

# **THE LIFE OF CHRIST**

## **TEACHER'S NOTES**

VOLUME 1- 2

QUESTIONS 1 - 508

QUESTIONS 509 - 1032

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## BIBLIOGRAPHY

# RECOMMENDATIONS FOR TEACHING

One way to use any personal illustrations or statements of the author is to introduce it by saying, "As one preacher has said...", or "One preacher described it this way."

It is extremely important to note that the false answers are designed to generate discussions about life principles, theology, other Scriptures, philosophical issues, and social concerns. Even some that might seem facetious or irrelevant represent significant false perspectives. I hope that these notes will reveal more of what I had in mind by the selection of false answers.

The discussions are written in an oral format. Hopefully, you should be able to simply read the comments adding on things that you have thought of. It is highly likely that you will have important things to say so it would be appreciated if you sent in anything to be included in future editions to [pastor@smallchurchsos.com](mailto:pastor@smallchurchsos.com).

I have given my notes to others in the group study at church to present the lesson with good success. Also, assigning questions for people to answer has been profitable for the study. I have assured them that I will add on anything I have to say so that they don't have to worry if they have covered what I was thinking of.

Don't be surprised if you only get to as few as two questions in a week. Generally I have done from about 5 to as many as about 10 questions. If the discussion is good you should not press forward just for the sake of getting through the material. Files for these notes are available for download at [www.smallchurchsos.com/LOC/notes.pdf](http://www.smallchurchsos.com/LOC/notes.pdf). This is so you might print only the pages you want to use as needed. Feel free to extract the text for editing using your own wordprocessor. Upon request, I will make the original file created using WordPerfect. Video files as I taught the lessons are available at [www.smallchurchsos.com/LOC/](http://www.smallchurchsos.com/LOC/) where you can see how I presented the lessons with other discussion that developed out of the printed notes.



# INTRODUCTION

## Why Four Gospels

### The Benefit of a Harmony of the Gospels

Just as four voices in a barbershop quartet blend together to make a beautiful sound, the voices of the Gospel writers blend together to give a fuller understanding of the life of Christ. Each of the four Gospels gives testimony of Jesus from a slightly different perspective, but they all tell the same story.

Matthew, Mark, and Luke are called the "synoptic" gospels, because of their similarity in content, order, and statement. John's account of Christ is different from the others because his purpose is to present more of an argument for the divinity of Christ rather than a historical record of the life and ministry of Christ.

Each one of these Gospels was written for a different audience and emphasizes different things about Jesus. The Gospel of Matthew was written primarily for the Jews and emphasized how Jesus fulfilled the prophecies of a kingly Messiah. Mark was written primarily for the Roman reader and is portrayed as the Divine Servant. Luke was written primarily for the Greek reader and is presented as the Son of Man, emphasizing His full humanity. John's Gospel emphasizes Jesus as the Son of God and includes more of Jesus' revelations about Himself as the divine Son of God than any of the other Gospels.

### The Synoptic Problem

Some people have attempted to discredit the Bible by pointing out what appear to be inconsistencies in the Gospel accounts.

When quoting statements made by Christ and others, the differences can be accounted for because the writers were quoting *parts* of what was said. Even if you put all the writers' quotes together, all of what was said is still probably not being reported.

When the Gospel accounts are placed side by side, we see that they do not all follow the same strict chronology. The differences in minor details are also answered by "allowing the text to speak." Sometimes you have to ask what does the text *actually* say without reading presuppositions into it. Other differences are complementary, not contradictory. New information is added, but it does not take away from the veracity of the old information.

The Gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke have been called the Synoptic Gospels because they contain so many events in common from the life of

Christ. The Gospel of John includes significantly other events that support an emphasis on presenting Jesus as the Divine Son of God. Because the events of the Synoptic Gospels are presented thematically at times and not always chronologically, it is difficult to study them side by side. Some events might have occurred at an earlier time but are placed later in the account of Christ's life according to some other purpose. There are phrases that signal that an event is not necessarily treated chronologically such as "And it came to pass," "And it came to pass in those days," "And it came to pass on a certain day," "And he entered again," "And when Jesus was entered into." This is especially true in the Gospel of Luke. Consideration has to be made for a thematic accommodation of events and teaching. There are enough indicators to know that even though some placements are debatable, we have an accurate account of the life of Christ.

The intention of this study is not to present a final scholarly word on harmonizing all the events in the Gospels. The schedule used in this study has been developed with careful consideration to be sufficiently justified. The ultimate aim is to be able to examine the different things noted according to the perspectives of each of the Gospel writers.

### **Recommendations for Study**

- The entire material can be covered in about two semesters if you cover 11 questions per class (1031 questions, 96 classroom hours).
- When answering questions, be prepared to explain why the incorrect answers are wrong. The wrong answers often reflect popular, notions, misunderstandings of Scripture, philosophy, and theology. Students should be prepared to explain *why* the answers are right *or* wrong.
- The questions and answers are written to guide your attention and discussion. If you really can't discern the right answer, check the Answers section at the end of the book for further insight.
- Answers for questions are drawn from the parallel accounts so you should not depend only on one to find the answers.
- Although other materials should be used, it should be noted that there is enough disagreement between all scholars to remind us that anything we read should be considered under advisement. Each student should be careful how dogmatically they hold to positions depending on how well founded their arguments are.

## 1 - Luke's Preface

### 1. Why did Luke decide to write about the life of Christ?

Luke 1:3 It seemed good to me also, having had perfect understanding of all things from the very first, to write unto thee in order, most excellent Theophilus,

- a. Because he had a complete understanding and wanted to make sure Theophilus had a good record**
- b. Because he was completing a doctoral degree and wanted to make a thesis paper to impress his professors
- c. Because he thought since everyone else was doing it he might as well make a Gospel account, too

**c** The idea of writing a Gospel because everyone else was represents a flippant attitude that is common in *our* times. Today, when someone writes a book or makes a movie that manages to be a hit, there are many imitators who try to cash in on their success by jumping on the band wagon. Luke was not just some opportunist copy cat. He was a careful historian including details by the inspiration of God which help us to form a historically accurate record. For example, he recorded the water and blood from the spear wound in His side, demonstrating that He had died and not just swooned.

Over time, there have been so many who have used Christ for so many agendas, besides cashing in on book fad, that it is easy to find people who flippantly interpret Christ according to *their* agenda. Some regard Him as a revolutionary, a hippie, a communist, one of many "spiritual masters," a member of a secret society, a homosexual, an itinerant preacher, not Jewish, just an angel, etc.

**b** When considering the record of Luke (and for that matter, the other Gospel writers), we want to remember that these were not just people who were merely engaged in an *academic exercise*. They were not just writing for the intent of getting a degree. We have to be careful of those who *claim* to be scholars. Just because someone has a degree does not mean that they are an actual authority. The very *nature* of pursuing a degree runs the risk of producing a thesis borne of a desire to be novel and significant. It is easy to be critical, all you have to do is suggest that there is a problem and you can stack details that "confirm" what you want to believe (this is called *confirmation bias*). Such "scholars" end up denying everything important that the Bible affirms.

**a** Luke explicitly stated that his goal was to provide as much detail and context for us to be able to know Jesus. This is exactly what we need as we study. Although people who have written *about* the Gospel can be helpful and insightful, they are not writing under inspiration and you might find yourself wondering about how some of their conclusions could be so dead wrong.

That is why it is important to read the Bible for yourself so that you can prove all things and hold fast that which is true. You might find that you understand things better over time and have to correct yourself, but don't just give up your responsibility for studying to someone else.

2. What were the sources he used to make sure he was making an accurate record?
  - a. His own eyewitness testimony from traveling with Christ
  - b. Eyewitnesses and ministers of the Word**
  - c. A collection of the myths that had grown up about Jesus

Luke 1:2 Even as they delivered them unto us, which from the beginning were eyewitnesses, and ministers of the word;

**a** A is wrong because Luke was not an apostle or an original disciple. He had to rely on many who *were* eyewitnesses to Christ.

**b** Jesus' ministry was very public and firsthand sources were very important. Matthew, Mark, and John wrote from their personal perspectives. Just by having those three to compare with each other we can be confident that they were not just providing a biased account of Christ. One of the great benefits of Luke's efforts was that there were multiple sources to check and cross check. This made their testimony easier to verify.

The Gospel writers did not collaborate in their effort to produce a carefully edited final version of the life of Christ. Collaboration or corroboration is also the work of conspiracy. In a court of law, witnesses who have identical statements demonstrate that their testimony is rehearsed and staged. Although they might have heard from each other, they also heard from many others. Luke in particular sought out *many* witnesses.

**c** One of the assumptions that critical "scholarship" makes is to diminish the supernatural work of God in inspiring the Bible. Because of that, they assume that ancient people were so filled with superstition that anything they believed in was largely myth, as in C, created to explain their fears of a world they did not understand. This is nothing more than intellectual arrogance. It reveals their bias and lack of understanding because anything they don't understand they can always just call a myth.

3. Look up the name Theophilus. What does his name mean?
  - a. Man of God
  - b. Student of God
  - c. Lover of God**

Luke 1:3 It seemed good to me also, having had perfect understanding of all things from the very first, to write unto thee in order, most excellent Theophilus,

**c** Theophilus means *lover of God*. We are not just trying to be holy or mere

students. Those two are important, but the student of God must have a passion for God and a gratitude for the salvation that makes it possible to *truly* know Him.

**a,b** Those who are mere students with an academic interest will miss learning the greater messages of Christ that come from a love for Him. The foundation of a man of God is his love *for* God.

## 2 - Pre-Incarnation

### 4. Who was the Word?

- a. Jesus, God the Son**
- b. Jesus, a son of God
- c. Jesus, a god

John 1:1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

**a** We need to be careful in our reading of John 1:1 because it has been abused to deny the deity of Jesus Christ. Some say that the word god can mean a great one, which is actually true. However, that is obviously not the intention here.

**c** C is a reference to how John 1:1 is mistranslated by the Jehovah's witnesses as "the Word was *a* God." They misapply a Greek rule of grammar that they do not apply equally to the word God found in vs. 6, 12, 13, 18 in the same chapter. When pressed, they will say that Jesus is *a* son of God, as in B, but not, God, the Son, in an effort to reject the Trinity as well as the deity of Jesus Christ.

1John 5:7 For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one.

John 3:16 For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

**b** In John 3:16, the reference to Jesus being the *only begotten* does not mean that Jesus is the only son of God. All who receive Jesus as their Savior are sons of God. *Only begotten* refers to having a unique relationship, just as Isaac was considered the *only begotten* son of Abraham. Abraham had other children, but Isaac had a unique relation to Abraham.

Heb 11:17 By faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac: and he that had received the promises offered up his only begotten *son*,

The following is made available in case a more thorough discussion is needed:



### **The Apparent Difference in Spelling**

First of all, the same Greek word is used in both occurrences of the word "God" in John 1:1. This same word is used in many contexts, whether it refers to the Only True God or whether it is referring to a false god - such as a man-made god (1 Cor. 8:5) or Satan as the 'god of this age' (2 Cor. 4:4). The apparent differences in spelling between the word 'God' in the phrase 'and the Word was God' ('theos') and in other places, (even in the previous phrase, 'and the Word was with God' ('theon')) is due to inflection in the Greek language. Each Greek noun normally has 8 or 9 forms (cases & number) in which it can appear. (See my page on 'Inflection' and 'Cases' on the Web site). In the first instance in John 1:1 it is the object of preposition and thus is in the accusative case. In the phrase in question, it is in the nominative case (indicating the subject or predicate nominative - equal to the subject). But it is the same word for 'God', and in both phrases here indicates the One and Only True God. So the apparent difference in spelling is not because 'theos' is a different word than 'theon', but is a different form of the identical word.

### **The Lack of a Greek Definite Article**

Another common confusion in John 1:1 comes from the fact that in Greek there is no definite article in front of the word 'God' ('theos') in the phrase 'and the Word was God'. The confusion arises from an assumption that if there is no definite article in the Greek, then it must have an indefinite meaning and thus should be translated with the indefinite article "a". Based on this understanding, some argue that this phrase in John 1:1 should be translated "the word was a god," rather than "the word was God." It is important at this point to understand that the Greek language has a definite article ('the'), but does not have an indefinite article ('a' or 'an'). In certain instances, when the Greek omits a definite article, it may be appropriate to insert an indefinite article for the sake of the English translation and understanding. But we cannot assume that this is always appropriate. Greek does not operate in the same way as English does in regard to the use of the words 'the' and 'a'. In many instances in which English would not include the word 'the', the Greek text includes it. (We don't see it in the English translations because it would sound non-sensible in our language.) (See Note 1, below.) And in many cases where the Greek omits the definite article, the English translation requires it to convey the correct meaning of the Greek. (See Note 2, below.) Therefore it cannot be assumed that if the definite article is absent, then an indefinite article should be inserted. (For a clear illustration of this, see an example of the use of the word 'God' and the definite article in John chapter one.) Furthermore, even though the Greek language does not have an 'indefinite article' like we think of in English, there is a way in Greek for the writer to indicate the indefinite idea and thus avoid confusion. This is done in Greek by using the Greek indefinite pronoun 'tis'.

In John 1:1 there is no definite article in front of the word 'God' in the phrase, 'and the Word was God'. However, in this instance, it cannot just be assumed that the word 'God' is meant to be 'indefinite', and therefore an indefinite article used in the English translation. Because the first use of the word 'God' in John 1:1 ('the Word was with God') clearly refers to the Only True God, the Eternal Pre-existent Creator, more than likely John would have used a different Greek construction than he did if he had meant for this next phrase ('and the Word was God') to refer to a 'lesser' god, and did not want us to confuse this with the True God he had just mentioned. If John meant to avoid confusion, when making such a definitive statement, he could have done so by using this 'indefinite pronoun' ('tis') as an adjective. This would have made it clear that the Word was 'a certain god', but not the one he was just referring to. For examples of this, see the verses Mark 14:51, Luke 8:27, Luke 1:5, and Luke 11:1 (among many, many other examples). So, it seems that by the Greek grammatical structure in this statement, John is indicating that the Word (Jesus Christ - John 1:14) is the same essence and nature as God the Father.

(For a more thorough explanation of the function and use of the Greek article (and meaning of its absence), see 'Greek Grammar Beyond the Basics', by Daniel Wallace.

He includes fifty pages - entitled 'The Article, Part I' - which is a more complete treatment of the subject that many grammar books present and explains all the general uses of the article. He actually has a 'Part II' which discusses some special issues with the article. Fifteen pages of this second section apply directly to understanding this passage in John 1:1. It is highly recommended for those who really desire an honest and thorough understanding of this passage.)

### **The Predicate Coming Before the Subject**

Also, this phrase in John 1:1 is an example of a predicate nominative coming first in the sentence, before the subject. (Sentences like this one that use a linking verb require the noun in the predicate part of the sentence to be in the nominative case. Thus the phrase 'predicate nominative'.) The subject of this clause is 'the Word' and the predicate is 'God'. In Greek, the word 'God' comes before the word 'Word'. According to normal Greek usage (Colwell's Rule), the word 'God' should not have a definite article. Oftentimes, emphasis is shown in Greek by placing a word out of its normal, expected word order. Special emphasis is shown when the predicate comes first in the sentence. In other words, contrary to the thought that 'since there is no definite article used here it could belittle the fact of the Word being God', the fact that the word 'God' is used first in the sentence actually shows some emphasis that this Logos (Word) was in fact God in its nature. However, since it does not have the definite article, it does indicate that this Word was not the same 'person' as the Father God, but has the same 'essence' and 'nature'.

### **The Context of All of the Apostle John's Writings**

It is also necessary to see this statement in context of the rest of John's writings. When comparing this with other statements about who the person and nature of Jesus Christ really is, it adds to what is already made clear by the Greek grammar. See for instance: John 8:56-59 (cf. Exo. 3:13-14); 10:28-33; 14:6-11; 1 John 5:20; (also John 8:23; 3:12-13; 5:17-18). These verses also indicate that, in John's understanding and thus the Bible's clear statements, Jesus Christ is the same essence and nature as God the Father, but distinct in their person-hood.

### **Consulting with Other Well Respected Greek Scholars and Grammarians**

For a further explanation and clarification about these items, it is helpful to consult with many of the well respected Greek scholars and expositors. Personally I have never come across any objective, well respected Greek grammarian that has come up with different conclusions that what has been presented here. Many of them go into much more detail than I have in these few short paragraphs. See for instance the writings of Daniel Wallace ('Greek Grammar Beyond the Basics'), A.T. Robertson (both his 'Grammar' and 'Word Pictures'), R.C.H. Lenski (in his commentary on the Gospel of John), Henry Alford ('Greek Testament'), J.A. Bengel ('Word Studies'), Albert Barnes ('Barnes' Notes'), B.F. Westcott, and F.L. Godet, (and many others).  
 – [https://www.ntgreek.org/answers/answer-frame-john1\\_1.htm](https://www.ntgreek.org/answers/answer-frame-john1_1.htm)

5. What act did the Word perform?
  - a. He created all things by the authority of God
  - b. He created all things because He was God**
  - c. After being created by God, he was given the power to create all things

John 1:3 All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.

**a** Jesus did not merely have authority to create *given* to Him as if He was a lesser being, as in A.

**b** Jesus created all things Himself. Since Genesis 1 teaches that God created all things and John 1 teaches that Jesus created all things, then He is God.

**c** C is wrong because if everything made was made by Jesus and He is not God, then that would mean that Jesus made Himself. As God, He made all that was made.

6. What blessing was in the Word?

- a. He was the light of all men**
- b. He was the light to a select group of men
- c. He made all men alive

John 1:4-5 In him was life; and the life was the light of men.  
5And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not.

**b,c** There is a difference between being enlightened and made alive. B and C refer to doctrines in Calvinism which teaches that one is born again and being born again they are then enlightened and able to see the beauty of God and find themselves unable to resist accepting Jesus for salvation.

1Cor 2:14 But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know *them*, because they are spiritually discerned.

In 1Cor 2:14, Paul speaks of knowing in an absolute sense the things of God only by those who are spiritual. However, it does not mean that they cannot be understood at all unless one is saved. Jesus explained in Matt 13:15 that *seeing* can lead to *conversion* at which point we can have intimate and absolute knowledge.

Matt 13:15 For this people's heart is waxed gross, and *their* ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with *their* eyes, and hear with *their* ears, and should understand with *their* heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them.

By being the light of all men, Jesus has made Himself accessible to mankind, who is created with the ability to reason. The fact that man has the ability to create corrupted versions of the divine demonstrates that they have the ability to understand the eternal.

7. What was the darkness not able to do?

- a. Provide privacy
- b. Overcome the light**
- c. Give people a quiet time to rest

John 1:5 And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not.

**a** The word *comprehend* as used here means to encompass, surround, and overcome. Although people love darkness because it provides privacy for

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their evil deeds, as in A, the darkness can not overpower the search of God before whom all things are naked and open.

Heb 4:13 Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight: but all things *are* naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do.

**b** It has been said that there is no such thing as darkness, only the absence of light. You cannot add darkness to a room, as in B, to overpower what light is there.

**c** C refers to how there is no spiritual rest in the times of darkness from the overshadowing judgment of God.

# BIRTH AND CHILDHOOD OF CHRIST

## 3 - The Genealogy of Christ

8. What is the likely reason Matthew recorded the genealogy of Jesus back to Abraham and David?
- Matthew wrote to the Jews and they were more interested in his Jewish heritage as a king for Israel**
  - Matthew did not have sufficient historical information
  - Matthew wanted to prove the divine heritage of Christ

Matt 1:17 So all the generations from Abraham to David *are* fourteen generations; and from David until the carrying away into Babylon *are* fourteen generations; and from the carrying away into Babylon unto Christ *are* fourteen generations.

**b** Because Matthew was one of the apostles, it really couldn't be said that he did not have sufficient historical information, as in B. He was an eyewitness to the life of Christ. Especially as a Jew, he had the opportunity to be well versed in Jewish history.

**c** C is wrong because it was John who was concerned with the divinity of Jesus Christ, which was of universal interest.

**a** Because he was writing to a Jewish audience, Matthew responded to their interest in a Jewish Messiah. You have to remember that the Jews were very sensitive in that time to their Messianic hope. It was necessary to trace Christ back to Abraham and David because of the prophecies that had been given. Abraham was considered the father of the Jews through Isaac. But Matthew also emphasizes David as an ancestor to Jesus Christ. Today, on the internet, companies often resort to a two step process for validating somebody's identity. It is interesting here that there is a kind of two step process for identifying Jesus Christ. First, that Jesus was descended from Abraham as prophesied and then he fulfilled a *more* specific prophecy that he would have to be a descendant of David.

In order to establish greater authenticity, Islam has appealed to the sonship of Ishmael in order to suppress the significance of the Jews. However the Bible says that in Isaac shall thy seed be called.

Gen 21:12-13 And God said unto Abraham, Let it not be grievous in thy sight because of the lad, and because of thy bondwoman; in all that Sarah hath said unto thee, hearken unto her voice; for in Isaac shall thy seed be called.

13And also of the son of the bondwoman will I make a nation, because he *is* thy seed.

Ishmael, who was born to Abraham through Hagar, *would* become a

nation, but God's elect people would be *Israel*.

Later, God would call for Abraham to sacrifice his son, Isaac. This was contrary to God's prohibition of human sacrifice and so it doesn't seem to make sense. It *does* make sense in the light of God's complete revelation leading up to Jesus Christ. This was one of many signs in the Old Testament pointing to Jesus. It is important to note that God's command for Abraham to kill his son as a sacrifice for our sin was actually fulfilled in Jesus Christ as the *descendant* of Isaac. Paul makes a point of this in Galatians where he explains that it is not seed, as of many seeds, but one seed, Jesus Christ.

Gal 3:16-18 Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ.

17And this I say, *that* the covenant, that was confirmed before of God in Christ, the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect.

18For if the inheritance *be* of the law, *it is* no more of promise: but God gave *it* to Abraham by promise.

The following is made available in case a more thorough discussion is needed:

#### **Was Ishmael the Sacrifice?**

The Qur'an does not explicitly state which son of Abraham was supposed to be sacrificed in the famous episode of Abraham sacrificing his son. Today most Muslims, whether Sunnis or Shi'ites, believe that it was Ishmael, in contrast to the Biblical record that it was Isaac. However, many early Muslim commentators believed and stated clearly that the child of sacrifice is Isaac. They base their conclusions on many hadith from the companions of Muhammad themselves.

There is, however, one tradition that seemingly was given primacy over all others to come to the current Muslim conviction: "Umar b. Abd-Al-Aizi asked a Jew converted to Islam about the difference of opinion and he answered: ``The '*dhabhi*' is Ismail; the Jews know this also, but they are jealous of you, they say it was Issac." (*Shorter Encyclopaedia of Islam*, p.175)

This hadith is obviously incorrect, since none of the Jewish sources - Bible, Talmud or Targums - mention any other sacrifice except Isaac, which is evidenced by the Dead Sea Scrolls as well. It is significant also that the Muslims were not able to verify this through the Torah available at that time.

This view is also not supported by the Qur'an by considering the passages Surah 37:99-107, Surah 51:24-25,28-30 and Surah 37:109-113. See the article, The Child of Sacrifice for more in-depth discussion.

On the other hand, Al-Thalibi expressively states that the *Ashab* (companions) and *Tabiun* (successors of the companions), from Umar b. Al-Khattab to Kab Al-Ahbar, believe that the person sacrificed was Isaac (*Shorter Encyclopaedia of Islam*, p.175). The two commentators al-Kamalan say that Ibn `Umar, Ibn Abbas, Hasan, Abdullah ibn Ahmad say that it was Isaac (see *Hughes' Dictionary of Islam*, p. 219).

Thus, it is clear that even early Muslims of high authority were not agreed on who was actually sacrificed. The further away from the earliest days, the more it became the common view that it was Ishmael.

However, both of the above quoted two traditions from Sahih Bukhari are giving the story of Abraham and Ishmael, spanning the time Ishmael and his mother are sent away while Ishmael is still an infant who is suckled until he has become a grown man, and been married (twice). Only after all this, Abraham personally meets Ishmael again and builds the Kaaba together with him. No mention at all is made of the sacrifice. This omission would be inexplicable if the child of sacrifice had been Ishmael. This

is strong evidence that Muhammad (and Ibn Abbas) did not associate Ishmael with the sacrifice of Abraham's son, but Isaac. On the other hand, Tabari also relates a direct statement by Muhammad that the child of sacrifice is Isaac.\*

Contrary to usual Muslim beliefs, Khalifites believe that God never ordered Abraham to kill his son. They argue that it was only a dream, but that Abraham thought that he should carry it out.\*

Muslims often point to Genesis 22:1-2 where God called Abraham to sacrifice his **only** son as evidence that Ishmael must be the son to be sacrificed, not Isaac. Sura 21:76 provides an interesting angle to look at this.

Hughes says:

The author of the Shi'ah work, the *Hayatu 'l-Qulub* (Merrick's ed. p. 28) says: "On a certain occasion when this illustrious father (Abraham) was performing the rites of the pilgrimage at the Mecca, Abraham said to his beloved child, 'I dreamed that I must sacrifice you; now consider what is to be done with reference to such an admonition.' Ishmael replied, 'Do as you shall be commanded by God. Verify your dream. You will find me endure patiently.' But when Abraham was about to sacrifice Ishmael, the Most High God made a black and white sheep his substitute, a sheep which had been pasturing forty years in Paradise, and was created by the direct power of God for this event. Now every sheep offered on Mount Mina, until the Day of Judgment is a substitute, or a commemoration of the substitute for Ishmael." (*Hughes' Dictionary of Islam*, p. 219).

In contrast to the Bible which said that the sacrifice is at Mount Moriah, Muslims say that it is at Mount Mina near Mecca.

Sir William Muir says (*Life of Mahomet*, new ed. p. xvii): "By a summary adjustment, the story of Palestine became the story of the Hejaz. The precincts of the Ka'aba were hallowed as the icons of Hagar's distress, and the sacred well Zamzwm as the source of her relief. The pilgrims hastened to and fro between Safa and Marwa in memory of her hurried steps in search of water. It was Abraham and Ishmael who built the (Meccan) temple, placed the black stone, and established for all mankind the pilgrimage to Arafat. In imitation of him it was that stones were flung by pilgrims at Satan; and sacrifices were offered at Mina in remembrance of the vicarious sacrifice of Abraham instead of his son. And this, although the indigenous rites may have been little if at all altered, by the adoption of the Abrahamic legends, they come to be viewed in a totally different light, and to be connected in the Arab imagination with something of the sanctity of Abraham, the Friend of God. The gulf between the gross idolatry of Arabia and the pure theism of the Jews was bridged over. Upon this common ground Mahomet took his stand, and proclaimed to his people a new and spiritual system, in accents to which all Arabia could respond. The rites of the Kaaba were retained, but stripped of him of every idolatrous tendency; and they still hang a strange unmeaning shroud, around the living theism of Islam. (*Hughes' Dictionary of Islam*, pp. 219-220).

### **Biblical prophecy concerning Ishmael**

The Bible's prophecy of Ishmael and his descendants:

And as for Ishmael, I have heard you: I will surely bless him; I will make him fruitful and will greatly increase his numbers. He will be the father of twelve rulers, and I will make him into a great nation. (Genesis 17:20)

The angel of the LORD also said to her: "You are now with child and you will have a son. You shall name him Ishmael, for the LORD has heard of your misery. He will be a wild donkey of a man; his hand will be against everyone and everyone's hand against him, and he will live in hostility toward all his brothers." (Genesis 16:11-12)

\*a prophet, Maryam 19:54

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\*and Hagar, al-Baqarah 2:158. This verse does not really talk about Ishmael and Hagar. It is about the ritual at the Hajj, where it is supposed to be a remembrance of Hagar fetching water for Ishmael. see HAGAR.

\*and Arabs, see above and ARABS, which also touches on the the question, "Is Ishmael the ancestor of the Arabs?"

\*of the Chosen, Sad 38:48

\*of the Steadfast, al-Anbiya' 21:85

\*al-Baqarah 2:125,133,136,140; Âl 'Imran 3:84; an-Nisa' 4:163; al-An`am 6:86-87; Ibrahim 14:39; as-Saffat 37:102-109,

– <https://www.answering-islam.org/Index/index.html> >Ismail

9. What is the likely reason Luke recorded the genealogy of Jesus back to Adam?

- a. He wanted to show off his knowledge of history
- b. He wanted to show how many powerful people were in the lineage of Christ
- c. He wanted to present Jesus as the perfect man to a Greek audience**

Luke 3:38 Which was *the son* of Enos, which was *the son* of Seth, which was *the son* of Adam, which was *the son* of God.

**a** Luke would not be interested in showing off a knowledge of history, as in A, but instead was concerned about the Greeks natural interest in Christ being the perfect man.

**b** B is wrong because power was not a *cultural* interest of the Greeks.

**c** Because Luke was writing especially to a Greek audience, he was very interested in presenting Jesus Christ as the perfect representation of man. By tracing the lineage of Christ back to Adam, Luke was presenting Jesus Christ in his relationship to the original perfect man.

10. What is the likely reason Mark did not present a genealogy?

- a. He only wanted to present a brief life of Christ
- b. His Roman audience would be more interested in Jesus as the powerful man of action**
- c. His Roman audience kept careful records of their own about genealogies of foreign figures

**a** A is wrong because although the Gospel of Mark is the shortest gospel, this is entirely coincidental.

**c** C is wrong because since Mark was writing to a Roman audience, he knew that they would not be interested in genealogies of foreign figures.

**b** The Romans were more impressed with military power and conquest and domination. When Mark presented Christ in His ministry, he focused on short, powerful conquests of sin and disease. In this way Jesus Christ was presented as a powerful man of action.



11. Read John 1:1-5. How did John choose to present Jesus?
- As a creation of God at the beginning of the world
  - As divine God from eternity past**
  - As a man born to Adam and Mary

John 1:1-5 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

2The same was in the beginning with God.

3All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.

4In him was life; and the life was the light of men.

5And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not.

**b** It might not seem like John is presenting a genealogy, but this is true only in the normal sense of a genealogy. John was inspired to present Jesus Christ as divine God from eternity past. As we said earlier, John presents Jesus for all men and so the only significance of his origin would be his origin in God. John presents Jesus' genealogy as descended directly from God, the Father.

**a** But look at option A. Jesus was not a creation of God at the beginning of the world. Later on in the book of 1 John, John would be dealing with certain philosophies that came to be known as Gnosticism. Both he and Paul, in the book of Colossians, dealt powerfully with the fact that Jesus Christ was not an *emanation* that came from God. At the end of the first century, Arius presented Jesus Christ not as divine but as a creation of God. Today the Jehovah's Witnesses present Jesus Christ as a creation of God. They look to such passages as Psalm 2.

Ps 2:7 I will declare the decree: the LORD hath said unto me, Thou *art* my Son; this day have I begotten thee.

This was explained by Peter in Acts

Acts 13:33 God hath fulfilled the same unto us their children, in that he hath raised up Jesus again; as it is also written in the second psalm, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee.

We see in Romans chapter 8 also that Jesus in His resurrection would be the first born *from among the dead* as the first born among many brethren.

Rom 8:23,29 And not only *they*, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, *to wit*, the redemption of our body.

29For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate *to be* conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren.

Jesus was divine God from eternity past as we saw in John chapter one and verse number one.

c Option C is a reference to the false doctrine of the Mormons. The Mormons present themselves as just another branch of normal Christianity. In reality they are a strange cult. They teach that as man is God once was and as God is man may become.\* Brigham Young taught that somehow Adam who became God came down to cohabit with Mary in order to produce Jesus Christ.\*

\*<https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/ensign/1982/02/i-have-a-question/is-president-snows-statement-as-man-now-is-god-once-was-as-god-now-is-man-may-be-accepted-as-official-doctrine?lang=eng>

\*[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Adam%E2%80%93God\\_doctrine](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Adam%E2%80%93God_doctrine)

### Differences of genealogy

From David through Jesus, the genealogies are completely different. Even the reference to Shealtiel and Zerubbabel likely refer to different individuals of the same names. Matthew gives Shealtiel's father as Jeconiah while Luke gives Shealtiel's father as Neri. It would be normal for a man named Shealtiel to name his son Zerubbabel in light of the famous individuals of those names.

Luke records Mary's genealogy while Matthew records Joseph's. Matthew is following the line of Joseph (Jesus' legal father), through David's son Solomon, while Luke follows the line of Mary (Jesus' blood relative), through David's son Nathan. Since there was no specific Koine Greek word for "son-in-law," Joseph was called the "son of Heli" by marriage to Mary, Heli's daughter. Through either Mary's or Joseph's line, Jesus is twice a descendant of David and therefore eligible to be the Messiah. Tracing a genealogy through the mother's side is unusual, but so was the virgin birth. Luke's explanation is that Jesus was the son of Joseph, "as was supposed."

On close examination, there appears to be a skipping of generations in some places. This is not unusual because begetting was a description of being descended from. It was not uncommon to see this even in the Old Testament genealogies.

## 4 - Annunciation of the Birth of John the Baptist

12. What ministry did Zacharias have?

- a. He was a Levitical priest
- b. He was a professor in a rabbinical school in Jerusalem
- c. He was a zealot (member of the resistance against the power of Rome in Israel)

Luke 1:5,8,9 There was in the days of Herod, the king of Judaea, a certain priest named Zacharias, of the course of Abia: and his wife *was* of the daughters of Aaron, and her name *was* Elisabeth.

8And it came to pass, that while he executed the priest's office before God in the order of his course,

9According to the custom of the priest's office, his lot was to burn incense when he went into the temple of the Lord.

**b** Because Zacharias was not located in Jerusalem, he was somewhat removed from the politics that developed in the priesthood there. Because of this, John would have less opportunity to grow up under the influence of corruptive politics. This will be evident in his ministry that was characterized as being more in tune with a common man of the people preaching in the wilderness.

**c** Also, he was not a member of the party of Zealots and so was removed from their political complaints.

**a** As a Levitical priest, Zacharias would have extra spiritual influence on John the Baptist. One of the functions of a priest was to teach the people, not just offer sacrifices.

13. What was the character Of Elizabeth and Zacharias?

a. They were zealous and talented young professionals

**b. They were older saints with a reputation of righteousness before God**

c. They were social justice warriors who worked to provide for the marginalized

Luke 1:6,7 And they were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless.

7And they had no child, because that Elisabeth was barren, and they both were *now* well stricken in years.

**a** In our desire to see God's work magnified and expanded, churches are tempted to place an undue emphasis on movers and shakers, the up and coming, and as people who can make things happen in the church. Such people surely are a blessing, but we want to remember that our strength is from the Lord. In Proverbs there is a great emphasis on seeking out people who are wise.

Pro 12:15 The way of a fool *is* right in his own eyes: but he that hearkeneth unto counsel *is* wise.

Pro 19:20 Hear counsel, and receive instruction, that thou mayest be wise in thy latter end.

Prov 18:15 The heart of the prudent getteth knowledge; and the ear of the wise seeketh knowledge.

**c** Those who make the biggest difference in our lives are not malcontents with an axe to grind over how their under-achievement is due to oppression. Elizabeth and Zacharias had much to offer John as he was growing due to their age, experience, and faithfully serving in their humble ministry.

**b** It has been said that young parents can offer more energy in child rearing, but having children at an older age provides a richer experience for children.

Certainly, grandparents have much to offer in the raising of children. John had the blessing of growing up around the example of Godly figures.

14. Compare Luke 1:7,13,17-20. Why should Zacharias not have been so unbelieving?
- a. **He had prayed for a son and an angel had appeared to tell him he was going to have one**
  - b. God will always give us what we want
  - c. He wasn't very old and should have been looking forward to having a family

Luke 1:7,13,17-20 And they had no child, because that Elisabeth was barren, and they both were *now* well stricken in years.

13But the angel said unto him, Fear not, Zacharias: for thy prayer is heard; and thy wife Elisabeth shall bear thee a son, and thou shalt call his name John.

17And he shall go before him in the spirit and power of Elias, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just; to make ready a people prepared for the Lord.

18And Zacharias said unto the angel, Whereby shall I know this? for I am an old man, and my wife well stricken in years.

19And the angel answering said unto him, I am Gabriel, that stand in the presence of God; and am sent to speak unto thee, and to shew thee these glad tidings.

20And, behold, thou shalt be dumb, and not able to speak, until the day that these things shall be performed, because thou believest not my words, which shall be fulfilled in their season.

It is important to recognize that not only was Jesus' birth extremely miraculous, but that John, the forerunner of Jesus, had a miraculous birth also.

**b** There is no doubt that Zacharias was old enough to have the experience that God just doesn't give us willy-nilly whatever we want.

**c** If Zacharias and Elizabeth were young and had prayed for a child it would not be so obvious that God was at work in their lives.

**a** Nevertheless when you have an angel appear to you to tell you that you're going to have a son then the idea of having a son in your old age should be a little bit more believable. When God's messages come to us with the strength of experience the power of God and the word of God we should be more susceptible to obeying. To his credit, Zacharias does not ask how this is possible, but how he will know that this is definitely going to happen. His doubting *that* it would happen earned him the sign of being made dumb until the child was born.

15. According to Luke 1:17, how would Zacharias' son be described?
- a. The reincarnated Elijah
  - b. A man who would raise up an army to follow himself
  - c. **One who would come in the spirit and power of Elijah**

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Luke 1:17 And he shall go before him in the spirit and power of Elias, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just; to make ready a people prepared for the Lord.

This question about John coming in the spirit and power of Elijah is very significant. Because of the prophecy of Malachi 4:5, the Jews who were sensitive to the Messianic expectations of their day were looking for the return of Elijah before the Messiah would appear.

Mal 4:5 Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD:

**b** During the ministry of John the Baptist and Jesus, the question was asked a number of times whether each of them were the Messiah. Their understanding of the Messiah was one who would bring a military victory over the enemies of Israel.

**b** Neither John the Baptist nor Jesus ever did anything to set up an earthly Kingdom backed by a military.

**a** The Jews had no sense of reincarnation, which is the only other way that John being born would be the literal Elijah. When Elijah left the earth he left in a fiery chariot and it was expected that he would return again to pave the way for the Messiah. This scripture helps to explain what Jesus meant in Matt 17:10-13.

Matt 17:10-13 And his disciples asked him, saying, Why then say the scribes that Elias must first come?

11And Jesus answered and said unto them, Elias truly shall first come, and restore all things.

12But I say unto you, That Elias is come already, and they knew him not, but have done unto him whatsoever they listed. Likewise shall also the Son of man suffer of them.

13Then the disciples understood that he spake unto them of John the Baptist.

16. How could the son be compared to one with a Nazarite vow?

**a. He would not have strong drink or wine**

b. He could be comfortable with friends as a social drinker

c. He would be spiritually average

Luke 1:15 For he shall be great in the sight of the Lord, and shall drink neither wine nor strong drink; and he shall be filled with the Holy Ghost, even from his mother's womb.

Num 6:2-4 Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, When either man or woman shall separate *themselves* to vow a vow of a Nazarite, to separate *themselves* unto the LORD:

3He shall separate *himself* from wine and strong drink, and shall drink no vinegar of wine, or vinegar of strong drink, neither shall he drink any liquor of grapes, nor eat moist grapes, or dried.

4All the days of his separation shall he eat nothing that is made of the vine tree, from

the kernels even to the husk.

**a** A clear mark of holiness in the Bible is abstaining from alcohol.

**b** John the Baptist's ministry was performed in desert places. There was nothing about him that was average from his training for and the execution of his ministry.

**b** His bold preaching of separation and sin would not be compatible with a lifestyle of indulging in all that the world has to offer.

17. What was the mission of the son of Zacharias?

to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just; to make ready a people prepared for the Lord.

Luke 1:17 And he shall go before him in the spirit and power of Elias, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just; to make ready a people prepared for the Lord.

In Num 35, God provided for cities of refuge for people facing specific sin charges. In Deuteronomy 19:3, we see that they were supposed to make sure to prepare away to get to the cities.

Deu 19:3 Thou shalt prepare thee a way, and divide the coasts of thy land, which the LORD thy God giveth thee to inherit, into three parts, that every slayer may flee thither.

Luke 1:17 describes the ministry that John would have in preparing the way for people to find refuge in Jesus Christ. John would later characterize his ministry as preparing the way according to the prophecy of Isaiah 40:3.

Matt 3:3 For this is he that was spoken of by the prophet Esaias, saying, The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.

Isa 40:3 The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the LORD, make straight in the desert a highway for our God.

18. How did Elizabeth feel about expecting a child?

a. She wanted to abort him because she was too old

**b. She counted it a blessing of motherhood**

c. She worried about what people might think

Luke 1:25 Thus hath the Lord dealt with me in the days wherein he looked on *me*, to take away my reproach among men.

**c** Elizabeth was not worried about what people might think. In fact, if anything, she was rejoicing because it was a negative thing to be barren.

**a** She did not look at childbearing at an older age as a fearful thing that people should run away from by having an abortion.

**b** By taking away her reproach, it was obvious that she counted a blessing of motherhood.

## **5 - The Annunciation to Mary of the Birth of Christ**

19. Read Why was it important that Mary was a descendent of David?

a. Because she would get extra privileges

**b. Because God had promised a king to descend from David**

c. Because she would become a queen

2Sam 7:12-13 And when thy days be fulfilled, and thou shalt sleep with thy fathers, I will set up thy seed after thee, which shall proceed out of thy bowels, and I will establish his kingdom.

13He shall build an house for my name, and I will stablish the throne of his kingdom for ever.

Isaiah 11:1-10,16:5 And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots:

2And the spirit of the LORD shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the LORD;

3And shall make him of quick understanding in the fear of the LORD: and he shall not judge after the sight of his eyes, neither reprove after the hearing of his ears:

4But with righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth: and he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked.

5And righteousness shall be the girdle of his loins, and faithfulness the girdle of his reins.

6The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them.

7And the cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together: and the lion shall eat straw like the ox.

8And the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the cockatrice' den.

9They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain: for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea.

10And in that day there shall be a root of Jesse, which shall stand for an ensign of the people; to it shall the Gentiles seek: and his rest shall be glorious.

16:5And in mercy shall the throne be established: and he shall sit upon it in truth in the tabernacle of David, judging, and seeking judgment, and hasting righteousness.

Jer 23:5,6,33:17 Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth.

6In his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely: and this *is* his name whereby he shall be called, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.

33And when this people, or the prophet, or a priest, shall ask thee, saying, What *is* the burden of the LORD? thou shalt then say unto them, What burden? I will even forsake you, saith the LORD.

**a** Mary did not get extra privileges because she was a descendant of David. In fact, we see Joseph and Mary living a very humble life.

**c** Mary would not become Queen. In Roman Catholicism, they ascribe to Mary the title of Queen of heaven. There is nothing in the Bible that presents Mary in any special position.

**b** The reason it was important for Mary to be descended from David was not because there was anything special Mary. It was important because the promise that the Messiah would be of the seed of David would be fulfilled.

There are antisemitic groups who have blasphemously taught that Jesus was not a Jew. To portray Jesus, as is popularly done, as black, white, oriental, or otherwise would be to deny the Word of God. Such portrayals mean well in that they try to convey that Jesus is for *every* man, but it is really improper to do so that way.

20. Read Luke 1:28,30,33. In what way was Mary favored with God?

a. She would be preserved from sin

**b. She would give birth to Jesus, the Son of the Highest**

c. She would be the mother of God

Luke 1:28,30,33 And the angel came in unto her, and said, Hail, *thou that art* highly favoured, the Lord *is* with thee: blessed *art* thou among women.

30And the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favour with God.

33And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end.

**a** Roman Catholicism teaches that Mary was preserved from sin, being immaculately conceived, or born without sin. People mistakenly think that the Immaculate Conception refers to the conception of Jesus. Any suggestion that for Christ to be conceived without sin required that both parents needed to have no sin would then require that Mary's parents have no sin and so forth back into time.

**c** Neither is Mary the mother of God as if God sprang forth from her. For her to be the mother of God she would have to have existed before God or at least be coeternal in some sense. You could say that she was the mother of Jesus, the one who walked on earth, but not Jesus as God.

The term *mother of God* caused a theological problem in the 4th and 5th centuries due to the implication that Mary is the source of the divine nature of Jesus. The term used was *theotokos*, or *God bearer*. The other term suggested was *christotokos*, or *Christ bearer*. Either terms are theological, not Biblical. *Theotokos* became the preferred term because it was associated with the theology of the incarnation of Jesus with two natures in one person, divine and human, or what is called the *hypostatic union*, the union of Christ's humanity and divinity in one hypostasis, or individual existence. We reject, or at least avoid, the term *mother of God* because of its Roman Catholic overtones which elevate Mary for worship.



**b** Her favor with God was limited to giving birth to Jesus the son of the highest. It has no reference to being ever virgin or without sin.

21. Why was Mary perplexed?

a. She did not understand the incarnation of Christ

**b. She was not married**

c. She did not have the option for abortion and did not want to be an unwed mother

Luke 1:34 Then said Mary unto the angel, How shall this be, seeing I know not a man?

**b** Mary was perplexed because she was not married and did not have the normal opportunities to be expecting a child.

**a** Although it might be said that she did not understand the idea of incarnation, she did not question the nature of the One Whom she was bearing.

**c** Being an unwed mother did not seem to present as much of a problem to her as much as not understanding how being pregnant was even possible. There was no sense of dread that would make abortion at all appealing if it were available to her. Instead, her marvel over this spoke more about her appreciation for the fact that life begins at conception.

22. What did the angel use to help Mary understand the power of God?

a. A burning fiery bush

b. A still small voice

**c. Her aged cousin, Elizabeth, was expecting a child**

Luke 1:36 And, behold, thy cousin Elisabeth, she hath also conceived a son in her old age: and this is the sixth month with her, who was called barren.

**a,b** We often think of God demonstrating his extreme love and care in miraculous ways such as a burning fiery bush or still small voice.

