being a man, and indeed He is the second Adam. Pilate of course had no understanding of Christ’s true nature as the God-Man.
- (6) Still the people call for Jesus to be crucified. Pilate tells them they can crucify Him if they think He is worthy.
- (7) The Jews repeat that under their law He is guilty of blasphemy.
- (8) Take into account Jesus’ words of Jn. 18:37, Pilate’s wife’s dream, the Jews accusation that Jesus was calling Himself the “Son of God,” and the superstitious nature of the Romans. All of these things contribute to Pilate’s fear.
- (9) Pilate examines Jesus once more, but Jesus will not answer.
- (10) Jesus’ silence is so intimidating to Pilate, that Pilate threatens Jesus.
- (11) Jesus is clear as to where anyone gets the right to do anything. Who delivered Jesus to Pilate? The sin of the high priest Caiaphas was greater because he possessed the ability to have known better.
- (12) Pilate tries to release Jesus, but here the Jews take another turn. They make a political accusation that Caesar would be against Jesus.
- (13) Jesus was brought before the judgment seat.
- (14) John fixes the time at the Roman sixth hour or our 6:00 AM. Pilate now presents Jesus as their king.
- (15) When they continue to call for crucifixion, Pilate asks if they would crucify their king. They give the perfect reply to placate Pilate, but in doing so they yield their claim to independence and their hopes of a Messiah. What happened to the Jews when they rejected Jehovah for an earthly King (1 Sam. 12:12)? Now see what happens when Jesus is rejected for an earthly Caesar (Lk. 19:41-44; 23:27-31).
- (16) Jesus is delivered to be crucified (Lk. 23:25).

### **160. Our Lord Led Away to the Place of Crucifixion (Lk. 23:26-32) [Mt. 27:31-33; Mk. 15:20-22; Jn. 19:16,17]**

- (26) Note: the Matthew account tells us that they redressed Jesus in His own clothes. Cyrene was a country in North Africa known to have a large Jewish population. Simon was present in Jerusalem for the feast. Regardless of being a Jew, being a foreigner made him a prime candidate for impressments.
- (32) Here we see that at least some women mourned Jesus. This tells us that the multitude included friends as well as foes. These women were not from Galilee.
- (33) Jesus was aware that many would live to see the destruction Jerusalem. This sorrow then was only the beginning of a multitude of sorrows that would befall the city.
- (34) The horrors of the siege of Jerusalem would be such that the usual honor of motherhood would become a curse.
- (35) People would be wishing to die, wanting the end to come.

- (36) The green tree represents righteousness while the dead tree represents wickedness. If an innocent man should suffer, how much more so a wicked man (or generation)? The Jews had more guilt on their heads over the death of Jesus than those who actually carried out the crucifixion (1 Pet. 4:12-18).
- (37) (On evildoers, robbers, and criminals see Isa. 53:9-12 and Lk. 22:37). Who these particular criminals where or how long they had been awaiting crucifixion is unknown.