**c** One of the great ways that God encourages us is through the blessings that we see that our brothers and sisters have. God helped Mary understand the power of God through the testimony Elizabeth her aged cousin. This is why it is so important to have a full understanding of what the church is. It is not just a place where we go to hear a good sermon. It is also a gathering of people who mutually encourage each other. No one should stay home under the mistaken notion that they "don't need" any spiritual encouragement. First of all, that will never be true. To the point, though, is that maybe someone else needs *us* to encourage them.

23. What was Mary's reaction to the news of her expecting a child?

a. She was worried what people would think

- b. She thought she was going to miss a lot of opportunities to have a career

**c. She willingly submitted to God**

Luke 1:38 And Mary said, Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word. And the angel departed from her.

**a** Mary was so willingly submitted to God that her concern for others' opinions did not appear in her thinking.

**b** B is a reflection of modern attitudes that are contrary to God's design in creation. Having a family is part of being adult, even if it does not mean being able to have one's own children. She did not see bearing a child as something that would get in the way of her own dreams and aspirations.

**c** Mary's greater concern was simply how she could follow God's will. God's will was not something that was going to be an obstacle for her because her life was submitted to God.

## **6 - Mary's Visit to Elizabeth**

24. What was the reaction of Elizabeth's child when Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting?
- a. Nothing, a fetus is not a person
  - b. He leaped in her womb**
  - c. Nothing, it was entirely coincidental that the fetus was stretching since a fetus cannot think

Luke 1:41 And it came to pass, that, when Elisabeth heard the salutation of Mary, the babe leaped in her womb; and Elisabeth was filled with the Holy Ghost:

**b** I think that the reaction of John the Baptist leaping in the womb at the presence of Christ in Mary is one of the most beautiful and explicit pro-life statements in the scripture. Although David speaks of how we are fearfully and wonderfully made while in the darkness of the womb, all arguments about an unborn child not being a sentient being are destroyed by this event.

**a,c** Holy scripture under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit teaches that this is a reaction to the presence of God and not just a fetus coincidentally stretching.

25. What was Elizabeth's reaction to her child leaping?
- a. She was spiritually sensitive and knew that this meant that Mary was carrying her Lord**
  - b. She was annoyed by the discomfort of carrying a child
  - c. She was amazed at how her child showed signs of life since it was only a blob of cells

## BIRTH AND CHILDHOOD OF CHRIST – 24

Luke 1:42-45 And she spake out with a loud voice, and said, Blessed *art* thou among women, and blessed *is* the fruit of thy womb.

43And whence *is* this to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me?

44For, lo, as soon as the voice of thy salutation sounded in mine ears, the babe leaped in my womb for joy.

45And blessed *is* she that believed: for there shall be a performance of those things which were told her from the Lord.

**b,c** Elizabeth did not have a mere discomfort that accompanies bearing children. There is a presumption that she knew that this was not a mere blob of cells.

**a** In her spiritual sensitivity, she was filled with the Holy Ghost according to vs. 41 and recognized that the babe leaped in her womb for joy according to vs. 44.

26. What indicates that Mary knew she was a humble sinner?

- a. She recognized that God was her Savior**
- b. She did many good works to pay for her sin
- c. She sought counseling because of her low self esteem

Luke 1:47 And my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour.

**c** Mary did not have any problem with self-esteem. What she had was God esteem.

**b,c** In her respect for the Lord, she did not try to impress him with some work that she was doing on his behalf. Instead she had respect for His Holiness and her dependence upon him for salvation. Her response in vs. 47 was that she rejoiced in God her Savior. Mary was truly a sinner just like anybody else according to Romans 3:23.

Rom 3:23 For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;

This does not mean that we do not appreciate her exemplary spirit. It was very becoming of her to be a Godly woman so that Jesus would be a familiar figure in the temple and in Jewish life. It was also becoming of her spiritual nature during the ministry of Jesus and at his death and appearance in the upper room.

27. What did Mary realize would happen because of the great privilege she had to carry Jesus?

- a. She would get to become a queen
- b. She would get great riches
- c. She would be considered blessed for generations to come**

Luke 1:48,49 For he hath regarded the low estate of his handmaiden: for, behold, from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed.

49For he that is mighty hath done to me great things; and holy *is* his name.

**a,b** Just as any other Godly example in the scriptures, Mary did not value earthly rewards or fame.

**c** She could see how there was a greater blessing for all the generations to come and the example was going to be.

28. Read vs. 50-55. What phrase expresses God's blessing to the lowly?

a. He helps them conquer the rich and mighty

**b. He has mercy on the that fear Him**

c. He will comfort them because they are victims of the rich

Luke 1:50-55 And his mercy *is* on them that fear him from generation to generation.

51He hath shewed strength with his arm; he hath scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts.

52He hath put down the mighty from *their* seats, and exalted them of low degree.

53He hath filled the hungry with good things; and the rich he hath sent empty away.

54He hath holpen his servant Israel, in remembrance of *his* mercy;

55As he spake to our fathers, to Abraham, and to his seed for ever.

**a,c** God's blessings for the poor is not that they will ultimately overcome their oppressors nor that they should find peace as submissive victims of the rich. The world assumes that if someone is rich it must be because of unfair means. Their assumption is that in a neutral world all people will have an equal share of the wealth. God will not empower the poor to rise up and conquer the rich, but to be lifted up in righteousness.

**b** God's blessings extend far beyond into the world to come and that the lowly will be would be made exalted in God's sight. His blessings are made available to those who have a Godly fear. The blessings might be material, but they will certainly be spiritual. It is the imaginations of the heart that will cause the proud and those who trust in their riches to be scattered.

29. What did Mary see was God's attitude toward His people, Israel?

a. They were to be replaced by the church

**b. His promises were forever**

c. He would help them have victory over the world

Luke 1:55 As he spake to our fathers, to Abraham, and to his seed for ever.

**a** There are those who think that the church has successfully replaced Israel.

**c** As we have seen in the Old Testament, especially in the prophets, God's plans for Israel were continually affirmed. This does not mean that their purpose was to *militarily* vanquish the world. Prophetically, their role was to lead the world in worship. They fulfilled part of that by bringing the Messiah into the world, though they were reluctant and failed to follow Him, themselves.

**b** In Mary's response she affirms that the promises to Israel were forever according to vs. 55. We want to remember that the promises of the gospel were to the Jew first and then to the Gentile.

Rom 1:16 For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.

The promises that Mary was rejoicing in were especially for Gods mercy to Israel according to vs. 54.

30. How long did Mary stay with Elizabeth? 3 months

Luke 1:56 And Mary abode with her about three months, and returned to her own house.

According to vs. 56, Mary stayed with Elizabeth for about 3 months. This must have been a special time of mentoring from Elizabeth for Mary. Her godly support would reinforce the spiritual mission that Mary would have.

## 7 - Birth of John the Baptist

31. By not naming John after his father Zacharias or some other relative, what statement might this have made about him?

- a. He was going to have a different ministry than his father who was a priest**
- b. He was going to be a rebel who wouldn't follow his parents direction
- c. He was going to be a disappointment to his parents

Luke 1:67-75 And his father Zacharias was filled with the Holy Ghost, and prophesied, saying,

68Blessed *be* the Lord God of Israel; for he hath visited and redeemed his people,

69And hath raised up an horn of salvation for us in the house of his servant David;

70As he spake by the mouth of his holy prophets, which have been since the world began:

71That we should be saved from our enemies, and from the hand of all that hate us;

72To perform the mercy *promised* to our fathers, and to remember his holy covenant;

73The oath which he sware to our father Abraham,

74That he would grant unto us, that we being delivered out of the hand of our enemies might serve him without fear,

75In holiness and righteousness before him, all the days of our life.

It would have been expected for Zacharias to name his son after himself because it would be a great honor, especially marking the great blessing that he had bearing a son in his old age. The implication was that the child would not only grow up in honor of the father by bearing his name, but also by continuing on in his priestly work.

**b** Although John's ministry was not going to be business as usual in the religious institutions of his day, neither was it going to run *counter* to them. It was going to be *corrective* in nature, calling for people fulfill the spiritual

challenge of examining their hearts for true faith.

**c** It was very becoming of John's unique kind of ministry that he would receive a unique name. His name was not a foreboding of a contrary ministry that would be a disappointment to his parents, but a complementary ministry fulfilling the Messianic expectations of his parents.

**a** John's ministry would provide an adjustment to the course of Israel's history. What is especially interesting is the message in the family's names. The name Elizabeth means *God has promised*. Zacharias means *God has remembered*. The name John means *God is gracious*. The significance is that God had remembered His promises and was gracious to fulfill it by providing John as the forerunner of the Messiah.

32. What kind of salvation did the Jews look for according to Luke 1:69-74?

a. Personal salvation from hell

**b. National deliverance from their enemies**

c. Salvation from sickness and disease

Luke 1:69-74 And hath raised up an horn of salvation for us in the house of his servant David;

<sup>70</sup>As he spake by the mouth of his holy prophets, which have been since the world began:

<sup>71</sup>That we should be saved from our enemies, and from the hand of all that hate us;

<sup>72</sup>To perform the mercy *promised* to our fathers, and to remember his holy covenant;

<sup>73</sup>The oath which he sware to our father Abraham,

<sup>74</sup>That he would grant unto us, that we being delivered out of the hand of our enemies might serve him without fear,

**c** Zacharias was not a response to a people who were only plagued with sickness. This is the way some people think of salvation. Not knowing about the Biblical teaching of salvation some assume that miraculous healing or success is what they are supposed to look for. This is evidenced by people flocking to faith healers, being impressed by the "miracles" rather than by the teaching of God's Word. To them, salvation is an issue of deliverance from sickness and disease. Perhaps this is because in their doubts about eternal matters, they can't see very far beyond the immediate needs of this life. They are willing to call out to God when their circumstances are less than favorable. Oddly, they often have the same attitude when it comes to asking *for* material blessings thinking that there's something inappropriate about asking for too much in this life. The fact of the matter is, God wants to bless them above all that they can ask or think according to his riches in glory.

Phil 4:19 But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus.

More than that, His desire is to bless us with all of heaven and the spiritual strength we need til we arrive there.

## BIRTH AND CHILDHOOD OF CHRIST – 28

Eph 1:7 In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace;

Eph 3:16 That he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man;

However, this is not what salvation is.

**b** However at that time, the major concern of the Israelites was more in tune with the millennial Kingdom. Although they did not have an understanding of the 1000 year reign of Christ, they were very much expecting the return of the son of David to the throne of David. God's message and the prophecy of Zacharias was for the mission of John the Baptist to prepare for the way of Jesus, the Messianic King. What was not given to the Jews at this time, was the knowledge that Jesus would be rejected by them as their King immediately after presenting himself as King to Israel in the Triumphal entry. It would be after this that the grafting in of the church would take place in order to make the church.

Eph 2:13-16 But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ.

14For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition *between us*;

15Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, *even* the law of commandments *contained* in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, *so* making peace;

16And that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby:

**a** They were expecting salvation as deliverance as described in vs. 69-74. However, the salvation that God had in mind for them through the ministry of John was greater than this as will be indicated in the rest of the passage.

33. What was John's mission?

- a. To help Israel reform their behavior
- b. To prepare Israel for their replacement by the Gentiles
- c. To prepare the way for the Messiah**

Luke 1:73-76 The oath which he swore to our father Abraham,

74That he would grant unto us, that we being delivered out of the hand of our enemies might serve him without fear,

75In holiness and righteousness before him, all the days of our life.

76And thou, child, shalt be called the prophet of the Highest: for thou shalt go before the face of the Lord to prepare his ways;

**a** John's mission would not be to just reform the Jews behavior. Although he would preach repentance, it would be a repentance that would transform them, not merely reform them.

**b** We again take note that there was no sense in which the Gentiles would be replacing Israel. Quite the contrary, we see the emphasis on the same message of to the Jew first and then to the Gentile.

**c** John's mission was to prepare the way for the Messiah.

34. The name John means God is gracious. What way would God demonstrate His grace to Israel through John's ministry?

- a. To deliver them from the power of Rome
- b. To deliver them from the power of corrupt Jewish leaders
- c. To deliver them from hell by the remission of their sins**

Luke 1:77-79 To give knowledge of salvation unto his people by the remission of their sins,

78Through the tender mercy of our God; whereby the dayspring from on high hath visited us,

79To give light to them that sit in darkness and *in* the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace.

**b** The Jews were not interested in being delivered from the power of corrupt Jewish leaders. The Jews would be accustomed to and take for granted any normal politicking and human frailty of leadership.

**a** The Jews were definitely sensitive to the need of deliverance from their enemies. Being delivered from the power of Rome was one of the *Jews'* concerns, but John had a different plan in mind.

**c** Vs. 77 to 79 give a wonderful picture of the peace that comes through righteousness through repentance from sin and remission of sins according to the mercy of God that they might come into the light of the knowledge of salvation. The way of peace is very much a reference to salvation.

Rom 5:1 Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ:

We always want to remember that peace is not merely a sense of serenity or living at ease without fear of any threat. The peace of God goes far beyond this and extends to peace with God, being made one with God through the blood of Jesus Christ.

35. What would John's ministry provide?

- a. A guilty conscience
- b. Light to them that sit in darkness and the shadow of death**
- c. Public shame by exposing people's sin

Luke 1:79 To give light to them that sit in darkness and *in* the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace.

**c** John's mission was not to shame people by exposing their sin.

**a** Neither was his mission to give them a guilty conscience, that is the job of the Holy Spirit. A guilty conscience would lead to a desire for a light so that we can come to salvation.



**c** Our job is to bring light to people so they can find the truth of God. It is important that we be careful in calling out sin that we do so with a humble heart. We should not look at calling out as an opportunity to exalt ourselves in some kind of sense of self-righteousness and superiority. Because we are sinners also, we need to make sure to have compassion for those who are in darkness so that we can rejoice when they come to the light.

36. Where did John get his training for ministry?

- a. In desert places**
- b. In Jerusalem at the Temple
- c. From the Sanhedrin

Luke 1:80 And the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, and was in the deserts till the day of his shewing unto Israel.

**b,c** According to vs. 80, John did not go to get his training in Jerusalem at the temple or from the Sanhedrin. If John had gotten his training merely from serving in the temple in training as a priest, that might have had *some* benefit. However, at Jerusalem resided the Sanhedrin, which was a council which had an evolved form of religious and legal practice. Instead,

**a** John frequented desert places. The desert was a place of testing for Israel, David, and Jesus. This was a place where John would not only have escaped the corruptions of the Sanhedrin, but also a place where he would learn endurance, dependance on God, and hardness as a soldier of Christ. We do not know what instruction John had from God, but it is important to come apart from men to seek the company of God. Undoubtedly, this is where John would learn of the One who would be the lamb that takes away the sin of the world and envision the sacrifice of Christ on the cross. John was especially sensitive to the voice of God all the way up through the day when his ministry was revealed for the Jews.

## 8 - The Annunciation to Joseph

37. What did Joseph consider doing because He found out that Mary was expecting?

- a. He wanted her to be committed to a mental institution
- b. He wanted to divorce her**
- c. He wanted to break off their engagement

Matt 1:19 Then Joseph her husband, being a just *man*, and not willing to make her a publick example, was minded to put her away privily.

**a,b,c** Joseph was of a mind to divorce Mary to whom he was espoused. Putting her away is not a reference to having somebody committed to a mental institution, as in A, or even to breaking an engagement, as in C. As we will see in the next question, being engaged was more committed than we think of today.

38. What did being engaged mean?

**a. It was as binding as being married**

b. It was a romantic notion for two people living together

c. One could date others until the day of marriage

**b** Today marriage today engagement and marriage is so lightly looked on that it is nothing more than a quaint romantic notion. Engagement should be something that is looked on as serious as marriage.

**b** If you don't have marriage in mind when you get engaged then don't get engaged: this is not an open season for dating until the real thing takes place. The real thing takes place in one's heart, just as adultery is considered as committed in the heart.

**a** For the Jews, the engagement was merely a time that was used for the groom to prepare the house for his wife where he would receive her. Even though Joseph was only espoused to Mary, engagement was as binding as being married.

39. What does Jesus' title Emmanuel indicate?

a. God is in everything and everything is God

b. God is a man

**c. Jesus is God Who is with us**

Matt 1:23 Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us.

**a** It is popular to teach pantheistic notions about God, that He is in everything and that everything is God. This is certainly the opposite of the Gnostic notions that would plague the early church, where there is some sense of purity of spirit versus the sinfulness of the material. Pantheism is more in tune with today's mentality of self indulgence where everything is celebrated supporting the notion that God is in everything and everything *is* God. And then there are those false Christs who have risen up like Haile Selassie (a claim of the Rastafarians), Jim Jones, black nationalist Yahweh ben Yahweh, criminally insane Charles Manson, Irish businessman Tony Quinn, Shoko Asahara whose claim to fame was to carry out a sarin gas attack on the Tokyo subway, and Rev. Moon of the worldwide Unification Church.

**b** In the early days of Christianity, there were many views about the human/divine nature of Christ until the Nicean Council in 325 AD. The idea that God is a man is the opposite problem. Lorenzo Snow, fifth President of the Church of Latter Day Saints [the Mormons] taught:

"As man now is, God once was: As God now is, man may be."

Although the Mormons do not believe that God is *now* a man, they believe He started out as a man.

**c** Emmanuel means specifically that God is with us. This reflects on the immanence and transcendence of God. Not as the pantheists believe, God transcends, or is beyond and outside of nature. He who created the world is Himself uncreated. Atheists stumble at the thought of an eternal uncreated being while at the same time holding to an eternal uncreated material universe. The real problem is not that they can't accept the eternal, they just won't accept God. However, even though God transcends the world He is not entirely out of the world. God in His omnipresence is present everywhere. Solomon reflected on this in his prayer of dedication for the Temple.

2Chr 2:6 But who is able to build him an house, seeing the heaven and heaven of heavens cannot contain him? who *am* I then, that I should build him an house, save only to burn sacrifice before him?

The name Emmanuel speaks of God's very presence among us in the flesh as God became man in Jesus Christ.

40. What indicates that God and not Joseph is the Father of Jesus?

Matt 1:20 But while he thought on these things, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost.

#### The virgin birth of Jesus

Vs. 20 indicates that which was conceived in her was of the Holy Ghost and that Jesus was born of a virgin.

41. What did Joseph avoid until after the birth of Jesus? (Matt 1:25)

- a. Grape juice
- b. Marital relations**
- c. Being seen with Mary

**a** Suggesting that Joseph should not use grape juice is a reminder that being from Nazareth does not make someone a Nazarite. Some people confuse Jesus being from Nazareth with being a Nazarite. A Nazarite was specifically someone who took a special vow. During the time that he had the vow, he was not to touch any fruit or product of the vine. This was true for John the Baptist, but not for Jesus. Jesus was from Nazareth and is called a *Nazarene* in the scriptures, not a *Nazarite*.

**c** Joseph did not put away Mary privately and he did not avoid her publicly. He took her to be his wife.

**b** What he avoided was any *marital* relations with her. In vs. 25 we see that he did not have relations with her until she brought forth her first born son. The word *until* means up until the time that her first born son was delivered. After that, there was no reason for any restrictions in the marriage

relationship. This speaks to the fact that Mary was not a perpetual Virgin.

42. The name Jesus means "The Salvation of Jehovah." Look up what other forms of this name are:

Jehovah shua, Jehoshua, Joshua

Jehovah Shuah is specifically Jehovah saves. The name also appears as Jehoshua and Joshua in the scriptures. In the book of Hebrews the name Jesus appears as Joshua, also. Another similar form is Jeshua.

## 9 - The Roman Taxation

43. What event was used to give cause for Joseph and Mary to go to Bethlehem? (Luke 2:1-3)

The tax census registration

Luke was careful to tie the events of Christ life in with the external world. This is the mark of a historian which kept the account of the birth of Christ anchored. Any mythology writer could have created a fantasy world without any reference points in the world. Once you start creating reference points, you establish a basis for verification. For instance, in Book of Mormon, horses, elephants, wheat, barley, steel, silk, honey bees, the use of the wheel, populations made up of millions of people in cities, are all things that are thrown in gratuitously by someone not smart enough to know that these could be checked. None of these things existed in the new world. When you start trying to name things that should have existed it becomes very difficult to do so unless they are based on reality. The most significant factor concerning the Roman taxation was to make the scripture verifiable. We never say that archaeology *proves* the Bible, but that we should expect archaeology to be *consistent* with the Bible.

44. What does the taxation demonstrate about Jesus' claim for being the Messiah? (Luke 2:4)

**a. The verification that Jesus was of the house of David**

- b. That His parents were righteous and without sin so that He could be without sin
- c. That the Messiah would be a rebellious protestor since His parents were complicit with the Roman government

**c** Even though the parents of Jesus participated in the census in order to establish the tax burden for the Jews, this had nothing to do with being complicit with the Roman government. We want to recognize that the Romans *did* use Jews as part of the system for collecting taxes through the publicans, but Joseph and Mary were the victims of Roman domination.

**a** By participating in the census for the taxation, Joseph and Mary established a record that any of the Jews of that day could examine to see the right that Jesus would have to claim lineage from David.

**b** This conferred no spiritual benefit upon Joseph and Mary. It only established a verifiable record for the fulfillment of prophecy.

45. What would ensure that Jesus would be identified with Bethlehem, the city of David? (Luke 2:5)

a. Mary and Joseph wanted to move there so they could fulfill prophecy

**b. Mary's due date was very close**

c. The Jewish leaders were going to make Joseph king in Bethlehem since he was also from the line of David

**a** Mary and Joseph were providentially *forced* into going into Bethlehem of Judah. If the census had been at any other time then Jesus could potentially have not been born in Bethlehem.

**b** Mary's due date because she was great with child would ensure that Christ would be born before they had a chance to leave.

**c** The Jewish leaders had no interest in Joseph anymore than they had in any other descendant of David at that time. The politics of their day distracted them from any consideration of a possibility of a revival of the Kingdom of David. If anything, they wanted to secure their own power and were ultimately threatened by the popularity of Jesus as the son of David by the common people.

## 10 - The Nativity of Christ

46. Where was Jesus born in Bethlehem?

a. In a royal palace

b. In a friend's home

**c. In a stable**

Luke 2:6-7 And so it was, that, while they were there, the days were accomplished that she should be delivered.

<sup>7</sup>And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn.

**a** Jesus could have laid claim to being born at a royal palace on two accounts. The first, is because he was the King of heaven and deserved a treatment that was consistent with his glory. Secondly, Jesus was the promised Messiah who would take the throne of David. He was not just A son of David. However, being born in a royal palace was not becoming for the one who would identify with men in their true nature. Being born in a humble stable was very fitting for the One Who would take His place amongst mankind.

**c** In the world, men seek the highest seats for themselves. Being born in a stable is quite in keeping with the teaching that Jesus had that when you are invited to a party that you take the lower room and be elevated, rather than seek the upper room and be humbled.

Jas 1:9-10 Let the brother of low degree rejoice in that he is exalted:  
10But the rich, in that he is made low: because as the flower of the grass he shall pass away.

**b** Jesus did not follow after the prideful nature of men. Neither was He even born in a friend's home. In our human weakness, we as friends are prone to fail. In this sense Jesus also identified with mankind who has no one he can absolutely depend upon.

47. Who came to witness the birth of Christ?

- a. All the royal relatives
- b. Priests and Levites
- c. Shepherds**

Luke 2:8-12 And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night.  
9And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid.  
10And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people.  
11For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.  
12And this *shall be* a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger.

**a** There really were no royal relatives that Jesus had. Just as Joseph and Mary were two among many of those who were descended from David, so also did all the others have an equal claim to royalty in that day. Those who *actually* held the royal positions in that day were of the house of Herod. Herod himself was a usurper because he was an Edomite, the cousins of Israel. He considered himself to be a Jewish convert, but was still ineligible for the throne. In his royal interests, Herod would seek to have Jesus killed because he saw Him as competition for the throne.

**b** Although the priests and Levite's were certainly interested in Messianic issues, they were entrenched in their positions and pursuing their own interests. This would be in contrast to the Kings of the East who were genuinely looking for the Messiah and would appear later.

**c** Consistent with the humble nature of the birth of Christ and his humility by becoming man, the angels appeared to the shepherds. This is certainly fitting. Since David was a shepherd, Jesus was worshiped in the company of shepherds.

48. Even though Jesus was born amongst common men, what did the heavenly Father allow?

- a. **A heavenly host offering praise**
- b. Military protection
- c. Visitation by fans of Joseph and Mary

Luke 2:13,14 And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying,  
14Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.

**c** It would take something special to be able to celebrate the entrance of Jesus the son of God into the world. Fawning, fickle, paparazzi chasing off after celebrities would have been very unbecoming for the celebration of the birth of Christ.

**b** Although a military armed guard would have been better, it still was not sufficient. Jesus did not come as a military leader and did not need an earthly army.

**a** There are those who diminish all of the fanfare of a Christmas celebration, whether they do it for sincere reasons or not. In an effort to diminish the significance of Jesus as God the Son, the Jehovah's Witnesses criticize celebrations of any kind in order to cover for their rejection of Christ. They will not celebrate holidays or even birthdays claiming that we do not see such in the Bible. The angels worshiping Christ at His birth certainly does make a big deal out of His birth. It is entirely appropriate for us to give as much glory to recognizing the arrival of the one who was going to take away our sins.

49. What did the angel indicate God was providing for mankind?

- a. No more war
- b. Peace**
- c. No more troubles

Luke 2:14 Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.

**a,c** Because the world does not have an appreciation for the redemption that Jesus brought into the world, the world then settles for a kind of peace that falls short of what Jesus brought to mankind. People are happy to settle for a lesser kind of peace where there is no more war and if not that at least no more troubles.

**b** The peace that Jesus offers is defined in Romans 5:1.

Rom 5:1 Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ:

The peace Jesus offers is peace with God. We were the enemies of God to be destroyed for our sinfulness. By taking on our sin and judgment, Jesus brought us together with the Father. The word peace in Greek literally means to bring together.

50. What did the shepherds do after they saw Jesus?
- a. They went home and had a Christmas supper
  - b. They kept quiet so people would not think them uppity or crazy
  - c. They went and told people what had happened**

Luke 2:17 And when they had seen *it*, they made known abroad the saying which was told them concerning this child.

There are those who make the mistake of thinking that talking about religion is rude and stirs up trouble. They think that people should just keep religion as a private matter.

**a** They're happy if people confine their understanding of Christ to a mere cultural custom like having a Christmas supper. But the shepherds could not contain themselves.

**b** They didn't stop to think for a moment of what people would think about them. As shepherds, they could have been considered uppity, stepping out of their humble position of life. Or, they could have thought of them as crazy religious nuts. Whenever we speak from a position of confidence, we run the risk of people thinking that we are either prideful or behaving in an unbecoming way.

**c** The shepherds could not contain themselves but went out to tell the world what they saw. That is the way it should be with our faith. If we truly appreciate all that God is done for us, then we should not be able to contain ourselves. Football fans have no trouble bragging about their football team. Parents and grandparents love to talk about their children. Husbands who appreciate their wives love to talk about them. God who has done so much for us rescuing us from the pits of hell deserves unceasing praise. The trouble we should have is not how to start talking about Christ, but how to stop talking about Christ long enough to take care of our other obligations and responsibilities.

51. What was Mary's response to the events surrounding the birth of Jesus?
- a. She demanded better treatment
  - b. She negotiated a book and movie deal to tell her story
  - c. She gave careful and serious consideration to all that happened**

Luke 2:19 But Mary kept all these things, and pondered *them* in her heart.

**a** Mary was not self centered and prideful, demanding better treatment like a spoiled brat.



**b** She was not scheming, looking to press her situation to advance her self interests. There are those who exaggerate their claims of mistreatment in order to profit from it in a book deal or movie deal.

**c** Her attention was absorbed by the seriousness of the moment in addition to all the wonder that she would have had in motherhood.

52. What did the shepherds do when they returned back to their fields?

**a. They praised God**

b. They became distracted by their work and problems

c. They forgot about it

Luke 2:20 And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was told unto them.

**a** Oftentimes, people are quickly absorbed with the problems of life. There are many times when people go home from church having been sincerely engaged in the message of God and the worship experience, only to return to a miserable existence when they get home.

**c** Also, there are others who are not genuinely interested and are not impressed enough to give God another thought.

**a** When the shepherds came back they were still praising God. That should be our experience all through the week as we look forward to getting back to the House of God.

Ps 122:1 I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the LORD.

Ps 34:3 O magnify the LORD with me, and let us exalt his name together.

## 11 - The Presentation of Christ in the Temple

53. Why did Mary go to the Temple?

**a. To present Jesus and offer a purification sacrifice**

b. To present Jesus as the king

c. To have her sins forgiven

Luke 2:22 And when the days of her purification according to the law of Moses were accomplished, they brought him to Jerusalem, to present *him* to the Lord;

**a** By going to the temple to have Jesus presented and to offer a purification sacrifice, Mary demonstrated her righteous relationship with God. She sought to do things decently and in order, fulfilling the ritual requirements of the law.

**b** She did not get ahead of God by trying to promote Jesus as the King.

**c** Not all sacrifices were rituals for atonement. The sacrifices that would have been offered for purification were associated with sanctification.

54. What does the firstborn male foreshadow?

- a. The church
- b. The resurrection of Jesus from the dead**
- c. The birthright of the firstborn

Luke 2:23 (As it is written in the law of the Lord, Every male that openeth the womb shall be called holy to the Lord;)

**c** In its simplest sense, the birthright of the first born for the Jews was used to establish the legal primacy of the eldest male in a family. The mere birthright of the first born is not what is being addressed.

**b** The question asked here is how the birthright foreshadows something in the *future*. Romans 8 identifies that the inheritance is the resurrection.

Rom 8:15-29 For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father.

16The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God:

17And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with *him*, that we may be also glorified together.

...

22For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now.

23And not only *they*, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, *to wit*, the redemption of our body.

...

29For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate *to be* conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren.

**a** The church is a close answer because we share in the inheritance that Christ secured for us.

55. What does the consolation of Israel refer to?

- a. The wisdom to endure suffering
- b. The Messiah**
- c. Payment to make up Jewish losses

Luke 2:25,26 And, behold, there was a man in Jerusalem, whose name *was* Simeon; and the same man *was* just and devout, waiting for the consolation of Israel: and the Holy Ghost was upon him.

26And it was revealed unto him by the Holy Ghost, that he should not see death, before he had seen the Lord's Christ.

**c** The world thinks in terms of reparations. People are not satisfied unless someone has to pay for their offenses.

**b** Instead of searching for some kind of payment for any losses, Jesus *is* the consolation. Also, if all we achieve is restitution in this world then we will miss the purpose of suffering.

**a** Suffering leads us to a proper perception of sin. It makes us aware of how offences against us should be a reminder of how we are offensive and need redemption that can only be had in Christ. It is not sufficient to merely find some philosophical way to view suffering.

Vs. 26 says specifically that the consolation of the Jews is the Lord's Christ, which is Greek for Messiah.

56. What did the consolation of Israel provide according to Luke 2:32?

- a. Safety in the promised land
- b. The victory of Israel over the world
- c. Fulfillment of Israel's mission to bring the light of salvation to the world**

Luke 2:32 A light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel.

**b** The consolation that Israel was not safety or victory in this world. The consolation of Israel was not to just live and let live, either.

**c** The ultimate consolation that we have is found in bringing light and salvation to the world. The consolation that we have is to find purpose and meaning in life through sharing the Gospel.

**a** If all we had was safety and victory in this world, we would find a sense of emptiness. It is said of Alexander the Great that after he conquered the world he sat down and cried because there were no more worlds to conquer.

57. What did Simeon prophesy to Mary?

- a. The rule of Christ as King
- b. The death of Christ for sin**
- c. The sacrifice Mary would make for sin

Luke 2:34,35 And Simeon blessed them, and said unto Mary his mother, Behold, this *child* is set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel; and for a sign which shall be spoken against;

35(Yea, a sword shall pierce through thy own soul also,) that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed.

**a** In praying a benediction over Christ, Simeon prophesied of the success that this child would have.

**a** Simeon's emphasis was not on the rule of Christ as King over the nation of Israel. This would have fallen far short of the infinite purpose of Christ in the world. Also, he spoke of a far greater mission that he would have in providing salvation.

**c** The Catholic Church teaches that Mary is Comediatrix, but here, also, there is no inclusion of Mary in the work of Christ. By Speaking of the Salvation that Jesus would provide, what Simeon is prophesying to Mary here is the *death of Christ* for sin.

58. Who did Anna prophesy to?

- a. All those who were indifferent to what was going on in the world
- b. All those in Israel who sought redemption in Israel**
- c. All the oppressed classes

Luke 2:38 And she coming in that instant gave thanks likewise unto the Lord, and spake of him to all them that looked for redemption in Jerusalem.

**c** Anna's prophecy did not have in view oppressed classes according to some social justice scheme. It could be said that she prophesied to oppress classes if by oppressed classes you mean those who are oppressed by sin and the judgment of hell. According to Hebrews 11:6,

Heb 11:6 But without faith *it is* impossible to please *him*: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and *that* he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.

**a,b** Anna prophesied to those who sought redemption in Israel that they would be blessed and by implication those who were indifferent to God would deprive themselves of all that God has offered.

## 12 - Herod and the Wise Men

See p. 49 for a chart of the Dynasty of Herod the Great and descendants named Herod.

59. Who came to visit the Christ child from the east?

- a. Three kings
- b. Three wise men
- c. Wise men**

Matt 2:1 Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judaea in the days of Herod the king, behold, there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem,

**a** The purpose of this question is to point out our misconceptions about popular Bible stories. There is no real justification for calling the wise men kings from the passage. The first reference we have to wise men is in Dan 2:2, where essentially a chart-keeper is referred to as a magician.

Dan 2:2 Then the king commanded to call the magicians, and the astrologers, and the sorcerers, and the Chaldeans, for to shew the king his dreams. So they came and stood before the king.

**a** The common understanding of a magi was one who was an interpreter of signs and times. Since they were coming from the East, it is not unreasonable

to associate them with those who had perhaps passed on the influence they had from Daniel. The magi, which is translated wise men, were kind of like scientists in their day. Of course, this could loosely include all kinds of things since the sciences were not so specialized. Either of the words *wise men* or *magi* can be used, but *kings* is not correct.

**b** We don't know how many were represented. The number is assumed from the fact that there were three *types* of gifts presented.

60. How can we tell that Jesus was a political threat?

- a. Herod and all those in Jerusalem, the political center of Israel, were troubled**
- b. All of Israel was looking for a new king
- c. Rome wanted to get rid of King Herod and was looking to put a governor in place

Matt 2:3 When Herod the king had heard *these things*, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him.

**b** All of Israel was not necessarily looking for a new king. Herod had done a lot of public works and had some popularity in Israel.

**c** In old age Herod's health and mind began to fail. He began to see even more enemies and dangers than he actually had. To make matters even worse, members of his family began to manipulate him by preying upon his mental weaknesses. His sister Salome (not the one who served to have John the Baptist killed, but her granddaughter) carried out intrigues to make Herod doubt the fidelity of his wife Mariamne. Because Herod loved Mariamne he was extremely jealous. Herod had Mariamne killed when Salome convinced him that she had been unfaithful to him. Herod went on to kill Mariamne's two sons, her brother, her grandfather and her mother. Herod, however, had eight other wives and fourteen children. Herod, with good cause, came to believe that his first born son, Antipater was scheming to poison him and replace him. Herod then had that son executed.

Herod's mental instability finally lost him the confidence of Caesar Augustus (Octavian). Augustus remarked that it was safer to be one of Herod's swine than one of his sons. In spite of this, Augustus left him in place.

**a** With good cause, all of Jerusalem would be troubled because of the instability of the political situation they were facing.

61. Read the full prophecy of Micah 5:2 as compared to Matthew 2:6. How do we know that Jesus was God come in the flesh to be presented as Israel's king?

- a. Because Jesus was to govern Israel
- b. Because Jesus was of the tribe of Israel born in Bethlehem
- c. Because He was described as eternal yet being born in Bethlehem**

Micah 5:2 But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, *though* thou be little among the thousands of Judah, *yet* out of thee shall he come forth unto me *that is* to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth *have been* from of old, from everlasting.

Matthew 2:6 And thou Bethlehem, *in* the land of Juda, art not the least among the princes of Juda: for out of thee shall come a Governor, that shall rule my people Israel.

**a** Jesus was not merely going to govern Israel.

**b** There was no tribe *Israel* and Jesus would not merely come from Bethlehem because there were two Bethlehems in Israel. He would come specifically from Bethlehem of Judah.

**c** The way we can tell that Jesus was God come in the flesh was because His goings forth were of old and everlasting. He was the eternal one and yet at the same time He was born in Bethlehem.

62. Where did the wise men find Jesus?

- a. In a manger in Bethlehem
- b. In the Temple in Jerusalem
- c. In a house in Bethlehem**

Matt 2:8-11 And he sent them to Bethlehem, and said, Go and search diligently for the young child; and when ye have found *him*, bring me word again, that I may come and worship him also.

9When they had heard the king, they departed; and, lo, the star, which they saw in the east, went before them, till it came and stood over where the young child was.

10When they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceeding great joy.

11And when they were come into the house, they saw the young child with Mary his mother, and fell down, and worshipped him: and when they had opened their treasures, they presented unto him gifts; gold, and frankincense, and myrrh.

**a,c** Vs. 11 says specifically that Joseph and Mary were in a house. They had moved on from the manger in a stable and appeared to be settling into Bethlehem. There are various explanation for the star the wise men followed. Some have suggested an astronomical conjunction of planets. Others a comet that was reported in that time period. It is very possible that it was the same cloud of glory that accompanied Israel in the wilderness.

**b** There was no recognition of Christ's ministry at this point and would be twelve years old before His conversation with the religious leaders would take place at the Temple.

63. What do the three gifts represent that the wise men brought (this requires extra research)?

- a. That there were three wise men
- b. The royalty, priesthood, and death of Christ**
- c. The Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost

Matt 2:11 And when they were come into the house, they saw the young child with Mary his mother, and fell down, and worshipped him: and when they had opened their treasures, they presented unto him gifts; gold, and frankincense, and myrrh.

**a** Some have suggested that because there were three types of gifts mentioned that there were three wise men, but this is total speculation.

**c** Even though there are three in the Holy Trinity and three gifts, the only thing they had in common was the number three. You have to be careful in interpreting to not make the mistake of presumption based on simplistic similarities.

**b** However, the suggestion of the significance of the gifts has more substance and is consistent with the use of the gifts in that day. Gold was offered in tribute to a king. Frankincense was used by the priests in the offering of prayers. Myrrh was commonly used in embalming, which would anticipate the death of Christ.

### **13 - The Flight into Egypt and the Return to Galilee**

64. Where was the last place that Herod might have looked for Jesus to destroy Him?

- a. Bethlehem
- b. Nazareth
- c. Egypt**

Matt 2:13 And when they were departed, behold, the angel of the Lord appeareth to Joseph in a dream, saying, Arise, and take the young child and his mother, and flee into Egypt, and be thou there until I bring thee word: for Herod will seek the young child to destroy him.

**a,b,c** Herod had jurisdiction over Bethlehem and Nazareth. When Jesus was taken to Egypt, He was out of reach of Herod.

65. Where did Israel go to be strengthened before being able to take over the Promised Land?

- a. Egypt**
- b. Babylon
- c. Assyria

Matt 2:15 And was there until the death of Herod: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, Out of Egypt have I called my son.

**b,c** The Babylonian and Assyrian captivity's took place hundreds of years after Israel came out of Egypt. It important to keep a sense of the time line of Israel's history.

**a** When Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob were dwelling in the Canaan, they were continually at odds with the inhabitants of the land. When they *did* descend

into Egypt Joseph had negotiated with Pharaoh to have them located in the land of Goshen, away from the influence of Egypt. It was during that time that the iniquity of the Amorites, who dwelt in the promised land, would be fulfilled and come under the judgment of God.

Gen 15:13-16 And he said unto Abram, Know of a surety that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land *that is* not theirs, and shall serve them; and they shall afflict them four hundred years;

14And also that nation, whom they shall serve, will I judge: and afterward shall they come out with great substance.

15And thou shalt go to thy fathers in peace; thou shalt be buried in a good old age.

16But in the fourth generation they shall come hither again: for the iniquity of the Amorites *is* not yet full.

Even when the Israelites entered into the promised land under Joshua, they did not conquer it all completely. God had left some of the inhabitants because if they had been removed completely the land would become too wild.

Exod 23:29 I will not drive them out from before thee in one year; lest the land become desolate, and the beast of the field multiply against thee.

Even though Israel was much stronger when they arrived at the promised land, even then they were not sufficient to completely take over.

Matt 2:15 is a reference to Hosea 11:1 which applied to Israel's historical deliverance out of Egypt under Moses.

Hosea 11:1 When Israel *was* a child, then I loved him, and called my son out of Egypt.

Going down to Egypt for protection foreshadowed Jesus Christ being taken down to Egypt to escape the wrath of Herod.

66. How long was it since the wise men had come before Herod moved to destroy Christ?
- a. 30 years
  - b. 2 years**
  - c. 12 years

Matt 2:16 Then Herod, when he saw that he was mocked of the wise men, was exceeding wrath, and sent forth, and slew all the children that were in Bethlehem, and in all the coasts thereof, from two years old and under, according to the time which he had diligently enquired of the wise men.

**a,c** Herod did not wait until Jesus would be the threat He was when He began His ministry at the age of 30, as in A. Neither did He wait even until He was in the Temple at the age of 12, as in C, demonstrating His wisdom and excellence.

**b** Herod moved according to the time that he had "diligently enquired of the



wise men." The timing is linked to when the inquiry was made, not to when the wise men left the east nor from the time of the birth of Jesus. As Herod was becoming more obsessive and deranged he moved from killing his own family to killing off any possible competition, even to the slaughtering of the innocents.

Herod died of a loathsome disease...a short time after the perpetration of this terrible crime. He had sought relief for a little while in the mineral baths of Callirhoe. There he attempted suicide which was prevented. At the same time, he ordered thousands of the most prominent Jews to be shut up in the circus of Jericho, to be executed at the hour of his death, that there might be no lack of lamentation in the land. But Salome, to whom he entrusted the bloody order, when his death was announced, set the prisoners free.  
– Pentecost §15

67. What is revealed by the slaying of the children in Bethlehem?
- a. How Jesus almost didn't get to die for our sins
  - b. How wicked man can be**
  - c. How tolerant man can be

Matt 2:16 Then Herod, when he saw that he was mocked of the wise men, was exceeding wrath, and sent forth, and slew all the children that were in Bethlehem, and in all the coasts thereof, from two years old and under, according to the time which he had diligently enquired of the wise men.

**c** Often, those who preach tolerance and love the most are the most intolerant and hateful.

**b** The slaying of the children is a picture of man at his worst. Before we claim that we would not be capable of that in our modern times, we should take note of how many millions of unborn children have been killed in the name of political expediency.

**a** Jesus was protected from any chance of being killed before the cross. This occurred other times, also. For example, later, He was driven to the edge of cliff to be cast down.

Luke 4:28-30 And all they in the synagogue, when they heard these things, were filled with wrath,  
29And rose up, and thrust him out of the city, and led him unto the brow of the hill whereon their city was built, that they might cast him down headlong.  
30But he passing through the midst of them went his way,

This was not the only time He would escape death, but it is the most striking in that all He had to do was merely turn and pass through the midst of them. Sometimes God's intervention is more obvious than other times.

Matt 2:17-18 Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremy the prophet, saying,  
18In Rama was there a voice heard, lamentation, and weeping, and great mourning, Rachel weeping *for* her children, and would not be comforted, because they are not.

Jer 31:15 Thus saith the LORD; A voice was heard in Ramah, lamentation, *and* bitter weeping; Rahel weeping for her children refused to be comforted for her children, because they *were* not.

The passage in Jeremiah refers to the desolations brought on by Nebuchadnezzar, but this is one of the times that God reveals to us the double application of prophecy.

What Herod did on this occasion was included in the prophecy of Jeremiah, and thus Matthew called it to our attention. Matthew was noting that every incident that took place in the life of Christ was in keeping with the Old Testament prophetic scriptures. This was true whether the incident fulfilled a direct prophecy, such as concerning the place of his birth, whether it fulfilled a prophetic type, or whether it fulfilled a prophecy according to the principle of double reference. All took place in accordance with the revealed program of God.

– Pentecost §15

68. Who became ruler after the death of Herod the Great?
- a. **Archelaus, his son**
  - b. Herod Antipas, who killed John the Baptist and judged Christ
  - c. Herod Agrippa, the grandson of Herod the Great who killed James and was eaten of worms
  - d. Herod Agrippa II, son of Herod Agrippa, King of Judea whom Paul almost persuaded to become a Christian

Matt 2:22 But when he heard that Archelaus did reign in Judaea in the room of his father Herod, he was afraid to go thither: notwithstanding, being warned of God in a dream, he turned aside into the parts of Galilee:

This question introduces the problem people have keeping track of the family of Herod. Although the answer is A, Archelaus, his son, B, C, and D point out that there were a number of Herods. After the death of Herod the Great, his kingdom was divided into fourths forming a *Tetrarchy*. His sister, Salome I, received a portion made up of old Philistine areas.

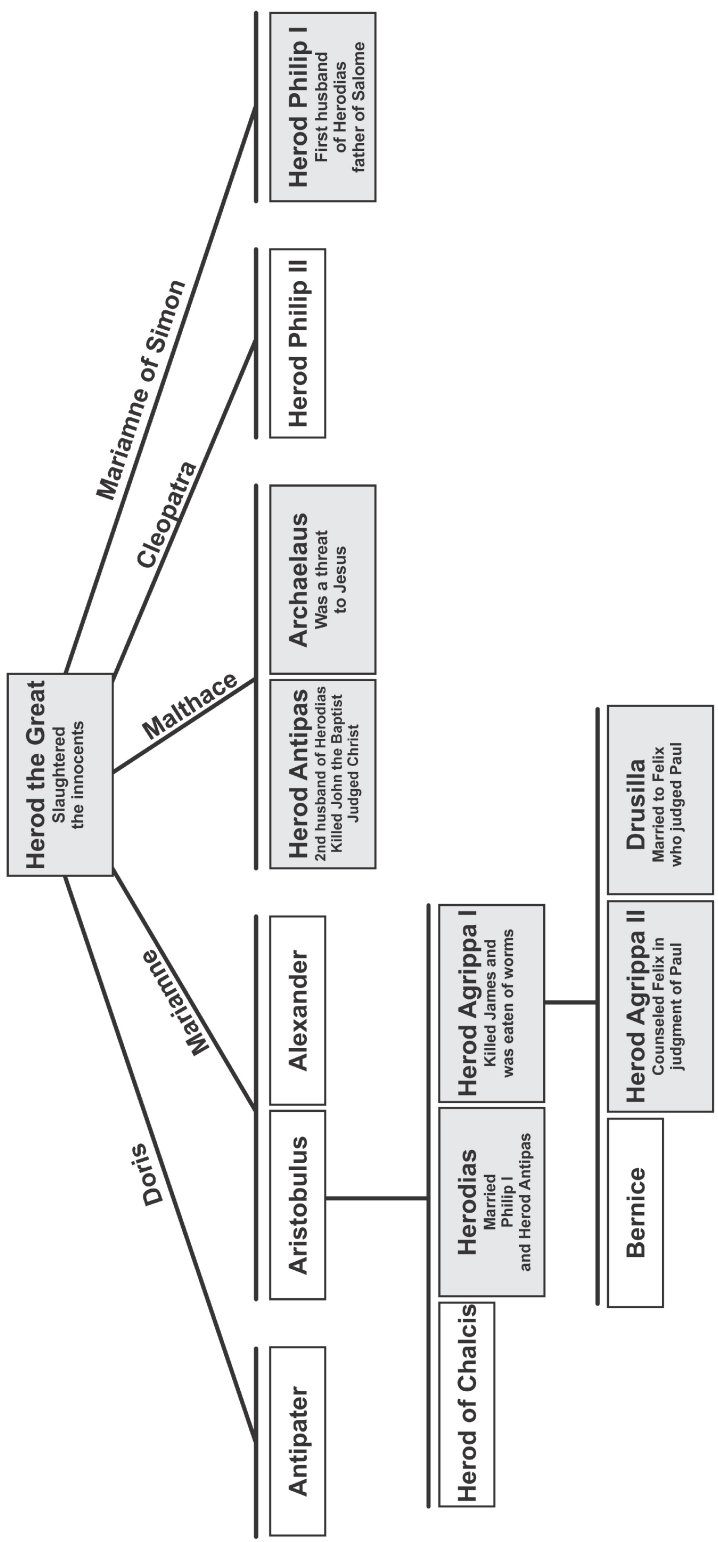
**b** His son, Herod Antipas, received the Galilee region. He is the Herod who had John the Baptist killed and was called on by Pilate to judge Jesus.

His son, Philip, received the area in the modern day Golan Heights, northeast of the Sea of Galilee. Philip lost his wife to Herod Antipas.

**a** His son, Archelus, received the area of Samaria and Judea. He was very cruel himself. Archelus possessed all the vices and weaknesses of his father and none of his redeeming characteristics. Augustus did not permit him to bear the title of King but that of ethnarch (a ruler of a people group, not an entire province). He was not liked by the Jews and immediately on his accession slew 3000 Jews in the temple at the Passover. He did not last long but was replaced by a governorship in 6 A.D. Pilate was the governor at the time of the judgment of Christ.

**c,d** It can be confusing later on in the Gospels and in the book of Acts you will read of Herod who judged Christ (this was Herod Antipas, a son), Herod – Herod Agrippa I, the grandson of Herod the Great, who killed James and was eaten of worms, and Agrippa – Herod Agrippa II, the great-grandson of Herod the Great, who was called upon by Felix to give counsel concerning Apostle Paul.

# Dynasty of Herod the Great



69. Why did Joseph take Mary and Jesus to Nazareth?

**a. Because God told him to go there**

b. Because he feared Archelaus

c. Because God made him go there

Matt 2:22-23 But when he heard that Archelaus did reign in Judaea in the room of his father Herod, he was afraid to go thither: notwithstanding, being warned of God in a dream, he turned aside into the parts of Galilee:

23And he came and dwelt in a city called Nazareth: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophets, He shall be called a Nazarene.

**c** It is not as though God mysteriously moved Joseph by force. God interacts with us in His directing us.

**a,b** It is true that Joseph feared Archelaus, but it is implied that he *would* have gone to Judea if God had not intervened and told him to go to Nazareth instead. Concerning Nazareth, Matthew does not quote a prophecy directly. It is likely that Matthew is associating the word *Nazarene* with the Hebrew word *netser* ("branch or sprout"). The "Branch" was a common term for the Messiah.

Isa 11:1 And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots:

Since Hebrew was written with only consonants, and *netser* would have appeared as NZR—the same main consonants as Nazareth. In Aramaic, the common language of Jesus' day, the word for "Nazareth" and the Hebrew word for "branch" sounded very much alike. Jesus was the Branch predicted by the prophets, and the name of the town He grew up in happens to sound just like the prophets' word for "branch."

Another possibility that has been suggested is that Matthew uses the word Nazarene in reference to a person who is "despised and rejected." In the first century, Nazareth had a negative reputation among the Jews. Galilee was generally looked down upon by Judeans, and Nazareth of Galilee was especially despised (see John 1:46). If this was Matthew's emphasis, the prophecies Matthew had in mind could include these two passages concerning the Messiah:

Ps 22:6 But I *am* a worm, and no man; a reproach of men, and despised of the people.

Isa 53:3 He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were *our* faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not.

It's true that Nazarenes were "despised of the people" and so one could see this messianic prophecy as an allusion to Jesus hometown of Nazareth. Isaiah's prophecy could be viewed as an indirect reference to Jesus' background as the supposed son of a carpenter from Nazareth.

## 14 - The Childhood of Christ

70. What is revealed about the character of Joseph and Mary in Luke 2:41,42?

**a. They were observant Jews**

b. They liked parties

c. They would take care of the business of God if they didn't have anything better to do

Luke 2:41,42 Now his parents went to Jerusalem every year at the feast of the passover.

42And when he was twelve years old, they went up to Jerusalem after the custom of the feast.

**b** It is too frequent that we find people attending church because of the entertainment perception of church. It *is* true that fellowship is a component of church, but it is only one aspect. It is important to recognize that there are four functions of church: evangelism, discipleship, fellowship, and worship. For some people worship is the reason they go to church. An *under* emphasis on any one of these areas will make the church out of balance. If they don't attend to the other three areas, they will miss the actual work of the church. If you don't have healthy evangelism, the church will not grow. If you don't have discipleship, the church will be susceptible to the false teachings of cults and wolves in sheep's clothing. If you don't have sufficient fellowship, you will miss out on the power of prayer, the encouragement of other believers, the things you can learn from the enriched experience of others, the opportunity of being a blessing to others, and the need to simply breakdown and enjoy the company of like minded people. Similarly, an overemphasis on any of these areas can create problems. An overemphasis on fellowship, specifically, can cause people to see church as a place where they merely go to fulfill their social needs.

**a** Joseph and Mary did not treat their obligation to attend Passover only as an opportunity to join a party. It took effort for them to be able to travel from Nazareth to Jerusalem in order to observe Passover. This also speaks of how committed they were because they made Passover a priority.

**c** Joseph and Mary were not casual about their spiritual responsibilities. They went up every year to Jerusalem, not just if they had nothing else better to do. That is the way some people treat church and serving God. Serving God should not be a matter of whether you have something better to do or not. Do not give God the leftovers of your life.

71. How old was Jesus when He was found in the Temple?

a. When He was about 30 years of age and old enough to be exposed to religion

b. When He was 13, the age of being able to assume the responsibilities of a Jewish adult in a bar mitzvah

**c. When He was 12 years old**

Luke 2:42 And when he was twelve years old, they went up to Jerusalem after the custom of the feast.

**a,b** Having the opportunity to serve God is not something that you are eligible for because of a religiously scheduled ceremony. Neither is it something that you discontinue when you are confirmed in a sacrament. It does not stop just because you reach the end of your teenage years and graduate. Jesus continued to serve God as a natural part of His life.

**a** There are some parents who think they're being so noble by not giving their children any religious instruction and leaving it to them to decide when they are older . The same parents who refrain from teaching about faith to their children and shield them from others have no problem with exposing them to sexual instruction or scaring them with climate change, and sometimes having them shill for their political purposes.

72. Where did Joseph and Mary look for Jesus?

- a. Hiding somewhere in the company
- b. With relatives and acquaintances whom they might take for granted He would be with**
- c. In the Temple where they knew He would be about His Father's business

Luke 2:44 But they, supposing him to have been in the company, went a day's journey; and they sought him among *their* kinsfolk and acquaintance.

**a** Joseph and Mary were certainly not used to Jesus being mischievous that he would just be hiding somewhere in the company.

**c** Based on his response to them later on, they could have easily assumed He was attending to spiritual matters.

**b** Instead they looked for him with their relatives and acquaintances. Sometimes people don't take searching for Jesus very seriously. They are happy to to limit their understanding of Christ to what they might receive from things they are familiar with, watching holiday shows or other notions made popular in the media or movies.

73. What was Jesus doing in the Temple where they found Him?

- a. Playing hide and seek
- b. Cleansing the Temple
- c. Engaging in spiritual discussion with the doctors of the law**

Luke 2:46,47 And it came to pass, that after three days they found him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the doctors, both hearing them, and asking them questions.  
47And all that heard him were astonished at his understanding and answers.

**b** Cleansing the temple was something that Jesus would do at a later date when he opened and closed his ministry.

**a,c** While other children might be happy to play hide and seek, Jesus was openly interested in talking to the doctors of the law. It is wonderful when children have questions and are engaged with knowing and understanding God. It is always sad when you watch as a child is self centered enough to resist instruction and avoids God.

74. What impressed the doctors of the Law?
- a. Jesus was God who gave them the Word of God
  - b. Jesus was working miracles
  - c. Jesus' understanding and answers**

Luke 2:47 And all that heard him were astonished at his understanding and answers.

**a,b** Many times, people are more interested in the outward work of God that is evident in the performing of miracles rather than the inward work of God in the heart. Jesus would use miracles as a part of the testimony about his mission to bring salvation. But, He often reproved people for what they could get *from* Him rather than receive the message of repentance and salvation.

**c** The doctors of the law were very impressed with His understanding and His answers. You have to wonder what kind of questions they would have Him if they had only known that He was God Who gave them the very word of God that they studied so diligently.

75. What manifested itself early in the life of Jesus?
- a. His sense of mission and divinity**
  - b. His nature as a radical who challenged the *status quo*
  - c. His ability to work miracles

Luke 2:49 And he said unto them, How is it that ye sought me? wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?

**c** There are actually apocryphal accounts which report that Jesus did miracles and could be quite vengeful.

**b** Jesus never presented himself as a maverick or a radical who was at odds with society. This is a common misconception people have about Him. Jesus demonstrated the opposite of this by going to Jerusalem, dealing thoughtfully with the doctors of the law, and then submitting Himself to His parents. Later, what He would challenge is how the Jews had departed from the norms of Judaism.

**a** He evidenced that He knew and understood that He had a mission on earth. We are not quite sure all the things He was aware of, though.



76. How did Jesus react to Mary?
- a. He reproved her for challenging Him
  - b. He tried to comfort her with understanding of God's mission**
  - c. He went home and did whatever He pleased

Luke 2:49-51 And he said unto them, How is it that ye sought me? wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?

50And they understood not the saying which he spake unto them.

51And he went down with them, and came to Nazareth, and was subject unto them: but his mother kept all these sayings in her heart.

**c** Jesus did not act independently of the family but was subject to His parents. This does not mean that He would automatically do Mary's bidding. There is a notion that some people have that if you can't get satisfaction from your prayers that you should approach Jesus through His mother, who He can't refuse.

**a** He did not reprove her, although there will be other times when He does so, but encourages her with a reminder of His purpose in life.

**b** Mary took all of these things to heart, much like she did when she pondered in her heart all those things that took place at his birth.

77. What characterized Jesus' life as He grew?
- a. His wisdom and favor with God and man**
  - b. His impatience with those around Him
  - c. His domination of those around Him

Luke 2:52 And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man.

**a** If there was anybody Who had any reason to be impatient with those around him it certainly was Jesus Christ. It is a wonder that God puts up with us. This has been the blessing to the world that while God is longsuffering and moves through the dispensations of time some will be added to the kingdom.

**c** On the other hand in not putting up with us, He also has every reason to dominate those around him. There *will* be a time when the best government will be total domination by a King: King Jesus. Until then, having a pluralistic system where believers can compete for the hearts of men is the best we can hope for.

**a** Instead He increased in wisdom and stature as he continued to grow into his mission. At the same time He grew in the favor of man as well as God. We have such an excellent example in Christ to grow. There are two reactions that the world will have. Those in rebellion against God will feel judged while others responding to the Holy Spirit will warm towards the Kingdom.

# THE EARLY JUDEAN MINISTRY

## 15 - The Ministry of John the Baptist

So far we have covered the introduction to the life of Christ and the childhood of Christ. The final week of Jesus' life and ministry before His death and resurrection is often called Passion Week; the events leading up to his death are called the Passion of the Christ. 42% of the information (this is not necessarily the amount of words or verses) in the Gospels is devoted to the Passion Week. Between His childhood and the Passion we have divided the consideration of the life of Christ into four periods of ministry: the short Early Judean Ministry, the Galilean Ministry, which forms the greater part of the life of Christ, or 30% of the Gospel information, the Later Judean Ministry, and a detour through Perea for the Peraan Ministry. The shorter ministry periods each make up about 7% of the Gospel information.

We are going to be looking at the Judean ministry, which was associated with the ministry of John the Baptist. This time period has been called the Year of Obscurity and ends with the imprisonment of John. This will be followed by the Year of Popularity which is made up of the Galilean Ministry and the Year of Opposition which includes the Later Judean Ministry and the Peraan Ministry.

The first thing you should notice on page 21 is that Matthew, Mark, and Luke all give introductory information about the ministry of John the Baptist. Then John gives some extra information about John the Baptist's purpose. Next Matthew, Mark, and Luke give information about prophecies concerning Christ on page 22, but they are each unique. Matthew refers to the prophecy of one prophet, Isaiah. Luke also refers to one prophet, Isaiah, but he records extra information from the prophecy of Isaiah and then adds more description about the appearance of John. Mark, however, refers to more than one prophet and identifies *two* prophecies. Next, on page 23, Matthew and Luke describe the message of John and then Mark on page 24 adds a little bit more information. We won't do this with every section but you should take notice that this is something that happens as you're comparing the Gospels with each other.

78. According to Luke 3:1, when did the ministry of John the Baptist start?

### The fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar

Luke 3:1 Now in the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar, Pontius Pilate being governor of Judaea, and Herod being tetrarch of Galilee, and his brother Philip tetrarch of Ituraea and of the region of Trachonitis, and Lysanias the tetrarch of Abilene,

Luke gives more detailed information as a historian that might seem

unnecessary. However, this is again some of the detail that helps anchor the life of Christ in a larger historical context. The timing of the beginning of the crucifixion of Christ might not seem like a big deal...except we actually *can* determine the date of His death. Good Friday has been used by the Catholic Church to contribute to a system of superstitions and mythological traditions. This is due to the Catholic church's general approach to interpretation of scripture. Where scripture has not exactly been convenient to Catholic teaching, the Catholic Church's general method of allegorical interpretation has contributed to lazy and sloppy analysis of the Bible. This becomes evident in ignoring facts and historicity and emphasizing interpretations and applications that cater to emotional needs.

The reign of Tiberius Caesar began on September 7, 14 AD, so the ministry of John began sometime after September 7, 28 AD. Since Christ celebrated two Passovers (John 2:13, 6:4) and was crucified on the third Passover (John 11:55), He would be crucified in 31 AD, when Passover began on Wednesday. See the discussion later about the timing of the crucifixion, *Good Wednesday or Good Friday?* p. 711.

79. Why would someone get baptized?
- a. **Because of the remission of their sins**
  - b. In order to get remission of their sins
  - c. Because it is a very special thing to do

Mark 1:4 John did baptize in the wilderness, and preach the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins

Luke 3:3 And he came into all the country about Jordan, preaching the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins;

**a,b** Mark 1:4 and Luke 3:3 specifically refer to John preaching a baptism of repentance because of the remission of sins. Some have taken the phrase *for* the remission of sins to mean that people were baptized *in order to have their sins forgiven*. This misinterpretation comes up because of *eis* the Greek word for *for*. Although *eis* is commonly a preposition to describe the entrance into something, that is not the only way it can be used, as in Matthew 12:41

Matt 12:41 The men of Nineveh shall rise in judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: because they repented **at** the preaching of Jonas; and, behold, a greater than Jonas *is* here

Here, the Ninevites repented *at* the preaching of Jonas, or because of the preaching of Jonas, or in response to the preaching of Jonas. The word *at* is the same word *for* in Mark 1:4 and Luke 3:3. The sense of a baptism of repentance because of the remission of sins conveys the same idea in Matt 3:8 where John told the Pharisees and Sadducees to bring forth fruits meet for repentance.

Matt 3:8 Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance:

The fruits of repentance and baptism were a reflection of the heart of one who had their sins forgiven.

If John had indeed been teaching that baptism would forgive sins, he would have had serious troubles with the Pharisees. None of the ceremonial washings according to the law had ever been associated with atonement, only sanctification. When Jesus made a point of being able to forgive sin, He was severely criticized. And yet, John, whose ministry had come under scrutiny by the Pharisees did not receive the slightest criticism for such a thing. This context determines the understanding then John baptized because of the remission of sins and not in order to get the remission of sins.

**c** C is a reflection of people's emotional interests in things of religion. Baptism is not just something out of the ordinary that is significant merely because it is different. The essence of holiness involves being different, but it is a mistake to treat all things different as holy. A Hindu priest, a religious relic, clerical garb, a pagan shrine, a big rock and roll event at a church are all different and "awe inspiring" but none of these are holy. Baptism *is* special but only because of the statement one is supposed to be making in a testimony of his salvation. People should not just get baptized because they want to do something special.

80. Who did Mark quote about the mission of John the Baptist?

a. Isaiah

**b. Malachi and Isaiah**

c. Moses

Mark 1:2-3 As it is written in the prophets, Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee.

<sup>3</sup>The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight

Matt 3:3 For this is he that was spoken of by the prophet Esaias, saying, The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.

**c** Although Moses did indeed prophesy that there would be a Prophet who would be raised up after him who Israel would listen to, this prophecy is not included here.

Acts 3:22 For Moses truly said unto the fathers, A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me; him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever he shall say unto you.

**a,b** Matthew includes only the prophecy that Isaiah made. Mark includes reference to *prophets* (plural), specifically Malachi and Isaiah. This distinction is critical here because modern versions have used the faulty critical Greek text and include only Isaiah. The *Textus Receptus*, which was used to translate the King James New Testament, correctly identifies that there are more than one prophet being quoted here. This is preserved in the King James version.

81. Who would be given the light of the Gospel?
- a. Only those who converted to Judaism
  - b. The whole world**
  - c. Whoever God had chosen to be in Christ from the foundation of the world

John 1:7-9 The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all *men* through him might believe.

<sup>8</sup>He was not that Light, but *was sent* to bear witness of that Light.

<sup>9</sup>*That* was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.

**b** John identifies that the mission of the Jews was for the light of the Gospel to go out to the whole world. **a** In fact he reproved those who prided themselves as Jews. He pointed out that being a child of Abraham garnered no special privilege. The message of the Gospel was intended for the whole world.

Matt 3:9 And think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to *our* father: for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham.

John the Baptist preached repentance for all and did not speak with reference to the nation of Israel.

Luke 3:6 And all flesh shall see the salvation of God.

**c** There was no limitation made here upon the Gospel for only a pre-determined number chosen by God to be saved.

82. Who is a child of God?
- a. As many as received Jesus Christ as his savior**
  - b. The Jews
  - c. The whole world

John 1:12 But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, *even* to them that believe on his name:

**c** There is a common misunderstanding that everyone is a child of God; the whole world was not included in salvation, just the *opportunity* for salvation. The qualification for salvation is not inherent because you are a human being (this is Universalism).

**b** John's message was intended for more than just the Jews. Some teach that Jews are saved because they are God's chosen people. Salvation is not inherited because you are a Jew. Being chosen means that one is chosen for God's *purposes*. We, for instance, are *chosen* because we are one with He Who is chosen. But, Christ being chosen even refers to His being chosen for the Father's purposes.

**a** Salvation is specifically only for those who have received Jesus Christ as

their Savior.

83. How does someone become changed in the new birth?
- a. By their blood relationship to someone who is already saved
  - b. By the will of God**
  - c. By their own efforts
  - d. By someone deciding to receive Christ for them

John 1:13 Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

**b** Although someone is saved because they have repented toward God and submitted themselves for salvation, the actual salvation is performed solely by God. This verse eliminates several popular false notions about salvation.

**a** There are those who think that they are saved by their blood relationship to someone who was a Christian. There was no guarantee of salvation for those who are our children. There are those who think that they are Christians simply because they are from a country that is identified as Christian.

**c** People are not saved by the will of the flesh, or by any effort that they have made to obtain salvation. Any idea of salvation by works is illuminated.

**d** The last thing excluded is the will of man. As a result of the Reformation, there were many faulty doctrines that were eliminated. However baptism for infants was not one of them. For those churches which practice infant baptism, they know that a child is unable to make a decision for themselves, as required by Acts 8:37

Acts 8:37 And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.

Since faith is required for salvation, sponsors are used to answer on behalf of the child when the baptism is performed. This verse specifically eliminates the possibility that somebody can decide to receive Christ for them.

84. What did God do to make this possible?
- a. He dwelt among us
  - b. He became flesh and dwelt among us**
  - c. He created His Son who dwelt among us

John 1:14 And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.

**a** It is not enough to say that God dwelt among us. This could accommodate the notion that the spirit of God or the spirit of Christ was present in some intangible way, spiritually present in the sacrifices, the religious system, the priests, or just nature itself.

**c** It is incorrect to say that God created His Son who dwelt among us. Jesus was neither created at His birth to dwell among us nor was He created at the beginning of the world in order to be placed in a human body later. Jesus is coeternal with the Father. The understanding of Jesus achieving sonship at all has been discussed earlier to indicate His resurrection.

**b** To make salvation possible, Jesus became flesh and dwelt among us so that He was given the body and blood that He might make Himself a sacrifice for our sins.

85. What was the mission of John the Baptist?

a. To baptize as many people as possible

**b. Prepare the way for the Lord in righteousness**

c. Build roads and public projects

Mark 1:2-3 As it is written in the prophets, Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee.

<sup>3</sup>The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.

Luke 3:4-6 As it is written in the book of the words of Esaias the prophet, saying, The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.

<sup>5</sup>Every valley shall be filled, and every mountain and hill shall be brought low; and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough ways *shall be* made smooth;

<sup>6</sup>And all flesh shall see the salvation of God.

**a** John was more concerned about preparing the way of the Lord in righteousness than marking up a scorecard for the largest ministry possible. He certainly would have been happy for as many people to be baptized as possible, but not at the expense of righteousness.

**c** Neither did John come preaching a message of redeeming the culture. He was not interested in building new roads and public projects in order to elevate society. The whole idea of building roads was a reference to making away for people to easily get to the refuge cities. This was a metaphor for finding refuge in Jesus Christ.

**b** John's mission was entirely consistent with the kingdom of God as a spiritual kingdom of righteousness. He was preparing the way for Jesus to fulfill all righteousness by fulfilling all the prophecies so He could be presented as the Messiah who would be rejected and resurrected to reign in an eternal kingdom.

86. What was John the Baptist's appearance like?

**a. A common man**

b. A refined man

c. A priestly man

## THE EARLY JUDEAN MINISTRY – 61

Matt 3:4 And the same John had his raiment of camel's hair, and a leathern girdle about his loins; and his meat was locusts and wild honey.

Mark 1:6 And John was clothed with camel's hair, and with a girdle of a skin about his loins; and he did eat locusts and wild honey;

**a,b** Matthew and Mark capture the sense and purpose of John the Baptist's mission by describing his appearance. They reveal him as a common man. John's message was one of what was absolutely necessary in life with no refinements added on embellishing his message. By being presented as a common man, he gave the sense that religion was not something reserved for a priestly caste.

**c** John actually did have a claim to the priesthood. However, his vocation was characterized as the forerunner of the Messiah.

87. What would be the ultimate benefit of Jewish revival?

- a. The whole world would get the opportunity to be saved**
- b. The Jews would be able to take over the world
- c. The Gentiles would be able to displace the Jews

Luke 3:6 And all flesh shall see the salvation of God.

**b** The Jews have had a consciousness of their role in the world but it has been downplayed especially in Conservative and Reform Judaism in reaction to antisemitism.

**c** A Jewish conquest of the world is not in view here; neither is there any sense that there would be a Gentile conquest of the Jews by replacing them. All are included in the blessing of the Gospel, having the opportunity to be saved.

**a** The ultimate benefit of Jewish revival would be the fulfillment of the mission of the Jews to provide the Messiah to the world. Even when the Jews are set aside in this dispensation, their effect of their restoration will be glorious.

Rom 11:12-15 Now if the fall of them *be* the riches of the world, and the diminishing of them the riches of the Gentiles; how much more their fulness?

13For I speak to you Gentiles, inasmuch as I am the apostle of the Gentiles, I magnify mine office:

14If by any means I may provoke to emulation *them which are* my flesh, and might save some of them.

15For if the casting away of them *be* the reconciling of the world, what *shall* the receiving of *them be*, but life from the dead?

88. What did John call for?

- a. Obedience to government so we can fit in better with the rest of society
- b. Better behavior to make up for a sinful heart attitude
- c. Behavior and works should follow true repentance**



Luke 3:10-14 And the people asked him, saying, What shall we do then?  
11He answereth and saith unto them, He that hath two coats, let him impart to him that hath none; and he that hath meat, let him do likewise.  
12Then came also publicans to be baptized, and said unto him, Master, what shall we do?  
13And he said unto them, Exact no more than that which is appointed you.  
14And the soldiers likewise demanded of him, saying, And what shall we do? And he said unto them, Do violence to no man, neither accuse *any* falsely; and be content with your wages.

**a** John does not actually make any reference here to becoming obedient to the government. He preached a personal holiness, selflessness, and spiritual contentment which would enable anyone to be a blessing whether they serve in a government or not. There was no mention of any conformity to the world.

**b** The way we comport ourselves should reveal a heart that is at peace, not a prideful spectacle. Our behavior could never make up for a sinful heart attitude. Our works cannot compensate for our sin.

**c** However behavior and good works should follow true repentance. This is what John describes.

89. What did John warn the people not to assume?

- a. That everyone was a child of God
- b. That being of Abraham they were automatically a child of God**
- c. That being a spiritual person is all you need to please God and He will leave you alone

Matt 3:7-10 But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees come to his baptism, he said unto them, O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come?  
8Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance:  
9And think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to *our* father: for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham.  
10And now also the axe is laid unto the root of the trees: therefore every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire.

**a** John did not suggest that everyone was a child of God. Some people think that by affirming their notion of spirituality and righteousness that this will preempt God from forcing His message of repentance delivered to them.

**c** It is certainly true that not everyone is a child of God, nor that all someone has to do is be spiritual. But, John's message was especially for those who think that salvation is something that they inherit.

**b** John the Baptist warned the Jews not to take for granted their Jewish inheritance. He wanted them to be realistic and understand that they had no special privilege when it came to salvation. With their Jewish background

they certainly did have the advantage of special knowledge and revelation given to them, but this only made them more accountable.

90. What did John tell people to do?

- a. **Share, be nice**
- b. Make more sacrifices
- c. Be more tolerant

Luke 3:10-14 And the people asked him, saying, What shall we do then?

11He answereth and saith unto them, He that hath two coats, let him impart to him that hath none; and he that hath meat, let him do likewise.

12Then came also publicans to be baptized, and said unto him, Master, what shall we do?

13And he said unto them, Exact no more than that which is appointed you.

14And the soldiers likewise demanded of him, saying, And what shall we do? And he said unto them, Do violence to no man, neither accuse *any* falsely; and be content with your wages.

**a** The answer for this question is arrived at by process of elimination. Although John does not say the words, "Share and be nice," this is what's described in Luke 3:10-14. True repentance will be reflected in how we live a life of selflessness around others.

**c** There are those who teach that being tolerant means we should abandon any critical analysis for fear that we will make someone else feel bad. They suggest that we should ignore differences in the name of tolerance. This is actually worse because by not exercising careful thought and analysis, there will be those who will go to Hell because they were left in their presumption of the sufficiency of their own righteousness.

**b** John did not come to preach the importance of having more sacrifices. In fact God condemns sacrifices when they are offered with an impure heart.

Mic 6:6-8 Wherewith shall I come before the LORD, *and* bow myself before the high God? shall I come before him with burnt offerings, with calves of a year old?

7Will the LORD be pleased with thousands of rams, *or* with ten thousands of rivers of oil? shall I give my firstborn *for* my transgression, the fruit of my body *for* the sin of my soul?

8He hath shewed thee, O man, what *is* good; and what doth the LORD require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?

Psalms 51:16-17 For thou desirest not sacrifice; else would I give *it*: thou delightest not in burnt offering.

17The sacrifices of God *are* a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise.

91. What did John tell the publicans (tax collectors for the benefit of the Romans) to do?

- a. Quit their jobs
- b. **Not to cheat**

c. Give away their wealth

Luke 3:13 And he said unto them, Exact no more than that which is appointed you.

**c** John does not criticize wealth as something that is inherently evil. In fact we know that it is the *love* of money that is the root of all evil, not money itself. He did not promote some Marxist scheme of wealth redistribution.

**a** Neither did he tell them to quit their jobs. Even though the people resented the imposition of Roman taxes on them, the publicans' work was not sinful in itself.

**b** They were simply told to be honest in their jobs and not to cheat.

92. What did John tell the soldiers?

a. Avoid arresting people for fear they were being biased

b. They were pigs who abused their power

**c. Be content with their wages and not to abuse their power**

Luke 3:14 And the soldiers likewise demanded of him, saying, And what shall we do? And he said unto them, Do violence to no man, neither accuse *any* falsely; and be content with your wages.

**a** Serving in a military or law enforcement capacity was something that was a matter of course which should be carried out and applied evenly.

Rom 13:1-5 Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God.

2Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation.

3For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same:

4For he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to *execute* wrath upon him that doeth evil.

5Wherefore *ye* must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake.

**b,c** John did not condemn law enforcement in general. John did not preach a Marxist message of social justice and oppression. He did teach them to not abuse their power, neither in their exercise and enforcement nor in taking advantage of their position for corrupt gain.

93. Who did people think John might be?

**a. The Messiah**

b. Elijah

c. Moses

Luke 3:15 And as the people were in expectation, and all men mused in their hearts of John, whether he were the Christ, or not;

**a,b,c** Some wondered if John was the Messiah himself. Later on they would wonder if John might be Elijah. Moses was not considered a forerunner to the Messiah.

94. What comparison was there between John and the Messiah?

- a. John was unworthy to even untie His shoes**
- b. They are both enlightened ones sent by the Divine
- c. The Messiah would continue John's work

Luke 3:15-17 And as the people were in expectation, and all men mused in their hearts of John, whether he were the Christ, or not;

16John answered, saying unto *them* all, I indeed baptize you with water; but one mightier than I cometh, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to unloose: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire:

17Whose fan *is* in his hand, and he will throughly purge his floor, and will gather the wheat into his garner; but the chaff he will burn with fire unquenchable.

**c** The Messiah's work was not an extension of the ministry of John the Baptist. The Messiah would take it up to a whole new level.

**b** Neither John nor Jesus were merely enlightened ones sent by the divine. We do not need to enter into a new enlightenment but a transformation where we are actually changed, not just having our minds expanded.

**a** John described himself in a far more humble way as one who was not fit to untie even His shoes.

95. What would the Messiah do

- a. He would accept all no matter what
- b. He would baptize with the Holy Ghost**
- c. He would spread love and wealth throughout the world

**b** In baptizing people with the Holy Ghost, Jesus would do so with fire which would purge his work.

**a,c** Not all would be accepted. Jesus did not come to merely give us worldly comfort. People prefer the notion of universalism which suggests that all will be found acceptable or received. They need to reckon with the fact that God is a holy God and that He is also a God of love ready to receive people but on his terms: by the sacrifice of His Son for their sins.

## 16 - The Baptism of Christ

96. How did John react to Jesus coming for baptism?

- a. He was happy his Cousin was going to be one of his disciples
- b. He was happy the Messiah was coming to start His ministry
- c. He thought that Jesus was so holy that He should be baptizing him**

Matt 3:14 But John forbad him, saying, I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me?

**b** As we are going to see later on, John did not know that Jesus was the Messiah.

**a** He did not see Jesus as an excellent trophy to be added to his own ministry. We, also, have to be careful to not view people as mere objectives to achieve for our church.

**c** He was humbled knowing, from what he could have seen of the character of Jesus growing, up that, if anything, *he* should be baptized of Jesus.

97. Why did Jesus insist on being baptized?

**a. It would be His first step in fulfilling His righteous mission**

b. He needed His sins washed away so He could become the Son of God

c. To fulfill the requirements of the Jewish law so He could be born again

Matt 3:15 And Jesus answering said unto him, Suffer *it to be so* now: for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness. Then he suffered him.

**a** Only Matthew recorded that the baptism of Jesus was something that was consistent with the fulfillment of His Messianic mission. Fulfilling all righteousness is a reference to how Jesus would fulfill all the demands of the law. Jesus said he came not to destroy the law but to fulfill it. Also, His baptism foreshadowed the fulfillment of His righteous mission: His death and resurrection.

**b** Certainly, Jesus did not need any sins washed away; but then baptism was never intended to wash away sins.

**c** Fulfilling the requirements of the Jewish law suggests that there is some work that needs to be completed in order to be born again. Some people hold that baptism is being born again because of a misunderstanding of John 3, which we will discuss when we get there. Later on, the Apostle Paul would deal with the Galatians over this very argument. The Judaizers would suggest that one had to fulfill Jewish law before someone could be saved. This of course brings a contradiction between the nature of salvation which is of faith and not of works.

There are a few historical heretical views of Jesus, the Christ. Some say that Jesus became the Son of God at His creation, some that it was when He was conceived, some that the spirit of Christ came on Jesus at His baptism, some say that He became the Christ at the Transfiguration. Jesus was always the Christ, the eternal Son of God, not just at His baptism or some other significant moment in His life.

98. Who participated in Jesus baptism?
- a. Mary
  - b. Peter
  - c. God the Father and God the Holy Ghost**

Matt 3:16-17 And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him:

17And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.

**c** Only God the father and God the Holy Ghost participated in the baptism of Jesus: the Father speaking and the Holy Spirit descending upon him in the form of a dove.

**b** God did not endorse Peter as the head of the church.

**a** Mary does not have any particular power over Jesus or in the church.

## 17 - The Temptation of Christ

Matthew and Luke both point out that Jesus hungered after he had fasted 40 days and 40 nights. Satan did not tempt Jesus only after he had fasted for 40 days. He tempted Jesus all during the time of the fasting. You will notice that Matthew and Luke have a different order for the temptations. As is noticed as is noted in the book on page 28, Matthew uses chronological order while Luke uses a logical order.

99. How long did Jesus fast before Satan tempted Him?
- a. 40 years
  - b. 40 days**
  - c. The season of Lent

Matt 4:1-2 Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil.

2And when he had fasted forty days and forty nights, he was afterward an hungred.

**b,a** The number of days that Jesus fasted were 40. We make mention of 40 years to refer to the way the number 40 is used in the Bible. The Israelites were in the wilderness for 40 years, it rained on the earth for 40 days and 40 nights, Moses was on the Mount for 40 days to receive the commandments, Elijah was in the desert for 40 days, Ezekiel laid on his right side for 40 days to bear the iniquity of Judah's sins, Goliath taunted Israel for 40 days before David defeated him, the men who went to spy out the land were there for 40 days, Jonah warned Nineveh for 40 days, and Saul, David, and Solomon, each reigned for 40 years. The number 40 is used to represent a time of judgment or testing. Even in the case of the reigns of Saul, David, and Solomon, they actually could represent a time of judgment on Israel for seeking out to havocking. Each of their reigns was marked by 20 years of

prosperity and 20 years of ruin.

**c** However, Lent, which is a period of fasting for 40 days, is a tradition of the Roman Catholic Church which has its roots in a 40 day period of mourning over the death of Bacchus, also known as Tammuz.

Eze 8:13-16 He said also unto me, Turn thee yet again, *and* thou shalt see greater abominations that they do.

14Then he brought me to the door of the gate of the LORD'S house which *was* toward the north; and, behold, there sat women weeping for Tammuz.

15Then said he unto me, Hast thou seen *this*, O son of man? turn thee yet again, *and* thou shalt see greater abominations than these.

16And he brought me into the inner court of the LORD'S house, and, behold, at the door of the temple of the LORD, between the porch and the altar, *were* about five and twenty men, with their backs toward the temple of the LORD, and their faces toward the east; and they worshipped the sun toward the east.

100. What is there to stop Satan from tempting us?

**a. Nothing, If Satan was not afraid to tempt Jesus, why would he be afraid to tempt us?**

b. If we are a child of God then he cannot tempt us

c. If we are paired up, prayed up, and paid up, then he cannot tempt us

**b** Some people are perplexed over the fact that after getting saved they're still tempted by some of the same old sins. Salvation does not mean the end of temptation. It is true that sometimes major temptations are overcome after salvation, but sometimes temptations continue to plague us until we grow spiritually and are fortified by sanctification.

**a** It should be comforting to notice that Satan was not afraid to tempt Jesus. If he would do that to Him then why would he be afraid to tempt us?

**c** The phrase paired up, prayed up, and paid up is very interesting and certainly has its value. If we are paid up (a reference to having made any restoration for any sins committed), prayed up (to making sure that we have confessed her sins to God) and paired up (in fellowship with other believers) then we will certainly be strengthened to resist and overcome sin – but it does not mean that we will automatically escape notice of the devil.

1Cor 10:12-14 Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall.

13There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God *is* faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear *it*.

14Wherefore, my dearly beloved, flee from idolatry.

101. How did Satan tempt Jesus' flesh?

a. He touched him with boils

**b. He tempted Jesus to make bread to eat**

c. He made fun of the way He looks

Matt 4:3-4 And when the tempter came to him, he said, If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread.

4But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.

**c** Making fun of somebody is one of the ways people commonly bully each other. Although this might seem like a trivial issue, the fact of the matter is that Satan will try to tempt somebody in *whatever* their area of weakness is.

**a** In the case of Job, Satan first thought that he could tempt Job by touching his possessions. Perhaps Satan thought that he was warming up God to the proposition of touching Job personally. Satan then upped the stakes, thinking that Job's weakness was certainly that he would want to save his own skin. If Satan can get his foot in the door, with some little temptation, he will not rest until he is able to absolutely destroy.

**b** In Jesus' case, Satan tempted Jesus in his most immediate need, His hunger.

102. What did Jesus declare was the way that we can have true life?

**a. By the Word of God**

b. By holy communion

c. By eating manna

Matt 4:3-4 And when the tempter came to him, he said, If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread.

4But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.

**a** When Jesus was tempted in the wilderness, He said that man shall not live by bread alone but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God. That is where true life comes from.

**c** Later on the Jews would tempt Jesus to give them bread. Their reasoning was that certainly if Moses gave them manna in the wilderness to feed them, the least Jesus could do would be to give them bread. Jesus would later point out that the manna was only symbolic.

**b** The same is true in John chapter 6, where Jesus pointed out that the flesh profiteth nothing but the words that I speak into you they are spirit and they are life. The Roman Catholic Church teaches that the wafer in communion gives spiritual life. But this is not consistent with Christ's affirmation about living by the Word of God and that the words that He spoke were life.

103. How did Satan try to get Jesus to tempt God the Father?

**a. To doubt God's promise and see if He could be forced to protect Him**

b. To see if God could keep other angels from joining Satan

c. To see if God would save Him



Matt 4:5-7 Then the devil taketh him up into the holy city, and setteth him on a pinnacle of the temple,  
6And saith unto him, If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down: for it is written, He shall give his angels charge concerning thee: and in *their* hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone.  
7Jesus said unto him, It is written again, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God.

**a** The reference here is from the Psalms.

Psa 91:11-12 For he shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways.  
12They shall bear thee up in *their* hands, lest thou dash thy foot against a stone.

The idea of temptation is to ask "What have you done for me lately, God?" As the Israelites did in the wilderness. The Jews had watched God provide for them on a number of occasions and yet they were faithless. Their doubting God was a form of accusation that God was not good enough and that He had to prove himself all over again to their satisfaction.

**b,c** Although a number of Angels had joined Satan, Satan was now looking to see if he could tempt Jesus, Himself to turn on the Father. The issue was not only to see if God would save Jesus, but to push Him beyond merely preserving Jesus until the day that he would offer himself as a sacrifice. That is what is implied in the Psalms, that He would not dash His foot against a stone, which would cause Him to even stumble. Satan was suggesting that Jesus really put the Father to the test which required him doubting God's general provision, to see if God would be able to be pushed around to perform for us. That would be like walking into the street with a blindfold. It would be presumptuous and like daring God to prove Himself.

104. What did Satan finally offer Jesus?

- a. The kingdoms of the world which he owned
- b. David's throne
- c. The kingdoms of the world that actually belong to God**

Matt 4:8-10 Again, the devil taketh him up into an exceeding high mountain, and sheweth him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them;  
9And saith unto him, All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me.  
10Then saith Jesus unto him, Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.

**b** David's throne was something that was promised to Jesus.

**a** Satan on the other hand, thinking himself superior to God, believed that the world is owned by *him*. Although he is certainly the Prince and the power of the air and the God of this world, that does not make him the owner of the world nor its kingdoms.

**c** Ultimately all things belong to God. Satan only thinks that he has that dominion, but this is only true as far as he is able to deceive man.

105. What did Jesus use to confront Satan?

- a. Philosophy
- b. The Word of God**
- c. Science

1Cor 2:1-2 And I, brethren, when I came to you, came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God.

2For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified.

**a** Sometimes people like to use philosophy, which is always based on certain assumptions and speculations. In that case, one's conclusions are only as good as the assumptions on which they are founded.

**c** People treat science as if it is God. Science never proves anything. At best science only arrives at the best possible explanation. The problem is that many times the conclusions of science have such evidence to back them up that they are either very obvious or highly reliable. But the scientific method always assumes that further data could refine one's conclusions. It is ridiculous how politicians try to employ science to give authority to public policy. The more complex the systems that science tries to resolve, the greater the possibility of error to be multiplied. The very notion of the claim that there is a consensus among scientists defies the very nature of science itself.

**b** The only absolute knowledge that we have comes from revelation from God, the source of all knowledge. The only question is whether there is enough evidence for us to feel confident in the Word of God. In this sense, the scientific method is used to come to a conclusion about the Word of God, but once you do, you have more reason to trust in God's absolute truth than man's relative approximations of truth.

Whenever we look at this passage, we should remember that the way Jesus dealt with Satan was to go back to the Bible. If this was an effective way to deal with temptation for Jesus, then we should be admonished to know God's Word, too.

106. Who ministered to Jesus after the temptation?

- a. Angels**
- b. A group of monks from a secret Himalayan kingdom
- c. No one, He was strong enough by Himself

Matt 4:11 Then the devil leaveth him, and, behold, angels came and ministered unto him.

**a,c** Even though Jesus as God certainly had access to all power, He came under he submitted himself under the conditions of his earthly Tabernacle. Being made obedient unto death. He brought himself under the power of the flesh up to an including death.

Phl 2:6-8 Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God:

7But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men:

8And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.

Because of this, Angels were employed to minister to him. The suggestion here is that they supplied for his physical needs.

**b** There are actually suggestions made that Jesus as some kind of mystic obtained His knowledge, wisdom, or even His power from some enlightened group. Some suggest that He had spent time with the Essenes and had learned fasting and other ascetic practices from them as well as their spiritual wisdom and philosophy. This suggestion does not do justice to the nature of the Essene community who actually *were* trying to find some way to serve God to the fullest. Those who suggest this treat the Essenes as some gnostic community with some kind of esoteric knowledge and enlightenment. Others identified Jesus outright with Gnosticism and secret knowledge. Some have suggested that Jesus went to India in order to achieve spiritual enlightenment. All of these things are as fanciful as Shangrila which was a secret Himalayan Kingdom whose inhabitants dwelt in peace submission and had perpetual youth as long as they stayed within the confines of Shangrila.

107. What did Satan do after the temptation?

- a. He left Jesus alone
- b. He tried to kill Him
- c. He left Jesus alone for a season**

Luke 4:13 And when the devil had ended all the temptation, he departed from him for a season.

**a,b,c** Satan knew that he could not touch Christ and could not kill Him. However he did not give up on trying to affect Him and His ministry. There would be other occasions later on when he would tempt people to do damage to Jesus. Ultimately he affected Judas Iscariot; but even he did not act alone. The Sanhedrin and the general population worked in concert to try to kill Christ. Praise God that not even in that case did they succeed. Jesus said that no man takes my life but that he offered it freely.

John 10:17-18 Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again.

18No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father.

## 18 - The Testimony of John the Baptist to the Party from the Sanhedrin

108. Why was Jesus before John?

- a. Jesus was born first before John
- b. Jesus was more important than John
- c. Jesus is eternal**

John 1:15 John bare witness of him, and cried, saying, This was he of whom I spake, He that cometh after me is preferred before me: for he was before me.