**161. The Crucifixion (Lk. 23:33-46) [Mt. 27:34-50; Mk. 15:23-37; Jn. 19:18-30]**

- (38) According to Mark it was now 9:00 AM. These criminals are thought to be companions of Barabbas and Jesus was being hung on a cross that was originally prepared for him. To hang Jesus between these two only heightens the shame and indignity of the occasion. Calvary = Golgotha = Skull.
- (39) There are seven utterances of Jesus on the cross; however we do not know the specific order in which they occurred. 1)- Lk. 23:34; 2)- Lk. 23:43; 3)- Jn. 19:26,27; 4)- Mt. 27:46; 5)- Jn. 19:28; 6)- Jn. 19:30; and 7)- Lk. 23:46. This verse shows us that ignorance is no excuse for sin, but perhaps it is more easily forgiven. Prisoners were usually crucified naked, so the soldiers divided His garments with a game of chance. The soldiers divided the clothes equally, but only one received His cloak, because they did not want to tear it apart due to its quality. This is fulfillment of Ps. 22:18.
- (40) The rulers as well as the people scoffed at Jesus (according to Matthew and Mark.). They taunted Him even in His death, saying that if He was who He said He was, He could save Himself.
- (36,37) The soldiers joined in the mocking. They offered Him sour wine to drink and repeated the taunting of the Jews.
- (38) John's account tells us that Pilate set up an inscription. It was the Roman custom to write the accusation above the head of the one being crucified for all to see. It was written in the three languages of the day. Also from John we read that the Jews wanted the inscription changed to read, "He said, I am King of the Jews," but Pilate refused to change it. Matthew: "This is Jesus, the King of the Jews." Mark: "The King of the Jews." Luke: "This is the King of the Jews." John: "Jesus of Nazareth, The King of the Jews."
- (39) Matthew and Mark indicate that both of the thieves railed against Jesus, while Luke indicates one. Perhaps both began to taunt Jesus, but the second thief thought better of his actions and repented. So now we have even the thieves joining in the taunting.
- (40,41) The second thief sees that the railing against Christ is railing against God. Why? At the very least such railing against an innocent man would be against God's Divine judgment. Compare the fates of the two thieves versus the fate of Christ. They deserved their punishment, while Jesus did not deserve His.
- (42) The penitent thief asks Jesus to remember him after death. This is all we know about this thief's knowledge concerning the nature of Christ's kingdom. He lived and died under the Law of Moses.
- (43) Jesus answers and says, "Today shalt thou be with me in paradise." Where is paradise? It is equivalent to "Abraham's bosom." The word also occurs in 2 Cor. 12:4 and Rev. 2:7. It seems to be the abode of the blessed dead - a waiting and resting place. Part of the Hadean world. We know it was not heaven, because Jesus did not go to heaven that day (Jn. 20:17). He had not yet ascended to the Father.
- John 19:25-27** – Let's note John 19 and the four women. Jesus concludes His ministry just as He began it, by addressing His mother (Jn.2:4). Jesus confers His natural son-ship on John. Basically this is a request for John to see to His mother's needs even though Jesus had other siblings who would be responsible.
- (44) Darkness came over the land beginning at noon and lasting for three hours.

(45,46) The veil of the Temple that separated the Most Holy Place was torn in two. The miracle caused the sun's light to fail. See Mk. 15:34,35 then Jn. 19:28-30. Those standing by could not understand whom Jesus was calling for. They thought He meant Elijah. Giving Him vinegar to drink would be an act of kindness, as it would deaden the pain. The rending of the veil was to signify the removal of the distinction between the holy and most holy place. The services of the priests and high priests would no longer be needed under the new dispensation.

**162. Extraordinary Events (Lk. 23:45, 47-49) [Mt. 27:45, 51-56; Mk. 15:33, 38-41; Jn. 19:31-37]**

Read all of the passages and note the following:

- 1)- Earthquake (Matthew).
- 2)- Tombs opened, saints raised (Matthew). When did these resurrections take place?
- 3)- The Centurion confesses Jesus as a Man of God (Matthew and Luke) and according to John, "the Son of God."
- 4)- The multitudes smite their breasts (Luke).
- 5)- The women watch from afar off. Note that the mother of Jesus is not listed at this point in time (Matthew, Mark, and Luke).
- 6)- The legs of the malefactors are broken (John).
- 7)- None of Jesus' bones were broken – a Passover regulation (Ex. 12:46; Num. 9:12). The prophecy of Ps. 34:20 fulfilled.
- 8)- The side of Jesus pierced (Ps. 22:16,17; Zech. 12:10; 13:6; Rev. 1:7).

## THE FOURFOLD GOSPEL - THE LIFE OF CHRIST

### PART TEN: THE BURIAL, RESURRECTION, APPEARANCE, AND ASCENSION OF OUR LORD

#### 163. His Burial (Lk. 23:50-56) [Mt. 27:57-61; Mk. 15:42-47; Jn. 19:38-42]

- (50,51) Joseph of Arimathea – a member of the Sanhedrin, who did not consent to the death of Jesus. He was a secret disciple and he was rich which was a fulfillment of Isa. 53:9.
- (52) Joseph requested the body of Jesus. According to Mark's account Pilate questions whether Jesus is dead or not. When the death is confirmed, Pilate releases the body to Joseph.
- (53) From John we see that Nicodemus assisted Joseph. The custom was to bind the body in a linen cloth using up to 100 pounds of myrrh and aloe. Joseph was in possession of a newly hewn tomb in the garden of Calvary.
- (54-56) The efforts were somewhat hurried because the Sabbath began at sundown. The burial was unfinished, but Jesus was entombed anyway. It seems that the women planned on finishing the embalming process on Sunday.