**a** John is not merely talking about birth order here. Neither is he only declaring that Jesus was more important.

**c** Although John was not as important as Jesus, and he certainly points that out later when he says that he must decrease in that Jesus must increase, the greater significance is that before John rose to any prominence, Jesus was the eternal one. Because Jesus was eternal, he preempted any significance that John's ministry had.

109. What did Jesus provide for us?

- a. His fullness and grace**
- b. Part of His righteousness so we can do good works to get saved
- c. Temporary salvation in the hope of keeping it until die when our salvation becomes eternal

John 1:16 And of his fulness have all we received, and grace for grace.

**a** When someone received Jesus Christ they receive him completely in all his fullness.

John 17:22-23 And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one:  
23I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me.

We become one with Christ. This is why the Scriptures speak of being in Christ.

Eph 1:3-4 Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly *places* in Christ:  
4According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love:

**b** Because Jesus is the life and He is the resurrection, we participate in His resurrection and in His life. Jesus provided a perfect salvation, full and complete. We do not get any righteousness laid to our account with the possibility that good works will finish off achieving righteousness. This is the sense of infused righteousness which the Catholic Church holds to.

**c** The idea of fullness goes against the sense of a *temporary* salvation. As the complete sacrifice for sin, we are saved once and for all. God's grace is not measured out bit by bit to drag us across the finish line.

110. What did Moses provide?

- a. Grace and truth
- b. The Law**
- c. A way to earn salvation

**b,c** Moses was in no position to offer grace, himself. Only an offended party can provide grace. Moses could, as the agent of God, be a channel for the Law of God. The Law was never intended to provide salvation.

Rom 3:19-23 Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God.

20Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law *is* the knowledge of sin.

21But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets;

22Even the righteousness of God *which is* by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference:

23For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;

Rom 8:3 For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh:

**a** Jesus, as the *logos*, is the embodiment of grace and truth.

111. How can we know God?

- a. By meditating on our center
- b. Through Jesus**
- c. Through the merits of the saints

John 1:18 No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared *him*.

**c** In the Catholic Church there is a sense of having the treasury of the merits of the saints that can be applied to our account for righteousness.

**a** Achieving an awareness of God does not come from meditating on our center as the new age movement teaches. Meditating on our center turns one inward to self and makes self God. Any sense of enlightenment is imaginary as we convince ourselves that we have achieved a higher plane of mind.

**b** The only way that we can know God is through Jesus Christ. We do not have mere intellectual knowledge by Christ teaching us, but experiential knowledge in an intimate relationship through Christ.

112. Who came to John to examine his spiritual movement?

- a. Pilate
- b. Herod
- c. Priests and Levites**

John 1:19 And this is the record of John, when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, Who art thou?

**a** Pilate was not interested in knowing anything about Jesus at this time. It would only be at the time when the Sanhedrin would send Him to Pilate that he had any concern about the claims of Christ. Even at that, he tried to avoid any real engagement with Christ, sending him to Herod for investigation, then doubting even the nature of truth, and finally trying to wash his hands of the situation.

**b** Herod would be interested in John and his message, but that was only after he was imprisoned by Herod.

**c** At this point, the only ones who had sufficient interest would be the priests and Levite's as Jesus was being introduced in His ministry. As people began to respond to the arrival of the Messiah, more and more people would be pressed to deal with Christ. Today the same thing can happen. As believers step up on meeting their responsibilities, more people will be pressed in their view of Jesus. We call this confrontational evangelism, where people do not merely hear some things about Jesus, but have to make a decision themselves on what they will do with Jesus.

113. Read Mal 3:1, Luke 1:17. Who were the priests expecting John to be?

- a. Christ coming to suffer
- b. Elijah before Christ coming to reign**
- c. John in the spirit of Elijah

Mal 3:1 Behold, I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me: and the Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple, even the messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in: behold, he shall come, saith the LORD of hosts.

Luke 1:17 And he shall go before him in the spirit and power of Elias, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just; to make ready a people prepared for the Lord.

John 1:20-22 And he confessed, and denied not; but confessed, I am not the Christ. 21And they asked him, What then? Art thou Elias? And he saith, I am not. Art thou that prophet? And he answered, No.

22Then said they unto him, Who art thou? that we may give an answer to them that sent us. What sayest thou of thyself?

**a** Although the priests were wondering if John the Baptist was the Christ, they did not have any concept of the Messiah coming to suffer for sins.

**b,c** We know that John was coming in the spirit of Elijah, but the priests were not aware of any such consideration. There was no concept of two comings of Christ. When the priests thought of Elijah coming at all it was only in the sense of his appearing before the second coming in power. So when they thought of John the Baptist as Elijah, their perspective was that John the Baptist was somehow presenting as Elijah, himself, coming before the reigning Messiah, not the suffering Messiah.

114. What did John say about himself?

- a. **He was the one crying in the wilderness to prepare the way of the Lord**
- b. He was the Messiah
- c. He was deserving of a wider platform to present himself and the John the Baptist Ministries Association

John 1:23 He said, I *am* the voice of one crying in the wilderness, Make straight the way of the Lord, as said the prophet Esaias.

**b,c** John the Baptist denied any claim to be the Messiah. Neither was he trying to develop a mega-church or a worldwide religious leader. He did not seek to establish a religious business association around his personality, popularity, or success.

**a** He was merely one crying in the wilderness to prepare the way of the Lord. This is absolutely always the way where many are called but few are chosen. Those who take the strongest stand for righteousness and purity of doctrine will always take lonely stands. It is almost inherent in the nature of large organizations that one submit to compromise in order to maintain a big tent. Although smallness is not a sign of righteousness, largeness does not prove that one is right either. 1000 flies on a piece of meat left in the dirt does not make the meat any more savory. Even if there are large numbers that seem to be added to the Lord in a revival we should be careful while being excited concerning the power of God at such a time.

115. What did John tell the Pharisees of his mission?

- a. He was there to call people back to the Law
- b. He was there to create a world wide church
- c. **He was there to make way for the ministry of Jesus**

John 1:25-27 And they asked him, and said unto him, Why baptizest thou then, if thou be not that Christ, nor Elias, neither that prophet?

26John answered them, saying, I baptize with water: but there standeth one among you, whom ye know not;

27He it is, who coming after me is preferred before me, whose shoe's latchet I am not worthy to unloose.

**a** John's ministry was not to move people backward to the law. Neither was his ministry to move in the far future where the church certainly will be worldwide in the Millennium.

**b** He was not diverting attention by seeking to create something that cannot exist at this time, a universal worldwide church. We know that the Dispensation of the Law was until John came.

Luke 16:16 The law and the prophets *were* until John: since that time the kingdom of God is preached, and every man presseth into it.

We also know that grace and truth comes by Christ so that we the Dispensation of Grace started with John's ministry. Although this marks the time that Christ will build His church, that church will not be in true existence until it appears in heaven as the church of the first born.

Heb 12:22-23 But ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels,  
23 To the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect,

**c** John was introducing specifically the next step in God's unfolding agenda. He was there to make way for the ministry of Jesus.

## 19 - John's Testimony to the People

116. How did John introduce Christ when he came back from the wilderness?

- a. The Lamb of God who would die for select individuals
- b. The Lamb of God who would teach the way of peace on earth
- c. The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world**

John 1:29 The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.

**b** There are some who only look at Jesus is coming to teach people to settle down and not live in conflict. This would not require a lamb to be given in sacrifice. The whole idea of a sacrifice is to make atonement for sin. If people could live in peace already they would not need to make an atonement for sin.

**a** Jesus was provided as the Lamb of God and as a lamb to be a sacrifice for the sins of the whole world. John did not introduce Jesus as the Lamb of God who would die and have his atonement limited to be applied to be offered only four a pre-selected group.

**c** John the Baptist was indicating that he was not merely reviving the work of Israel, but introducing something completely new. This would be the next phase as Israel fulfilled its mission to be a blessing to the Gentiles by furthering the gospel of salvation beyond themselves.

Luke 19:10 For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.



John 14:27 Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.

Php 4:7 And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

117. How was John supposed to know Jesus was the Messiah?

- a. By the way he behaved while growing up
- b. By the Holy Spirit descending upon Him as a dove**
- c. By His display of power in gathering an army

John 1:32-34 And John bare record, saying, I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and it abode upon him.

33And I knew him not: but he that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and remaining on him, the same is he which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost.

34And I saw, and bare record that this is the Son of God.

**a** As we have indicated before, John the Baptist certainly would have suspected that Jesus could have been the Messiah just by noticing the way He grew up.

**c** Jesus was not gathering an army as might be a popular concept of the Messiah in that day. John would not have been looking for that since he knew *he* was supposed to introduce the Christ. Also, John knew that Jesus was going to work establishing a *heavenly* kingdom, not an earthly one.

**b** John had been told by God that the way to finally recognize exactly who the Messiah was would be by the Holy Spirit descending upon him as a dove.

118. What would Jesus immerse people in who got saved?

- a. The Holy Ghost**
- b. The water
- c. The church

John 1:33 And I knew him not: but he that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and remaining on him, the same is he which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost.

**b** Although we think of the word baptism as being related to immersion in water, it really only indicates immersion.

**a** Jesus would offer the indwelling of the Holy Spirit which would become part of us completely.

**c** Physical baptism in water does indeed represent our being placed in the physical body of Christ, the church. We see this in Acts 2 where the people who were baptized were added to the church. However, John was not speaking of the physical symbols.

119. How did John describe Jesus in vs. 34?

- a. A son of God
- b. The Son of God**
- c. An Angel of God

John 1:34 And I saw, and bare record that this is the Son of God.

**a,b,c** Jesus has the special designation as the son of God which is certainly different than any of the Christ deniers who think of him as merely *a* son of God. His position is unique and is not described as an Angel of God.

## 20 - The First Disciples

120. What did John do when he saw Jesus the next day?

- a. He identified Him as the Lamb of God**
- b. Nothing, he didn't want the competition

John 1:36 And looking upon Jesus as he walked, he saith, Behold the Lamb of God!

**a** John constantly affirmed the ministry of Jesus. He promoted Christ both before and after he realized that he was the Messiah. As soon as Jesus reappeared after having been in the wilderness, he identified Him as the Lamb of God again.

**b** You can tell that he had no sense of self aggrandizement because of his constant promotion of Christ.

121. Who followed Jesus on the testimony of John?

- a. 2 disciples**
- b. The 12 apostles
- c. All of John's disciples

John 1:37,40 And the two disciples heard him speak, and they followed Jesus.

<sup>40</sup>One of the two which heard John *speak*, and followed him, was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother.

**a,c** John the Baptist's ministry did not end with the appearance of Jesus Christ. We only know that one of the two disciples of John who followed Jesus was Andrew. The ministry of the gospel was something that was not unique. The coming of the Messiah fit into the larger foundation that was laid by the prophets and the ministry of John. There was no large scale turn over of the ministry of John to Jesus.

**b** You should notice that not all of the 12 apostles were called at this time. In fact, the disciples that started gathering to Jesus was larger than just twelve. It would not be until later twelve of the disciples would be called apostles. There was a time of examination that went on before Jesus selected any of them to follow him exclusively.

122. How did Jesus test the two disciples?

- a. He asked them theological questions
- b. He asked them if they were a member of a church
- c. He asked them to explain what they were seeking**

John 1:38 Then Jesus turned, and saw them following, and saith unto them, What seek ye? They said unto him, Rabbi, (which is to say, being interpreted, Master,) where dwellest thou?

**a** Jesus did not merely ask the disciples theological questions. Even an atheist might be able to give answers to theological questions without having any sense of commitment to Christ.

**b** Sometimes there are so many people whom we assume are followers of Christ just because they were a member of the church. Some people treat church more as a club and are not there seeking Christ diligently.

**c** Jesus' question is very direct and confrontational. Confrontational does not mean obnoxious or combative. By being confrontational people are challenged to share their personal view, not just talk about what ideas exist in the world which they may or may not subscribe to. The very act of having them voice their personal interest would actually have the effect of helping them crystallize just what they were thinking. This is similar to a sales person listening to someone talk about all kinds of things and then finally having to ask him, so what is it that you actually want. It's not that what the person is explaining is necessarily irrelevant, but it is hard sometimes to understand what they are saying without knowing where they are headed. People can get lost in the course of talking about things but Christ gets to the whole point of their interest right away.

123. Who did Andrew first bring to Christ?

- a. A coworker
- b. His brother, Simon, later called Peter**
- c. A friend

John 1:40-41 One of the two which heard John *speak*, and followed him, was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother.

41He first findeth his own brother Simon, and saith unto him, We have found the Messiah, which is, being interpreted, the Christ.

**b** All three of these answers are actually correct to a degree. Andrew was a coworker to Peter and he evidently had a good relationship with him because as his brother he was also his friend. His brother Simon, later called Peter, is the best answer especially because he was not merely any coworker or friend.

Because Andrew sought his brother Simon, we have an example of how our love for people should cause us to want to share Jesus with them. We will see later on how unfortunate it is that people who are closest to us are very likely to take us for granted and not listen.

The one thing we should especially notice about Andrew is how anxious he was to go out and bring people to Christ.

124. Simon means sand. What does Cephas mean?

- a. A great foundation stone
- b. A small stone**
- c. Pope

**b** The name Cephas means a small stone. In fact, the three names that are given to Simon all indicate that he was not a great foundation stone on which the church would be built with Peter taking the place of Christ on earth. Peter means a small stone Simon means sand and Cephas means a small stone.

**a** The word for rock in Matthew chapter 16 is different and refers to the gospel as the great foundation stone upon which the church would be built by Jesus.

**c** There is nothing about the names of Peter that would indicate that he was to be the Pope and the foundation of the church.

125. What is the Hebrew word for Christ?

- a. Meshugana
- b. Messiah**
- c. Moishe

**b** The Hebrew word for Christ is Messiah. Messiah means an anointed deliverer and the Greek word Christ means the anointed one. Most people do not make the connection between the Messiah and the Christ and so we often have to explain that to people who are not familiar with these terms.

**c** Moishe was *a* deliverer, but that is the Hebrew name for Moses.

**a** However some people think that Christ is meshugana, which is a Yiddish word for crazy.

126. What did Jesus call Phillip to do?

- a. Forsake all and follow him
- b. Listen to sermons and go home
- c. Follow him**

John 1:43 The day following Jesus would go forth into Galilee, and findeth Philip, and saith unto him, Follow me.

**b** Jesus does not call people to merely listen to sermons and go home. It is especially easy today to become spiritually lazy and merely check in on the internet to take advantage of one of the great gospel ministries that are available. Preachers actually are not flattered by how many people show up

to pay attention to him. When preachers put their sermons up online and then get reports of how many people have downloaded them, they're excited about how far they are reaching out but secretly they wonder how much difference the message is making.

**c** Jesus calls on people to *actually* follow him. This cannot be done from the innermost sanctum of our comfort zone. We are not called to build our hideaway from the world and not even to join a Christian commune to protect us from the evil influences of the world. We are called to go out into the world as those who follow the teachings and commands of Christ.

**a** However, Jesus did not call on Phillip to forsake all at this time. As the disciples grew Jesus would select 12 to forsake all to follow him.

127. Why would Jesus say there was no guile in Nathaniel?

- a. Nathaniel knew of the town Nazareth
- b. Nathaniel had a reputation for honesty

**c. He had a he had an honest question about Nazareth in prophecy**

John 1:45-47 Philip findeth Nathanael, and saith unto him, We have found him, of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets, did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph.

46 And Nathanael said unto him, Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth? Philip saith unto him, Come and see.

47 Jesus saw Nathanael coming to him, and saith of him, Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile!

**a** When Nathaniel asked if there can be any good thing come out of Nazareth, he was not implying that Nazareth had such a bad reputation that nothing good could come from it.

**b** Jesus is not just admiring Nathaniel for his honesty. It was what Nathaniel was honest about that was significant.

**c** When Jesus suggested that there was no guile in him, He was not speaking to the general reputation of Nathaniel. What Jesus recognized was that Nathaniel was a *true* Israelite, one who studied and was not merely an occupant of the country of Israel. The question that Nathaniel had was one that would reappear later in the hearts of the scribes. Messianic prophecies concerning Nazareth were not so clear. We saw in previous questions that Nazareth does appear in prophecy, but all the clear references to the Messiah identify him with Bethlehem and Jerusalem.

128. How would Nathaniel see that Jesus was special?

- a. The way Jesus glowed
- b. Jesus was obviously intimately aware of him**
- c. Nathaniel was an enlightened one who could recognize another enlightened one

John 1:48-49 Nathanael saith unto him, Whence knowest thou me? Jesus answered and said unto him, Before that Philip called thee, when thou wast under the fig tree, I saw thee.

49Nathanael answered and saith unto him, Rabbi, thou art the Son of God; thou art the King of Israel.

**a,c** Nathaniel did not have some kind of new age connection to Jesus by some electrical connection that he felt with Him. Although Jesus certainly had something about Him, it was not that He had an aura like we might see in some painting about Him. However, the way Jesus glowed is not actually an absurd answer. In the transfiguration Jesus would glow with His heavenly glory in front of the disciples. Our impression of Jesus Christ should not come from some miraculous phenomena that defies physics.

**b** Our impression of Christ should come from our intimate awareness of Him as we read His word and pray and observe His guiding hand in our lives.

## 21 - Marriage Feast of Cana – A Visit to Galilee

129. How did Jesus respond to his mother's request for wine?

**a. He gently rebuked her**

b. He obeyed her

c. He ignored her

John 2:4 Jesus saith unto her, Woman, what have I to do with thee? mine hour is not yet come.

A common statement in Catholicism is "To Mary through Jesus." We are quick to point out that there is only one mediator between man and God, and that is Jesus Christ. In order to get around this, Catholicism has to find some way to redefine what one mediator means. At the heart of deception is double-talk, speaking out of both sides of one's mouth. One Marian website in one moment acknowledges that Jesus is the only mediator, but then declares that since the church is Jesus' body, then the church is the mediator also. Since the church is the mediator then that makes Mary the mediator too since she has the role of the Queen Mother in the new and everlasting Kingdom of Christ as our intercessor.

– (<https://www.marian.org/news/To-Jesus-through-Mary-Why-7143>)

Another Catholic site says this about Mary:

She becomes the utter object of our love outside of God because she is the most special object of Jesus's love outside of the Holy Trinity. In other words, loving Mary with all the powers of one's soul is the necessary result of living Jesus's life — of Jesus united to that soul. The Church tells us that Jesus is united to Mary such that the two cannot be separated but rather form one heart out of their two distinct hearts: Mary is "from all eternity joined in a hidden way with Jesus Christ in one and the same decree of predestination" while "by one and the same act God predestinated both Christ and us." Thus, the most pertinent imitation of Christ, after being a "beloved son in the Son" of God the Father, is the Christified soul's relationship to

Mary, both being loved by her (she transforms the soul in to Christ) and loving her (the soul actually living Jesus's life)! After one goes "to Jesus through Mary," one immediately returns "to Mary with Jesus." Mary herself was created not only to love God and each person, but to be loved by God and each person.

– <https://www.hprweb.com/2018/10/to-jesus-through-mary-is-not-enough/>

When defending an error, the more one talks the more conflicting statements will emerge. You cannot extol and then downplay Mary at the same time. If anything, people who criticize Catholicism will be deceived by Catholicism's denials while at the same time promote Mary with reckless abandon to its members.

**a,b,c** While Jesus was not going to be rude and ignore Mary, neither did He subordinate Himself to her. He responded to her, but in His response we hear a gentle rebuke, "What have I to do with thee?"

130. What did the ruler of the feast call the wine Jesus made?
- a. Good and therefore expensive booze
  - b. Wine
  - c. Good (non-alcoholic) wine**

John 2:9-11 When the ruler of the feast had tasted the water that was made wine, and knew not whence it was: (but the servants which drew the water knew;) the governor of the feast called the bridegroom,

10And saith unto him, Every man at the beginning doth set forth good wine; and when men have well drunk, then that which is worse: *but* thou hast kept the good wine until now.

11This beginning of miracles did Jesus in Cana of Galilee, and manifested forth his glory; and his disciples believed on him.

**a** People in their delight of being naughty will make jokes about the most damaging things as being the "good stuff."

**b,c** People do not read carefully this passage; they only take from it that wine was made. You have to be careful to not read into a word a modern definition. We only think of wine as something that is alcoholic. There were several words in the Bible that could be translated as wine. However, those words only refer to that which is associated with grapes. In their context, they refer to grape vines, the press that produced grape juice, grape juice, and wine in the alcoholic sense. Specific words or context help distinguish whether grape juice, either alcoholic or non-alcoholic, was intended. In John 2:10 Jesus did not make wine – specifically, He made good wine. Good wine is the term for grape juice before it had soured. This passage cannot be used to justify the use of alcohol in a Christian's life.

131. Read Eph 5:18-33. If wine represents the blood of Christ, why is it fitting that the first miracle is at a wedding?
- a. Weddings are joyful events
  - b. It represents the church He would shed His blood for**
  - c. It represents a union of two people who love each other

**c** A union of two people who love each other is insufficient. Today, this has been reduced to suggest that two people who lust after each other to allow for all kinds of unscriptural and unnatural unions.

**a** Another reduction is to merely view a wedding as a party and not a spiritual event. People often feel entitled to a celebration on the basis that whatever makes one feel good should not be denied. Many ungodly things are celebrated because of this.

**b** Marriage is not something that you take and redefine to suit your own purpose. The original intent of marriage was to picture the union of Christ and His church.

Eph 5:18-33 And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit;

19Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord;

20Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ;

21Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God.

22Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord.

23For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body.

24Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so *let* the wives *be* to their own husbands in every thing.

25Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it;

26That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word,

27That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.

28So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself.

29For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church:

30For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones.

31For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh.

32This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church.

33Nevertheless let every one of you in particular so love his wife even as himself; and the wife *see* that she reverence *her* husband.

132. Where did Jesus go for a short time after his baptism?

**a. Capernaum**

**b. Bethlehem**

**c. Nazareth**

John 2:12 After this he went down to Capernaum, he, and his mother, and his brethren, and his disciples: and they continued there not many days.

**b** Bethlehem was needed to fulfill the claim of Jesus as the Son of David.



**c** Nazareth was sufficient to provide a haven where Jesus would grow up.

**a** However, Capernaum and the surrounding region of the sea of Galilee in the North would be where Jesus would end up developing His ministry outside of the reaches of the concerted attacks of the religious establishment of Jerusalem. Jesus would not truly settle there until after the death of John the Baptist.

Isa 9:1-2 Nevertheless the dimness *shall not be* such as *was* in her vexation, when at the first he lightly afflicted the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, and afterward did more grievously afflict *her by* the way of the sea, beyond Jordan, in Galilee of the nations.

2The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light: they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined.

Matt 4:12-17 Now when Jesus had heard that John was cast into prison, he departed into Galilee;

13And leaving Nazareth, he came and dwelt in Capernaum, which is upon the sea coast, in the borders of Zabulon and Nephthalim:

14That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying,

15The land of Zabulon, and the land of Nephthalim, *by* the way of the sea, beyond Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles;

16The people which sat in darkness saw great light; and to them which sat in the region and shadow of death light is sprung up.

17From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.

## 22 - The First Cleansing of the Temple

Jesus introduced His public ministry and completed His ministry with a public cleansing of the Temple. The fact that after His several years of ministry did not result in any change in the Temple operations demonstrated that Israel was ripe for judgment to be set aside at this point in their history. This is a precursor to the final statement in the book of Acts where Paul, under house arrest, met with the Jews:

Acts 28:25-29 And when they agreed not among themselves, they departed, after that Paul had spoken one word, Well spake the Holy Ghost by Esaias the prophet unto our fathers,

26Saying, Go unto this people, and say, Hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and not perceive:

27For the heart of this people is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes have they closed; lest they should see with *their* eyes, and hear with *their* ears, and understand with *their* heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them.

28Be it known therefore unto you, that the salvation of God is sent unto the Gentiles, and *that* they will hear it.

29And when he had said these words, the Jews departed, and had great reasoning among themselves.

133. What was the function of the changers of money?

- a. To collect taxes for the Roman government
- b. To convert foreign currency to the temple shekel**
- c. To find ways to cheat people so they could get rich

John 2:14 And found in the temple those that sold oxen and sheep and doves, and the changers of money sitting:

**a** The money changers in the temple were different from the publicans. Tax collecting could be privatized by seeking bids from the tax collectors, or publicans, who kept track of the local economy. They made their money by the fees they set for collecting the taxes. They got to keep any excess tax collection above the contract they had.

**c** Nobody was supposed to find ways to cheat people so they could get rich. This was not the function of the money changers. This was something that just happened.

**b** Jews traveling to the temple were to bring a sacrifice or an offering. For any Jew traveling from a great distance, they would buy a sacrificial animal when they arrived at Jerusalem. Because of the Jews' sense of purity and separation from the world, any money that was used to give an offering or to buy a sacrifice an animal for sacrifice had to be in the form of the temple shekel. The money changers would convert would convert the foreign currency into the temple shekel. The next step would be to take the sacrifice for the priest to inspect. If it was found faulty, they would have to go through the process all over again and be out their original payment.

134. What was Jesus response to the animals and changers of money?

- a. He gave them a timeout
- b. He respected their truth and was tolerant
- c. He drove them out**

John 2:15 And when he had made a scourge of small cords, he drove them all out of the temple, and the sheep, and the oxen; and poured out the changers' money, and overthrew the tables;

**a** Jesus did not use a toothless punishment of a timeout. Often times Jesus is depicted as only mild and gentle.

**b** In modern thinking there is such an emphasis on avoiding any discomfort. Of course this is only used to shut down you down. In a postmodern world there is no sense of truth. All truth is subjective. According to postmodern thinking, you have to always be sure to assume that you might be wrong. Any confidence is viewed as arrogance and pride. By demanding tolerance, people move quickly from not being condemning of other people's points of view to forcing you to approve of other people in their error and sin.

**c** Although we must be cautious to be as wise as serpents and harmless as doves, there are times to speak up in righteous indignation. People often make the mistake and confuse righteous indignation with their own personal anger and control issues. Jesus certainly had every right as God and the judge of the universe and the infinitely righteous and holy one to take this action and more. We should be motivated to be respectful of God not only by the attractiveness of his love but by the fear of his displeasure. Of course, the hypocrisy of our modern culture will permit those who they favor to use violence with the excuse that your speech is violent and justifies a violent response if they can't guilt you into submission.

135. What did Jesus find a problem with in the temple?

- a. Merchandising**
- b. Animal sacrifice
- c. They should have used bake sales and camel washes instead

John 2:16 And said unto them that sold doves, Take these things hence; make not my Father's house an house of merchandise.

**b** Again, Jesus was not like those in the modern culture who are so overly concerned about comfort that he would be some kind of animal rights activist.

**c** Having bake sales and camel washes would not be categorically different from the sacrifice sales in the temple. Similarly, in churches today, we should not be passing our responsibility to provide for God's work onto the lost world by expecting them to pay to support His work.

**a** It is not wrong to sell things completely. Selling a church vehicle church equipment, etc, is not the same thing as making sales part of the main operation of the church. This is what is meant by making God's house an house of merchandise.

136. How did Jesus feel about the temple?

- a. He was consumed with the holiness of the things of God**
- b. He felt the security of sacred spaces
- c. He appreciated the many different faiths that worshiped there

John 2:17 And his disciples remembered that it was written, The zeal of thine house hath eaten me up.

**c** In our modern times, where truth suffers, people are not so concerned about spiritual distinctions. In the spirit of spirit of false tolerance, as we described before, people are disposed to an ecumenical spirit where the differences of mutually contradicting belief systems are ignored. Jesus is the author of truth. The very first commandment in Exodus 20 is a charge against ecumenism.

**b** Jesus did not simply look at the temple as a sacred space where the spiritual ambiance would afford a self centered desire for relief from the pressures of the outside world. The purpose of the temple was a place of holiness and release from sin after repentance. It was not a place to indulge oneself or pursue personal notions of spirituality.

**a** We should be so consumed with God's holiness that we maintain a sensitivity to the misuse of the things of God. Many people feel uncomfortable with even placing anything on top of a Bible. Communion should not be looked at as if it were just a little snack. Although we should not have such an austere attitude in the church sanctuary to the degree that we end up with a holier than thou attitude. Neither should the auditorium be looked at as a place where people can run around and cavort. Similarly, God's name should not be taken in vain in even the slightest way in our conversation. It is a small step from ignoring these polite measures to ignoring holiness in our homes and in our relationships.

137. How did the Jews respond to Jesus?

- a. They put Him in jail for disturbing the peace
- b. They wanted to know what sign He could give to prove He had authority from God**
- c. They had a revival because they confessed their sinfulness to God

John 2:18 Then answered the Jews and said unto him, What sign shewest thou unto us, seeing that thou doest these things?

**a** The Jews had enough sensibility to know that Jesus was not simply disturbing the peace. Today, Peoples resistance and rebellion against God makes them bold to think that you're doing something wrong in your public service of God. In America today, going door to door is still protected as free speech, it is not solicitation. People will sometimes think that you are being unethical or committing a social sin by giving them a tract.

**c** If anything, the Jews should have taken the challenge and examined their hearts and realized that they needed to confess their sin and turn to God in revival.

**b** Instead they tried to put Jesus in his place by challenging his authority. In reality, He was doing nothing more than exercising normal spirituality. It is said that this is one of the faults that the Jews had that they always are looking for signs when they should settle for obvious truth.

138. What sign did Jesus offer them?

- a. Thunder and lightning on Mt. Sinai
- b. A strong wind, earthquake, and fire
- c. The resurrection**

John 2:19 Jesus answered and said unto them, Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.

**b** God certainly had used a strong wind earthquake and fire as in the case of Elijah.

**a** He also had used thunder and lightning as on Mount Sinai.

**c** Jesus would indeed use something phenomenal, but what he had reserved for them was the resurrection. This would be the manifestation that they would be able to observe which should have been convincing. Later on He would explain to them on another occasion that this would be the same thing as the sign of Jonas the prophet where he was three days and three nights in the belly of the whale and then brought forth, so Jesus would be three days and three nights in the belly of the earth. Bringing back Jonas from the watery grave certainly was impressive enough to convince the Ninevites. The resurrection would be something that actually would convince many Jews to get saved even though the larger part of Judaism resisted and were set aside until after the rapture. In fact one of the things that will actually convince the Jews during that time would be the return of Christ would be the return of the resurrected Christ at the Mount of Olives.

139. What did the disciples think of the sign Jesus offered?

- a. They didn't get it**
- b. They looked forward to the resurrection
- c. They thought Jesus was going to redecorate the Temple

John 2:20-22 Then said the Jews, Forty and six years was this temple in building, and wilt thou rear it up in three days?

21But he spake of the temple of his body.

22When therefore he was risen from the dead, his disciples remembered that he had said this unto them; and they believed the scripture, and the word which Jesus had said.

**a** The Jews, in general, in that moment made the mistake that Jesus was speaking of the earthly temple and not the temple of His body.

**c** It is obvious that they didn't think that Christ was concerned about anything trivial, like a mere redecoration of the Temple. C represents how many people *do* take their spirituality so lightly as though all they have to do is clean things up on the outside. Many people treat revival as merely refreshing the outward appearance of their lives. Instead Jesus in the resurrection was promoting a complete transformation, which we experience in our spirit first, and then our body at the rapture.

**b** Later on the disciples would finally get it when they saw the resurrection and understand what He had meant. At that time they were not likely looking forward to their resurrection, but merely the restoration of the Kingdom as many of the other Jews were expecting.

140. After He did many miracles, how did the people respond?

- a. They asked questions to trip Him up
- b. They wanted His autograph
- c. They believed on His name**

John 2:23 Now when he was in Jerusalem at the passover, in the feast *day*, many believed in his name, when they saw the miracles which he did.

**b** The people did not merely treat Jesus as a celebrity performing magic tricks and seeking His autograph.

**a** To their credit they did not ask him questions to trip him up. This is common practice today where a hostile media will be more interested in asking "gotcha" questions or use their questions as an occasion to push their agenda rather than seek information. You can tell the bias of the media today by how consistent they are in attacking one party while ignoring the same problems in the party they favor. One thing that even the unjust accusers of Christ did later was to examine Him by the Scriptures even though they were motivated by their agenda.

**c** Instead, they were open enough have to realize the power of God and they believed on His name. It is with this kind of simple faith that we should be ready to receive Jesus.

141. How did Jesus respond to the people?

- a. He was happy for how many people were following
- b. He rejected any celebrity status**
- c. He admired the sincerity of the people

John 2:24-25 But Jesus did not commit himself unto them, because he knew all *men*,  
25And needed not that any should testify of man: for he knew what was in man.

**a** We might get excited when numbers of people seem to be responding to God, but we never know their hearts. God looks on the heart whereas man looks on the outward appearance. Jesus knew their hearts and what was in man and so John did not report that Jesus was excited about how many people were following.

**c** The sincerity of the people was not evidenced by their thronging him. Jesus avoided becoming their leader by popular acclaim. He would not commit himself in that way. Jesus had His own eternal Kingdom agenda.

**b** He rejected being made a celebrity. This would not be the first occasion where He would have to deal with this. It is interesting that this happened even up to the end of his life on earth at the triumphal entry only to be cast aside by the same people a couple of days later.

## 23 - Meeting with Nicodemus

142. What was Nicodemus' status?
- a. Amateur theologian
  - b. A religious skeptic
  - c. A Pharisee and member of the Sanhedrin**

John 3:1 There was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews:

There are three kinds of Bible students that are indicated here.

**a** The first one is an amateur theologian. It has been said that a little knowledge is a dangerous thing. The stronger the statement you make, the stronger the arguments, or context, that you need to back up your statements. Ultimately we don't worry about people as they make mistakes in their understanding of Scripture. We all depend on the Holy Spirit to guide us. As time goes on, when people take time to regularly and faithfully study, the scriptures will do the job of correcting any misinterpretations. However, there are denominations which require that people do not seek to interpret the Bible for themselves. In fact, they discourage people from studying the word of God, Because they teach that you have to have someone official to interpret the Bible for them. If the teaching does not have an *imprimatur* on it, then it is not to be trusted. However, the problem still remains that just because we are commanded to study the word and trust in the guidance of the Holy Spirit, the mistake that the amateur theologian makes is condemning their spiritual elders according to their conclusions that need more grounding. Spiritual elders know that they need to be apt to teach, patient, in meekness instructing those that oppose themselves if God peradventure should give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth.

**b** The second kind of Bible student is the religious skeptic, if he can actually even be called a Bible student. This student depends more on his doubts and preconceived notions than honest convictions. The chief error the skeptic makes is called "shooting holes" in an argument. They assume that if you can find one small part to being questioned, that that invalidates the entire argument.

**c** Nicodemus is the third kind of student. The Pharisees we're not just people who have attitude problems. Today being a Pharisee is synonymous with having a judgmental, holier than thou attitude. However, the Pharisees were actually serious Bible students. The Apostle Paul called himself a pharisee of the Pharisees. Even though they would be critical of Christ, their concerns were not so unfounded. They were based more on their desire to have the most absolutely correct understanding of Scripture. If there was any kind of mistake that this kind of student makes, it would be to over apply the conclusions of their studies.

143. What suggests what Nicodemus' attitude was toward Jesus?
- He was argumentative because he came with others to support him
  - He was concerned what others might think because he came under the cover of darkness**
  - He was impressed with Jesus because he asked Him to speak at his synagogue

John 3:2 The same came to Jesus by night, and said unto him, Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him.

**a** Nicodemus did not arrive with a crew of scholars to back him up and cheer him on in an attack on Jesus.

**c** He was not merely there to seek Jesus out as a celebrity for the synagogue. We find this problem all too often in our modern churches. In the interest of drawing a crowd to meet the genuine desire for people to hear the gospel, it is possible to rush and not properly vet the people who are brought in to draw the crowd.

**b** It appears that Nicodemus might actually have been concerned what others might think about him because he came under the cover of darkness. This could suggest that he didn't want to come under criticism, or it could possibly suggest that he didn't want to be a premature influence on those who looked to him for guidance. His standing in the synagogue could certainly be at jeopardy. An honest student of the Bible would seek out an opportunity to get alone with the teacher to have a greater focus on his questions.

144. How did Jesus respond to Nicodemus inquiry?
- He responded to his true need and told him to be born again**
  - He explained how He did His mighty works
  - He gave him a riddle to solve

John 3:3 Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.

**c** Jesus certainly did not give Nicodemus a riddle to solve. That is the way sometimes people view the parables that Jesus gave. The parables were illustrations to help people understand spiritual truths. We do this often today, to give people a personal context so they can see how a truth applies. Jesus did this because people couldn't necessarily understand a direct answer right away. As a speaker, I often do this to set people up so that when I present a principle they will be more prepared to understand what I am teaching.

**b** Jesus did not explain how He did His mighty works. He could have simply said I do this by divine power. That would be true of every single miracle that was done in His ministry. Also, this was not a matter of sharing "secrets of the trade" as if Nicodemus was another prophet that looking for tips on how



to minister.

**a** Nicodemus, like so many people today, are more concerned about the manifestation of power than they are the meaning behind the miracles. People often treat what looks like a miracle as if it is a proof of an argument. I have often heard people say about those who are speaking in tongues, "Bbut I saw it for myself," or even "I experienced it myself, therefore it must be true." They talk about the experience of power in what looks like a miracle to justify the experience as coming from God. Or, people might look at the reports of miracles in the Catholic Church as proof for the authority of the Catholic Church. Miracles are wonderful things and are actually quite common. We only think of the miraculous as something that is stupendous and large. Miracles are certainly blessings, but they should not be used as absolute proof. Jesus would tell people to believe because of the miracles, but He was more insistent that they examine the scriptures because it is they that speak of Him. And then ultimately, the only sign He wanted them to truly use as a proof, would be His resurrection.

Jesus did what we need to be careful to do when talking to people about the Gospel. Many times people want to ask about superficial things like the differences between churches or religions. We need to address their true need, which is salvation. We don't want to ignore their interests, but we must steer the conversation around to the whole purpose of religion, which is to answer the question about how to enter a relationship with God, have our sins forgiven, and to make sure of our eternal destiny.

145. What is the only way to enter the Kingdom of heaven?

- a. Reincarnation
- b. Being born again**
- c. Baptism

John 3:3,5 Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.

5Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.

**b** Jesus identifies very quickly that the only way to enter or even to understand the Kingdom of heaven is by being born again.

**a,c** Reincarnation and baptism are two misunderstandings that people actually apply to the whole notion of being born again. Some people think that being born again is some strange notion of backwoods religious people. When people are critical of those who are born again, this is a great passage to point out that whatever being born again is, Jesus said that you have to have it. The question is to understand what is meant by being born again. Many people, in trying to find a way to make this fit with their experience and understanding of religion, prematurely suppose that this is done in baptism. They see the words *born of water* and assume that that is a reference to

baptism. Other people, who only have vague spiritual notions of popular religion make the mistake of thinking that this refers to the Hindu teaching of reincarnation. We will look at the nature of being born again in the next question.

146. What corresponds to physical birth?

- a. Being born again through baptism
- b. Being born again through a spiritual birth
- c. Being born of water in natural child birth**

John 3:4-6 Nicodemus saith unto him, How can a man be born when he is old? can he enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born?

<sup>5</sup>Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.

<sup>6</sup>That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.

**a,b,c** There are two lines of thinking in Jesus' explanation to Nicodemus. Jesus contrasts the spiritual birth in being born again to our original physical birth. Jesus makes reference to being born again in verse 3. Nicodemus brings up the issue of the physical birth according to his misunderstanding. In verse 4, he asks about entering into his mother and being born again. Jesus responds to this question and addresses exactly what Nicodemus brought up. The physical birth corresponds to being born of water, a reference to natural childbirth, and then contrasts that with being born again as something that comes from the spirit. So this cannot be a reference to being born again through baptism, baptism is not in view here at all. Also He is not comparing the spiritual birth to the physical birth because it would make no sense to have someone enter their mother again to be born. In verse 6, He then restates the proposition by concluding that which is born of the flesh is flesh and that which is born of the spirit is spirit. Being born of a woman in childbirth is a flesh birth. Being born again is of the spirit and is a spiritual birth.

147. How did Jesus described the new birth process?

- a. Just like how we can see air itself
- b. It cannot be observed because it happens in the spirit**
- c. It is interesting to watch as someone transforms himself into a child of God

John 3:7,8 Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again.

<sup>8</sup>The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit.

**c** One does not transform himself into a child of God anymore than one conceives himself in natural childbirth. We saw this of course in John chapter one where we are not born according to the will of man or the will of the flesh.

**a,b** We are born of God and just as we cannot see air itself, it is something that we cannot observe because it happens in the spirit. Just as we see the

wind blow and can see the effect of the air, we can observe the result of someone being born again.

148. What does Jesus suggest about faith?

**a. Even a master theologian can miss the truth**

b. If we study long enough we should be able to know all about God

c. Nobody can know anything just by studying

John 3:9,10 Nicodemus answered and said unto him, How can these things be?

10Jesus answered and said unto him, Art thou a master of Israel, and knowest not these things?

**a** There truly are things that we can know through study. In fact the Bereans were called noble because they searched the Scriptures to see if what they were being told was so. Jesus told the people to search the scriptures for it was they that speak of Him. However, there are those who think that absolutely everything about God *is* knowable. They will arrogantly claim to be able to explain everything because they have all the answers and you should leave your church and follow them. There are some things about God that will necessarily be beyond us because God is infinite, His thoughts are not our thoughts, His ways are not our ways, and as the heavens are above the earth his ways are higher than ours.

**c** There are those who believe that we only know God experientially or diminish the importance of study. Although there is much we come to appreciate better by experience, there are many things we receive by study alone.

**a** What Jesus *does* suggest about faith, is that is possible for someone who is a master theologian to have missed the truth. We need to be careful to be grounded in reality and honest with ourselves to accept the truth when we see it.

149. What does someone have to have to understand God's message?

a. A theology degree

b. A lot of good works

**c. A willingness to believe**

John 3:11,12 Verily, verily, I say unto thee, We speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen; and ye receive not our witness.

12If I have told you earthly things, and ye believe not, how shall ye believe, if I tell you *of* heavenly things?

**a.b** There are many theologians who are, as some have put it, educated idiots. Having a degree does not guarantee intelligence or wisdom. There were also those who think by doing a lot of good works, they will become so holy that they will be able to see God because they are more holy than others.

**c** It is true that there are some parts of the Bible that God has made necessarily harder to understand because they require truly digging and trying to know Him. Anyone who has read the Bible knows that it does not read like the *Readers Digest*, a newspaper, a novel, or a Facebook post. However, the most important things to know from the Bible about how we are sinners who need a savior who died for us are easy to understand. Preachers are often reminded to make sure to put the cookies on the lower shelf to make sure that even children would be able to understand the truths of God without us distracting them by all kinds of embellishments. There is a secret in preaching that when we break for a moment to address something for a child in the audience, we know that there probably are many adults who need things explained on a child's level. Also, how many of us really enjoy the truths that are taught in a puppet skit or an illusion to teach a point?

150. What did Moses lift up for people to look on for physical healing?

**a. The brass serpent, a symbol of sin and judgment**

b. A copy of the law

c. A magic snake

John 3:14,15 And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up:

15That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life.

**b** In the Old Testament, when the people fell into sin and were being destroyed by a plague of fiery serpents, Moses did not hold up a copy of the law. The only purpose of the law is to teach us what sin is. If he had held up a copy of the law, the people might have said, "What good does that do us? We understand by the law that we are being judged. What is the remedy?"

**c** The brass serpent was not lifted up because of some superstitious power to be placed in some magical superstitious object. In fact, Hezekiah, according to 2Kings 18:4, the brass serpent had become an object of worship and superstition which caused Hezekiah to have it destroyed, declaring it merely to be Nehushtan, a mere thing of copper.

**a** The serpent was made of brass, which is a symbol of God's judgment. This becomes a very fitting type of Christ in that He became sin for us, was lifted up taking on the judgment of God for our spiritual healing in salvation for all those who would look to Him.

151. Why was Jesus going to be lifted up?

a. To be a good example

**b. He would receive the judgment for our sin**

c. To die

**a** Jesus was going to be lifted up not merely to be a good example for us. This is a popular teaching for those who do not teach salvation but still want to have an excuse to say they are Christians.

**c** Neither was He merely going to be lifted up in order to die so that He could be raised again.

**b** Specifically He was going to be lifted up so that He could receive the judgment for our sin.

152. What do people receive when they place their faith in the divine son of God who died for our sin?

a. Temporary life until we can sin again and have to get saved again

**b. Eternal life**

c. The ability to do good works to earn eternal life

John 3:15,16 That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life.  
16For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

**a,b** The scripture says specifically that what we receive is eternal life. It is not temporary life until we can sin again and have to get saved again.

**c** There are those who teach that one only begins the process of transformation by having original sin removed and then perfecting their salvation by doing good works.

153. What did Jesus die for?

a. Those who God chose to be saved

b. Those who deserve to be forgiven and saved

**c. The world**

John 3:16 For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

**b** Using the word *deserve* in connection with being forgiven makes as much sense as talking about a hot ice cube, a dark shade of white, or a round square.

**a** The idea that God chose somebody to be saved and that He died only for them is a Calvinistic doctrine called limited atonement. The theory behind limited atonement is that if Christ died for all then certainly it would be a waste of His sacrifice, an abuse of Christ, and a great indignity for Him if someone did not get saved. However, this would be precisely the reason why God is justified in sending some to Hell. It's because they abused their opportunity and rejected Christ's sacrifice.

**c** The fact is that Jesus died for the world, which does not mean, as some suppose, to mean a world composed of those who were chosen. It simply says for the world.

154. Why will people be condemned for their sin?

- a. If they commit enough sin they will be condemned
- b. They are condemned because they are born as sinners**
- c. They won't be condemned if they never heard about the Bible or Jesus

John 3:18 He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.

**b** People will be condemned for their sins is because they are simply born as sinners. They are already sinners.

**a** It's not a question if they commit enough sin. Adam and Eve became sinners for one act of rebellion. Even then, it was not some gross sin as we might think today. It's not as though they murdered anybody, committed adultery, or robbed a bank. We are judged primarily because we are sinners; the fact that we sin is merely proof of what we are.

**c** Some people make the mistake that someone is excused if they never heard about the Bible or Jesus. Romans chapter one cover this argument.

155. Why do people love darkness?

- a. Their sins are harder to see**
- b. It is cozy and quiet
- c. Their good works are easier to see

John 3:19-20 And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.  
20For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reprov'd.

**b** People love darkness not just because it is cozy and quiet. We're speaking in terms of morality here.

**a** The darkness provides cover for sin. Whether it could be the darkness of ignorance by keeping people from knowing God's Word and knowing the law which would expose their sin, or simply the fact that as we see in much violence that is done today that they seek to hide their guilt. As times become more evil, people are more willing to do their sins in the day because they feel emboldened by what they're getting away with. Because judgment is not executed speedily people get bold in their sin.

Ecc 8:11 Because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil.

**c** It is not that people doing good works by contrast are more obvious because they shine in the darkness. Instead the truth is found in light.

## 24 - Questioning John the Baptist

156. How did John respond to the growing popularity of Christ?

- a. He was jealous
- b. He paid for a better marketing campaign
- c. He knew he must fade away**

John 3:26-30 And they came unto John, and said unto him, Rabbi, he that was with thee beyond Jordan, to whom thou barest witness, behold, the same baptizeth, and all *men* come to him.

27John answered and said, A man can receive nothing, except it be given him from heaven.

28Ye yourselves bear me witness, that I said, I am not the Christ, but that I am sent before him.

29He that hath the bride is the bridegroom: but the friend of the bridegroom, which standeth and heareth him, rejoiceth greatly because of the bridegroom's voice: this my joy therefore is fulfilled.

30He must increase, but I *must* decrease.

**b** One of the ways public figures are judged to today is as if they are in a beauty contest. They are not considered for their message, but how they deliver it. Churches can slip into this mentality if they treat soul-winning or bringing people into church as an issue of marketing strategy. Stewardship requires that we be as efficient as possible with our material assets, but evangelism is a matter of the Spirit. Evaluating our outreach by marketing data might be helpful, but by no means does it define the success of the church.

**a** John the Baptist was not jealous of the work of Christ especially because he was committed to the Kingdom of God.

**c** He was well aware of the workings of the Kingdom of God and God's "strategy." Because of this, he knew that his role was meant to diminish. The "star" of the wedding is not the best man, but the bride and groom. In a Jewish wedding, the groom proceeds to the bride's house with much fanfare. The excitement of the wedding starts with the approach of the groom.

157. Why did Jesus have more power?

- a. He had the power of the spirit just like we do
- b. He was more handsome and eloquent
- c. He had the power of the spirit without reserve**

John 3:34 For he whom God hath sent speaketh the words of God: for God giveth not the Spirit by measure *unto him*.

**b** Jesus power did not depend on superficial qualities like appearance and how nice He sounded. In fact, the scope of His "eloquence" included a scourge of cords; He did not depend on His oratorical skills, but on the content of His message.

**a,c** We should feel some sense of confidence because even though we do not have absolute and infinite access to the Holy Spirit, when we *do* work in the Lord, we have the *same* Spirit that Jesus had. Jesus accomplished His work not by Himself, but by the power of Holy Spirit, which is why elsewhere Jesus said that we will do the same works that He did. More than having the content of His message, Jesus had the power of the Holy Spirit without measure.

158. How would people be given to the Son by the Father?

- a. By works
- b. By faith**
- c. By following Jesus' example

John 3:35-36 The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into his hand.  
36He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him.

**a,c** There is no difference between A and C. We might think that being a follower of Jesus is synonymous with being a Christian, but there are people of other religions who claim to be a follower of Jesus because they pick and choose what they admire about Him to adopt for themselves.

**b** We *have* everlasting life, not *will* have everlasting life, the moment we exercise saving faith in Him.

159. Who will have everlasting life?

- a. Those who are baptized
- b. Those who believe in Jesus**
- c. Those who are spiritual

John 3:32,33,36 And what he hath seen and heard, that he testifieth; and no man receiveth his testimony.  
33He that hath received his testimony hath set to his seal that God is true.  
36He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him

**a** John had spent so much of his ministry baptizing people that, if baptism were part of salvation, he certainly would have included it here.

**c** Many people consider themselves safe because they consider themselves to be spiritual. Being spiritual is insufficient. Many who reject the Gospel message preached by Jesus, Himself, would be saved if being spiritual was all someone needed. People in some false sense of a live-and-let-live kind of tolerance will fend off and confrontation of reality by declaring themselves to be spiritual.

**b** Salvation is completely by faith.



160. What do unbelievers receive?
- a. A timeout
  - b. The wrath of God**
  - c. A second chance in reincarnation

John 3:36 He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him.

**a** People who promote life without real consequences are impressed with how well a timeout should work. They minimize judgment and are the kind that give out participation trophies. Heaven is not a trophy that is given to all who participate in being humans whose flaws are insignificant.

**c** Still trying to escape any notice in the judgment, people think that they will somehow have a chance after death to get things right, either by a profession when they are standing in front of God and realize how holy He is, or be reincarnated to get a "do over."

**b** They will face the wrath of God instead.

Heb 9:27-28 And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment:  
28So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation.

## **25 - The Woman at the Well – Passing through Samaria**

John chapter 3 and John chapter 4 really should be read and considered together. There are a number of places in the scriptures where events are put side by side for comparison. This is certainly the case in the situation of Nicodemus and the Samaritan woman. The contrast between the two demonstrates the scope of the outreach of the gospel. Nicodemus was the righteous of the righteous and the cleanest of Jews, the Samaritan woman represented the extreme of moral and spiritual uncleanness. All of us fall somewhere between Nicodemus and this woman. There is no one too holy and no one too lowly that the gospel cannot reach.

Jesus took advantage of the woman's response to His request for water to turn the conversation to what *her* need was.

John 4:12-19 Art thou greater than our father Jacob, which gave us the well, and drank thereof himself, and his children, and his cattle?

13Jesus answered and said unto her, Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again:

14But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life.

15The woman saith unto him, Sir, give me this water, that I thirst not, neither come hither to draw.

16Jesus saith unto her, Go, call thy husband, and come hither.

17The woman answered and said, I have no husband. Jesus said unto her, Thou hast well said, I have no husband:

18For thou hast had five husbands; and he whom thou now hast is not thy husband:  
in that saidst thou truly.

19The woman saith unto him, Sir, I perceive that thou art a prophet.

161. Who did Jesus baptize?

- a. **No one, His disciples did it**
- b. His disciples
- c. The multitudes who heard Him preach

John 4:1-2 When therefore the Lord knew how the Pharisees had heard that Jesus  
made and baptized more disciples than John,  
2(Though Jesus himself baptized not, but his disciples,)

In the previous chapter, it's obvious that John wasn't running any competition with Jesus. We also saw that people were already looking for a possible conflict between Jesus and John the Baptist. Later, in the early church, unfortunately, who baptized whom quickly became a point of argument.

1Cor 1:12-15 Now this I say, that every one of you saith, I am of Paul; and I of  
Apollos; and I of Cephas; and I of Christ.

13Is Christ divided? was Paul crucified for you? or were ye baptized in the name of  
Paul?

14I thank God that I baptized none of you, but Crispus and Gaius;

15Lest any should say that I had baptized in mine own name

**a,b,c** If being baptized by Paul might have given people an opportunity to boast, imagine the potential problems if someone could claim to have been baptized by Christ Himself. These passages also support the argument that baptism is not a requirement for salvation.

1Cor 1:17 For Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel: not with  
wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of none effect.

162. How did Jesus approach the woman?

- a. **He asked her for a drink of water**
- b. He made her feel uncomfortable for coming to the well when other women weren't around
- c. He preached a sermon to her with a lot of Bible references to show how knowledgeable He was

John 4:7 There cometh a woman of Samaria to draw water: Jesus saith unto her, Give  
me to drink.

**b** The fact that the woman was coming in an off hour avoiding the presence of other women suggests that she felt the stigma of being an adulterous woman wanting to avoid the recriminations of the other women. Jesus did not try to make her feel comfortable. In fact, He set her up asking about her husband, obviously knowing that she had had five and was now living with a man. Jesus did not come to bring peace by smoothing over what people considered to be mere mistakes, or just not ideal.

**c** Jesus did not bowl the woman over with a million versus which each would need all kinds of exposition. In fact, Jesus did not use any Scripture verses at all. This should not be taken to mean that this is the best "method" for witnessing. At other times, Jesus *does* use Scripture to deal with people. What we see is Jesus being responsive to the woman and not *just* sharing a canned approach with her. Which does not mean that a canned approach is absolutely bad. It does mean that we have to be sensitive to the person.

**a** Jesus started off with something totally innocuous and it also was used to introduce further discussion. Her reaction to Him became the point for discussion that Jesus could leverage for the Gospel.

163. What was the woman ready to do after hearing the message of Jesus?
- a. Accept him as the Messiah**
  - b. Give him water
  - c. Acknowledge his ethnic superiority

John 4:29 Come, see a man, which told me all things that ever I did: is not this the Christ?

**c** This is where it is important to bring out the woman's concerns. They represent a great obstacle that many people have to being open considering the Gospel. The issue of the woman was generally a sense of partisanship. She was of the Samaritan party and held to their religious platform. Even though she was an admitted sinner, she fell back onto her identity as a Samaritan.

John 4:20 Our fathers worshipped in this mountain; and ye say, that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship.

The Samaritans evolved out of the people who were placed in the land by the Assyrians after the northern tribes had gone into captivity. What remaining Jews there were were mixed ethnically, doctrinally, and spiritually. Sanballat, in Nehemiah's time, erected a temple on Mt. Gerazim in Samaria which came into competition with the Jewish Temple in Jerusalem after they were not permitted to participate in the rebuilding of the Jerusalem Temple. They used only the Pentateuch because the work of establishing the canon was done by his opponents, Ezra and the Great Synagogue. [There is dispute over the Great Synagogue and any formation of it. A good article regarding this with respect to the establishment of the Jewish canon is <https://www.jstor.org/stable/pdf/3156199.pdf> ]

...the Samaritans considered this temple to be their most holy spot, and their tradition ascribes nearly all of the biblical account of the patriarchs' deeds and the places associated with them (the land of Moriah, Beth-El, etc.) to Mt. Gerizim. There are 13 names for Mt. Gerizim, the "Kibla" of the Samaritans, the place toward which they turn in prayer. The fourth of the five articles in the declaration of their creed proclaims its holiness...[One writer] enumerates it as one of the choicest things created by God and set apart as divine. The Samaritan text for Deuteronomy 27:4-5

reads: "And it shall be when ye are passed over the Jordan, that ye shall set up these stones, which I command you this day, in Mt. Gerizim" (in place of Mt. Ebal in the masoretic text; cf. Sot. 33b). It is of interest that they even add Mt. Gerizim at the end of the Ten Commandments in both Exodus 20:17 and Deuteronomy 5:21, considering it to be the chosen mountain (Har ha-Mivhar), even from the time of the creation of the world. (The Samaritans read bahar, "has chosen," for the masoretic text yibhar, "will choose," in Deut. 12:14.) The Samaritans gave it the title "mountain of blessing" or "blessed mount"...and they claimed that the mountain was not submerged at the time of the Flood...

Mt. Gerizim became the main point of divergence between the Samaritans and the Jews. (Cf. the end of Kut.: "At what point can the Samaritans be accepted into Judaism? When they reject their belief in Mt. Gerizim.") In the time of Ptolemy I Soter (323–284 B.C.E.), there was an argument over this point between the Samaritans and the Jews of Alexandria (Jos., Ant., 12:1ff.). When Antiochus IV Epiphanes passed decrees against the Jews, he converted the Samaritan temple on Mt. Gerizim into a pagan shrine in honor of Zeus Xenios or Hellenios (II Macc. 5:23; 6:1; Jos., Ant., 12:257ff.). This temple was destroyed in 129 B.C.E. by John Hyrcanus.  
– <https://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/gerizim-mount>

**b,c** Her life was impacted more than by just overcoming ethnic bigotry and giving Jesus water. In the public's current obsession with defining all things as a problem of oppressor vs. oppressed [Modern Critical Race Theory], the only thing that is important is overcoming racism. However, also according to modern thinking, Jesus would be considered the oppressor because He was Jewish and the woman would be considered to be an oppressed "Palestinian." We have to be careful to define our mission in Biblical terms rather than the political issues *du jour* [of the day].

164. How did the disciples react when they came back and saw Jesus with the Samaritan woman?
- a. They asked him all about how they could deal with non Jews
  - b. They wanted to become missionaries to the world
  - c. They were surprised He would cross ethnic barriers**

John 4:27 And upon this came his disciples, and marvelled that he talked with the woman: yet no man said, What seekest thou? or, Why talkest thou with her?

- a** The disciples first reaction was amazement that Jesus was talking to a non-Jew. They should have been more interested in His evangelistic method.
- b** The prevailing sentiment of the day was the revival of the kingdom and world missions was way out of view for them, let alone the idea of learning how to be better soul winners.
- c** They were dumbfounded. Jesus' style was very open and inviting for all.

165. What did the woman do that shows she became a believer?
- a. She moved to Jerusalem
  - b. She went out soul winning**
  - c. She went to a quiet place to worship

John 4:29 Come, see a man, which told me all things that ever I did: is not this the Christ?

The Samaritans did have Messianic expectations, but since they only accepted the Pentateuch, they thought that the Messiah would be patterned after Moses based on Deu 18:15-19

Deu 18:15-19 The LORD thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto him ye shall hearken;  
16According to all that thou desiredst of the LORD thy God in Horeb in the day of the assembly, saying, Let me not hear again the voice of the LORD my God, neither let me see this great fire any more, that I die not.  
17And the LORD said unto me, They have well *spoken that* which they have spoken.  
18I will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee, and will put my words in his mouth; and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him.  
19And it shall come to pass, *that* whosoever will not hearken unto my words which he shall speak in my name, I will require *it* of him.

This certainly did apply to Jesus, but there are so many other and more descriptive Scriptures about the Messiah throughout the Old Testament.

**c** The woman did not view spirituality as something very personal and therefore very private. She did not seek out a place to just quietly worship and find comfort and solace for her soul.

**a** The woman did not move to Jerusalem so she could be one in thousand of people who might not have appeared to need the Gospel. They *did* need the Gospel, but from her point of view, she might have erroneously thought that because she was giving in to the Jewish message of Jesus that they must have been okay spiritually.

**b** Her response was the natural response that someone should have to the Gospel: she wanted to reach others.

166. What did Jesus turn the disciples attention to when they encouraged him to eat?

- a. He told them to become soul winners**
- b. He told them He wanted something different to eat
- c. He joined them in a celebration

John 4:32-36 But he said unto them, I have meat to eat that ye know not of.  
33Therefore said the disciples one to another, Hath any man brought him *ought* to eat?  
34Jesus saith unto them, My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work.  
35Say not ye, There are yet four months, and *then* cometh harvest? behold, I say unto you, Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest.  
36And he that reapeth receiveth wages, and gathereth fruit unto life eternal: that both he that soweth and he that reapeth may rejoice together

**c** Although a celebration would certainly be appropriate, the disciples would not have been so appreciative since they didn't even see how this was a fulfillment of what Jesus' mission was.

**b** Jesus indicated that His appetite was for spiritual matters, not just that He was in the mood for Chinese food for a change.

**a** The disciples did not get it, which is consistent with how spiritually shortsighted they were when it came to the mission of Christ. Jesus used this time to challenge them to understand what His ultimate mission is.

167. What advantage did the disciples have as soul winners?

a. They had the Internet

**b. They were building on all the work previous generations of believers had laid down**

c. They had enough money to reach out with a large marketing campaign

John 4:37-38 And herein is that saying true, One soweth, and another reapeth.

38I sent you to reap that whereon ye bestowed no labour: other men laboured, and ye are entered into their labours.

**a,c** As described before, the methods we have at our disposal are not what gives us an advantage. Still, you might wonder what the apostle Paul's reaction to having the internet, airplanes, and all the Christian publishers that we have.

**b** What the disciples had was the groundwork that had been accomplished to prepare for the arrival of Christ. You also have consider all that missions work, church planting, books, and other things we have at our disposal which were provided by the saints who came before us. We have just as much obligation to maintain all that we have for the next generations of believers who come after us, if the Lord should tarry.

# THE GALILEAN MINISTRY

## Rejection at Nazareth and the New Home in Capernaum

### 26 - The Imprisonment of John the Baptist and The Return to Galilee

It is not hard to imagine what benefit there was to Jesus moving to the north and away from Judea. He would be free to have His work and reputation grow without any conflict until it was time for Him to present Himself as the King of Israel. Similarly, with John the Baptist's ministry being essentially over, there would be no question that introductory work of John was over and that it was time to focus on Jesus only.

168. What was Jesus main message after the imprisonment of John?
- a. People should have patience til someday in the future for the complete restoration of the Kingdom
  - b. People should be creative and develop systems of worship that best expressed their spirituality
  - c. The Kingdom of Heaven was at hand**

Matt 4:17 From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.

Mark 1:15 And saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel.

Luke 4:14 And Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit into Galilee: and there went out a fame of him through all the region round about.

**c** Jesus emphasized the fact that the Kingdom of heaven was at hand. Israel had been given so many prophecies, so many types, so many symbols for hundreds of years in order to prepare for this moment and was preaching that that day had finally arrived.

**a** A says people should have patience till someday in the future for the complete restoration of the Kingdom. Jesus did not tell the people to just continue waiting. We have a similar situation today. There might be a temptation for people to treat the coming of the Kingdom of God and the Second Coming as something so far off that they shouldn't be bothered to worry about it. Of course, this is not true of dispensational fundamentalists. We, also, should not lose sight of the fact that the last days started with Jesus message and was affirmed at Pentecost in Acts 2. If anything, this should make us even *more* anxious in our anticipation of the Second Coming. The

very next thing that was supposed to happen on God's eschatological calendar was to be the coming of Christ in his Kingdom.

2Pet 3:1-7 This second epistle, beloved, I now write unto you; in *both* which I stir up your pure minds by way of remembrance:

2That ye may be mindful of the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets, and of the commandment of us the apostles of the Lord and Saviour:

3Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts,

4And saying, Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as *they were* from the beginning of the creation.

5For this they willingly are ignorant of, that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the water:

6Whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished:

7But the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men.

**b** B points out how people have used this time to be creative and develop systems of worship. Cults have been very creative and have developed sometimes mystical fantasies and other times obvious counterfeits of God's agenda. But not only the cults have been active. Liberals have used their loose interpretation of Scripture to develop forms of Christianity to match their preconceptions and preferences.

169. How did the people respond to Jesus?

a. They were skeptical

**b. They were excited**

c. They were too busy to pay attention

Luke 4:14-15 And Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit into Galilee: and there went out a fame of him through all the region round about.

15And he taught in their synagogues, being glorified of all.

**b** According to Luke 4:14-15, the people were excited and glorified Christ. It was after the imprisonment of John that the ministry of Christ kicked into high gear.

**c** C points out how sometimes people are too distracted by the circumstances of life to notice Christ. You have to wonder what they had to be distracted by in that time period. We should take notice that distraction is relative to the circumstances that people live in. In an earlier day in America, driving above a 15 mile per hour speed limit appeared to be very dangerous. in an earlier day of America, which seems ludicrous to us.

**a** A points out how some people approach Christ with skepticism. Certainly during the French Revolution the people did not have the internet to eat up their attention, but the skepticism of the age exceeded the skepticism of our day. However, it is true that we have more distractions available to us and easier to get to than other times. It is also true that the amount of distractions from one area to the next can be greater. While skepticism can run rampant



in any age, do not underestimate the possibility of revival in our day as the cultural pendulum swings back and forth. A return to the Lord and the simplicity of serving God is very easily a welcome relief to people whose lives are consumed by the tyranny of modern technology.

170. Instead of centering his work on Jerusalem where He would be crucified where did Jesus minister at this point in time?

- a. **In Galilee as was prophesied**
- b. Amongst the Essenes, an ascetic sect
- c. With the Buddhists
- d. With the lost tribes in America

Matt 4:14-16 That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying,

15The land of Zabulon, and the land of Nephthalim, *by* the way of the sea, beyond Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles;

16The people which sat in darkness saw great light; and to them which sat in the region and shadow of death light is sprung up.

The false answers represent theories of the kind of contact that Jesus had outside of Israel.

**b** The Essenes were certainly an ascetic sect that had a Millennialist focus, but it would be total speculation to suggest that Jesus received instruction from them merely because He presented the Messianic hope. This is an example of reductionist thinking that suggests that if two things have something in common that they must be related to each other.

**c** Other fantasies include the idea that Jesus spent time with eastern religions like Buddhism so that he could bring back a message that was an advancement on Judaism.

**d** The suggestion that Jesus spent time with the lost tribes in America is a hoax that was suggested by Joseph Smith and the Mormons.

**a** Matthew records that Jesus went to Galilee according to the prophecy of Isaiah 9. It is interesting that he is the gospel writer to the Jews would be sure to include the prophecy of Isaiah which suggested that the Gentiles would begin to be affected by the fulfilling of Jewish prophecy.

## 27 - Healing of the Nobleman's Son

171. Why was there an advantage for Jesus to leave Nazareth for the rest of Galilee?

- a. **Familiarity breeds contempt**
- b. There was more money to be made
- c. There was a greater need for Christ in Galilee

John 4:44 For Jesus himself testified, that a prophet hath no honour in his own country.

**a** In John 2, Jesus had been at the Passover feast. In John 3, He met with Nicodemus and then moved on His way to the Galilee area, passing first through Nazareth. Next, He went to Galilee, not pausing in His own country area of Nazareth because there was no honor there, which we will also discuss in another passage later. The more familiar people are with you, the greater the possibility that they will be dismissive of you being used to ignoring you and thinking they already know what you are going to say.

**b** Jesus not go there, as B suggests, because He was merely looking for a better job opportunity. If there are many people who simply move because they are looking to take care of some physical need. This seems like the most natural thing for a person to do. It is probably the most common form of being double minded. He comes naturally because in the course of growing up and learn and responsibilities, the pressure to work and provide causes us to find a job and pursue a career. There's a difference between being willing to do it any kind of work and the stewardship of developing a career path. We should certainly be willing to do anything, nothing should be in the knee this to do. But a career path is part of a larger concern, having a plan for life. The mistake is made is blurring the two together, not having a sense of discernment. Taking a job as a *basic* responsibility is good. The emphasis is on the word basic, though. For some, developing a career and life plan is only a sophisticated form of taking a bigger job just for the purpose of getting bigger money. The difference is between taking a bigger job for bigger money instead of *developing* your career in the larger context of a plan for life. Absolutely any plan that does not fit in the context of the Kingdom of God is merely materially minded, living for money, serving mammon. Before moving, or possibly even taking it from motion within a company, we need to make sure that our ministry for the lord will not be compromised.

**c** The need in Galilee was no greater than in any other place. The only difference was the plan of God to minister there for His agenda. Again, ministry and mission should determine our life plan.

The question is phrased not as *why* Jesus left Nazareth to move into Galilee, but rather *what advantage* was there for the move. Jesus, in a later passage, will face rejection in Nazareth. In anticipation of that, His ministry focus will be on the region of Galilee.

172. Why did the nobleman come to Jesus?

- a. He wanted to debate with him
- b. He needed a doctor
- c. Because of the testimony he heard from others**

John 4:47 When he heard that Jesus was come out of Judaea into Galilee, he went unto him, and besought him that he would come down, and heal his son: for he was at the point of death.

**b** The nobleman was beyond the need for a doctor. Too often, people turn to God as a last resort when they should have been turning to Him all along. Sometimes they *do* pray and make promises to God. When He answers their prayer, they dismiss their commitments with the prayer, "Never mind God, it's all better, I have everything under control now, I don't need you after all." They then return to their argumentative ways, in effect seeking ways to not have to live in submission to God.

**a** It is obvious that the man did not seek Christ out to debate Him, but this highlights the fact that some of the people who need Jesus the most actually *do* prefer to debate Him than believe.

**c** There are other times that people face the reality that they need more of God and are receptive of the testimony of others. We have to remember that we are often the vital link between belief and unbelief.

173. What was Jesus' opinion of the nobleman's faith?

- a. It was strong based on the Word of God
- b. It was weak, dependent on outward signs**
- c. It was moderate based on fear

John 4:48 Then said Jesus unto him, Except ye see signs and wonders, ye will not believe.

**a** Sometimes people are accused of believing merely out of fear of God. This certainly should be a component of what brings us to Him. We should be afraid of displeasing someone who is worthy of all honor. To insult someone who is honorable is a form of sin where you are falsely accusing them of dishonor. To *only* come out of fear of what God could do to you suggests that you are not coming in saving faith, but merely to keep God at bay. This was the perspective of the ancients with their sacrifices to the false gods. They sought to appease their nature gods so they could get out of them what they wanted or to keep them from exercising their demonic pleasure against them.

**a** Faith *should* be based on the Word of God, not our assumptions of what we think God should be like according to *our* wisdom.

**b** Jesus warned the nobleman to not be caught up in signs and wonders, dependent on empirical evidence. Faith requires more and should include reasoning and a commitment to truth.

174. At what point did the nobleman believe?
- a. When he heard from others that Jesus had arrived
  - b. When Jesus told him that his son would live
  - c. When he went home and found that the son survived**

John 4:50-53 Jesus saith unto him, Go thy way; thy son liveth. And the man believed the word that Jesus had spoken unto him, and he went his way.

51And as he was now going down, his servants met him, and told *him*, saying, Thy son liveth.

52Then enquired he of them the hour when he began to amend. And they said unto him, Yesterday at the seventh hour the fever left him.

53So the father knew that *it was* at the same hour, in the which Jesus said unto him, Thy son liveth: and himself believed, and his whole house.

**a,b** The nobleman certainly have hope that his son might be healed when he heard that Jesus came into Galilee. If you look in verse 50, the man merely believes in the word of Christ, but not necessarily in Him. Ordinarily, this would be an indication of saving faith.

**c** The difference here is found in verse 53. If there is a difference in the kind of faith that is spoken of in verse 53, it would be because there wasn't clear faith which would speak of his trust in Jesus, Himself. It is definitely possible for someone to believe that Jesus *can* save, but not *be* saved until they call upon Him for salvation. This is also suggested in

John 5:24 Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.

It is not the mere hearing Christ's word with a sense of understanding, but following up with placing their faith in Him.

## 28 - Healing at the Pool of Bethesda

175. What feast did Jesus attend?
- a. Passover
  - b. Yom Kippur
  - c. Christmas
  - d. We don't know**

John 5:1 After this there was a feast of the Jews; and Jesus went up to Jerusalem.

**b** Before looking at *d*, We don't know which feast this is, let's look at the other choices first. Yom Kippur is celebrated in the fall as part of the Jewish New Year. The Jewish New Year begins 10 days earlier with Rosh Hashana. Rosh Hashana is literally the head of the year. It begins a time of introspection and ends with Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement. The Day of Atonement is a very solemn time of repentance and contrition.

**a** Passover, is a celebration of The Jews exodus from Egypt.

**c** Christmas, is, of course a Christian holiday, but it corresponds to the Festival of Lights, or Hanukkah. Passover, Pentecost, the Feast of Tabernacles, Rosh Hashana, and Yom Kippur are all holidays established in the Torah. Hanukkah was later on added as a celebration during the time of the Maccabees when oil was miraculously supplied to keep the menorah lit. Even though Hanukkah was not prescribed in the law, Jesus celebrated this feast, also, as the Feast of Dedication in John 10.

**d** The fact of the matter is that we do not know what feast this is. This makes a difference in how people harmonize the Gospels and handle the chronology of the life of Christ. When calculating the chronology based upon the reign of Tiberius in his 15th year and ending with Passover (taught in an earlier session), you would end up with the crucifixion occurring on a Monday. By not assuming that this is an extra Passover, the timing works out perfectly for a Wednesday crucifixion. This is an example of an undesigned coincidence in the Bible. The writers did not have a conscious intention of the effect of the way they recorded the scriptures. They might not have had a conscious intention, but this is a way that God puts details to be discovered by study and demonstrating the inspiration of the Bible.

176. How long had the impotent man suffered?

- a. 38 years**
- b. A short while
- c. For about six weeks and was almost better

John 5:5 And a certain man was there, which had an infirmity thirty and eight years.

**a,b** When considering the length of time that the impotent man had suffered, we are led to have a sense of compassion for him and how big this miracle would be to him. He was impotent for 38 years and not for just a short while.

**c** When we consider C, for about 6 weeks and was almost better, we understand the depth of his suffering. We might feel like we're going to die after about six weeks of going through some virus and then when it is over we merely take it in stride as part of life, but this man had, no doubt, gone through times of depression, and dashed hopes. You have to wonder what he was thinking as Jesus offered to heal him. And you also have to wonder how great his joy was to become normal again.

177. Who approached whom for the healing?

- a. The impotent man approached Jesus
- b. The apostles approached Jesus
- c. Jesus approached the impotent man**

John 5:6 When Jesus saw him lie, and knew that he had been now a long time *in that case*, he saith unto him, Wilt thou be made whole?

**c** It is interesting that Jesus approached the impotent man first. It highlights the nature of salvation.

**a** A is wrong because the impotent man did not approach Jesus first. In salvation, *God* reaches out to *us* first through the Holy Spirit and His convicting power. If we were left to our own devices and intellect, God's plan of salvation would never have occurred to us. Natural man thinks only in terms of paying for one's own sins.

**b** B highlights the fact that we cannot approach Jesus Christ through either the apostles or any other saints who have gone before us. I do not mean to suggest that people have no role in bringing people to Christ, just that there is no intercessory roll where the saints use their merits to help us earn salvation.

178. What did the infirm man do instead of simply saying yes to Jesus?

- a. He explained how humble he was and was willing to suffer
- b. He said he didn't need Jesus because he trusted his doctors
- c. He complained about how no one was ever there for him to help him to the waters**

John 5:7 The impotent man answered him, Sir, I have no man, when the water is troubled, to put me into the pool: but while I am coming, another steppeth down before me.

**c** C, he complained about how no one was ever there for him to help him to the waters, could probably be taken several ways. Sometimes people will *blame* others for their condition. Other times people place an undue emphasis on their *expectations* of others to take care of them. Perhaps he was looking for pity. And then there was a possibility that he was realistic and merely explaining his plight. It should be noted that when Jesus offered him the opportunity to be made whole, the man was only thinking in earthly terms. We often try to figure out things according to *our* experience and how we think things work are supposed to work. We need to make sure to look to the Lord and know that He works beyond what we can know or do.

**a** A highlights how some people pride themselves on their humility and use suffering as a badge.

**b** According to B, there are some people who put their faith in science and assume that science has all the answers. We must remember that even when doctors participate in our healing, they do so as a blessing from God. Whether God heals us directly or uses doctors, God should still get the glory. This also suggests how spiritually nearsighted people are. Sickness and suffering is not some issue to be addressed by some quick medical fix. Sickness and suffering needs to be considered in the larger scope of the plight of humanity and the frailty of our human condition before God.

179. What did Jesus tell the man to do to reveal the misapplication of the law of the Sabbath?
- a. He told him to get to work
  - b. He told him to take up his bed and walk**
  - c. He told him to live as he pleased as long as his intentions were noble

John 5:8 Jesus saith unto him, Rise, take up thy bed, and walk.

We only want to point out here that, by Jesus commanding the men to take up his bed to walk, He was going to be in conflict with the Jews over Sabbath observance.

**c** He did not tell him, as in C, to merely ignore the law and do as he pleased as long as his intentions were noble. People who wrestle and fail with the law and the difficulty of perfection will often give up and resort to the idea that it is the thought that counts. This might be good enough when you receive a gift that you really can't use. When someone stands before God in the judgment, He is not going to say, "don't worry about your sin, you meant well." If Jesus was a faker He would cover up His inability to actually do anything with platitudes and solutions that don't make a real difference.

**a** A is wrong because Jesus would not tell the man to go to work which was something contradictory to the law. It would certainly be fitting that when someone was healed that they should no longer merely live in dependence on others. They should go out and get a job and take responsibility for their life. But Jesus did not tell him to get up and go to work. He only told him to take up his bed and walk. This, in and of itself however, would be more than the Jews could bear.

**b** I am not going to deal with how Christ is the Lord of the Sabbath issue, or his challenge to the Jews about healing on the Sabbath, or Jesus pointing out their hypocrisy on Sabbath observance. This will come later in other passages. This is a good time to point out how overly concerned the Jews were when it came to the Sabbath and had *excessive* requirements. According to Pentecost:

...the Sabbath [was] divinely ordained and beneficent part of the Mosaic economy, designed for the rest of man and for his worship and service to God. Its purpose was to protect the underlings and oppressed in a nation of afflicted with greed...All food must be prepared, all vessels washed, all lights kindled, and all tools laid aside. There were restrictions laid down in the Mosaic law, but the rabbis had elaborated from these a vast array of injunctions and prohibitions, making of the Sabbath law a veritable bondage. Moses said: "thou shalt not do any work." The rabbis made out a system of thirty-nine works, which, done, rendered the offender subject to death by stoning. Derived from these "father works" were numerous "descendant works." One of the "father works" was "plowing." A son of this was "digging." Wearing false teeth was a "descendant" of "carrying a burden." Among the descendants of "reaping" were the "plucking of a head of wheat" or "the pulling out of a Gray hair from one's head." Lengthy rules were formulated about what kinds of knots one might tie on the Sabbath. The camel drivers and sailors knots might not be tide or unloosed. 2 letters

of the alphabet might not be written together. To kindle or extinguish a fire was a great desecration, not being justified even in the case of the emergency of sickness. The Sabbath had become a grievous burden by the thousands of such restrictions and rules too numerous to mention.

Pentecost §49

180. What did Jesus tell the man to be careful not to do?

- a. **To not return to sinful ways because a greater judgment might happen to him**
- b. To not be careless because all sickness is due to sin
- c. To not worry about sin because it makes us human

John 5:14 Afterward Jesus findeth him in the temple, and said unto him, Behold, thou art made whole: sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee.

c C, to not worry about sin because it makes us human, is wrong because Jesus would not, and we should not, minimize the problem of sin. It almost suggests that sin is good because it makes us interesting.

a A highlights the attitude of many in that day that sickness was a judgment for sin. We will also cover this when we come to John 9:

John 9:2,3 And his disciples asked him, saying, Master, who did sin, this man, or his parents, that he was born blind?

3Jesus answered, Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents: but that the works of God should be made manifest in him.

We also see in the case of the Apostle Paul that it was God's will for Paul to suffer his infirmity so that he might stay dependent on God. There was no suggestion that his infirmity was due to any sin.

b However, according to A, Jesus warned the man not to sin because a greater judgment might happen to him. Although not all sickness is not due to sin, certainly some is.

Gal 6:7-8 Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.

8For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting.

181. Why did the Jews seek to kill Jesus instead of just persecute Him?

- a. **Because Jesus put himself on par with the Father**
- b. Because they were jealous that they couldn't do miracles too
- c. Because Jesus was creating a new religion

John 5:17,18 But Jesus answered them, My Father worketh hitherto, and I work.

18Therefore the Jews sought the more to kill him, because he not only had broken the sabbath, but said also that God was his Father, making himself equal with God.

b The Jews did not want to kill Jesus merely out of jealousy as in B.



**c** They would certainly have a case, as in C, if He *were* to have come preaching another God and another faith.

**a** What Jesus did was even more significant. He claimed to be the inheritor of the faith of Judaism by identifying Himself with God as one with Him in His work and having a direct relationship with the Father. This was the ultimate blasphemy to them.

182. Where did Jesus get His power and wisdom from?

a. From deep within Himself

**b. From the Father**

c. From a spirit guide

John 5:19 Then answered Jesus and said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do: for what things soever he doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise.

**c** Jesus did not, as in C, get His power and wisdom from a Spirit guide as in the claims of the New Agers today.

**a** Neither did He merely reach down deep inside Himself as in A. Some suggest, today, that all people have to do is draw on some inner strength to accomplish whatever they want in life like *the little engine that could*.

**b** Instead, the Father is the source of all power and Jesus did things as the Father showed Him. This speaks of the hierarchy within the Trinity.

183. What judgment has the Father given to the Son?

a. The right to condemn the world while He was on Earth

b. The right to excuse the world

**c. The judgment that comes in the resurrection**

John 5:21-25 For as the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth *them*; even so the Son quickeneth whom he will.

22For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son:

23That all *men* should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father. He that honoureth not the Son honoureth not the Father which hath sent him.

24Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.

25Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live.

**c** Some feel that this passage is a contradiction to John 12:47-48 where Jesus said that He did not come to judge the world:

John 12:47-48 And if any man hear my words, and believe not, I judge him not: for I came not to judge the world, but to save the world.

48He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day.

You have to look carefully at what is actually said. In His first coming He came to save the world, but vs. 21-25 speak of the judgment that comes at the *end* of the world.

**a** Jesus came the first time to save the world, contrary to A. The second time He comes, He will judge the lost by the word that He had spoken.

**b** Jesus did not, as in B, merely come to excuse sin.

184. What did Jesus do to fulfill His right to judge the world?

- a. He became a man and went through what we have gone through**
- b. He received forgiveness from His Father
- c. He became an ascended master

**b** Jesus did not receive forgiveness, as in B, which enabled Him to be able to forgive others. The only one who has power to forgive is God. There is a view in Catholicism that those who have been canonized are, now that they are fully forgiven, able to apply their merits to make up for our sin.

**c** C is wrong because there is no one who achieves some higher level of spirituality through the process of incarnations or by acquiring a higher level of consciousness through meditation and is thus able to empower us over sin.

**a** The answer for this question is partially derived from process of elimination and also knowing Hebrews 2:16-18.

Hebrews 2:16-18 For verily he took not on *him the nature of* angels; but he took on *him* the seed of Abraham.

17Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto *his* brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things *pertaining* to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people.

18For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted.

185. Who are the ones who have done good and will receive the resurrection of life?

- a. Those who kept the Law and did not work on the Sabbath
- b. The ones who heard the word of Christ and believing have passed from death unto life**
- c. Those who sincerely followed Christ

John 5:29 And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation.

**b** It's possible to make a mistake according to verse 29 and suggest that people get the resurrection of life because of what good they have done. Jesus described in the verses preceding this how they have eternal life.

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John 5:21,24-26 For as the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth *them*; even so the Son quickeneth whom he will.

24Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.

25Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live.

26For as the Father hath life in himself; so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself;

It is because of our faith in Him and that we have life and shall not come into condemnation. It is after this that He characterized the life of those who had eternal life as those who world do good. We are (present tense) not will be (future tense) passed from death unto life. This answers the question about those who do good in Romans:

Rom 2:6-10 Who will render to every man according to his deeds:

7To them who by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory and honour and immortality, eternal life:

8But unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath,

9Tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doeth evil, of the Jew first, and also of the Gentile;

10But glory, honour, and peace, to every man that worketh good, to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile:

...and also Galatians:

Gal 5:21 Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told *you* in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.

Those who are saved are the "good."

**a** The fact that Jesus was silent on any part that the law or honoring the Sabbath plays in salvation, is why A is wrong.

**c** Neither is C correct – merely following Christ in our behavior will not bring salvation. There are those who follow Christ but do not know salvation. There are also those who are following their version and idea of Christ, but not the real Christ, who are not saved.

186. What did Jesus have in Him so He could quicken us?

- a. Power
- b. Life**
- c. Love

John 5:26 For as the Father hath life in himself; so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself;

**a** Jesus did not merely have power as an A to *make* us alive.

**c** Neither is there any inherent power in love as in C, to accomplish His purpose in salvation.

**b** The way the question is worded is very important. Jesus does not simply make us eternally alive, but He shares his eternal life with us because we are *in* Him.

187. How was Jesus subordinate to the Father?

a. He was created by His Father

**b. He did His Father's will**

c. He was not as holy as His Father

John 5:30 I can of mine own self do nothing: as I hear, I judge: and my judgment is just; because I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me.

Holiness is one of the chief characteristics of God. The word holy means to be separate. God in His holiness is distinct and transcends all of His creation. The doctrine of the imminence of God speaks of how He is present in the creation by His omnipresence. The doctrine of the transcendence of God speaks of how He is separate from his creation. The creation is not part of God as the pantheists hold.

**a** Jesus was not created *by* His Father, as in A. Being one with the Father, He also transcends nature.

**c** Also, C is wrong because He is one with His Father.

**b** B highlights the *logical* relationship He had with His Father. It is not a physical or *metaphysical* relationship, but one determined by God's sense of order.

## 29 - The Fishermen Begin to Follow Jesus

188. Although the disciples would be called later to *only* follow Christ, what was their attitude in Christ's invitation here?

**a. They were quick to respond**

b. They wanted to finish up what they were working on first

c. They took four vacation weekends, slept in ten times, woke up and realized they weren't in any special need eleven times, had "something that had to be done" twelve times, felt they were being pushed too hard ten times, and after all, planned to see Jesus on His next birthday, so they almost got around to responding but they forgot to do so

Matt 4:19-20,22 And he saith unto them, Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men.

20And they straightway left *their* nets, and followed him.

22And they immediately left the ship and their father, and followed him.

There are two times where Jesus calls the fishermen to follow Him. The place in the Gospels where they are called suggests that these are two events, and the circumstances reinforce that. The call to follow Him was gradual. He met with them as disciples right after His return from the wilderness and, here, He calls them more thoroughly.

**c** C is a sad reflection of how people avoid responding to Christ and seem to find regular excuses to never get around to following Him in discipleship.

**b** B points out that there is always something left to take care of and if you try to finish up one last task you will never end up following.

**a** We should always be quick to respond to Jesus' call.

189. What did Jesus plan to teach them?

- a. How to start a soup kitchen
- b. How to win souls for Him**
- c. How to lift up the oppressed

Matt 4:19 And he saith unto them, Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men.

**a,c** A, starting a soup kitchen, and C, lifting the oppressed, are the methods of the social Gospel. The theory is that if you take care of people's needs first, then they will not be distracted by their plight and be willing to listen to us preach. These are things that are good in and of themselves, but they are not our mission. There are those who recognize by helping them that we genuinely care, but there are also a great many who are only trying to figure out what things to say to give them what they want.

**b** Jesus call was have them win souls.

190. How did Jesus plan to teach them?

- a. By following Him**
- b. By only giving them a book to read on the subject
- c. By having them do a survey of what people would like in a church

Matt 4:19 And he saith unto them, Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men.

**a,b** Jesus worked at mentoring the disciples. We need to follow up people in their salvation with a mentoring relationship. We can't just hand them a discipleship book, as in B, and expect them to understand the Christian life. The Christian life is more caught than taught. This is why it is so important for people to be in church physically so they can interact especially with

people who are younger in the Lord. People become spiritually fat if they don't take the time to go to work and share what they learn. Fat is good if it is being used as a fuel to work, otherwise it is merely stored up in the body.

c C describes an emphasis that is ideal if you are building a Christian country club. It is too easy to build a ministry that admires itself rather than making evangelism primary.

### 30 - Beginning of the Galilean Ministry

Matt 4:23 And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all manner of sickness and all manner of disease among the people.

This passage could be easily interpreted as Jesus preparing for His presentation at the Triumphal Entry as the King Of Israel, knowing that He would be rejected as King to bring on the crucifixion. However, this leads to a fuller question about the Kingdom of God in general.

191. Read Luke 17:21. What is the kingdom of God?
- a. The reign of Christ as King over all the earth
  - b. The reign of Christ as King in our hearts**
  - c. The reign of Christ which would start at Pentecost

The Kingdom of God is used in the Bible in more of a general than specific way. A general term allows for many specific applications. As a problem of logic, it is possible to fall into error by generalizing a specific application. This best understood by giving an example. Take the general category of pipes. A pipe is a long, metal, hollow object that can convey materials. That is a *general* description of a pipe. However, if you go to Home Depot and ask for a pipe, they will ask you what the pipe is for. So you tell them it is for steam heating he will sell you a plain steel pipe. Steel pipe is the *specific* description of a pipe. You are now an expert and go back to the store to get some steel pipe to get water into your kitchen. When you get home and try to install the pipe you find that it won't work because you need *copper* pipe. This is an example of *generalizing* a *specific* application. Steel pipe, the *specific kind* of pipe can not be used *generally* for every piping need.

The term kingdom of God can be used generally as in Luke 17:21.

Luke 17:21 Neither shall they say, Lo here! or, lo there! for, behold, the kingdom of God is within you.

a There are specific applications to the Millennial Reign of Christ. A, the reign of Christ as King over all the earth, will occur in the Millennium. God is certainly sovereign in any age, but that is different from reigning as king.

1Cor 15:24-28 Then *cometh* the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power.

25For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet.

26The last enemy *that* shall be destroyed *is* death.

27For he hath put all things under his feet. But when he saith, all things are put under *him*, *it is* manifest that he is excepted, which did put all things under him.

28And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all.

**c** In the Old Testament, Israel was a theocratic kingdom since law and government was determined by God. *C* is wrong because it confuses the last days with kingdom theology.

**b** The things that apply to Christ ruling in the Millennium do not generally apply to the kingdom of God in Israel, which do not generally apply to the kingdom of God in our hearts. This is a mistake that is made for various kingdom theologies:

### **Kingdom Now**

There is a sense in which God's kingdom is already in force. Hebrews 2:8–9 says,

Hebrews 2:8,9 Thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet. For in that he put all in subjection under him, he left nothing *that is* not put under him. But now we see not yet all things put under him.

9But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man.