#### 164. Guard at the Sepulchre (Mt. 27:62-66)

- (62) Most commentators agree that “on the morrow” refers to after sundown Friday night as the Jewish day extended from sundown to sundown.
- (63) See Jn. 2:19 and Mt. 12:39,40.
- (64) The Jews interpreted “after three days” as until the third day. We need this information to help us interpret “three days.” The rulers were concerned about the resurrection prophecies. They did not believe that there would be a resurrection, but were afraid that the disciples might make it appear as if a resurrection did occur. This type of thinking on the ruler's part indicates that they thought everyone was as dishonest as they were. Notice that it took the disciples 51 what the resurrection really meant. This shows that they would have not known what to do with a pretended resurrection if they had staged one!
- (65) Pilate is saying that they could have a guard, not that they already had one. If they already had one, why would they ask for one?
- (66) They usually sealed the tombs with wax or clay. If the seal was shown to be broken, then they would have reason to believe the tomb had been tampered with.

#### 165. His Resurrection. Empty Tomb Discovered (Lk. 24:1-12) [Mt. 28:1-8; Mk. 16:1-8; Jn. 20:1-10]

- (1) Read Luke 23:56. Part of Friday, all day Saturday and part of Sunday would equal three days under their reckoning of time. That is, He will rise on the third day. How do we reconcile this with Mt. 12:40?
- (2,3) The stone was the door to the tomb. How would the stone be removed (Mt. 28:2)? The women were concerned that they could not move the stone (Mk. 16:3). They wanted in the tomb to complete the embalming procedures.
- (4,5) They did not expect an empty tomb. Two men stood by. Compare Mk. 16:5 and Mt. 28:5. The women were frightened and fell on their faces. What does “why seek the living with the dead” mean?
- (6,7) They additionally testify to His resurrection. Add to this the empty tomb, the earthquake, the soldiers in a trance; the stone rolled away, the folded napkin, and the testimony of the New Testament writers. See also Mt. 17:23; Lk. 18:33, and Jn. 11:25. Jesus of course had predicted His resurrection.

- (8,9) The women seem to understand. They returned to the city and reported to the disciples. From Jn. 20:12, we see that Mary Magdalene preceded the other women and conferred with Peter.
- (10,11) We know more about Mary Magdalene than we do about the other women (Lk. 8:2,3). According to Deut. 19:15, three witnesses was legal proof and here we have three witnesses named. The disciples though, thought these witnesses were “seeing things.”
- (12) AROSE -> RAN -> SAW -> DEPARTED -> WONDERED  
Note their eagerness. See also Jn. 20:3-10 and note that John ran with Peter.

**166. Appears to Mary Magdalene (Jn. 20:11-18) [Mk. 16:9-11]**

- (11,12) Read the Mark account. Mary is weeping because she presumes that the tomb is empty. To make sure she looks into the tomb. She sees two angels. Compare the placement of the angels to the cherubim of the Ark of the Covenant.
- (13,14) While Mary converses with the angels, Jesus appears but is not recognized. Why did Mary not know Jesus? Was it grief or a miracle?
- (15) Jesus asks the same question, then asks “whom do you seek?” She presumes that Jesus is the gardener and might have moved the body. Mary offers to take the body if it is not to be entombed in the garden.
- (16) Now when Jesus calls her by name she recognizes Him. She calls Him “Teacher.”
- (17) This is a difficult passage. McGarvey interprets it to say, “Do not detain me.” Johnson concurs and adds that Jesus had other more important things that He must do. Thayer says that faith should show Mary that it was indeed Jesus without having to physically touch His body. Jesus is saying that it is of course His body because He has not returned to His purely God-like state. It was more important for her to go to the brethren and inform them.
- (18) The grief that the disciples felt is why the Lord wanted Mary to go quickly and inform them of His resurrection.

**167. Appears to the Other Women (Mt. 28:9-10)**

- (9) As the women returned from the tomb, Jesus met them. They held Him and worshipped Him.
- (10) Jesus reiterates the message of the angels as well as the message He gave Mary Magdalene. Jesus promises to meet them in Galilee.

**168. Report and Bribery of the Guards (Mt. 28:11-15)**

- (11) In the meantime some of the guard reported to the council. The soldiers told them that the tomb was empty. Had they seen the risen Savior? Did Jesus need the tomb to be opened? Did the disciples need the tomb to be opened?
- (12,13) This does not appear to be the entire Sanhedrin. They choose to ignore the facts and instead turn to bribery. Why was their lie improbable? 1)- How could men have opened the tomb without waking the guard? 2)- It is impossible to know what happens while you are unconscious.
- (14) It was the death penalty for any Roman guard to sleep on duty. If Pilate heard of this, he would require persuasion to keep from killing the guards.
- (15) The soldiers took the bribe and told the lie. The secular historians say that the Jews dispatched special messengers throughout the world spreading this “story.”

**169. Third and Fourth Appearances – to Cleopas and Another Disciple and to Simon (Lk. 24:13-35) [Mk. 16:12-13]**

**The Road to Emmaus**

- (13) Read Mk. 16:12,13. There appear to have been five sightings of Jesus on this first day of the week: 1)- Mary Magdalene, 2)- the other women, 3)- the two going to Emmaus, 4)- Simon Peter, and 5)- the ten Apostles. Emmaus was about seven miles from Jerusalem. Who were these two travelers? We know they were not Apostles – why? (See v. 33.)
- (14) Cleopas and the “other disciple” were discussing the events of the day. They compared their views and conjectures.
- (15,16) They were confused concerning the empty tomb. Jesus joined them, but was not recognized for two reasons: 1)- He appeared in another form and 2)- their eyes were “restrained” or “holden.”
- (17) Jesus asked them, “What is this thing that you throw back and forth between you?” This caused them to halt and look sadly at Jesus. Jesus of course knew what they were discussing, but used this as a way of entering into their conversation.
- (18) Cleopas is not the Cleophas of Jn. 19:25. He cannot believe this man is the only person in Jerusalem that does not know of the strange things taking place.
- (19,20) Jesus induces these men to speak. He does not answer their question directly, but does inquire as to what events are being discussed. In their eyes Jesus had been a prophet mighty in miracles and teaching. They knew how the chief priests had delivered Him to be crucified.
- (21) These disciples may have expected Jesus to be a temporal deliverer. Jesus did deliver Israel from their sins, not the Romans. They mention the third day as though it were significant. Perhaps they were expecting the resurrection or at least something to show the establishment of the Kingdom.
- (22,23) The disciples had heard the report of the women, including the story the angels and that Jesus lived.
- (24) Also certain of the men (Peter and John) tomb and found it empty, but did not see Jesus.
- (25) Jesus calls them foolish for not believing what had been prophesied. They did not connect the suffering of Jesus, His crucifixion and resurrection as fulfillment of Messianic prophecy.
- (26) To fulfill prophecy Jesus necessarily had to endure all that had befallen Him. The Messiah had to suffer what Jesus had suffered.
- (27) Jesus taught them from the Messianic prophesies of Moses on down. He covered all the scriptures that concerned Himself.

**The Disciples’ Eyes Opened (vv. 28-35)**

- (28) When they reached Emmaus, Jesus acted as if He would continue His journey.
- (29) Jesus was willing to stay if invited. From v. 27 we presume that He would have continued if he had not been invited. Jesus never forces Himself on anyone (Rev. 3:20). However they persuaded Him or invited Him to abide with them. They were grateful for His teaching and probably wished to hear more from Him.
- (30,31) While Jesus was breaking bread; whatever power He used to restrain their vision was removed and they recognized Jesus. When they did recognize Jesus, He vanished from their presence.
- (32) After He vanished they recalled how His teachings had affected them. Now they knew this feeling was caused by who was doing the talking. Now they understood scripture they previously had not. We do not know how much time Jesus actually spent with these disciples.
- (33,34) While this trip to Emmaus may have been a “Sunday stroll,” they probably hurried back to Jerusalem. They went to the disciples and told them their experience. There were others with the eleven (1 Cor. 15:5).

- (35) They add their testimony to that already recorded. Their testimony confirmed the testimony of the women. The disciples were now ready to see the risen Savior.

**170. Appeared the Same Day and Ate With Disciples (Lk. 24:36-43) [Mk. 16:14-18; Jn. 20:19-23]**

- (36) Mark indicates that they reclined at the meal. John tells us that the door was locked and Thomas was absent. How did Christ enter the room? Note His customary greeting.
- (37) The disciples were astonished and terrified. They had just heard of the appearance some miles away and now he suddenly appears in their midst. The thought He was a ghost.
- (38) They still refused to believe He had risen, but it could not be denied.
- (39) To prove Himself He displays his hands and feet. Note the engagement of the three senses: sight -> touch -> hearing.
- (40) He showed them His pierced hands and feet.
- (41) They were still slow to believe. So Jesus gives more evidence – He eats food.
- (42,43) He was given fish and honeycomb. This was not a dream or mirage, it was not a mass hallucination.
- Note: We will discuss “The Great Commission” under point 174 (Mt. 28:16-20).