In this passage, we have a "now" (we see Jesus crowned with glory), and we have a "not yet" (not everything has been subjected to Christ). Jesus is the King, but His kingdom is not yet of this world (see John 18:36).

Also...

1John 3:2 Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is.

Again, we have a "now" (we are the children of God), and we have a "not yet" (our future state). We are children of the King, but we must wait to see exactly what that entails.

Add to this the facts that Romans 8:30 says we are "glorified" and Ephesians 2:6 says we are seated with Christ [in heavenly places] as if these were completed acts. We don't feel very glorified, most of the time, and our surroundings do not much resemble [heavenly places]. That's because the present spiritual reality does not yet match up with the future, physical reality. One day, the two will be in sync.

So, there is a biblical basis for the "already but not yet" system of interpretation. The problem comes when this paradigm is used to justify the prosperity gospel, name-it-claim-it teachings, and other heresies. The idea behind these teachings is that Christ's kingdom is in full operation and that prayer can make it "break through" into our world. Evangelism is thought to "advance the kingdom." And people are told they never need be sick or poor because the riches of the kingdom are available to them right now.

The Bible never speaks of "advancing the kingdom," however. The kingdom will

come (Luke 11:2). We must receive the kingdom (Mark 10:15). And the kingdom is currently "not of this world" (John 18:36). Jesus' parables of the kingdom picture it as yeast in dough and a tree growing. In other words, the kingdom is slowly working toward an ultimate fulfillment. It is not sporadically "breaking through" to bring us comfort in this world.

— <https://www.gotquestions.org/already-not-yet.html>

## **Inaugurated Eschatology**

The kingdom promises to Israel are being fulfilled in the church today. Dispensationalism, in contrast, teaches that even though we are living in the last days since Pentecost, the kingdom promises to Israel belong to the Tribulation and Millennium.

## **Dominion Theology / Theonomy / Christian Reconstructionism**

Dominion theology refers to a line of theological interpretation and thought with regard to the role of the church in contemporary society. Dominion theology is also known as Christian reconstructionism and theonomy. Dominion theology states that biblical Christianity will rule all areas of society, personal and corporate. Christian reconstructionism reasons that society will be reconstructed by the Law of God as preached in the gospel and the Great Commission. Theonomy is a post-millennial view believing that all of the moral laws contained in the Old Testament are yet binding today. Although these might sound somewhat disparate, they have all been closely linked together to the point that people often use the terms interchangeably.

Those who hold these views believe that it is the duty of Christians to create a worldwide kingdom patterned after the Mosaic Law. They believe that Christ will not return to earth until such a kingdom has been established. The principal goal, then, of dominion theology and Christian reconstructionism is political and religious domination of the world through the implementation of the moral laws, and subsequent punishments, of the Old Testament (the sacrificial and ceremonial laws having been fulfilled in the New Testament). This is not a government system ruled by the church, but rather a government conformed to the Law of God.

Dominion theology / Christian reconstructionism is largely based upon a post-millennial view of covenantalism. Post-millennialism is the belief that Christ will return to earth after the thousand-year reign of God's kingdom, and covenantalism refers to the belief that biblical history is divided into three major covenants supposedly described in Scripture—of redemption, of works, and of grace. Adherents believe that we currently exist under the covenant of grace, that the church and Israel are the same, and we are now in the millennial Kingdom of God. Man, under the covenant of grace, is responsible to rule the world, to hold dominion over it in obedience to the laws of God.

— <https://www.gotquestions.org/dominion-theology.html>

## **The difference between the Kingdom of Heaven and the Kingdom of God**

While some believe that the Kingdom of God and Kingdom of Heaven are referring to different things, it is clear that both phrases are referring to the same thing. The phrase "kingdom of God" occurs 68 times in 10 different New Testament books, while "kingdom of heaven" occurs only 32 times, and only in the Gospel of Matthew. Based on Matthew's exclusive use of the phrase and the Jewish nature of his Gospel, some interpreters have concluded that Matthew was writing concerning the millennial kingdom while the other New Testament authors were referring to the universal kingdom. However, a closer study of the use of the phrase reveals that this



interpretation is in error.

For example, speaking to the rich young ruler, Christ uses "kingdom of heaven" and "kingdom of God" interchangeably.

Matthew 19:23,24 Then said Jesus unto his disciples, Verily I say unto you, That a rich man shall hardly enter into the **kingdom of heaven**.

24And again I say unto you, It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the **kingdom of God**.

...Jesus makes no distinction between the two terms but seems to consider them synonymous.

Mark and Luke used "kingdom of God" where Matthew used "kingdom of heaven" frequently in parallel accounts of the same parable.

Matthew 11:11-12 Verily I say unto you, Among them that are born of women there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist: notwithstanding he that is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he.

12And from the days of John the Baptist until now the **kingdom of heaven** suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force.

Luke 7:28 For I say unto you, Among those that are born of women there is not a greater prophet than John the Baptist: but he that is least in the **kingdom of God** is greater than he.

Matthew 13:11 He answered and said unto them, Because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the **kingdom of heaven**, but to them it is not given.

Mark 4:11 And he said unto them, Unto you it is given to know the mystery of the **kingdom of God**: but unto them that are without, all *these* things are done in parables:

Luke 8:10 And he said, Unto you it is given to know the mysteries of the **kingdom of God**: but to others in parables; that seeing they might not see, and hearing they might not understand.

Matthew 13:24 Another parable put he forth unto them, saying, The **kingdom of heaven** is likened unto a man which sowed good seed in his field:

Mark 4:26 And he said, So is **the kingdom of God**, as if a man should cast seed into the ground;

Matthew 13:31 Another parable put he forth unto them, saying, The **kingdom of heaven** is like to a grain of mustard seed, which a man took, and sowed in his field:

Mark 4:30 And he said, Whereunto shall we liken the **kingdom of God**? or with what comparison shall we compare it?

Luke 13:18 Then said he, Unto what is the **kingdom of God** like? and whereunto shall I resemble it?

[Others:] Matthew 13:33 with Luke 13:20; Matthew 18:3 with Mark 10:14 and Luke 18:16; and Matthew 22:2 with Luke 13:29. In each instance, Matthew used the phrase "kingdom of heaven" while Mark and/or Luke used "kingdom of God." Clearly, the two phrases refer to the same thing.

– <https://www.gotquestions.org/kingdom-heaven-God.html>

192. What contributed to the popularity of Christ?
- He delivered the people from the oppressive Romans
  - He healed the people**
  - He brought peace to the world

Matt 5:24 Leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift.

**a** A is wrong because Jesus did not serve in a worldly way to present Himself as another player on the world stage, defeating one empire only to replace it with another. This is something that the Jews were certainly sensitive to and desired. However, Jesus is beyond politics.

**c** In C, Jesus certainly did come to bring *His* peace to the world.

**b** But comparing C with B highlights the fact that people are more impressed with the superficial, or what they can immediately see and grasp hold of. When the deeper message of salvation which truly brings peace to the world is preached, people begin to back off because they don't necessarily want to submit to the sovereignty of God. People like want a miracle-working Savior, not a sovereign Savior.

### 31 - Teaching in the Synagogue of Nazareth

193. What was Jesus known for doing as He grew up in Nazareth?

- a. Performing miracles
- b. Faithfully attending religious services**
- c. The life of a party

Luke 4:16 And he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up: and, as his custom was, he went into the synagogue on the sabbath day, and stood up for to read.

**a** The idea that Jesus was known for performing miracles is false, A, because that is only found in other spurious writings about the life of Christ.

**b** The only thing we are aware of in His early life was that He was worshiped by the wise men, dedicated in the Temple, and was faithful to go to Jerusalem for the feasts. Apart from this, vs. 16 speaks of Christ's reputation of being in the synagogue while He lived in Nazareth.

**c** C is wrong because we do not see Jesus in the Scriptures as being the life of the party. He was certainly prominent in any situation we see Him in, but He did not live the life of a socialite or celebrity. Fame looks like more of a burden because people expect that you are going to say something witty or significant at a moment's notice. It must be hard living under that scrutiny when it is your job, as in acting, to pretend you are a person. For those who actually *do* have expertise in some area, they are under pressure to have something significant to offer in areas outside their expertise. Although Jesus actually *was* expert in everything in the universe, His mission was focused and consistent. In modeling our life after the life of Christ, our concern should be to reflect Christ in all our social experiences and engagements. This does not mean that we can't have any fun, but that we should not be seeking to draw all the attention to ourselves. We should always be looking

for an opportunity to present Jesus Christ.

194. What parts of Isaiah did Luke record from Jesus' message when He was recognized to give the lesson from the Scriptures?

Luke 4:18-19 The Spirit of the Lord *is* upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, **to set at liberty them that are bruised,**

<sup>19</sup>To preach the acceptable year of the Lord.

Isa 61:1-2 The Spirit of the Lord GOD *is* upon me; because the LORD hath anointed me to preach **good tidings unto the meek**; he hath sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to *them that are* bound;

<sup>2</sup>To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD, **and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all that mourn;**

Isa 42:1,6,7 Behold my servant, whom I uphold; mine elect, *in whom* my soul delighteth; **I have put my spirit upon him: he shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles.**

<sup>6</sup>I the LORD have called thee in righteousness, and will hold thine hand, and will keep thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people, for a light of the Gentiles;

<sup>7</sup>**To open the blind eyes, to bring out the prisoners from the prison, and them that sit in darkness out of the prison house.**

Jesus actually read a combination of Scriptures from Isaiah and the summary of what He read is reported by Luke.

The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, To preach the acceptable year of the Lord

195. When Jesus sat down to give the sermon, what was the first thing he said in His message?

- a. **The Scripture of the day was being fulfilled in front of them**
- b. They were going to have to rise up in war
- c. There was going to be no more Israel

Luke 4:21 And he began to say unto them, This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears.

**a** It was the custom in the synagogue to invite those who were of reputation to read the scripture portion for the day and then to be seated to give an exposition of the text. It was quite a blessing that the reading should happen to have fallen on Isaiah 61:1,2 and 42:1-7 for that day, but it probably wouldn't matter what the readings were because the whole of the Bible refers to Jesus Christ.

**b** B is wrong because that reflects the worldly interests only of the zealots in

that day.

**c** is wrong because it is inconsistent with the Millennial message of that day as well as the eschatology of the New Testament.

196. How did the people react to Christ's wonderful and gracious words?

- a. They embraced Him as their King
- b. They complemented Him on His nice message and went home to Sabbath dinner
- c. They discredited Him because He was only Joseph's son**

Luke 4:22 And all bare him witness, and wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth. And they said, Is not this Joseph's son?

**a** A is wrong because the timing for presenting himself as the King was not right.

**b** B is a reflection of how so many people treat the messages from God's Word as a set of flowery sentiments and church only as something social with a set of polite social rules to follow.

**c** Instead, according to C, they measured Christ in their esteem by their common everyday experience. To them He was merely Joseph's son. Even though He had been received in the synagogue, presumably because of the reputation He had been gathering, when people don't want to hear a message, they will find ways to justify ignoring it.

197. Even if Jesus did some of the miracles they had heard about, what did Jesus say would be the reason that they probably still wouldn't believe?

- a. They would want someone who was properly credentialed from the Temple
- b. Prophets are generally taken for granted and not heeded by those who are most familiar with them**
- c. They preferred to be committed to the prophets on TV who didn't require anything from them

Luke 4:23.24 And he said unto them, Ye will surely say unto me this proverb, Physician, heal thyself: whatsoever we have heard done in Capernaum, do also here in thy country.

24And he said, Verily I say unto you, No prophet is accepted in his own country.

**c** C highlights how people will try to ease their conscience by doing spiritual things rather than respond to a personal challenge to serve God. People will be diligent in following a preacher on TV, but will apply selectively what they hear. They will not apply the admonitions to attend a local church, seek out fellowship, support a local ministry, etc.

**a** is another excuse that people will use to dismiss challenges from their spiritual brothers and sisters because they are not official. Too much emphasis on accreditation and official sanctions can produce laziness in the lives of believers. They will avoid studying, leaving it to the official minister who is supposed to know everything. I appreciate the respect people have for those who have many years of experience in ministry. But such ministers will be quick to point out how much they still need to learn. One of the great lessons to be learned in ministry is that you do not have every spiritual gift or experience in life so that you don't need to hear from other people.

**b** Jesus explained that prophets are generally taken for granted and not heeded by those who are most familiar with them. In one way those who we know best and who know us best have a certain kind of edge over those who are supposed to be highly credentialed. We have more context and familiarity what the nuances of each other's lives so that we might know how to zero in on exactly what is needed. But this very same sense of familiarity can be a problem because of the embarrassment we might experience from those who know us best. Those who are spiritual will know how to not become overly involved or take things too personally.

198. Why did the Jews get upset with Jesus?

- a. They thought He was not going to do any miracles for them
- b. They thought He was not nice enough
- c. They didn't like to be compared as less than the Sidonians and Syrians**

Luke 4:25-28 But I tell you of a truth, many widows were in Israel in the days of Elias, when the heaven was shut up three years and six months, when great famine was throughout all the land;

26But unto none of them was Elias sent, save unto Sarepta, *a city of Sidon*, unto a woman *that was* a widow.

27And many lepers were in Israel in the time of Eliseus the prophet; and none of them was cleansed, saving Naaman the Syrian.

28And all they in the synagogue, when they heard these things, were filled with wrath,

**a** A is wrong because Jesus pointed out how they were aware of the miracles in Capernaum and expected him to do the same miracles.

Luke 4:23 And he said unto them, Ye will surely say unto me this proverb, Physician, heal thyself: whatsoever we have heard done in Capernaum, do also here in thy country.

**b** B is wrong because it doesn't matter how nice you are, if someone is against you, the nice things they appreciate one day will become the reason for their complaining the next day.

**c** C is the correct answer because in their ethnic pride they didn't like being compared as less than the Sidonians and Syrians. In comparison, Jesus was pointing out how Elijah found hospitality outside of Israel in the house of the

Sidonian woman widow. He also pointed out how that Elisha did not heal any lepers in Israel; that was reserved for Naaman the Syrian.

199. Because it wasn't time for Jesus to be crucified, what did He do to avoid be killed?

- a. **He just walked right through the crowd and left**
- b. He blinded them and escaped
- c. He called His disciples to fight them and was able to escape

Luke 4:29-30 And rose up, and thrust him out of the city, and led him unto the brow of the hill whereon their city was built, that they might cast him down headlong.  
30But he passing through the midst of them went his way,

**b** People often expect something dramatic when it comes to the miraculous. B reminds us how the Angels came and blinded the Sodomites for Lot and his family to escape. C points out how that not only could Jesus have called his disciples to fight, but in reality, He could have called legions of Angels to his side. It simply wasn't the right time for Him to die, nor was it the right manner for Him to die.

**c** C is also wrong, of course because this was in conflict with his mission. Even later on at the time of the cross, Jesus would not call on anybody in the time when He truly *was* going to die.

John 18:33-37 Then Pilate entered into the judgment hall again, and called Jesus, and said unto him, Art thou the King of the Jews?  
34Jesus answered him, Sayest thou this thing of thyself, or did others tell it thee of me?  
35Pilate answered, Am I a Jew? Thine own nation and the chief priests have delivered thee unto me: what hast thou done?  
36Jesus answered, My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence.  
37Pilate therefore said unto him, Art thou a king then? Jesus answered, Thou sayest that I am a king. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice.

**a** Jesus simply turned around and walked right through the crowd and left. Don't underestimate the significance of the simple life in normal service from day to day for the Lord.

## **32 - Teaching in the Synagogue of Capernaum**

In Mark and Luke, we see the authority of Jesus contrasted with the scribes. Here, Jesus takes His divine authority and applies to beyond what the scribes had to deal with. The scribes actually worked within the limitations of what they could hope to do, but this ended up adding a degree of obscurity to their teaching. Jesus could speak directly. The divine quality of the authority and power of Jesus was even more clearly on display as He commanded the demons.

200. How was Jesus' teaching different than the scribes?

- a. **Jesus did not depend on the authority of commentators**
- b. Jesus spoke in nebulous terms that anyone could fit to their personal theology
- c. Jesus spoke in sound bites that were easy to quote

Mark 1:22 And they were astonished at his doctrine: for he taught them as one that had authority, and not as the scribes.

Notice here that it is Mark that refers to Jesus speaking with authority. This is an example of his appeal to the Roman sensibilities.

**b,c** B and C highlight two ways that orators, politicians, and demagogues will use to sway people. According to C, speakers might use sound bites or short sayings pithy sayings that are clever. They hope to evoke an emotional response to get people to buy into a larger proposition. Sound bites and bumper stickers have their place in that they should remind people of a particular stand that is explained in a larger context. It should not replace reasoning. For example, you might be asked if you are for women's health and reproductive rights. Because sound bites are so short, as a generalization they can be expanded to mean all kinds of things. The use of the word *rights* is supposed to evoke a pro-freedom sentiment. The word reproductive would ordinarily suggest the creation of life. When used by abortionist, it is a reference to include the *lack* of reproduction. The reference to being for women's health creates the problem of a false dilemma. It presents an all or nothing proposition where all kinds of things might be sneaked in. Non-reproduction means anything that is not actual reproduction – non-reproduction includes abortion. If you are against non-reproduction then you must be against women's health.

Cult leaders and Mystics are famous for bringing up and creating words that could be used to mean anything at all. The Seventh-Day Adventists created the term *investigative judgment* in order to account for their obvious failure to predict the return of Christ. Once they created the term, they can define it any which way they want to. They then use the word *investigative judgment* to speak of a cleansing of the Heavenly Temple to prepare it for the believers rapture. In this way they could justify speaking of the Second Coming in spite of the fact that he didn't come when they said He would. Nostradamus is an example of a mystic who spoke in strange esoteric terms which could be subjectively interpreted and applied in whatever way they were needed.

**a** Jesus' teaching was different than the scribes in that they used another method of persuasion called an appeal to authority. They were very busy learning because of their work in copying scripture. They did not have any claim to authority in themselves. They were very humble because they would essentially footnote everything they produced. But, have you ever tried to read an academic paper with all of its references? It makes sense to academics, but you quickly get the idea that their work was meant for an

inner circle. Could you imagine if the evening news was delivered that way to you? Newscasters do not refer you to footnotes and bibliographies to justify what they are reporting to you.

There is another problem of producing a message with all kinds of footnotes and sources called cherry picking. The idea is that people will ignore alternative views to make it look like there *is no* other view.

There is power in the preaching of the Word.

1Cor 1:18 For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God.

1Cor 2:4 And my speech and my preaching *was* not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power:

People find it refreshing when they meet up with a church where the Word of God is presented with Its authority instead of rote memorization of a catechism or an attempt to incorporate worldly philosophy that caters to leaving people feeling comfortable in their sin. Jesus spoke with boldness and that boldness was apparent in the way He taught and could visibly demonstrate His power - casting out the demon by His authority.

201. How did the demon in the man react to Christ?

a. It taunted Him

**b. It recognized His power and authority**

c. It tried to identify with Him so people would follow it instead of Jesus

Mark 1:24 Saying, Let *us* alone; what have we to do with thee, thou Jesus of Nazareth? art thou come to destroy us? I know thee who thou art, the Holy One of God.

**c C** is the most interesting choice in this question. We included it to make reference to the Apostle Paul and how a demon possessed woman followed him around, seeming to be supportive.

Acts 16:16-18 And it came to pass, as we went to prayer, a certain damsel possessed with a spirit of divination met us, which brought her masters much gain by soothsaying:

17The same followed Paul and us, and cried, saying, These men are the servants of the most high God, which shew unto us the way of salvation.

18And this did she many days. But Paul, being grieved, turned and said to the spirit, I command thee in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her. And he came out the same hour.

Paul simply turned and rebuked the demon. It's important to note that he did not try to work with this woman in any way nor take advantage of her endorsement. Satan often works this way which is the spirit behind me modern ecumenism. False churches, cults, and strange New Age Mystics try to identify with true Churches appearing to seek mutually benefit each other. But, they only succeed in putting churches in a compromising position and gaining respectability for themselves. Paul could have been in the position



where he might have tried to ingratiate himself to this woman, but such lack of discernment would certainly be noticed by those he was trying to reach.

**a** A, refers to the way the seven sons of Sceva were treated by a demon when they sought to capitalize on a supposed power from God.

**b** The only thing wrong about these answers is that this is not the reaction that they had to Jesus. B points out how clear the power and authority of Christ as the divine son of God.

202. How did Jesus deal with the demon?

**a. He commanded it directly to leave**

b. He anointed the man with oil and vinegar so the demon could not stay

c. He laughed and ignored it

d. He gave him medication to treat his mental illness

Mark 1:25 And Jesus rebuked him, saying, Hold thy peace, and come out of him.

B, C, and D are all actual ways that people have responded demonic activity.

**c** The first mistake that people make is, C: people do not take the demonic seriously. It is treated as something that is spooky and scary fun for Halloween.

**d** According to D, people now treat demonic activity as mental illness and think the ancients were ignorant and superstitious. There certainly *is* such a thing as mental illness that is part of a physical condition, but demon possession is still active today. You have to wonder though, how much insanity is actually produced by demonic influence.

**b** B is a reference to how people get carried away with a religious response and come up with elaborate schemes to deal with demonism. Such methods are more the result of superstition and resemble more the work of a witch doctor.

**a** A, the correct answer, also highlights an assumption that people try to deal with demonism by trying to hold a conversation and deal intelligently with a demon. Jesus merely rebuked the demon.

203. What was the effect of getting rid of the demon?

**a. Jesus ministry became even more well known**

b. Jesus became an exorcist and got rich

c. The demons gathered together to make war with Jesus

Mark 1:28 And immediately his fame spread abroad throughout all the region round about Galilee.

**c** C is wrong because the demons were already at war with Jesus.

**b B** highlights how that, in the world, people try to take advantage of the spiritual and fantasy for profit. This would be similar to Harry Potter movies. This should remind us that there are charlatans and hucksters who will always be there to try to make a buck.

**a** Nevertheless, Jesus ministry became more well-known. He did not use this fame in order to become a celebrity, though.

204. What did the people recognize in Jesus?

- a. His congeniality
- b. His authority**
- c. His philosophy

Mark 1:27 And they were all amazed, insomuch that they questioned among themselves, saying, What thing is this? what new doctrine *is* this? for with authority commandeth he even the unclean spirits, and they do obey him.

**a** A is a reflection of the modern mentality of judging people as if they were in a beauty contest. This is especially true of modern elections. Even though people know not to judge on superficial qualities, they still ignore substantive issues.

Sometimes people in their shallow thinking declare that they cannot believe in a god who judges people for their sin. Rather than consider the righteousness of God's judgment, they would rather dismiss him based on their emotional reaction to him.

We have to remember that our success in the Lord's work does not depend on our personality. Of course we should try to do whatever we can to eliminate anything in the way talk or present ourselves that would distract people from the message of the Gospel, but we must remember that it is the Holy Ghost Who convicts people of their sin and reveals Christ to them in their spirit.

**c** C is wrong because Jesus did not present philosophy to the people. Later on you will read of the Athenians on Mars Hill who spent their days trying just looking for some new philosophy for their amusement and entertainment. So much philosophy can actually sound quite plausibly significant. But, in actuality it is based on so much assumption and opinion.

**b** Instead, Jesus spoke with authority because He is the source of all wisdom and knowledge. We can do the same thing in that when we share the Word of God, we are not sharing mere opinions, but the mind of God.

### 33 - Healing of the Mother-in-Law of Peter

205. How did Jesus respond to Peter's mother?
- He expected that those who were close to Him would have to understand that He had a larger ministry and couldn't be bothered.
  - He took time to heal her**
  - He gave her an aspirin and told her the earliest she could make an appointment would be in three months

Mark 1:29-31 And forthwith, when they were come out of the synagogue, they entered into the house of Simon and Andrew, with James and John.

30But Simon's wife's mother lay sick of a fever, and anon they tell him of her.

31And he came and took her by the hand, and lifted her up; and immediately the fever left her, and she ministered unto them.

**a** A is wrong because Jesus is genuinely interested in people.

**c** He is not like the worst elements of a medical system where you feel like an overwhelmed doctor has not taken time to read a chart or a receptionist who has taken a disliking to you and is dismissive of your concerns, as in C.

**b** We need to be careful to take time with people and their concerns. Ministry is not all about numbers, crowds, and events.

206. What must have been the closest thing on her heart while she was sick?
- How she would love to take some time for herself
  - How unfair it was for her to be sick
  - How she could get back to ministry**

**a** A highlights how she certainly could have taken some time for herself and no one would have faulted her for it. Her concern for others overrode any justified self-interest she might have had.

**b** B highlights how someone who is very self-centered might have been known for being a complainer.

**c** The fact that Peter's mother-in-law immediately set about to ministering to them speaks of how unselfish she was as a person. Those who are immature cannot see beyond their own immediate circumstances and the greater need of others all around them.

### 34 - Many Healed

207. How did Jesus respond to the people thronging him in the evening?
- He took their infirmities and bore their sickness**
  - He told them to come back when His office was open
  - He stopped seeing them because He ran out of the power of God

Mark 1:32-34 And at even, when the sun did set, they brought unto him all that were diseased, and them that were possessed with devils.

33 And all the city was gathered together at the door.

34 And he healed many that were sick of divers diseases, and cast out many devils; and suffered not the devils to speak, because they knew him.

Matt 8:17 That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying, Himself took our infirmities, and bare *our* sicknesses.

**b** B is a reference to how Jesus is always available to us. We are often frustrated by the fact that there are so many times when store hours and office hours are not convenient. Even worse, is the frustration that doctors are so overloaded that it might take weeks to be able to get a medical appointment. In that time something that seems minor could become something major. This does not mean to say that God is going to immediately heal all of our problems; there are other considerations about what God is doing in our life as we go through problems. It should be comforting to know that we can call out to God at any time. And, we should know that we should call out to God regularly.

**c** C reminds us that Jesus never runs out of power.

**a** Even though we do not take on people's sickness and infirmity in our own bodies, we need to be like Christ and realize that sometimes ministering to people is done at our expense and costs us.

208. Read Matt 12:24. If Jesus had accepted the testimony of the devils, how might that be understood?

a. He would be glorified that even the devils recognized Him

**b. He would be thought to be in league with the devils**

c. He would be thought of as a kook

Matt 12:24 But when the Pharisees heard *it*, they said, This *fellow* doth not cast out devils, but by Beelzebub the prince of the devils.

**a** A highlights the fact that not all worship is acceptable to God. God will be glorified by the devils and also all those who have rejected him in the judgment.

**c** C is not out of the question, it's just that this was not the problem that Jesus faced. We regard people who devil in the occult, astrology, and other demonic activities as weird at best, and at worst, dangerous.

**a** The Pharisees in their reaction certainly did think that Jesus was able to perform the miraculous when it came to casting out demons because he had made a deal with the Devil. However, Jesus was so consistent in his operations against Satan, false doctrine, and hypocrisy that it was obvious that if He *were* working with the Devil that it would be a case of house divided against itself which would not be able to stand.

## The First Tour of Galilee

### 35 - Jesus Prays, But the People Follow

Although the Sermon on the Mount (Matt 5-7) occurs before this, it is examined alongside the Sermon on the Plain. Even though there are similarities that suggest it is one event, there are portions of the sermon that Jesus taught on other occasions, also. The lessons from the Sermon on the Mount are considered on p. 172.

See <https://www.contradictingbiblecontradictions.com/?p=2621> for remarks about the differences between the settings.

209. Where did Jesus present Himself very often?

- a. In the synagogues
- b. In the Temple
- c. On mountains and boats

Mark 1:37-39 And when they had found him, they said unto him, All *men* seek for thee.

38And he said unto them, Let us go into the next towns, that I may preach there also: for therefore came I forth.

39And he preached in their synagogues throughout all Galilee, and cast out devils.

The special focus of this question is on the nature of the ministry of Jesus.

**b** He did not focus His ministry on meeting in the Temple. The key function of the Temple was to provide for worship through sacrifice. Jesus made sure to go to the Temple on the holy days, but to primarily work through the Temple would be too narrow a focus. Beside that, His true work in the Temple would not come until the end of His ministry where we *do* see Him teaching and preaching in the Temple as He was about to fulfill His mission. Also, the Temple was a hostile setting for the elitist establishment type of leaders. Please note that we should draw a distinction between the established institutions of religion and an elitist establishment that works to control them.

**c** Jesus was not merely a populist figure in rebellion against religious institutions who was known for mixing among the common folk as an outsider as indicated in C. He certainly did spend time in public places, but that was not an exclusive focus.

**a** Jesus did not work *counter* to the establishment. The idea of established institutions is not so much the problem as much as an *elitist* establishment who supplants and usurps the original mission of the established institutions. Jesus worked very much in the synagogues system which had been developed after the Restoration to serve the needs of the people for religious instruction and prayer.

People make the mistake of looking for the *one* thing they need to do to achieve success. They want a boiled down version that they can handle to work. Our work is actually made up of everything that works, as long as it is not unscriptural, unethical, or illegal. The fact that Jesus taught in the synagogues demonstrates the importance of organized religion. People oppose organized religion because of the misuse and abuse of organization. The remedy is not to avoid it, but to strive to do it right.

### 36 - The Disciples Forsake All

This section should speak to us about our attitude when it comes to following the call to discipleship.

210. What were the disciples doing as Jesus was being pressed to preach?
- a. They were hanging out with their friends
  - b. They were spending some "me" time at the local gym
  - c. They were cleaning their nets after a disappointing night of fishing**

Luke 5:2 And saw two ships standing by the lake: but the fishermen were gone out of them, and were washing *their* nets.

**b** Spending time at the local gym, as in B, is not a problem. I specifically added on the phrase "me time" to highlight the hyper-concern about self in our modern culture.

1Tim 4:8 For bodily exercise profiteth little: but godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come.

There's something about complaining about needing me time that signals that you can count on a person to view any obligation as an unjust imposition on their comfort.

**a** A points out that these men were not just indolent who had no real concerns about life. Living for the opportunity to go hang out is different from making opportunities for fellowship. Instead of hanging out waiting for something to amuse us, we should have a healthy desire to pursue interests and significance.

**c** C highlights the sense of responsibility and industriousness of the fisherman. Someone who has such a sense will not be easily deterred by disappointment in any of their endeavors. It was a matter of course for them to be getting ready for their next opportunities. This should be the attitude of a good church member. Instead of being easily given over to make excuse for why they don't want to bother serving, they look for an opportunity to try again.

211. What did Jesus ask Peter to do?
- a. To let Him hire him and his boat to preach from
  - b. The favor of launching out so Jesus could preach from the boat**
  - c. To take Him out on the boat when he had some time

Luke 5:3 And he entered into one of the ships, which was Simon's, and prayed him that he would thrust out a little from the land. And he sat down, and taught the people out of the ship.

This question examines *Peter*, what he was asked to do, and how he might have felt and responded.

**a,b** As a Christian worker, Peter was not considered to be a mere hireling. Jesus thought more of him than that. In A, we think of how people have no trouble going work because they are getting paid. However, they have an expectation that the pastor should, of course, be faithful in service because that's his job. This is an insult to most pastors because if their pay actually matched the work they do they would be grossly underpaid. I often tell people that I don't get paid for preaching. I am happy to preach for free, and often do. What I *do* get paid to *not* work for someone *else*. It should also be an insult to someone to suggest that the only way to get them to church and to serve God is if it is for money. Instead, Jesus asked Peter to serve Him and Peter willingly complied. It speaks well of Peter that he simply did what he was asked, even though it would take considerable effort to do so. This act required considerable respect for Jesus.

**c** C highlights how people demonstrate their sensitive immaturity. Instead of being ready to bear any responsibility, you have to make sure that you're not imposing upon them and that all of their other priorities have to be taken care of before they give God any of the leftover time they have.

212. Why might Peter have not understood Jesus' request to launch out for a draught for fish?
- a. Peter was a professional who had just tried all night and could get no fish**
  - b. Peter was not very familiar with who Jesus was or what He was doing
  - c. Jesus was an expert fisherman who should have known that there were no fish

Luke 5:4,5 Now when he had left speaking, he said unto Simon, Launch out into the deep, and let down your nets for a draught.

5And Simon answering said unto him, Master, we have toiled all the night, and have taken nothing: nevertheless at thy word I will let down the net.

**b** Peter was not, as in B, unfamiliar with Jesus. It seems reasonable to expect that Peter would be curious about what Jesus was going to do. If Jesus had been an expert fisherman then Peter might have had cause to only question His judgment.

**a,c** Peter, as a professional, could have thought that Jesus did not know he was talking about and could have merely ignored Him.

213. How did Peter respond to Jesus' request?

- a. He advised Jesus where the fishing might be better
- b. He protested because he knew there were no fish
- c. He obeyed Him in spite of his own best professional opinion**

Luke 5:5 And Simon answering said unto him, Master, we have toiled all the night, and have taken nothing: nevertheless at thy word I will let down the net.

We might be ready to offer our expertise to each other, but this question is about our relationship to God's leadership. It speaks of our willingness to submit to God's leading when we don't quite understand it and when our experience disposes us to reject what God might be doing in our lives.

**c** We need to be ready to obey Christ and where He is leading us instead of letting our experience get in the way. Although we should use our talents, skills, training, and experience in our service to the Lord, we have to guard against "knowing better than the Lord."

**a.b** Even in spite of all of our experience, and *sometimes because* of all of our experience, we should never think that our mastery will guarantee that we know best. In some of our experience we know how much we *don't* know. We have to be ready for the fact that God might be performing a miracle that is beyond our comprehension.

214. How did Peter respond to Jesus after the great draught of fishes?

- a. He asked Jesus to become his partner
- b. He made excuses for why *he* had not gotten fish the night before
- c. He recognized Christ's excellence and how much he fell short of His righteousness**

Luke 5:7-9 And they beckoned unto *their* partners, which were in the other ship, that they should come and help them. And they came, and filled both the ships, so that they began to sink.

<sup>8</sup>When Simon Peter saw *it*, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, Depart from me; for I am a sinful man, O Lord.

<sup>9</sup>For he was astonished, and all that were with him, at the draught of the fishes which they had taken:

**b** Instead of trying to explain away any embarrassment over his failures, as in B, Peter was more focused on Christ than himself.

**a** He did not misread the situation and think that he should strengthen his commitment to fish by taking Jesus on as a partner, as in A. There are many times when people will pray and ask God to do their will by helping them fulfill their agenda. Instead of asking God to help you and your work so that you can reach your goals and take care of your needs, we should be praying



how our work fits into the mission of Jesus Christ.

**c** This became a moment when Peter not only recognized the power and authority of Jesus but made the connection with his own true weakness which was spiritual. When we contemplate our own frailty, it should not only highlight our insecurity and powerlessness in this world but, also, our powerlessness before God because we are sinners who deserve nothing from God let alone an opportunity to serve him.

215. What did Jesus call on Peter to do after they caught the fish?

- a. Follow his dreams
- b. To become a fisher of men**
- c. Stay put until He returns

Luke 5:10 And so *was* also James, and John, the sons of Zebedee, which were partners with Simon. And Jesus said unto Simon, Fear not; from henceforth thou shalt catch men.

**a** The world does not care about the things of God and so we are encouraged by the world to merely follow our dreams, as in A.

**c** C highlights how that Jesus never expected us to just hunker down and endure whatever was going to come. There have been times when some Christians have overreacted to the sinfulness of the world and have tried to create perfect societies where they will be protected from the influences of the world. Soon they discover that the one thing that ruins their perfect little world is the presence of their own sinful selves.

**b** According to B, Jesus called on them to mission. Although their sense of industry certainly was important, we have to keep in mind that they were called to do something that was entirely different from what they were used to doing. There are certainly those who have a personality that makes it easier to connect in evangelism. But there are other connections that people have that are also important. We need to be careful to remember that it is not our personality that actually makes the difference: It is the power of Christ in the Holy Spirit.

216. What did the sons of Zebedee, James and John, and Peter do next?

- a. They forsook everything to only follow Jesus**
- b. They committed themselves to be more faithful at church
- c. They pledged themselves to be better

Luke 5:11 And when they had brought their ships to land, they forsook all, and followed him.

**c** C highlights how many times people make half-hearted promises or use trite expressions that cause them to never amount to anything.

**b** B, making a commitment to be more faithful in church, can be done without actually being a follower of Christ. There are many people who have churchianity rather than Christianity. They like the prestige of belonging to a social organization. Other times, people are willing to make a small change in an apparent effort to appease God rather than being willing to forsake all for Him.

**a** It might seem that only those who are called into ministry end up forsaking all in order to follow Christ. Those in full-time certainly do leave jobs in the world behind, but that does not mean that you do not have to leave your job behind. It is possible to still go to work and in a sense leave your job at the same time. This happens when we turn our job over to Jesus for his glory.

This passage is distinguished from the earlier challenge to become fishers of men. The circumstances were distinct. In the first case, Peter and Andrew were casting their nets in the water, and James and John were mending their nets. In the second case, the fishermen were washing their nets and were called to launch out where they caught a great draught of fish. In the first case, James and John were mending their nets. In the second case, they were there for the great catch of fish. In the first case James and John left the mending of their nets, in the second, they waited till they got back from the great catch to follow Jesus. In the first case, they left to follow Jesus, but in the second, they forsook all to follow Jesus.

### **37 - The Man with Leprosy Healed**

217. What did Jesus tell the leper to do after he was healed?

- a. Go and get a second medical opinion
- b. Fulfill the Law and present himself to the priest**
- c. Go home and have a party to celebrate

Matt 8:4 And Jesus saith unto him, See thou tell no man; but go thy way, shew thyself to the priest, and offer the gift that Moses commanded, for a testimony unto them.

**c** C, going home to have a party and celebrate would have been probably the most natural reaction for the leper to have. Even though celebration is a form of showing worship and thankfulness, it is at least slightly self-centered. Our first reaction to receiving a blessing from any one should be to say thank you.

**b** Here, Jesus called upon the leper to turn to God to expresses gratitude. By telling him to go to the priest to present himself, Jesus was accomplishing two things. The first was to have him go to the place of worship and the second was to maintain his responsibility before the law. The Law required that if someone was healed of leprosy, he was supposed to present himself to the priest for examination. Here again we see that Jesus did not come to destroy the system that He, himself, had set up in the law. Jesus came to do the Law right.

**a** A highlights the fact that science does not have all the answers. Jesus never really said anything about science and its use. Jesus' focus was on man's relationship to God. The Bible condemns science that is falsely called science.

1Tim 6:20 O Timothy, keep that which is committed to thy trust, avoiding profane and vain babblings, and oppositions of science falsely so called:

218. What did Jesus do after He had been thronged by the people?
- a. He told them to come back when His office was open
  - b. He took time to meet with His Father**
  - c. He stopped seeing them because He ran out of the power of God

Luke 5:15-16 But so much the more went there a fame abroad of him: and great multitudes came together to hear, and to be healed by him of their infirmities.  
16And he withdrew himself into the wilderness, and prayed.

**c** Of course, Jesus did not run out of power as in C.

**a** Neither did Jesus treat ministry as a business as in A.

**b** What was important was that Jesus took time to be refreshed in His Father. This is the true source of all of our strength. It is not merely that we try to find some "me" time or even vacation time. Vacation time certainly is important as God has determined that we need the Sabbath rest. But merely trying to achieve a relaxation response instead of a fight or flight response is not sufficient. We need to make sure to get alone with God to prepare us for the work that is ahead.

### 38 - The Palsied Man Healed

219. What city did Jesus adopt for His own?
- a. Jerusalem
  - b. Capernaum**
  - c. Nazareth

Matt 9:1 And he entered into a ship, and passed over, and came into his own city.

Mark 2:1 And again he entered into Capernaum after *some* days; and it was noised that he was in the house.

**a,b,c** I would like to point out by this question God's use of human instrumentality. Here, Jesus has made a logistical and strategic choice. We have already pointed out that Jerusalem presented a hostile environment at this point in the ministry of Jesus. Also, Nazareth was a little too off the beaten path. By relocating to Capernaum, Jesus was in an excellent launching off point for ministering in the Galilee area. Although we should not depend on our human wisdom and planning, that does not mean that we

should do no planning at all.

220. Which people looked like they were more ready to judge Jesus because they were front and center in the house where Jesus was meeting?

**a. Pharisees and doctors of the law**

b. People who were sick

c. People who didn't have something else they had to do

Mark 2:6 But there were certain of the scribes sitting there, and reasoning in their hearts,

Luke 5:21 And the scribes and the Pharisees began to reason, saying, Who is this which speaketh blasphemies? Who can forgive sins, but God alone?

**c** People who are indifferent to the Gospel, as in C, go through life with a spiritual dullness, missing the work of God being done right under their noses. People suggest that if they don't have something else to do they will be in church, and then don't show up even when they don't have something "better" to do.

**b** Both people who were sick, as in B, and the pharisees and doctors of the law certainly had an interest in what Christ was doing.

**a** The doctors of the law should have been coming out of genuine interest in Jesus, but sadly this was not true. The other most likely option would be that they were come in order to judge Christ. Those who come to Christ in order to criticize Him will always be able to find something. This is not because there's something worth criticizing about Christ, but that never really matters. People will invent problems and faults in their imaginations. Everything depends on how we approach Christ. Lee Strobel was a journalist who did an honest investigation of the claims of Christ and found, just like many who have done the same thing, that Jesus was Who He said He was.

221. What indicated the love and concern of the men who carried in the palsied man?

**a. They were willing to bust up the patio on top of the house to lower the man to see Jesus**

b. They told the man they would pray for him (which they promptly forgot to do)

c. They voted to raise everyone's taxes so the government could be responsible for him

Luke 5:19 And when they could not find by what way they might bring him in because of the multitude, they went upon the housetop, and let him down through the tiling with his couch into the midst before Jesus.

B and C, are two common ways that people respond to those who are afflicted.

**c C** is a reference to the collectivist response where there is an emphasis on government being the solution to our problems. When the government is used to guarantee that everyone has the same benefit then people are quick to pass on their neighborly responsibility to the government. The idea is that this is what taxes are for. This demotes people's care for their neighbors because they can pass on their responsibility to fully consider what is needed. Once it is in the government's hands it becomes too complicated to follow. Of course, this creates layers of management and handling that creates an accumulation of human incompetencies. People feel free to leave it in the hands of the government so they don't have to think about it anymore. This has actually been demonstrated to reduce the charitable giving and activity of those who assume the government will take care of everything.

**b B**, on the other hand, is a reference to a different uncaring attitude. Offering to pray for someone can become a glib response. It becomes like a polite greeting saying, "How are you?" when you don't necessarily care how someone is doing. It certainly is only a polite remark when we offer to pray for someone and then promptly forget to do so. Although we must be careful with over commitment since we can't fix everything in the world, we need to become involved in the care of our neighbors...although not to the point that we develop in them a sense of dependence where they become irresponsible.

**a A** According to A, we need to be willing to go the extra mile sometimes to be a blessing to others if we care about them. That can be especially true when it comes to sharing the Gospel with people.

222. Because sin was often associated with the cause of illness and other troubles (John 9:2, Luke 13:1-5, John 5:14), how did Jesus show His understanding of the palsied man's greater concern?

- a. He told him he wasn't really a bad person
- b. He told him to stop sinning
- c. He forgave him his sins**

Matt 9:2 And, behold, they brought to him a man sick of the palsy, lying on a bed: and Jesus seeing their faith said unto the sick of the palsy; Son, be of good cheer; thy sins be forgiven thee.

**b B** suggests how if sin is the cause of illness that the remedy for sin is dependent on self and our good works.

**a A** highlights how the world diminishes the significance of sin and obscures the real solution for sin.

**c C** Jesus used this opportunity to deal with people to address the man's real need concerning sin.

223. How did Jesus find out about the Pharisees' complaint?

- a. They were very vocal
- b. His disciples overheard them talking and murmuring amongst themselves
- c. Jesus knew their heart**

Mark 2:8 And immediately when Jesus perceived in his spirit that they so reasoned within themselves, he said unto them, Why reason ye these things in your hearts?

**a** Sometimes we find out about what people are thinking because they are vocal about their complaints, as in A.

**b** Other times we hear about what people are thinking because they complain behind our backs, as in B.

**c** Jesus knows what our deepest needs are and what we are really thinking. This is why He would not commit Himself to men to serve *their* causes. Instead of bending God's will to serve our plans, we need to discover what God's agenda is to serve Him. The Pharisees were not quick to find a way to agree with Jesus, but would have preferred to see Him act according to the way *they* thought was appropriate.

224. How were the Pharisees right in their reaction to Christ forgiving sin?

- a. Jesus could not forgive sins
- b. Only God could forgive sins**
- c. Jesus could not heal

Luke 5:21 And the scribes and the Pharisees began to reason, saying, Who is this which speaketh blasphemies? Who can forgive sins, but God alone?

**c** They knew that Jesus could heal, as in C, because they had seen Him do it.

**a** They were wrong, as in A, to think that Jesus could not forgive.

**b** They were right that only God can forgive sins. By recognizing this, they were actually answering their own question about Jesus. Jesus set up this manner of healing to bring the Pharisees along in their logic. If the man were healed, then they would have to recognize that Jesus was claiming to be God. Jesus was setting up the Pharisees, drawing them to come to a conclusion that they would have to supply themselves.

225. How did Jesus prove His deity according to the standards of the Pharisees?

- a. If sin and the sickness were tied together then if you cure the sickness you cure the sin**
- b. He healed the man according to the best medical practice of the day
- c. He insisted the man's sin was forgiven and left him in his sickness

Mark 2:9-11 Whether is it easier to say to the sick of the palsy, *Thy sins be forgiven thee*; or to say, Arise, and take up thy bed, and walk?

10But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins, (he saith to the sick of the palsy,)

11I say unto thee, Arise, and take up thy bed, and go thy way into thine house.

**b** If Jesus had healed the man with the best medical practice of the day, as in B, then the issue of sin and forgiveness would not have been addressed.

**c** If Jesus had not healed the man, but only forgave him, as in C, then there would be nothing for the Pharisees to be able to observe.