**171. Thomas, Being Absent, Doubted (Jn. 20:24,25)**

- (24) Thomas (the Twin) was not present when Jesus appeared. He is skeptical that Jesus is resurrected. However, he is really no more unfaithful than the ten who were hard to convince in Luke 24.
- (25) Thomas refuses to believe any man; he will not even believe his own eyes. He takes on an attitude bordering on defiant – he must feel the nail prints and the place where the spear had pierced Christ’s body before he will believe.

**172. A Week Later, Christ Appears Again, With Thomas Present (Jn. 20:26-31)**

- (26) Notice the emphasis on the first day of the week beginning with the resurrection of Jesus. This is the second Sunday mentioned. Remember that Peter’s sermon of Acts 2 takes place on Sunday as well.
- (27) Jesus asked Thomas to administer the tests that he had said would be required. The sincerity of Thomas was not in question or Jesus would not have extended this special treatment to him.
- (28) Did Thomas carry out the tests? Thomas confesses Jesus as Lord and God. This is a direct testimony as to the deity of Jesus.
- (29) Thomas saw and believed. Those of us that have not seen and believed are given a special blessing because we walk by faith instead of by sight.
- (30) None of the gospel writers reveal all of the deeds of Jesus.
- (31) Here we see the reason for the Gospels. They are written to reveal Jesus to the extent a faith is produced based on Jesus as the object of that belief. John concludes his argument for Jesus as the Christ that he began in Jn. 1:1.

### 173. Appears to Disciples Again at the Sea of Tiberius. (Jn. 21:1-25)

#### a. Breakfast by the sea (vv. 1-14)

- (1) Jesus had told the disciples to return to Galilee (Mt. 28:7, Mk. 16:7). In Galilee, He appeared to the Twelve and 500 brethren at once (1 Cor. 15:6). While waiting for Jesus, Peter decides to take up his former occupation. Sea of Tiberius is another name for the Sea of Galilee. What do you make of the “strangeness” of the appearances of Jesus?
- (2) Seven disciples are listed; all are regarded to be Apostles. Nathaniel is elsewhere referred to as Bartholomew.
- (3) Peter is portrayed as the leader. The others had followed Peter to the boat for a night of unsuccessful fishing.
- (4) As dawn was breaking, Jesus appeared on the shore, but either because of the poor light or a miracle He was not recognized.
- (5) The literal translation here is “fellows have you caught any fish?”
- (6) The disciples followed his direction regardless of whether they recognized him or not. They caught so many fish that they could not retrieve the nets.
- (7,8) John perceived that the man was Jesus. Remember the former draught of fishes? Peter felt he should be properly dressed before the Lord even though he was going to swim to shore ahead of the boats. The boat was out about 100 yards. Who do you think was most commendable here, Peter or the six?
- (9,10) The breakfast is already prepared. Jesus calls for additional fish.
- (11) Peter goes back to work at the command of Jesus. The number of fish was so great that it could have broken the nets.
- (12,13) Something about Jesus caused the disciples to have questions, but their realization that it was indeed Jesus caused them to remain quiet. Jesus acts as the host.
- (14) Is this the third appearance of Jesus? Note: John says, “to the disciples.”

#### b. Jesus restores Peter (vv. 15-19)

- (15) Many commentators believe that Jesus is giving Peter an opportunity to repent for denying Jesus three times. Peter has certainly mellowed since the night he said that he would *never* forsake the Lord. If Peter does love Jesus, then Peter will work for Him.
- (16) Jesus repeats His question again using the word *agape* for love, while Peter replies with *phileo*. Jesus adds sheep to the lambs. Peter has downgraded his previously professed love of Jesus to a “modest affection for Him.”
- (17) Jesus changes His question to *phileo* and once again Peter answers and is grieved.
- (18) Peter had denied Jesus to save his own life. In the future, he would have to sacrifice his life on Christ’s account. He would be bound and led to his death.
- (19) Peter was to die a martyr. Secular history records that Peter was crucified. “Follow me” now takes on an additional meaning. Earlier Jesus meant for them to physically follow Him during His earthly ministry, now He means for Peter to emulate His life and follow in His footsteps even unto a similar death. (See 2 Pet. 2:21,22.)