**a** They fell short of the conclusion that Jesus must be God.

226. Why would the people have fear because of what they had seen?

a. They didn't like miracles

**b. Their thinking was challenged by things not going the way they expected**

c. They were afraid of miracles

Luke 5:26 And they were all amazed, and they glorified God, and were filled with fear, saying, We have seen strange things to day.

Mark 2:12 And immediately he arose, took up the bed, and went forth before them all; insomuch that they were all amazed, and glorified God, saying, We never saw it on this fashion.

Matthew reported how God was glorified, Mark added on that they had never seen a healing performed in association with forgiveness of sin, but it is Luke who recorded that they were filled with fear because of it.

**b,c** B and C are wrong because people certainly do like miracles and would welcome them.

**a** The problem comes with people's expectations. People don't quite know how to deal with change. We want things to change for the better, but then we are faced with adapting to our new circumstances. Many times people want to just stay with the familiar. When change takes place, their sense of control is threatened. If something is going to change, they want things to go the way *they* expect them to happen.

Many times people are not willing to grow in their faith because they are unwilling to leave behind their false church to pursue the truth. Other times, people resist God's moving in their church because either "we never did it that way before" or "that's the way we've always done it."

### 39 - The Call of Levi

At this point, Jesus had called people into ministry who were not the most likely candidates. They were fishermen, not trained theologians. Otherwise, there was nothing particularly objectionable about them. In calling Matthew, also known as Levi, Jesus has chosen someone who was held in *disregard* because he was a publican.

227. How long did it take Matthew to respond to Jesus' command to follow Him?

- a. **He responded right away**
- b. He took some time to pray about it
- c. He took some time to ask advice of others

Luke 5:27-28 And after these things he went forth, and saw a publican, named Levi, sitting at the receipt of custom: and he said unto him, Follow me.  
28And he left all, rose up, and followed him.

**b,c** B and C are very important ways to make sure to determine the will of God.

**a** When it comes to the very direct commands of God, We should be quick To respond to him right away. Luke is the only one who includes that Matthew left all to follow Christ.

228. What did Matthew do at great expense to himself?

- a. He made a large donation to the Temple
- b. **He invited his friends to a feast to meet Jesus**
- c. He gave his riches to those who were less fortunate than himself

Mark 2:15 And it came to pass, that, as Jesus sat at meat in his house, many publicans and sinners sat also together with Jesus and his disciples: for there were many, and they followed him.

**c** C is wrong because Matthew is different from the case of Zacchaeus, the publican, Who *did* give money back. However, even in the case of Zacchaeus, Zacchaeus was making restitution. C highlights the problem of how some people today feel that people who have wealth *owe* it to the poor as if it is wrong and unfair for people to have wealth. We certainly do have an obligation to use our strength and our blessings to help others, but charity is something that should be given out of love, not out of guilt .

**a** A highlights how some people feel that they can discharge their responsibility to God by simply giving money to church. This is similar to how during the time of the Civil War it was possible to avoid conscription by paying somebody to take your place in the draft .



**b** A and C are not actually bad in and of themselves, but are certainly less than B which points out how Matthew became personally involved with bringing people to Christ.

229. How did the Pharisees regard the publicans who collected taxes for the Romans?

**a. They thought of them as sinners**

b. They thought of them as naive

c. They thought of them as being forced to collect taxes

Mark 1:16 Now as he walked by the sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and Andrew his brother casting a net into the sea: for they were fishers.

**b** B points out how that sometimes we think of people who have joined in with a bad movement, system, or party as being under-informed and naive. The publicans, on the other hand, were willing participants profiting from the taxing of the Jewish people.

**c** The publicans, as in C, were not in the position of expecting any sympathy from the Pharisees.

**a** Although the term *sinner* could be used broadly in the Bible to describe the general spiritual state of man, it could be applied more narrowly. It was not used to only speak of someone who was immoral or a habitual sinner, but someone who was not a practicing member of a religious party. In a casual reading of this passage, you might get the idea that there were overt sinners in addition to publicans at this feast. When we look at the grammar of the Greek text, the meaning of publicans and sinners is not *a meeting composed of some publicans and some sinners*. What is meant is *publican/sinners*, or publicans, even sinners, or publicans which are considered to be part of a profession outside of Pharisaical standards which would make them a sinner. This is apparent in Gal 2:15

Gal 2:15 We *who are* Jews by nature, and not sinners of the Gentiles,

Here, we understand that Paul is not talking about whether someone was actually sinning or not, just that they were of a group that was outside of the Law. The etymology of the word *sin* here is one who has *missed the mark*. Another word for sin indicates that one has trespassed, or actually broken, a law. By missing the mark it is inferred that someone just does not measure up to the righteousness of the Law. That can be so whether someone has not actively committed a sin. The hypocrisy of the Pharisees becomes evident in that they had no regard for the actual sin of the publicans. They judged them to be sinners just because of the class they belonged to. It would be just as correct to say *Pharisees and sinners* if all that they were acknowledging is the fact that people are sinners. The Pharisees would not have denied that they ever sinned. The distinction they made was that of class; the Pharisees operated within the context of the Law and anyone else was a sinner,

someone who was not considered under the Law.

The reason this is important to know is that this speaks more of their sense of prejudice than it does their sense of righteousness. It is easy to fall into a sense of partisan pride when we look at others who are not exactly like us. We have to be careful maintain a devotion to doctrinal purity while at the same time accommodate the fact that others are our brothers and sisters in Christ without, also at the same time, falling into compromise. Having independent churches has been one of the strengths of Baptists. Each church has been free to operate according to its conscience in association with other churches without being bound by or to them.

230. What would make the Pharisees think of Jesus as *unclean*?

- a. He ate with people who were low-life
- b. He ate with people who were defiled by their association with Rome**
- c. He ate with people who were spiritually immature

Luke 5:30 But their scribes and Pharisees murmured against his disciples, saying, Why do ye eat and drink with publicans and sinners?

**a,b,c** A and C are included here to draw attention to the problem of treating people as if they are unclean and unworthy of our attention. This might come in the form of being condescending, ignoring, avoiding, demeaning them behind their back, putting less effort into helping them, not considering their input, not including them, and probably many more ways.

231. In Jesus' first coming, what was His mission?

- a. To rally the righteous Jews to establish a pure commune
- b. To restore a pure form of worship
- c. To call sinners to repentance**

Luke 5:31-32 And Jesus answering said unto them, They that are whole need not a physician; but they that are sick.

32I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.

**c** Jesus is pointing out an irony here. He came not to call the righteous, but the problem is that there are *none* who are righteous.

**b** B is wrong because of the emphasis on the idea of a *form* of worship. Although God had instituted the Law and the forms used to create the Tabernacle and later the Temple, there was always an emphasis on the importance of the heart attitude over the forms. This was the case of the Samaritan woman who challenged Jesus over the form of worship at Jerusalem vs. Samaria. People will ask the question that if what God required was purity of heart and actually judged the people for their failure to keep the law associated with the Temple and sacrifices, why did He institute them? Because of this people are drawn to Formalism, an emphasis on ritual and

*observance* over their *meanings*. From Psalm 51:16-17 it is evident that the forms of religion are not the significant factor in worship, but the heart attitude is.

Ps 51:16-17 For thou desirest not sacrifice; else would I give *it*: thou delightest not in burnt offering.

17The sacrifices of God *are* a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise.

The reason that there is such judgment when the forms are violated is that they reflect on the character and work of God. It is not as though the forms are pure; in fact they cannot be. But if people can't get even *those* right then their compromise is even greater.

Heb 10:1-14 For the law having a shadow of good things to come, *and* not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect.

2For then would they not have ceased to be offered? because that the worshippers once purged should have had no more conscience of sins.

3But in those *sacrifices there is* a remembrance again *made* of sins every year.

4For *it is* not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins.

5Wherefore when he cometh into the world, he saith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldst not, but a body hast thou prepared me:

6In burnt offerings and *sacrifices* for sin thou hast had no pleasure.

7Then said I, Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me,) to do thy will, O God.

8Above when he said, Sacrifice and offering and burnt offerings and *offering* for sin thou wouldst not, neither hadst pleasure *therein*; which are offered by the law;

9Then said he, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God. He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second.

10By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once *for all*.

11And every priest standeth daily ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins:

12But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God;

13From henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his footstool.

14For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified.

**a** The problem with A is that the time when Jesus will call us out of the world is in the Resurrection. In the mean time, we are called as lights shining in the world.

1Cor 5:9-10 I wrote unto you in an epistle not to company with fornicators:

10Yet not altogether with the fornicators of this world, or with the covetous, or extortioners, or with idolaters; for then must ye needs go out of the world.

Phil 2:14-15 Do all things without murmurings and disputings:

15That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world;

232. What was Jesus more interested in?
- a. People who achieved near perfection
  - b. People with a merciful heart like God**
  - c. People who made sure their form of worship was correct no matter how they felt

Matt 9:12-13 But when Jesus heard *that*, he said unto them, They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick.

13But go ye and learn what *that* meaneth, I will have mercy, and not sacrifice: for I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.

**c** C emphasizes the problem of Formalism again.

**a** A might be considered the opposite of Formalism where people try hard to do everything, but also to do it the right way. A also takes into consideration that people will probably never get to perfection in this lifetime. The problem with A is that it doesn't include the reason why we are trying so hard to get as close as possible to be holy.

**b** The objective of a Christian life is to have compassion on people in their sin and seek their forgiveness, not their judgment. If we only try to focus on being holy without connecting it to the mission of Christ to save sinners, then we run the risk of becoming prideful in how good we are.

## 40 - Defense of the Disciples

This section covers the Pharisees attempt to call out Jesus on the difference between the manner of His disciples as distinguished from the disciples of John. The Pharisees could have *some* kind of appreciation for John and his disciples because they had prayer and fasting in common. Jesus uses this opportunity to talk about the transition from the old Mosaic Dispensation to the Dispensation of Grace.

Mark 2:18 And the disciples of John and of the Pharisees used to fast: and they come and say unto him, Why do the disciples of John and of the Pharisees fast, but thy disciples fast not?

Luke 18:11-12 The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men *are*, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican.

12I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess.

Luke 5:33 And they said unto him, Why do the disciples of John fast often, and make prayers, and likewise *the disciples* of the Pharisees; but thine eat and drink?

The Pharisees took note that the disciples of Jesus went on eating and drinking which Jesus took used to compare them at a wedding feast.

Luke 5:34 And he said unto them, Can ye make the children of the bridechamber fast, while the bridegroom is with them?

233. Why would the Pharisees and the disciples of John fast?

- a. To make sure their bodies were rid of toxins
- b. To lose weight for a healthier lifestyle
- c. For mourning over sin**

The answer to this question is not actually derived from the Scripture for this passage. You have to get the answer by the process of elimination. In this case, and from time to time, the answers are meant to be instructive.

**a,c** A and C refer to the way fasting has been transformed from a spiritual discipline and "modernized" to fit into peoples' preoccupation with health, fitness, and beauty. This would be in keeping with the promotion of self-interest. People seek achieving some sense of serenity by promoting yoga, fad diets for well being, gym and exercise. They can be found in their exercise outfits in the park and cycling on Sunday mornings while Christians balk at having to get dressed up and getting out to Sunday School on time. There are ads *ad nauseum* for medications and health care featuring happy people going about their happy lives at picnics or playing sports. Fasting for ridding the body of toxins or for losing weight for a healthier life fits into *that* culture, but the history of fasting for mourning and spirituality has faded away and is forgotten.

**b** For believers today, the emphasis on fasting is usually for a spiritual focus. We should emphasize the nature of mourning that accompanies fasting.

Jon 3:5,10 So the people of Nineveh believed God, and proclaimed a fast, and put on sackcloth, from the greatest of them even to the least of them.

10And God saw their works, that they turned from their evil way; and God repented of the evil, that he had said that he would do unto them; and he did *it* not.

1Ki 21:27-29 And it came to pass, when Ahab heard those words, that he rent his clothes, and put sackcloth upon his flesh, and fasted, and lay in sackcloth, and went softly.

28And the word of the LORD came to Elijah the Tishbite, saying,

29Seest thou how Ahab humbleth himself before me? because he humbleth himself before me, I will not bring the evil in his days: *but* in his son's days will I bring the evil upon his house.

Ezr 8:21 Then I proclaimed a fast there, at the river of Ahava, that we might afflict ourselves before our God, to seek of him a right way for us, and for our little ones, and for all our substance.

Neh 1:4 And it came to pass, when I heard these words, that I sat down and wept, and mourned *certain* days, and fasted, and prayed before the God of heaven,

Est 4:3 And in every province, whithersoever the king's commandment and his decree came, *there was* great mourning among the Jews, and fasting, and weeping, and wailing; and many lay in sackcloth and ashes.

Ps 35:13 But as for me, when they were sick, my clothing *was* sackcloth: I humbled my soul with fasting; and my prayer returned into mine own bosom.

234. Read John 3:29. Why would a bridal party be excused from fasting?
- Because they would have been very busy
  - Because the coming wedding would be a cause for joy and not mourning**
  - Because it would not look right if they were suffering from hunger

John 3:29 He that hath the bride is the bridegroom: but the friend of the bridegroom, which standeth and heareth him, rejoiceth greatly because of the bridegroom's voice: this my joy therefore is fulfilled.

**c** C highlights how people place a lot of significance on appearance. People's response should be sincere and genuine.

**a** A is wrong because it suggests that people can be excused from spiritual responsibility to accommodate their comforts and convenience.

**b** B might be construed that their response was due to convenience, but it is a question of having an appropriate response.

Eccl 3:1,4 To every *thing there is* a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven:

4A time to weep, and a time to laugh; a time to mourn, and a time to dance;

235. How did Christ use this occasion to prophecy of His crucifixion?
- He warned them that the bridegroom was to be taken away**
  - He told them that they will have joy as long as they don't fast anymore
  - He told them that the bridegroom would replace the old bride with a new bride

Matt 9:15 And Jesus said unto them, Can the children of the bridechamber mourn, as long as the bridegroom is with them? but the days will come, when the bridegroom shall be taken from them, and then shall they fast.

**b** Jesus did not teach a Positive Thinking kind of religion as is implied in B.

**c** To replace an old bride with a new bride, as C suggests, would be to prophecy that the Old Testament saints have no place in the Bride of Christ.

Heb 11:13-14 These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of *them*, and embraced *them*, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth.

14For they that say such things declare plainly that they seek a country.

Heb 11:39-40 And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise:

40God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect.

Eph 2:11-15 Wherefore remember, that ye *being* in time past Gentiles in the flesh, who are called Uncircumcision by that which is called the Circumcision in the flesh made by hands;

12That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world:

13But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ.

14For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition *between us*;

15Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, *even* the law of commandments *contained* in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, *so* making peace;

**a** A points out how that Jesus was going to be taken in the Crucifixion. We go through times of spiritual fasting until the time that Jesus comes for His bride and then there will be a great wedding feast.

Matt 26:26-29 And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed *it*, and brake *it*, and gave *it* to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body.

27And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave *it* to them, saying, Drink ye all of it;

28For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.

29But I say unto you, I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom.

Rev 19:6-9 And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth.

7Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready.

8And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints.

9And he saith unto me, Write, Blessed *are* they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb. And he saith unto me, These are the true sayings of God.

236. How did Jesus describe the new dispensation that was coming?

a. As a new bride replacing the old bride

**b. As a new cloth that should not be patched onto old cloth**

c. As old wine in old bottles

Mark 2:21 No man also seweth a piece of new cloth on an old garment: else the new piece that filled it up taketh away from the old, and the rent is made worse.

**a** A is wrong because it refers to Replacement Theology in which people believe that God has no more use for the Jews.

**c** C suggests that there is a mere continuance of the old dispensation.

**b** B, regarding new cloth that has not shrunken through washing and drying that would pull apart from the older fabric, or, later, new wine in old leather bottles bursting the bottles, refers to the new dispensation would not be a mere addition to the old, where the Law continues alongside grace. The character of the new dispensation replaces the old.

Heb 10:1-14 For the law having a shadow of good things to come, *and* not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect.

2For then would they not have ceased to be offered? because that the worshippers once purged should have had no more conscience of sins.

3But in those *sacrifices there is* a remembrance again *made* of sins every year.

4For *it is* not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins.

5Wherefore when he cometh into the world, he saith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared me:

6In burnt offerings and *sacrifices* for sin thou hast had no pleasure.

7Then said I, Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me,) to do thy will, O God.

8Above when he said, Sacrifice and offering and burnt offerings and *offering* for sin thou wouldest not, neither hadst pleasure *therein*; which are offered by the law;

9Then said he, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God. He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second.

10By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once *for all*.

11And every priest standeth daily ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins:

12But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God;

13From henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his footstool.

14For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified.

The demands of the law give way to the fulfillment by grace and so it cannot be woven into this time.

237. How did Jesus use the old wine to describe how people might respond to the new dispensation that was coming?

**a. People might prefer the old dispensation they are used to**

b. People like to rush into new things and so they will be early adopters

c. People will get frustrated by having to figure things out so they will give up altogether

Luke 5:39 No man also having drunk old *wine* straightway desireth new: for he saith, The old is better.

**b** Although there are those who *are* early adopters, as in B, people don't generally rush into a new fad, like suits with shorts, the male sarong, a phone with a built in razor, or electrified water. Some fads should never have lasted as long as they did like boomboxes on your shoulder, mullets, or platform sneakers.

**c** C refers to how people give up too quickly when trying to grow spiritually.

**a** According to A, Jesus pointed out how that people tend to stay with things that are familiar. This is especially a problem when people change to become a Christian. It has to be pointed out how that everyone changes all the time from one day or year to the next. We should be committed to developing our faith, which will require that we cast off old things that are proven to be problematic.



## 41 - Accusation that Jesus Cast Out Demons by the Prince of the Devils

238. Read Matt 12:24-37, Mark 3:22-30. What was the reaction of the Pharisees to Jesus casting out demons?
- The praised God for the revival over spiritual darkness
  - They marveled at the power of Christ casting out so many demons
  - They would rather give credit to Satan than glory to God in order to deny Jesus**

Matt 9:32-34 As they went out, behold, they brought to him a dumb man possessed with a devil.

33And when the devil was cast out, the dumb spake: and the multitudes marvelled, saying, It was never so seen in Israel.

34But the Pharisees said, He casteth out devils through the prince of the devils.

Matt 12:24-37 But when the Pharisees heard *it*, they said, This *fellow* doth not cast out devils, but by Beelzebub the prince of the devils.

25And Jesus knew their thoughts, and said unto them, Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation; and every city or house divided against itself shall not stand:

26And if Satan cast out Satan, he is divided against himself; how shall then his kingdom stand?

27And if I by Beelzebub cast out devils, by whom do your children cast *them* out? therefore they shall be your judges.

28But if I cast out devils by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God is come unto you.

29Or else how can one enter into a strong man's house, and spoil his goods, except he first bind the strong man? and then he will spoil his house.

30He that is not with me is against me; and he that gathereth not with me scattereth abroad.

31Wherefore I say unto you, All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men: but the blasphemy *against* the *Holy* Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men.

32And whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him: but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the *world* to come.

33Either make the tree good, and his fruit good; or else make the tree corrupt, and his fruit corrupt: for the tree is known by *his* fruit.

34O generation of vipers, how can ye, being evil, speak good things? for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh.

35A good man out of the good treasure of the heart bringeth forth good things: and an evil man out of the evil treasure bringeth forth evil things.

36But I say unto you, That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment.

37For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned.

Mark 3:22-30 And the scribes which came down from Jerusalem said, He hath Beelzebub, and by the prince of the devils casteth he out devils.

23And he called them *unto him*, and said unto them in parables, How can Satan cast out Satan?

24And if a kingdom be divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand.

25And if a house be divided against itself, that house cannot stand.

26And if Satan rise up against himself, and be divided, he cannot stand, but hath an end.

27No man can enter into a strong man's house, and spoil his goods, except he will first bind the strong man; and then he will spoil his house.

28Verily I say unto you, All sins shall be forgiven unto the sons of men, and blasphemies wherewith soever they shall blaspheme:

29But he that shall blaspheme against the Holy Ghost hath never forgiveness, but is in danger of eternal damnation:

30Because they said, He hath an unclean spirit.

We have talked before about the reaction of the people to Jesus casting out demons. Remember that although Satan might do things temporarily for purposes of deception, no one can consistently oppose themselves and continue to succeed. This didn't matter, they were so intent on doing anything other than giving God the credit.

Although the blasphemy of the Holy Spirit is in the supplemental Scripture, we will wait until we get to that section to discuss it.

**a** A highlights that people would prefer to find fault with God than to be thankful. They don't want to give up their ways even if it meant that they could get a greater blessing.

**b** B points out how they peoples lack of appreciation for all that God can do leads them astray.

**c** The Pharisees in their jealousy were not willing to recognize the power of God. We have to be careful to not let jealousy keep us from recognizing God's work in our friends, family, co-workers, and even government.

## **42 - The People are Sheep with No Shepherd**

This event precedes the choosing and commissioning of the twelve apostles. Jesus had earlier pointed out that the fields were white unto harvest already when He was with the Samaritan woman. In this section, Jesus points out the need for workers and in the next section He will choose the apostles to aid in that mission. Later on, the whole church receives the commission to reach the world.

239. What was the focus of Jesus ministry at this point?

- a. Building a large church
- b. Helping people enjoy their best life now
- c. Teaching in the synagogues**

Matt 9:35 And Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every sickness and every disease among the people.

**c** You could say that Jesus was building up a foundation of Biblical teaching in the Jewish community.

**a** A Highlights how that the churches can very often be caught up in building a monument instead of a spiritual community. You would think that building a large church was synonymous with building the spiritual community, But this is not necessarily so. Sometimes churches get caught up in the excitement of programs and large crowds that they equate that with spirituality. Spiritual elders in large communities are not able to have very close relationships with the membership. To compensate for this, large scale churches will develop subgroups within the church. This has been done by working through graded Sunday schools, home cell groups, and affinity groups.

**b** Churches, as in B, that don't attend to the spiritual foundation of its members, resort to a superficial teaching that caters to the basest part of our nature. Sometimes ministers are encouraged to preach to the perceived needs of the people. We need to emphasize And what God perceives that people need instead.

240. What was Jesus' assessment of the spiritual state of Israel?
- a. They had a commitment to holiness
  - b. They were spiritually floundering**
  - c. They were ready for revival

Matt 9:36 But when he saw the multitudes, he was moved with compassion on them, because they fainted, and were scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd.

By describing their need for a shepherd, Jesus identified their need for spiritual leadership. Being read for revival, as in C, would require spiritual focus, which they did not have. He did not describe them as having a sense of holiness, as in A. People might have a sense of religion, but when people are given to holiness they will necessarily want to organize for serving God.

241. How was the spiritual need of that day similar to the needs of today (and for the whole church age since Christ came)?
- a. The need for laborers for serving in the ministry**
  - b. The need for counselors to bring comfort for our day to day difficulties
  - c. The need for greater crowds to show up for worship

Matt 9:37-38 Then saith he unto his disciples, The harvest truly *is* plenteous, but the labourers *are* few;  
38 Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth labourers into his harvest.

**c** We are not looking to draw greater crowds, as in C. The answer we need for the spiritual needs of today are not how to attract people to show up for worship which they are not spiritually prepared to do. Just because people are praising God does not mean that they have a heart for holiness in order to appear before God.

**a** We want people to come hear His Word preached, but our concerns don't end there. We need to build up people to take leadership in their homes, work, and communities to guide people in the faith.

**b** B highlights how ministries are not supposed to be life coaches and therapists. The purpose of ministry is to train people to do the work of the ministry.

Eph 4:7-16 But unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ.

8Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men.

9(Now that he ascended, what is it but that he also descended first into the lower parts of the earth?

10He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that he might fill all things.)

11And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers;

12For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ:

13Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ:

14That we *henceforth* be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, *and* cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive;

15But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, *even* Christ:

16From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love.

## Ministry of the Apostles

### 43 - Apostles Chosen

The lists of the apostles are grouped by fours into three groups. Peter heads all the lists and Judas Iscariot is last in the Gospel lists. Philip heads the list of the second group in all four of the lists, and James of Alphaeus heads the list of the last group in all four of the lists.

242. What other name was Lebbaeus Thaddaeus known by?

- a. Bartholomew
- b. Judas**
- c. Judas Iscariot

Matt 10:3 Philip, and Bartholomew; Thomas, and Matthew the publican; **James *the son of Alphaeus*, and Lebbaeus, whose surname was Thaddaeus**;

Mark 3:18 And Andrew, and Philip, and Bartholomew, and Matthew, and Thomas, and **James *the son of Alphaeus*, and Thaddaeus**, and Simon the Canaanite,

Luke 6:16 **And Judas the brother of James**, and Judas Iscariot, which also was the traitor.

In this question, we point out that there were several names that were used that makes us read the Scriptures carefully. There are two named James, two named Simon, and two named Judas.

243. What did Jesus give the apostles authority to do?

- a. Create high attendance records
- b. Magically change substance from one element to another
- c. Command demons to be cast out and heal**

Mark 3:14-15 And he ordained twelve, that they should be with him, and that he might send them forth to preach,  
15And to have power to heal sicknesses, and to cast out devils:

**b B** is a reference to the Roman Catholic notion of Apostolic Succession. They view the apostles of carrying and passing on the authority of Jesus, using it in a priestly fashion for making sacrifices. One of the titles of the Pope is the *Ponitfix Maximus*. The term means the *high priest*. The word *pontif* for priest, means a bridge builder, or one who bridges the gap between heaven and earth. It is in this sense that they seek to continue through the authority of the Pope on down through the clergy to re-sacrifice Christ in the Mass by changing the bread and wine into the very body and blood of Jesus.

Luke 22:19-20 And he took bread, and gave thanks, and brake *it*, and gave unto them, saying, This is my body which is given for you: this do in **remembrance** of me.  
20**Likewise also the cup** after supper, saying, This cup *is* the new testament in my blood, which is shed for you.

Heb 9:22,28 And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission.  
28So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation.

Heb 10:11-14 And every priest standeth daily ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins:  
12But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God;  
13From henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his footstool.  
14For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified.

**a In A**, we point out that the purpose of ministry is not to drive up numbers merely for the sake of getting large crowds. We have to be even more concerned about what happens after large crowds are drawn.

**c** The apostles were given authority over demons, but not for sensational purposes. It was just something that had to be done. We should not let any aspect of our work be the objective of that work. The objective of our work should not be to point out how wonderful the work is, but how wonderful Jesus is.

244. What is the basic definition of an apostle?

- a. **One who is sent**
- b. One who is in command
- c. One who represents God

The definition of an apostle is one who is sent out.

c C is wrong because *all* of us represent God.

1Pet 2:9 But ye *are* a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light:

There is a peculiar doctrine of the Roman Catholic church that names the pope as the *Vicar of Christ*. The word *vicar* comes from the word vicarious, or one who stands in the place of another. The Roman Catholic Catechism No. 882 says, "For the Roman Pontiff, by reason of his office as Vicar of Christ, and as pastor of the entire Church has full, supreme, and universal power over the whole Church, a power which he can always exercise unhindered."

b B is wrong, apart from the basic definition of the word, because being an apostle does not imply having a commanding position.

1Pet 5:1-3 The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed:

2Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight *thereof*, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind;

3Neither as being lords over *God's* heritage, but being ensamples to the flock.

Peter, who was an apostle, taught leadership by example, not by force. People like the use of the title of apostle because there is a perceived authority that goes with the title. Although it is appropriate to hold a pastor in esteem, it should come not from the office so much as the work that a pastor does.

Heb 13:7 Remember them which have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God: whose faith follow, considering the end of *their* conversation

Some churches like to pile on titles that exaggerate the significance of a man. It has been said that if you have to tell everyone that you are the leader then you are not. One's authority comes from the message he delivers. Let the message speak for itself. Paul did not come with eloquence nor did he like to use his position of authority. If anything, he appealed to the churches according the debt of gratitude they might have.

a In Eph 4 there are a number of people given to lead the church, each with a different emphasis in ministry.

Eph 4:11 And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers;

It is pretty easy to identify the role of Pastor/Teacher. The other leadership roles need to be explained more. The understanding of what a Prophet was in Biblical times was one who came with a message to the nation. People we consider to be evangelists today would be more properly called Prophets. An apostle, being one who was sent out, like Paul and Barnabas, and also the other apostles, were ones who were sent out to establish churches. An apostle would be what we know as a Missionary. An Evangelist would be someone who challenges the church in soul-winning. Modern day Evangelists who primarily conduct Gospel, evangelistic, soul winning services would not be so much a prophet as what Paul calls an Evangelist.

245. Read Acts 14:14 and 13:1-3. Where did Barnabas get his commission as an apostle?

- a. **From the church at Antioch**
- b. From the Lord
- c. From a Bible college

Acts 14:14 *Which* when the apostles, Barnabas and Paul, heard *of*, they rent their clothes, and ran in among the people, crying out,

Acts 13:1-3 Now there were in the church that was at Antioch certain prophets and teachers; as Barnabas, and Simeon that was called Niger, and Lucius of Cyrene, and Manaen, which had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch, and Saul.

2As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them.

3And when they had fasted and prayed, and laid *their* hands on them, they sent *them* away.

**a,b** We all have a commission from the Lord to share the Gospel, so B is true in general because of the sense of the Great Commission. However, Barnabas was not commissioned by Christ. Barnabas received his commission from the church at Antioch.

**c** C highlights the commonly mistaken idea that Bible Colleges graduate people into ministry. They might *train* people for ministry, but they do not take the place of the church for *organizing* ministry. People assume that there is some headquarters that does this work and so it is natural for them to think of a Bible college in that way.

246. What would be the difference between an apostle of the Lord and the apostleship of Barnabas?

- a. There is no difference.
- b. Barnabas had less authority
- c. **The source of the commission, the twelve were sent by Christ, Barnabas by the congregation at Antioch**

**b** There is no greater character of those who were sent by Christ or sent by a church as implied in B. The only significant consideration is that they are sent out with a commission.

**a** A is wrong because it is not as though there is no difference at all. There are no more apostles *of the Lord*, because the Lord has not commissioned others. *Now* the commissioning is done by a church.

**c** Some churches like to act as though their ministers have some heightened relationship to God and speak *ex cathedra* from the throne of Peter. This is a notion of the Catholic Church used to give some kind of heavenly authority to the Pope so that what is said is equal to the Bible. Churches who like to use the word apostle for any of their pastors appear to be jealous of the Catholic church and try to elevate their authority by claiming to be equal to the apostles of the Lord. The apostles certainly had more opportunity to know what Christ taught, but it is also amazing how many times they got things wrong and had to be corrected. B is wrong in two ways: the first is on the issue of authority, as described earlier. The second is that Barnabas *kind* of apostleship was no different than the *kind* of apostleship of the twelve. There would only have been *personal* differences: training, experience, style, etc.

247. How did people account for the popularity of Christ?

- a. They thought He appealed to the odd people
- b. They thought He was a charismatic leader
- c. They thought He was a crazed leader**

Mark 3:21 And when his friends heard *of it*, they went out to lay hold on him: for they said, He is beside himself.

**a,b** The people could have easily made the mistakes of A or B. It is not that Jesus appealed only to odd people who felt shut out from the rest of society and found Jesus welcoming. People from almost all walks of life followed Him. Even the Pharisees were attracted to Him, although many of them struggled over accepting Him. There is not any mention of priests following Him, although later, in the book of Acts, it is noted that many did. They might have considered Him to be very charismatic.

**c** However, when someone presents himself with confidence, he is often considered to be arrogant and dangerous. *Beside himself* is literally *standing outside of himself*, or out of his mind.

## 44 - Plucking of Corn

This section deals with the authority of the Pharisees in the application of the Law vs. that of Jesus, Who is the Lord of the Sabbath.



248. What concern did the Pharisees have over Jesus and his disciples plucking the wheat kernels to eat?
- a. They were not adhering to what Moses had written in the Law
  - b. They were not living by the spirit of the Law
  - c. They were not adhering to the Pharisees' interpretation of the Law**

**b** The idea that Jesus and his disciples were not adhering to what Moses had given in the law brings into question the nature of interpretation. The Pharisees did not have a proper sense of context, which can influence how one interprets what they are looking at. To appreciate this problem, we have to look at the challenges for interpretation.

We start with the problem of ambiguity in language. Ambiguity is the use of words that could be interpreted a variety of ways. For instance, if I said that I buried \$100 in a bank, would you think that I put \$100 in an account at the First Savings and Loan Association and forgot about it? Or, would you think I took a shovel and went down to the river, dug a hole in the shoreline, put \$100 in the hole and covered it up? In order to render a judgment about anything, we often rely on understanding the definitions of what we are talking about.

The more critical the issue, the more precise our definitions must be. This is what the Pharisees were trying to be careful to do. For example, in a contract words have specific meanings and lawyers work to set up the terms of a contract to not allow for ambiguities that would nullify the contract. In *The Merchant of Venice*, Shylock demands that the terms of a contract require his rival Antonio to forfeit a pound of flesh which he had put up for security in a loan he defaulted on. Shylock wins his case and may have his pound of flesh, but not a drop of blood. This becomes the turning point that causes Shylock to lose everything. The more critical the issue, the more safeguards are put in place to define terms. This has led to great debates, especially in modern times, on the very nature of meaning in language.

However, language often depends on the context in which it is used. For a physicist, work means force x distance. For an artist, it means expression and presentation. For a philosopher, it means mental exertion. For a contractor, it means production. For someone exercising, it means mere physical exertion. Each of these might raise an eyebrow to hear the others talk about work.

The Pharisees, in their overly strict application of the Law, did not take into consideration the spirit, or intent of the Law. By excluding the spirit of the Law, they did not have a proper context. It was because of this that their interpretation was reduced to only part of the purpose of the Law from which they created their own application.

**a** The Pharisees had the particular problem of how to define work. In their attempt to be unambiguous and unassailable, they developed understandings of the term work that led to questionable interpretations. We have the same problem today where lawmakers write laws and then leave the interpretation to regulatory agencies who take advantage of the ambiguities of the law to pile up burdensome regulations that over-protect the public and stifle business and social activity.

**c** The Pharisees would claim that they were merely applying what was written in the Law, as in A, but in reality, they were applying their *interpretations* of the Law, as in C. They did not care about the obvious use of the Law, or the spirit of the Law, or what the Law was intended for. The Law is pretty clear except when it is laden with over-examination. The Law was given to protect workers from being overworked. What started as a guarantee for rest turned into a burdensome and contradictory control of people. Walking on stilts and walking with a peg leg would both be work according to a physicist, but the Pharisees treated each differently. We will see more about this in the next questions.

249. What did Jesus use first to illustrate the significance of the spirit of the Law?

a. How that the Law was not to be taken to extreme observance since David was given the consecrated shewbread once it had served its purpose

**b. How that derivatives of the Law did not have the same significance as the Law since David was given the consecrated shewbread once it had served its purpose**

c. That the Law was subject to interpretation since David was given the consecrated shewbread once it had served its purpose

Mark 2:25-26 And he said unto them, Have ye never read what David did, when he had need, and was an hungred, he, and they that were with him?

26How he went into the house of God in the days of Abiathar the high priest, and did eat the shewbread, which is not lawful to eat but for the priests, and gave also to them which were with him?

**a** Jesus pointed out how their arguments lacked elegance. That is, the Pharisees interpretations raised more questions than it did explanations. A is wrong because how the Law was to be applied was not according to the degree that we feel is reasonable. Extreme application of a law might help us to gain perspective such as in not killing. There are limitations to this Law because it really only covers murder. Even here there is a problem between accidental vs. anger vs. premeditated murder. Within these there are further breakdowns such as in accidental killing due to negligence. The problem using extreme applications with all of these, which are covered in the Law, is that the application of the Law becomes subjective to what each person considers extreme.

**c** There is a similar problem with C. The Law is not to be applied to subjective interpretation. The key word here is *subjective*. There are *objective* standards to be applied that include examining the Law in the context of the whole Bible and the circumstances that are presented. God had set up judges to be able to give consideration to all factors involved. When one person alone judges, there is a greater possibility of unwarranted subjectivity.

**b** The difference between B and the other answers is that the Pharisees had set up *new* laws that people were judged by. Using just the original law allowed flexibility to be able to judge appropriately.

Prov 11:14 Where no counsel *is*, the people fall: but in the multitude of counsellors *there is* safety.

The danger of *codifying* the derivatives of the Law is that the subjectivity that was used to arrive at the derivative law is now embedded in the Law itself.

By raising the question of David eating the shewbread, Jesus forced the Pharisees to have to reconsider the derivative laws they had created. The body of case law that they had established is necessarily less authoritative than the original source law. Although case law can be very helpful and powerful, it is still subject to being overturned. For example, the U.S. Supreme Court has overruled more than 200 of its precedents that had been set in other cases. Jesus did not challenge the significance of the Law, just the significance of the derivative laws made by the Pharisees.

250. How did Jesus demonstrate the practicality of the Law when it came to the priests of the Temple?

- a. They *had* to work on the Sabbath in the Temple and so not *all* work could be against the Law**
- b. They were exempt from the Law and could do anything they wanted to do in the Temple
- c. There were different standards to be applied depending on your privileges in life

Matt 12:5 Or have ye not read in the law, how that on the sabbath days the priests in the temple profane the sabbath, and are blameless?

**a** There is no specific Scripture that talks about how the priests did not profane the Sabbath by their priestly work. Jesus is pointing out a truth that is based on the *absence* of Scripture. For all the passages that describe the work of the priests, there is never any reference to them being judged for their labors. Jesus is referring to the *practice* of the priests. By pointing out the practical nature of the Law Jesus highlights the significance of the *sprit* of the Law, or what the significance of the intention of the Law was.

**b** B is wrong because there is no exemption from the Law of working on the Sabbath that was written into the Law. Jesus is pointing out that the Law was

commonly understood to refer to a more general sense of rest for people from their labors.

**c** C is obviously wrong and highlights the hypocrisy, especially in our modern times, of how lawmakers will make laws and policies but write in exemptions for themselves. Exceptions to the Law should be based on realistic needs, not privileged position.

251. How is Jesus greater than the Temple?

a. Jesus was holier than the priests of the Temple

**b. Jesus was Lord of the Sabbath who determines the administration of each dispensation**

c. Jesus as God can be arbitrary in the laws He makes and changes

Matt 12:6,8 But I say unto you, That in this place is *one* greater than the temple.

<sup>8</sup>For the Son of man is Lord even of the sabbath day.

**a** Jesus was not claiming to be merely *holier* than the priests of the Temple, as in A. He was claiming to be greater than the Temple, itself.

**b** The issue of even greater significance was the claim that Jesus made about being the Lord of the Sabbath. Having referenced David eating the shewbread of the Tabernacle and the work of the priests in the Temple, Jesus is claiming even greater authority since He is greater than the Temple.

**c** As a Law respecting Jew and Law fulfilling Messiah, Jesus would not have made changes to the Law at all, let alone do so arbitrarily, as in C. As Messiah, Jesus was the best judge of what the Law meant, which would apply then and now in this dispensation. This is markedly true when we consider that the requirements of the Law, being fulfilled in Jesus, make many practices of the law defunct. With regard to the Sabbath today, there are those who use Sabbath worship as a test for salvation: those who worship on some other day are considered to be identified with the Antichrist.

Col 2:16-17 Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holyday, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath *days*:

<sup>17</sup>Which are a shadow of things to come; but the body *is* of Christ.

Christians were noted for worshiping on the Lord's day, breaking bread on the first day of the week, and so it was the common practice of the church to meet on Sundays. If God had meant it to be on the Sabbath, He would have said so, but the change was made to the Lord's day. This was in recognition of the fact that Jesus rose from the grave on the first day of the week.

Rom 14:5-6 One man esteemeth one day above another: another esteemeth every day *alike*. Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind.

<sup>6</sup>He that regardeth the day, regardeth *it* unto the Lord; and he that regardeth not the day, to the Lord he doth not regard *it*. He that eateth, eateth to the Lord, for he giveth God thanks; and he that eateth not, to the Lord he eateth not, and giveth God thanks.

252. What is an underlying principle of the Law that Jesus emphasized?

- a. Arbitrary rules for testing
- b. Good ideas that evolve for our times and needs
- c. Mercy and blessing**

Matt 12:7 But if ye had known what *this* meaneth, I will have mercy, and not sacrifice, ye would not have condemned the guiltless.

Mark 2:27 And he said unto them, The sabbath was made for man, and not man for the sabbath:

**a** A highlights how rules are not supposed to be made arbitrarily as a means to test people so there can be a reason to punish them. Rules are made for practical purposes in order to achieve efficiency in reaching goals. They are meant to be helpful, providing mercy (protecting laborers) and to be a blessing.

**b** However, God's Law was not given for one age and is able to be abandoned according to man's changing values, as in B. The Law is a reflection of the character of God and what determines sin from one culture or age to the next is not subject to man's popular opinion.

**c** Jesus pointed out the purpose of the Law as a benefit for man by emphasizing the character of mercy the Law was supposed to have.

## **45 - The Withered Hand Healed in the Synagogue**

253. How did Christ teach the merciful purpose of the Law in the synagogue?

- a. He prayed that the man's hand would be like everyone else's hand and so everyone walked out with a withered hand
- b. He asked if working on the Sabbath to get ahead would really be such a big deal
- c. He asked if taking care of a sheep in distress on the Sabbath was more important than taking care of a man in distress on the Sabbath**

Matt 12:11-12 And he said unto them, What man shall there be among you, that shall have one sheep, and if it fall into a pit on the sabbath day, will he not lay hold on it, and lift *it* out?

<sup>12</sup>How much then is a man better than a sheep? Wherefore it is lawful to do well on the sabbath days.

**b** B is a reflection of how people just disregard the Law in favor one's subjective opinion of what is right and wrong. In our natural sense of rebellion, we resist and diminish the significance of any confrontation. Jesus, Who taught that He did not come to destroy the Law, would not cater to people wanting to wriggle out of the importance of the Law. It is safer to try to be circumspect in all we do rather than keeping an attitude of nothing

matters. If anything, Jesus is relating this to another part of the Law regarding mercy.

Deut 22:4 Thou shalt not see thy brother's ass or his ox fall down by the way, and hide thyself from them: thou shalt surely help him to lift *them* up again.

By pointing out the contradiction that the Pharisee's interpretation leads to, they missed the way mercy resolves the problem. Jesus didn't dismiss the Law but applied it correctly.

**a** A is an old joke, but points out that the Law was not to be used to make everyone equally miserable. The Pharisees were more concerned about the Law forcing behavior and really didn't care about the man's needs. They would have rather had everyone suffer than address the real need.

This event becomes another opportunity to teach the true purpose of the Law for a spiritual people (the purpose of the Law for the lost would be bring conviction for sin). The purpose of the Law for God's people was meant to liberate, not control people. It was not meant to regulate life but to keep people from excessive punishment as well as from sin.

1Tim 1:8 But we know that the law *is* good, if a man use it lawfully;

**c** Since the Law did not cover every minute action of life, the Pharisees tried to make up for this. The application of the law depends on not only specific admonitions, but also on the general understanding that a reasonable person would have. Laboring on the Sabbath would certainly include not working at one's normal job and would cover not working on a side job, too. This would provide worker protections. Jesus used the principle of the law for saving a sheep to point out the application of the Law that any reasonable person would have about healing.

254. How much did Christ's wisdom on the Sabbath healing drive the Pharisees crazy?

- a. They listened to Christ more intently to understand Him
- b. They were willing to conspire with their rivals, the supporters of Herod, to plot Christ's destruction**
- c. They took advantage of the people's disapproval and drove Him out of the country

Luke 6:11 And they were filled with madness; and communed one with another what they might do to Jesus.

Mark 3:6 And the Pharisees went forth, and straightway took counsel with the Herodians against him, how they might destroy him.

**c** C refers to what the Pharisees were counting on in the peoples reaction. The Pharisees knew that the people heard Jesus gladly which should have spoken to them. They would have to wait for just the right circumstances to be able

to turn the masses against Him long enough to have Him crucified.

**a** They were so disposed against Him that they were not able to suspend their prejudice long enough to see if there was any merit in what He taught, as in A.

**b** Rather than be intellectually honest, they were willing to conspire with their rivals, demonstrating the fact that politics makes strange bedfellows.

255. What happened because of Christ's healings?

- a. He became even more popular**
- b. The Pharisees were won over
- c. He got tired of dealing with icky people

Mark 3:7-8 But Jesus withdrew himself with his disciples to the sea: and a great multitude from Galilee followed him, and from Judaea, 8And from Jerusalem, and from Idumaea, and *from* beyond Jordan; and they about Tyre and Sidon, a great multitude, when they had heard what great things he did, came unto him.

**c** C points out that Jesus never gets tired of us. His infinite compassion makes Him always ready to receive us.

**b** B is wrong because the Pharisees resisted continually and were not even open to being won over.

**a** Jesus became more popular not just because of His healing, but because of the wisdom that was taught by the healings.

## **46 - The Sermon on the Mount Compared to The Sermon on the Plain**

Although the Sermon on the Mount (Matt 5-7) occurs before this, it is examined here alongside the Sermon on the Plain. Even though there are similarities that suggest it is one event, there are portions of the sermon that Jesus taught on other occasions, also.

See <https://www.contradictingbiblecontradictions.com/?p=2621> for remarks about the differences between the settings.

## **The Beatitudes**

The first four Beatitudes (blessedness) deal with how *we* regard *ourselves*. The next three deal with how *we* regard *others*. The last beatitude deals with how *others* regard *us*. They are not a prescription for how to serve God but are more of a description of the nature of a true believer.

256. Read Gal 2:20. Who is destined for the kingdom of heaven?

- a. **Those who are emptied of self and focused on God**
- b. Those who suffer in poverty
- c. Those who are pay close attention to how humble they are

Matt 5:3 Blessed *are* the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Gal 2:20 I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.