#### c. The Beloved Disciple and His Book (vv. 20-25)

- (20,21) Peter asks what will become of John. They were close companions and Peter naturally wondered what would happen to his friend.

- (22) Each apostle (disciple) had work to do. Peter's work was active; John's work was more patient and less active. Indeed John did tarry until Jesus came. Many years hence John would be on the isle of Patmos to receive the Revelation. He would be the last living Apostle delivering the last revelation of Christ.
- (23) John himself was unclear as to what Jesus meant, but did understand that Jesus was not saying he would physically live forever.
- (24) John is identified as the one being spoken about. Some commentators feel that another writer appended this verse and verse 25 to the original.
- (25) The extent of Jesus' ministry was beyond the scope of what could be recorded in a book of this nature.

**174. On a Mountain in Galilee (Mt. 28:16-20)**

- (16,17) **The Great Commission.** This is probably the same meeting mentioned by Paul in 1 Cor. 15:6. This is the only record made by Matthew of the appearance to the Apostles, so the incident with "doubting Thomas" is perhaps included or was among the 500 appearances mentioned by Paul. (See Mk. 16:15-18.)
- (18) Jesus prefaces the commission with a statement of His authority. This power or authority is all-inclusive.
- (19) The Apostles were not to wait for sinners to come to them, but were to go and take the gospel to the world. Who is to be baptized, the disciples or the nations? It has to be the disciples, which means that first you become a disciple, then you are baptized. This act of baptism brings the recipient into a divine relationship. Baptism is referred to elsewhere in the NT as a birth. It is through this birth that the recipient is allowed to assume the name of Christ (Rom. 2:24; Jas. 2:7). (See also Mk. 16:17,18.)
- (20) The Apostles were to pass on the things that Jesus had taught them. Jesus promises to be with them until the end of the age. (See Lk. 24:44-49; 1 Cor. 15:7; and Acts 1:3-8. Note the appearance to James and all of the Apostles as recorded in 1 Cor. 15:7.)

**175. (Lk. 24:44-49) [Acts 1:3-8; 1 Cor. 15:5-7]**

- (44) Luke summarizes everything Jesus did between His resurrection and ascension. 1)- He taught all things that must be fulfilled according to Moses, the prophets and the psalms.
- (45) 2)- Jesus opened the minds of the Apostles so the scripture could be understood. This "opening" could be of a miraculous nature or through teaching.
- (46,47) To suffer, die, and rise again was God's plan. This plan also included the preaching of repentance and remission of sins. This "Good News" was to be preached to all nations. While the Apostles were to offer the gospel to everyone, they were to begin by offering it to the Jews.
- (48,49) The Apostles were witnesses of the things Jesus wanted taught. They were not trained professional orators or speakers, but simply teachers of the Word. Here they are instructed to remain in Jerusalem until the Holy Spirit comes and baptizes them (Isa. 44:3; Jer. 31:33,34; Ezek. 36:27; Joel 2:28.)

**176. The Ascension of Our Lord (Lk. 24:50-53) [Mk. 16:19,20; Acts 1:4,5]**

- (50) Jesus and the disciples have returned to Jerusalem. From there Jesus took them to the eastern slope of the Mount of Olives. (See also Mk. 16:19,20 and Acts 1:9-12.) Note that Luke has passed over the 40 days, the appearance to the eleven, the appearance in Galilee, etc.
- (51) As Jesus was blessing the group, He ascended.

(52,53) It is from Acts 1:3 that Luke teaches us that Jesus was on the earth 40 days after His resurrection. His repeated appearances during these days had comforted the disciples, cleared their spiritual vision, reestablished and confirmed their faith, and went a long way towards correcting their former view of the Kingdom. Now they came to realize that Jesus was truly the Messiah and what His mission on earth entailed. After the ascension they returned to Jerusalem and went to the Temple to worship Jesus and meditate on the things that they had witnessed. Note that Luke began his gospel with Zacharias in the Temple and concludes with the Apostles in that very same place.

**177. Appeared to Paul (1 Cor. 15:8)**

The accounts of Jesus appearance to Paul will follow in our study of Acts.

**178. Appeared to John on the Isle of Patmos (Rev. 1)**

Jesus appearance to John will be studied in depth when we study the book of Revelation.

This concludes our study of the Fourfold Gospel.