**b** B represents the launching point for everything that is the opposite of being poor in spirit. Jesus gave a call of poverty of spirit, not financial poverty. This is not to be confused with His call to the rich young ruler to sell all that he had and give to the poor. In the rich young ruler's case, Jesus used that to point out to the young man where his true heart was. Calling everyone to poverty is easily misdirected to form the basis for Marxist schemes of government intervention. The reasoning is that if the poor are victims then it is because the wealthy have profited off of them. This becomes the moral basis for forced charity to the poor through governmental confiscatory policies (tax policies). Some naively suggest that the early church was socialist or communist because they sold what they had and brought the proceeds into the church to be shared. The difference is that this was voluntary on the part of those who were truly poor in spirit rather than something forced upon them. Jesus identified specifically that He is talking about being poor in spirit. This is the opposite of merely feeling bad and justifying government power as a moral solution. This whole idea is included here to highlight how important being poor in spirit is. The opposite of being poor in spirit leads to the sense of victimization that makes people ripe to be taken advantage of by big government control.

The person who is emptied of self does not *suffer* in poverty. This can only happen when someone is focused on self. If someone has a poverty of *self* then there is no *self* there to be conscious of suffering.

**a** The poverty that Jesus has in mind here is being poor in self. The person who is poor in spirit, as in A, is not focused on self. He is *self-less* because he has removed self from consideration. There is no victim where there is no self. The poor in spirit sees himself as responsible to God instead of society being responsible to him. He is free to deal with his neighbor and God out of love instead of being forced by law. This also forms the basis of salvation specifically because you are able to start listening to God and see Him as all important.

**c** C is a reflection of an unsuspected form of pride. It is possible to diligently practice humility, but C suggests that there is some sort of score keeping. You can pay close attention to *being* humble, but keeping track of *how* humble one is happens when someone takes pride in how humble they are. Humility should not be self conscious.



257. Read 2Cor 7:9-10. Once a person is emptied of self and self righteousness, how are they free to mourn and be comforted?
- They can mourn the death of their loved ones and be comforted
  - They can get angry over how things don't go their way and feel better when they get even
  - They are free to stop justifying how right they are and mourn over their sin and be comforted with salvation**

2Cor 7:9-10 Now I rejoice, not that ye were made sorry, but that ye sorrowed to repentance: for ye were made sorry after a godly manner, that ye might receive damage by us in nothing.

10For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death.

Matt 5:4 Blessed *are* they that mourn: for they shall be comforted.

**a** A reflects the common assumption that death must be involved or some other sense of loss when people hear the word *mourn*.

**b** B refers to the problem of the person who is not poor in spirit and instead envies others for their blessing. They assume that there is some unfair privilege that accounts for the things they enjoy in life. The only way to prove that no one is unfairly advantaged is if everyone enjoys equal outcomes...everyone has a house, a guaranteed living wage, equal representation in employment, etc. This becomes the justification for rioting and looting because we are supposed to understand how they feel.

**c** With *prideful* self out of the way, we are free to confront our true self, sinners who are at odds with God.

258. How does meekness work to bring us to our inheritance?
- We become very calm and God will reward our good behavior
  - We stop resisting and striving against God in order to receive His future for us**
  - We let everyone have what they want from us and they will let us have anything in the world we want

Matt 5:5 Blessed *are* the meek: for they shall inherit the earth.

**c** The word *meek* does not mean weak and just submitting to whatever happens to us. *Meek* means to have self mastery and self control. C is wrong because it is a description of appeasement. There is a philosophy that has proved itself disastrous in geo-politics and personal experience that if you give your oppressor what they want they will then not seek to get more and more.

**a** Neither should we depend on our good works in order to manipulate God as in A.

**b** When we stop resisting God's direction and work with His plan, then we will be free to enjoy God's best for us.

259. After we have been emptied of self and self righteousness, recognize our sin, and stop resisting God, what do we need to be filled with?

- a. The joy of God
- b. Joie de vivre (the joy of living)
- c. The righteousness of God**

Matt 5:6 Blessed *are* they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled.

**b** People make pleasure their God, as in B, by living for pleasure. Pleasure becomes the definition of good, which is Hedonism. The problem of living for pleasure doesn't have to be limited only to worldly pleasure, such as enjoying fine dining, art, sights, entertainment, etc.

**a** When people go to church looking primarily for a joyful experience in worship, they are operating by the same principle. If the goal of church is to make people happy then they will have no need to pursue righteousness as soon as they get the joy.

**c** We need to make sure that we put being right with God and knowing Him rightly as the foundation for the joy that is to follow.

260. What should our disposition of mercy towards others be?

- a. Not judgmental
- b. Concerned about the misery of their sin**
- c. Encouraging people to do good

Matt 5:7 Blessed *are* the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy.

**c** We would be false prophets if we directed people to merely be good. True joy comes from emptying self, submitting to God, and receiving salvation by grace, through faith, and not by works.

**a** Not being judgmental, as in A, is not about having no judgment at all. We are supposed to exercise discernment, but that's not the same thing as being judgmental.

**c** Being judgmental has the connotation of judging someone as a means of exercising power over them. Having a disposition of mercy towards others means not rejoicing in their sin but having compassion on them for the judgment they are about to receive from God. The idea that the unmerciful will not receive mercy is that it is difficult to ask for forgiveness if we don't even know what it is to forgive. If we live judgmentally, never seeing the need to be gracious, then we don't actually understand what grace even is. There is never any *deserving* grace so that if we only give grace when we

think someone deserves it then that is proof that we don't know what grace is.

261. Read James 1:8. How can a believer truly see God?

- a. **By having a heart that is purely in tune with God's will**
- b. By having a strong feeling for God
- c. By exercising so we have a strong heart

James 1:8 A double minded man *is* unstable in all his ways.

Matt 5:8 Blessed *are* the pure in heart: for they shall see God.

**b** You can witness all kinds of bizarre representations of devotion to God, as in B, but that does not indicate that a person actually sees, or knows, God. This is especially true when it comes to people who abuse themselves in some effort to humble themselves before God, even to the point of undergoing crucifixion. Also, when someone seeks an ecstatic experience and mimicking Pentecost, it might represent fervent emotions, but it is not knowing God.

**c** Other people give an excessive emphasis on having physical fitness so that their mind is clear so they can see God. Although this is true to a certain degree, the emphasis here is on excessive where the physical becomes idolatry.

**a** Being focused on God and not dividing our attention between worldliness and godliness, or taking on an excessive amount of obligations that divide our attention, keeps our heart from being pure, single focused on God's agenda.

262. Read Rom 5:1. How can we bring peace into the world?

- a. Getting the nations to destroy their weapons of war
- b. Helping people get the peace of God through salvation**
- c. Helping people learn how to center themselves and increase mindfulness and serenity
- d. Appease your enemies with compromise so they will leave you alone

Matt 5:9 Blessed *are* the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God.

**a** People who mean well think of peace on earth where there is no more fighting in the world, as in A. They typically think that peace is so attractive that people will naturally gravitate towards peace. Such people are naive and don't understand the difficulty of life and the way problems can be compounded. That is why such groups as Antifa will act like fascists all in the name of establishing social order.

**c** Another novel approach is to seek a sense of peace that is really only momentary calmness, as in C. This might open you up to spiritual forces to interfere in your life, or it might only bring about a momentary reprieve from the pressures of the world. Until God's wrath is satisfied by the blood of

Christ on your behalf, all of eternity hangs over your head like Damocles' sword.

The famed "sword of Damocles" dates back to an ancient moral parable popularized by the Roman philosopher Cicero in his 45 B.C. book "Tusculan Disputations." Cicero's version of the tale centers on Dionysius II, a tyrannical king who once ruled over the Sicilian city of Syracuse during the fourth and fifth centuries B.C. Though rich and powerful, Dionysius was supremely unhappy. His iron-fisted rule had made him many enemies, and he was tormented by fears of assassination—so much so that he slept in a bedchamber surrounded by a moat and only trusted his daughters to shave his beard with a razor.

As Cicero tells it, the king's dissatisfaction came to a head one day after a court flatterer named Damocles showered him with compliments and remarked how blissful his life must be. "Since this life delights you," an annoyed Dionysius replied, "do you wish to taste it yourself and make a trial of my good fortune?" When Damocles agreed, Dionysius seated him on a golden couch and ordered a host of servants wait on him. He was treated to succulent cuts of meat and lavished with scented perfumes and ointments. Damocles couldn't believe his luck, but just as he was starting to enjoy the life of a king, he noticed that Dionysius had also hung a razor-sharp sword from the ceiling. It was positioned over Damocles' head, suspended only by a single strand of horsehair. From then on, the courtier's fear for his life made it impossible for him to savor the opulence of the feast or enjoy the servants. After casting several nervous glances at the blade dangling above him, he asked to be excused, saying he no longer wished to be so fortunate.

– <https://www.history.com/news/what-was-the-sword-of-damocles>

**d** Appeasement, as in D has never been proved to work. It only empowers oppressors.

Jesus taught in Matt 10:34-39 that there is no peace without the separation of holiness. When we choose Christ, we are choosing against the world, and people will notice.

Matt 10:34-39 Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword.

35For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter in law against her mother in law.

36And a man's foes *shall be* they of his own household.

37He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me: and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me.

38And he that taketh not his cross, and followeth after me, is not worthy of me.

39He that findeth his life shall lose it: and he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it.

The only way to true, eternal peace is by receiving the new birth and a right spirit through salvation, as in Rom 5:1.

Rom 5:1 Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ:

263. What effect will such blessedness have in the world?
- a. People will only be drawn to your magnetic personality
  - b. People might persecute you if they are in rebellion against God**
  - c. People will be happy to be tolerant and let you live as you like

Matt 5:10-12 Blessed *are* they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

11Blessed are ye, when *men* shall revile you, and persecute *you*, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake.

12Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great *is* your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you.

**c** In the world, being tolerant, as in C, is something you say to get others to do what you want. Some of the most intolerant people are those who preach tolerance. Such people are tolerant only as long as you agree with them. For example, if you hold Biblical values regarding sexuality, you are considered to be an intolerant bigot. Unless you confess to being a bigot in need of help and willing to crusade to reform the Bible, you might find yourself out of a job. People in rebellion against God will not leave room for you to exist in the world.

**a** When you look at A, it will be true that *sometimes* people will respond to a Christlike attitude, especially if it is only a *partially* Christlike attitude of love and not the attitude of Christ that was critical of sin. When standing for righteousness, the world in its rebellion will not tolerate you. The objective is to win people to Christ and have *them* stand with you.

### **Concerning the difference in the beatitudes between The Sermon on the Mount and The Sermon on the Plain**

Luke 6:24-26 But woe unto you that are rich! for ye have received your consolation.

25Woe unto you that are full! for ye shall hunger. Woe unto you that laugh now! for ye shall mourn and weep.

26Woe unto you, when all men shall speak well of you! for so did their fathers to the false prophets.

When you look at Luke 6:24-26, Jesus adds on a description that is the antithesis of the beatitudes. He describes the person who lives for self instead of being emptied of self – the person who lives for all he thinks he deserves in the world. He will certainly get the most he can get from the world, but that is the tragedy. That is *all* he is going to get and will miss out on the eternal blessings he could have had.

## The Salt of the Earth and the Light of the World

264. If the saltiness of salt leaches out and leaves only impurities behind, what is it good for?
- None of the health benefits of salt**
  - Making food more flavorful
  - Preserving food
  - Cleansing

Matt 5:13 Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men.

**b,c,d** Salt was a very important commodity and was even used as one's *salary*. Because of its expense, salt mixed with other impurities could lose its saltiness by the NaCl leaching out.

**a** This question points out how empty life would be without our presence in this dark world. Being flavorful, preserving, and cleansing are all effects Christianity has had on society.

The following description appears widely on the internet and gives a taste of the world as it seeks to distance itself from anything that is derived from God who is Truth.

Postmodern literature is a form of literature which is marked, both stylistically and ideologically, by a reliance on such literary conventions as fragmentation, paradox, unreliable narrators, often unrealistic and downright impossible plots, games, parody, paranoia, dark humor and authorial self-reference. Postmodern authors tend to reject outright meanings in their novels, stories and poems, and, instead, highlight and celebrate the possibility of multiple meanings, or a complete lack of meaning, within a single literary work.

–[www.quora.com/What-is-an-analysis-of-postmodernism-in-literature](http://www.quora.com/What-is-an-analysis-of-postmodernism-in-literature)

It is a worthwhile study, but beyond the time that we have here, to compare literature, art, philosophy, law, morality, and even science to times before such thinking had taken such hold.

265. What is the effect of the light of our spirit?
- It will bring a private inner peace
  - It will cause people to stumble
  - It cannot be hid**

Matt 5:14 Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid.

**a** The effect of the light of our spirit is not supposed to bring a *private* inner peace as in Eastern Mysticism where one opens self to outside spiritual forces.

**b** Certainly the light that we have will not cause people to stumble.

**c** The effect of the light is to be obvious to all around us.

266. What is a benefit of being a spiritual light?

a. We can bring light to an empty place

**b. We can bring light to all those around us**

c. We can light our own path and get ahead of others

**c** The purpose of the light is not for personal benefit or as a weapon. In effect that is what we do if we get even with those who mock us by holding the Gospel back from them. We could say, in effect, okay, I'll be silent because I know that the eternal fire you are going to suffer is really going to be bad.

**a** We are not interested in knowledge just for the sake of having knowledge to fill up space on our bookshelves.

**b** We are supposed to have the light to bring others to Christ.

267. What is one way we can present our light so others can glorify God?

**a. By our good works**

b. By our eloquent preaching

c. By letting people know we are thinking of them in the times of their distress

**b** Having beautiful things to say to people does not pass. Even in the case of salvation, Paul talked about how he came not with excellency of speech but his power was in word and deed.

**c** It is not enough to just offer some spiritual *intentions* towards others. We are supposed to let our works be the demonstration of the light we have within.

Jas 2:14-18 What *doth it* profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? can faith save him?

15If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food,

16And one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be *ye* warmed and filled; notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body; what *doth it* profit?

17Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone.

18Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works: shew me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works.

**a** People can glorify God as they see His Word and work through us and will give Him glory.

1John 3:18 My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth.

## Christ, the Fulfillment of the Law

268. What was Christ's attitude toward the Law?

- a. He was a non-conformist who wanted to do away with the Law so we can be saved by how good we think we are
- b. He came to fulfill the demands of the Law so we can be saved by His sacrifice**
- c. He taught us to fulfill the Law so we can be saved

Matt 5:17-18 Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil.

<sup>18</sup>For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled.

**a** We have to be careful to guard against a popular misconception about Jesus as a rebellious non-conformist. Perhaps in some misdirected way of *enhancing* Jesus and making Him *relevant*, they might be emphasizing the fact that Jesus was distinct from what was the established practice of His day. Jesus does not need to be *made* relevant. For *leadership*, wearing plaid flannel shirts and sneakers because it is different from what is perceived as standard religion signals an attitude and outlook of being different just for the sake of being different. Our efforts should not automatically go to being different. On the face of it, we are letting people know that we are disagreeable. Our attitude should be one of being thoughtful and discerning. Sometimes that might make us differ from established thinking. In reality, much of established thinking is established because it has stood the test of time and examination. There are many more times that being thoughtful and discerning *affirms* the old paths. If anything, the Pharisees and others were the non-conformers: they did not conform to the Law as Jesus had originally established it.

**c** Jesus did not present the Law to us as something *we* can fulfill for salvation.

**b** Jesus did not say that He came to simply *obey* the law, but to fulfill it. To fulfill it has the idea of perfecting the Law, or bringing it to its full purpose. The primary purpose of the Law was to declare sin *and* its penalty. By going to the cross, Jesus fulfilled the *penalty* of the Law.

269. How seriously should the Law be considered?

- a. It was good to break the Law down into minute requirements like the Pharisees did
- b. There would be no more use for the Law after Jesus came
- c. The Law was important but it was not limited to a mere Pharisaical outward observance**

Matt 5:19-20 Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach *them*, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.

<sup>20</sup>For I say unto you, That except your righteousness shall exceed *the righteousness*



of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven.

**a** By referring to the fulfilling of the jot and tittle, small markings in Hebrew writing, Jesus was not saying that there were hidden meanings beyond what was written in the Law. The key phrase here is, "like the Pharisees did." He was referring to the absolute application of the Law, most specifically in His fulfillment in the demands of the Law.

**b** Jesus did say that there was no use for the Law. In fact He affirmed the benefit of the Law. There is a two-fold benefit of the Law: conviction for the lost and blessing to the believer.

**c** Jesus had been teaching that the Pharisees search for meaning between the lines of the Law had led them into a different, *self*-righteousness. The righteousness we need goes beyond that in nature where we obtain the righteousness of Christ through salvation.

2Cor 5:20-21 Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech *you* by us: we pray *you* in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God.

21For he hath made him *to be* sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.

## Peace with your Brother

270. What was the simple application of the Law concerning killing?

- a. You will have to face the judges**
- b. You will have to be killed
- c. You will have to make restitution

Matt 5:21 Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not kill; and whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of the judgment:

**b** Not every killing is subject to the death penalty. The commandment to no kill is a reference to murder. Ordinarily, such a case would simply bring someone before an inquest to determine what should be done.

**c** In some cases, restitution would be made but not necessarily so.

**a** Jesus presented the simple case as an opportunity to go after a deeper problem in the heart. Not everything can be covered by simple legal procedures. All things that go on in a person's heart cannot be covered by the law. Even when the motivation behind a killing can be judged, that does not mean that everything that is in the heart has been actually dealt with. Jesus goes on to discuss this heart problem as it appears *before* or in the *absence of* an actual killing.

271. What is the relationship of anger to killing?

- a. **You might have the heart of a killer**
- b. Having anger is not as bad as killing
- c. Anger is never justified and so you should be condemned for being a killer

Matt 5:22 But I say unto you, That whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment: and whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be in danger of the council: but whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire.

c There are times when righteous indignation is appropriate and should be distinguished from unjustified anger.

b As far as judgment on earth is concerned, not every sin carries the same penalty. Since God judges the heart, the same nature that *could* kill is the same nature of the man who *wants* to kill. Many people see the inconsistency between a hate crime and a regular crime. Generally people who commit murder are doing it out of hate.

a Someone who has an unjustified anger might not face an earthly council, but he will not escape the judgment of God. All that would be missing is the killing.

272. What might you deserve if you slanderously call someone Raca (stupid)?

- a. The death penalty
- b. **A lawsuit before the council**
- c. A shaming on social media

a Being disagreeable and in opposition to someone is a case where someone's motivation might not rise to the problem of being a murder in one's heart.

c A shaming on social media might actually be worse than being brought before a court. A court is required to render a responsible judgment. Social media carries all the prejudices and pettiness that is just as bad as the slander that is being judged. In fact, in the faceless and anonymous climate of the internet, a shaming on the internet can be as bad as murder.

b Slander might be able to be demonstrated in a public venue, but a council is limited to what is done in public as to what it can charge someone with.

273. Why would someone who arrogantly determines that someone is a fool (a moral reprobate) deserve the judgment of hell fire?

- a. Because it's not nice to call someone a fool
- b. Because judging others is forbidden
- c. **Because they demonstrate that they don't understand the grace of God**

**a** One of the greatest sins in our modern culture is to offend someone by calling them a name. Of course, some of the worst offenders are those who scream the loudest about being offended. For instance, Candace Owens, Larry Elder, and others have been called coons and Uncle Toms by the supposedly socially conscious progressives they oppose.

A number of years ago, someone called me a "white man." They were not referring to the obvious. They were making a very sharp and biting argument. They were exercising their free speech and I was not offended. This does not mean that we should feel free to be rude and obnoxious, but people should not be so quick to cancel others and seek to ruin their lives over name calling.

**b** Judging others is not something forbidden, but we will discuss this later in Matt 7

**c** C recognizes a principle that is used elsewhere about not being merciful or forgiving. If you can wish the judgment for a reprobate on someone who has not actually crossed the line into being reprobate, then that demonstrates that you do not understand grace, only retribution. This is especially true since we can never really know if someone is reprobate or not. The venue that someone should be concerned with is a heavenly one. Before wishing hell fire on someone, which they deserve if they really are that bad, one should consider what it is they, themselves, deserve. Such a vindictive attitude demonstrates a lack of understanding of grace.

274. What should you do if you know someone has a problem with you?

- a. Hold off on serving God and try to settle the problem with him**
- b. Keep on serving God and hope that the person gets over his problem with you
- c. Nothing, such people don't deserve to be forgiven

Matt 5:23 Therefore if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath ought against thee;

**c** C demonstrates a lack of understanding of grace which is needed for a Christian society. The Law gave the limitation of judgment in Lev 24

Lev 24:19-20 And if a man cause a blemish in his neighbour; as he hath done, so shall it be done to him;

20Breach for breach, eye for eye, tooth for tooth: as he hath caused a blemish in a man, so shall it be done to him *again*.

The character Tevye in *Fiddler on the Roof* points out the problem with a lack of understanding grace, "Very good. That way the whole world will be blind and toothless." It is not rational that someone you have offended should need to be forgiven, but if they are not willing to forgive then there is a different kind of problem that needs to be dealt with: holding a grudge.

**b** Sometimes problems do have a way of resolving themselves, but we must recognize that not all things will.

**a** If we have offended someone, then we should not just go on with life even serving God until someone chooses to confront us. If one of us suffers then all of us are suffering.

1 Cor 12:24-26 For our comely *parts* have no need: but God hath tempered the body together, having given more abundant honour to that *part* which lacked:

25 That there should be no schism in the body; but *that* the members should have the same care one for another.

26 And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honoured, all the members rejoice with it.

If it is within our power to reach out to someone who is *truly* offended we should do it. Merely feeling bad does not necessarily mean an offense has been committed. Something that would *not* count is someone who feels bad because we shared a painful truth with them.

275. What should a believer try to do with their adversary (the person who is at odds with you)?

a. Ignore him and hope the problem disappears

b. Take him to court before he takes you to court

**c. Come to a friendly agreement with him before the problem escalates into something more serious**

Matt 5:25-26 Agree with thine adversary quickly, whiles thou art in the way with him; lest at any time the adversary deliver thee to the judge, and the judge deliver thee to the officer, and thou be cast into prison.

26 Verily I say unto thee, Thou shalt by no means come out thence, till thou hast paid the uttermost farthing.

**a** Again, there are times when a problem is not really a problem and should left alone. But this does not apply to a case where someone is not an adversary.

**b** Especially for Christians, matters should not be taken to a court to decide. Humble spirits will value the importance of forgiving and moving forward. We should be quick to do this especially in light of how much we can overlook at work in order to get our jobs done. At work, we might have to be willing to totally ignore a disagreeable coworker. How much more should we be able to be forgiving at church?

**c** C demonstrates the importance of being able to catch problems early.

## Sins of the Heart

Jesus continues with the sins of the heart when it comes to lust.

276. What is at the root of adultery?

- a. Having a physical relationship with someone
- b. Lust in the heart**
- c. Flirtation

Matt 5:27-28 Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery:

28But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart.

**a,c** Someone does not have to actually commit outwardly to have sinned inwardly. However, people will try to minimize their guilt by suggesting they didn't actually commit adultery if they didn't carry out a physical act or even less if they were only flirting. They ignore the powerful effects of sexuality in male/female relationships. For this reason, it is not possible for males and females to be intimate friends.

**b** Sin in the heart is, again, the problem that Jesus points out.

277. How seriously does Jesus suggest one should avoid sin, especially adultery?

- a. You should make sure to not go too far before repenting
- b. You should not worry because you can always be forgiven later
- c. You should prefer to pluck out your lustful eye or cut off your stealing hand than justify your sinfulness and end up in hell**

Matt 5:29-30 And if thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast *it* from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not *that* thy whole body should be cast into hell.

30And if thy right hand offend thee, cut it off, and cast *it* from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not *that* thy whole body should be cast into hell.

**a,b** *A and B* are common attitudes about flirting with temptation and sin. One cannot just sin with the attitude that they can always repent. They are blinding themselves to the problem of sin so they can ignore the conviction against the temptation.

**c** Someone might ask the question, "Do I really have to cut off my hand eye?" They are entirely missing the point. Instead of weighing how much they want to sin vs. the cost, what they should really say is, "Boy, this is serious. I had better run from sin."

278. Read Matt 1:18-19, Deut 22:13-27, and Matt 19:3-6. When would the issue of fornication be grounds for divorce?
- a. At any time
  - b. During the betrothal time**
  - c. When someone has fallen out of love
  - d. When you fall in lust with someone else

Matt 5:31-32 It hath been said, Whosoever shall put away his wife, let him give her a writing of divorcement:

32But I say unto you, That whosoever shall put away his wife, saving for the cause of fornication, causeth her to commit adultery: and whosoever shall marry her that is divorced committeth adultery.

Matt 1:18-19 Now the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise: When as his mother Mary was espoused to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Ghost.

19Then Joseph her husband, being a just *man*, and not willing to make her a publick example, was minded to put her away privily.

Deut 22:13-27 If any man take a wife, and go in unto her, and hate her,

14And give occasions of speech against her, and bring up an evil name upon her, and say, I took this woman, and when I came to her, I found her not a maid:

15Then shall the father of the damsel, and her mother, take and bring forth *the tokens of* the damsel's virginity unto the elders of the city in the gate:

16And the damsel's father shall say unto the elders, I gave my daughter unto this man to wife, and he hateth her;

17And, lo, he hath given occasions of speech *against her*, saying, I found not thy daughter a maid; and yet these *are the tokens of* my daughter's virginity. And they shall spread the cloth before the elders of the city.

18And the elders of that city shall take that man and chastise him;

19And they shall amerce him in an hundred *shekels* of silver, and give *them* unto the father of the damsel, because he hath brought up an evil name upon a virgin of Israel: and she shall be his wife; he may not put her away all his days.

20But if this thing be true, *and the tokens of* virginity be not found for the damsel:

21Then they shall bring out the damsel to the door of her father's house, and the men of her city shall stone her with stones that she die: because she hath wrought folly in Israel, to play the whore in her father's house: so shalt thou put evil away from among you.

22If a man be found lying with a woman married to an husband, then they shall both of them die, *both* the man that lay with the woman, and the woman: so shalt thou put away evil from Israel.

23If a damsel *that is* a virgin be betrothed unto an husband, and a man find her in the city, and lie with her;

24Then ye shall bring them both out unto the gate of that city, and ye shall stone them with stones that they die; the damsel, because she cried not, *being* in the city; and the man, because he hath humbled his neighbour's wife: so thou shalt put away evil from among you.

25But if a man find a betrothed damsel in the field, and the man force her, and lie with her: then the man only that lay with her shall die:

26But unto the damsel thou shalt do nothing; *there is* in the damsel no sin *worthy* of death: for as when a man riseth against his neighbour, and slayeth him, even so *is* this matter:

27For he found her in the field, *and* the betrothed damsel cried, and *there was* none to save her.

Matt 19:3-6 The Pharisees also came unto him, tempting him, and saying unto him, Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife for every cause?  
4And he answered and said unto them, Have ye not read, that he which made *them* at the beginning made them male and female,  
5And said, For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife: and they twain shall be one flesh?  
6Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder.

**a,b** Jesus clearly only considered divorce during the betrothal time.

**c,d** The problem with either of these is the idea that marriage is a function of the emotions. Love should be treated as a decision to want the best for someone else. If we truly loved someone who is not our spouse, we would want the best for them which would be to not put them in an adulterous situation. The spouse that we might not feel fond of can be loved because as a decision to want the best for them we would stay faithful.

## Swearing Oaths

It should be noted that each of these passages that follow the Beatitudes speak of the living out the Beatitudes.

279. How did the Pharisees get around their interpretation of making oaths being forbidden?

- a. They could swear by lesser things than God's Name**
- b. They could be very serious when making oaths on trivial matters
- c. They assumed that God wasn't going to do anything anyway so they could get away with lying

Matt 5:33-36 Again, ye have heard that it hath been said by them of old time, Thou shalt not forswear thyself, but shalt perform unto the Lord thine oaths:  
34But I say unto you, Swear not at all; neither by heaven; for it is God's throne:  
35Nor by the earth; for it is his footstool: neither by Jerusalem; for it is the city of the great King.  
36Neither shalt thou swear by thy head, because thou canst not make one hair white or black.

**b,c** B and C both represent ways of taking God's name in vain. We need to teach that there are more ways to taking His name in vain than merely using it as a curse. When we suggest that God will back up our testimony, as in "With God as my witness," or when someone alleges they have a message from God, they are using His name lightly and in vain, or for their vanity.

**b** Sincerity and seriousness does not make something more true, meaningful, or significant. That is the stuff of wannabe poets. If you want to appear deep, pile on adjectives and drama.

**c** People feel free to swear by God since they don't really think God is going to do anything to them anyway.

Deut 5:11 Thou shalt not take the name of the LORD thy God in vain: for the LORD will not hold *him* guiltless that taketh his name in vain.

Be assured that no one gets away with this. Such preachers are soon held to be frivolous and vain; the world mocks them.

**a** The way the Pharisees got around this was not by exaggerating the significance of the thing they were swearing *about*, but by de-emphasizing what they were swearing by. They calculated that if they only swore by God's throne, they were diminishing the vanity of their oath. If anything, this might be interpreted as being deceptive. They wanted the appearance of the authority of God while leaving themselves a loophole. God took very seriously the things that were associated with Him. It was not acceptable to diminish the significance of those things that were types and symbols of God because they testified of Him. When Uzza merely reached out to steady the Ark of the Covenant God took him.

2Sam 6:6-7 And when they came to Nachon's threshingfloor, Uzzah put forth *his hand* to the ark of God, and took hold of it; for the oxen shook *it*.  
7And the anger of the LORD was kindled against Uzzah; and God smote him there for *his* error; and there he died by the ark of God.

The problem was that they were supposed to transport the Ark by staves passed through rings on the sides of the Ark, but because they did not respect the Ark it led to Uzzah's death. Although we should have a respect for those things that are dedicated for God, we do not have quite the same problem. Now we are commanded to worship Him in spirit and in truth. This leads to the truth in the next question about being flippant over holy things.

Swearing in court is not the same thing as the oaths Jesus spoke of. The problem with the way the Pharisees swore was that they used their oath as a way of lending credence to their promises as a way to manipulate people. Swearing in court is a way of acknowledging our accountability to God.

280. When it comes to day-to-day obligations, what should people depend on?

- a. Their reputation as faithful children of God**
- b. People being impressed by how much you insist that you are righteous before God
- c. God to cover your casual boasting

Matt 5:37 But let your communication be, Yea, yea; Nay, nay: for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil.

**c** C reflects the problem of taking God's name in vain. He is not obligated in some kind of *name-it-claim-it* or positive confession:

Positive confession is the practice of saying aloud what you want to happen with the expectation that God will make it a reality. It's popular among prosperity gospel



adherents who claim that words have spiritual power and that, if we speak aloud the right words with the right faith, we can gain riches and health, bind Satan, and accomplish anything we want. To confess positively is to speak words that we believe or want to believe, thus making them reality. This is opposed to negative confession, which is to acknowledge hardships, poverty, and illness and thus (supposedly) accept them and refuse the ease, wealth, and health God has planned for us.

– <https://www.gotquestions.org/positive-confession.html>

God is not obligated to cover everything that we declare.

**b** No matter how much we might puff ourselves up before people, it does not make our cause before the Lord any more significant. Some preachers and others might depend on how impressive they are as they get power from people supporting them but this does not bring glory to God.

**a** A describes how simply living responsibly before God should be enough to gain people's confidence.

Ecc 7:1 A good name *is* better than precious ointment; and the day of death than the day of one's birth.

## Love Your Enemies

281. How should we treat our enemies?

- a. As they treat us
- b. Hold them off so they can't take advantage of you
- c. With the love we show our brothers**

Luke 6:31 And as ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise.

**a** Treating others the way they treat us would especially be a problem if God did the same thing to us. We cannot truly condemn others when we are so guilty ourselves. How can a thief criticize a burglar? A speaks of our sense of retribution.

**b** Hold people off so they can't take advantage of you seems very smart. This is a popular Focusing on our grievances will turn us inward and create an envious heart that sees the world as not treating us fairly as if the world *owes* us. It seems that all we are doing is looking for our just desserts, an envious heart can always justify its jealousy of others. By keeping people away, we think we are avoiding pain, but all we are doing is living for pleasure. Love makes one vulnerable as is described in Matt 5:39-47.

Matt 5:39-47 But I say unto you, That ye resist not evil: but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also.

40And if any man will sue thee at the law, and take away thy coat, let him have *thy* cloke also.

41And whosoever shall compel thee to go a mile, go with him twain.

42Give to him that asketh thee, and from him that would borrow of thee turn not thou away.

43Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy.

44But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you;

45That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust.

46For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? do not even the publicans the same?

47And if ye salute your brethren only, what do ye more *than others*? do not even the publicans so?

This is the kind of love that Jesus extended to us.

**c** This passage is the Golden Rule. There are similar statements that are made by others, but what is unique about the Golden Rule is that it is proactive. It does not wait to react to what is done to us either in retribution or reward or even by not-reacting. It looks for opportunities to do good without respect to what others do or don't do. Other religions are similar, but none carry the idea of pro-activity:

Ancient Egypt - Now this is the command: Do to the doer to make him do. That which you hate to be done to you, do not do to another.

Sanskrit - One should never do something to others that one would regard as an injury to one's own self. In brief, this is dharma. Anything else is succumbing to desire.

Tamil - Do not do to others what you know has hurt yourself.

Ancient Greece - Avoid doing what you would blame others for doing. What you do not want to happen to you, do not do it yourself either.

Ancient Persia - That nature alone is good which refrains from doing to another whatsoever is not good for itself.

Ancient Rome - Treat your inferior as you would wish your superior to treat you.

Hillel the Elder - What is hateful to you, do not do to your fellow: this is the whole Torah; the rest is the explanation; go and learn.

Buddhism - Hurt not others in ways that you yourself would find hurtful.

– [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/\\_Rule](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/_Rule)

282. What proves that our love is real?

a. When we love people when it is easy

**b. When we love people who don't deserve it**

c. When we love people through hard times

Luke 6:32-36 For if ye love them which love you, what thank have ye? for sinners also love those that love them.

33And if ye do good to them which do good to you, what thank have ye? for sinners also do even the same.

34And if ye lend *to them* of whom ye hope to receive, what thank have ye? for sinners also lend to sinners, to receive as much again.

35But love ye your enemies, and do good, and lend, hoping for nothing again; and your reward shall be great, and ye shall be the children of the Highest: for he is kind unto the unthankful and *to* the evil.

36Be ye therefore merciful, as your Father also is merciful.

**a,c** It is possible that someone has love when it is easy or even through hard times. This is just as easily mistaken for loving someone because of what you

can get out of it.

**b** Love works when we only want the best for others. When there is nothing to gain then the only thing that is left is that we want the best for someone else.

283. Who deserves our love?

- a. No one**
- b. People who *can* reward us
- c. People who *will* reward us

Matt 5:46-47 For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? do not even the publicans the same?

47And if ye salute your brethren only, what do ye more *than others*? do not even the publicans so?

**b,c** Love operates *in spite of* what we can gain.

**a** *No one deserves* love. As stewards of God, we owe it to others to deliver the love that was given to us by God *for* them.

284. How does God demonstrate His universal mercy?

- a. He overlooks everyone's sin
- b. He makes everyone happy
- c. He provides rain and sunshine on the face of the whole earth**

Matt 5:45 That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust.

Luke 6:36 Be ye therefore merciful, as your Father also is merciful.

**a** God does not overlook sin at all. If anything, He dealt with it on the cross.

**b** God does not seek to make everyone happy, but everyone holy. If we are holy, then we will have the joy of the Lord.

**c** Grace is receiving what we do not deserve. Mercy is not receiving what we *do* deserve. By not giving us judgment, and instead giving us the good, God demonstrates both grace and mercy. Matthew emphasizes the aspect of mercy in that the evil and the unjust do not get what they deserve but receive grace instead.

285. How can our attitude demonstrate the perfection of God in our lives?

- a. By being kind and extending mercy to everyone**
- b. By never sinning
- c. By avoiding all commitments so that we can't fail

Matt 5:48 Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.

**b** Moral perfection is not possible to achieve by our obedience to the Law.

**c** Taking no action to avoid failure leads to sins of omission.

Jas 4:17 Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth *it* not, to him it is sin.

**a** The idea of perfection here is not that of moral perfection, but perfection in an entirely different sense. It has the idea of achieving a goal that was intended or to fulfill a purpose. If we are to fulfill all that God intended for us to do then we will be kind and extend mercy to all around us.

Eph 2:10 For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.

## Almsgiving

286. When do we benefit from our almsgiving?

a. When people can take note and reward us

**b. When we do them in secret**

c. When we promote our selves enough

Matt 6:1-4 Take heed that ye do not your alms before men, to be seen of them: otherwise ye have no reward of your Father which is in heaven.

2Therefore when thou doest *thine* alms, do not sound a trumpet before thee, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may have glory of men.

Verily I say unto you, They have their reward.

3But when thou doest alms, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth:

4That thine alms may be in secret: and thy Father which seeth in secret himself shall reward thee openly.

**a** When we do our alms because of what we can get, then we will only get the earthly reward, and not what God has for us. This is the kind of thing that drives politics, not as though all politicians are guilty of this. Generally speaking, neither politicians nor the mafia bless you with anything without strings attached.

**b** When we do our alms in secret, then there is less question that we are doing them because of what we can get.

**c** Churches might look like they are promoting themselves by reporting on their work. They risk looking like they are seeking the blessing of praise for how many people they are feeding, how many handouts they are distributing, or how they are helping people. The purpose of the reporting might be to attract people to join in the work, but it can also be mistakenly construed as looking for the praise of men. Maybe the photographs of the almsgiving could focus in only on the hands giving rather than the personalities doing the work.

287. How should we pray?
- a. With enough eloquence to impress those listening
  - b. The way you would in a private conversation with no one to impress**
  - c. With enough eloquence to move the sovereign God

Matt 6:5-6 And when thou prayest, thou shalt not be as the hypocrites *are*: for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of men. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward.

6But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly.

**a** A implies B: our eloquence might move men, but not God. Some people might be genuine because they learned to pray with *thees and thous*. Thee, thou, thy, and thine serve a purpose, especially in distinguishing between the singular from the plural, which uses you and you. People might consider not praying so eloquently in public as an example to younger believers that they should not be discouraged by their simple prayers. On the other hand, this does not mean that it is wrong to prepare to pray in public. It is good to let someone know you are going to call on them to pray so they have a chance to gather their thoughts since they are responsible to be bringing the hearts of the people before God. Written prayers run the risk of sounding like literature, rather than the expression of one's heart.

**b** Since we should avoid showing off in prayer but seek a more intimate relationship with God, we should not be quick to put on airs with God. Praying privately allows for the ability to double back on our thoughts with God, to pause, interrupt ourselves, reflect, etc.

**c** Some have tried to make the distinction between the prayers of the lost and the prayers of the saved by suggesting that He is obligated to hear and answer the prayers of the saved. God certainly does hear the prayers of the lost; He is omniscient. The word *sovereign* is used here to highlight the fact that God is not *obligated* to answer any prayers whatsoever, no matter how we pray.

This statement about prayer is included here with almsgiving because it speaks to the issue of the motivation of the reward that comes from showing off before men. It also serves as an introduction to the next section on the Lord's model prayer.

## Prayer

288. What is a way to not have insincere prayer?
- a. By chanting a mystic syllable to bring you into awareness of the physical reality of this world
  - b. By repeating an official prayer over and over
  - c. By speaking with simplicity and straightforwardly with God**

Matt 6:7-8 But when ye pray, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen *do*: for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking.

8Be not ye therefore like unto them: for your Father knoweth what things ye have need of, before ye ask him.

The key to this question is the problem of repetition. Repetition quickly becomes vain, or empty, because it does not require thought. In a less significant way, it is like the small chit chat we engage in for polite but relatively meaningless conversation. This could be like how we refer to the weather when we greet someone, or ask how they are doing. A and B refer to two ways that this is commonly done.

**a** A refers to Pagan mystical practice in the use of a mantra. There's an awful lot that can be said about a mantra but generally speaking

A mantra...is a sacred utterance, a numinous sound [having a strong religious or spiritual quality; indicating or suggesting the presence of a divinity], a syllable, word or phonemes, or group of words...believed by practitioners to have religious, magical or spiritual powers...At its simplest, the word [Aum, Om] serves as a mantra...believed to be the first sound which was originated on earth. Aum sound when produced creates a reverberation in the body which helps the body and mind to be calm. In more sophisticated forms, mantras are melodic phrases with spiritual interpretations such as a human longing for truth, reality, light, immortality, peace, love, knowledge, and action.

– <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mantra>

A mantra is often used for the purpose of centering and does not have to be limited to Eastern Mysticism. Notice the idea of opening oneself up to other powers in this description:

- Allow your heart to open toward that invisible but always present Origin of all that exists
- Whenever you become aware of a thought, no matter what its nature, let it go.
- Use a "sacred word".

This is a word or short phrase that helps you to let go of thoughts. It is a reminder of your intention to remain open to the silence. Generally sacred words fall into one of 2 categories: "God" words/phrases such as "Abba", "Jesu", "Mary", "Reality", "Come Lord" or "state" words/phrases such as "love", "peace", "be still". Sacred words are not used as mantras, as in constantly repeating them, but as a reminder of your intention to remain open. [The website this comes from claims that this is not a mantra but this is highly debateable especially since a mantra is used for the same purpose]

– <https://www.contemplative.org/contemplative-practice/centering-prayer/>

These methods call for the *abandonment* of thought, which would leave someone open for other spiritual influence.

**b** B refers to religious practice that finds spiritual empowerment through the use of religious forms. This is commonly found in "praying the rosary," but can be done with other prayers and found in other religions as well. Buddhists and Moslems use prayer beads and prayer wheels, for example.

**c** C refers to how we should go to God with simple communication as in genuine conversation.

289. What prayer did Jesus give us?

- a. The Lord's Prayer so we can repeat it often
- b. A model for prayer to remind us of the kinds of things to pray about**
- c. The Hail Mary so we can get assistance from Mary

Matt 6:9 After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name.

**a** A is going to be wrong because we are not supposed to be using empty repetition. We should note that Jesus uses the word *therefore* connecting the previous concept of not praying with vain repetition to this model prayer indicating that the model prayer is something to not repeat.

**c** C refers to how some people will use an unscriptural approach to prayer such as in the Roman Catholic "Hail Mary". This fits specifically into the category of idolatry by placing someone above God, in this case, Jesus Christ.

1Tim 2:5 For *there is* one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus;

This portion is commonly called the Lord's Prayer. The actual Lord's Prayer appears in John 17 where Jesus actually prays for the believers. Those who are more particular call this the Lord's *Model* Prayer. If you want to improve your prayer life it is good to study this model prayer.

**b** There are many times when I will be running through the Lord's Model Prayer in my head when I go to pray publicly so that I have a clue about the kinds of things that I should be praying for. This model prayer is like an outline, road map, or recipe. When we go to take a trip it is good to map out the route we are going to take. But no one enjoys the trip and the scenery by looking the map. When we go to prepare a meal it is good to have a recipe. But, no matter how tasty the recipe sounds, we don't eat the recipe, we eat the meal. The full experience of the trip, the meal, and communion with the Lord through prayer do not happen just by reading the map the recipe or the prayer. The following elements of Christ's teaching on prayer are presented in the order as Jesus gave them.

290. What do we have to make sure of before we go to God in prayer?

- a. That we are His child**
- b. That we are addressing God who is the Father of all
- c. That we have God's attention since He is far away in heaven

Matt 6:9 After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name.

**b** B refers to the way people think that God hears all prayers because He is the Father of all. Although He is omniscient, the model prayer as constituted cannot be used by someone who is *not* a child of God. As we saw in previous questions, God is the Father only of those who are born again. Only a child of God is able to say "Father" and *genuinely* seek His will on earth. If someone is not a child of God, he cannot genuinely seek God's will because that would mean he would want to be saved.

**c** C points out the absurdity of some assumption that praying to our Father in heaven indicates that He is far off from us. This is the concept that some have as Deism, the belief in the existence of a supreme being, specifically of a creator who does not intervene in the universe. The term is used chiefly of an intellectual movement of the 17th and 18th centuries that accepted the existence of a creator on the basis of reason but rejected belief in a supernatural deity who interacts with humankind. (From *Definitions from Oxford Languages*) Deism arose out of a reaction to Calvinism where a hyper-sovereignty where one could conclude that God is the author of evil. Paul distinctly deals with this:

Acts 17:24-31 God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands;  
25Neither is worshipped with men's hands, as though he needed any thing, seeing he giveth to all life, and breath, and all things;  
26And hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation;  
27That they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him, and find him, though he be not far from every one of us:  
28For in him we live, and move, and have our being; as certain also of your own poets have said, For we are also his offspring.  
29Forasmuch then as we are the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the Godhead is like unto gold, or silver, or stone, graven by art and man's device.  
30And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent:  
31Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by *that* man whom he hath ordained; *whereof* he hath given assurance unto all *men*, in that he hath raised him from the dead.

We refer to this passage because it speaks of the immanence of God, but we must remember that Paul is speaking of being the offspring as those generated by God, not as sons of God. The word for offspring is *genos*, from which we *genes* and is often translated *kind* or to speak of being related to someone. He does not claim that God is the *Father* of all as he quotes Arstus of Tarsus, a pagan poet. When referring to the children of God, *huios* is used. Paul described how God is active in the affairs of men.

**a** A refers to the special relationship we have with God to be able to speak in terms of the rest of the elements of the prayer. We have to be careful to approach God with an appreciation for the relationship we have with Him as His child, born again into His family, with a special standing in Christ. As



children, we look to Him for His wise guidance and asking all things according to that divine wisdom, willing to follow Him obediently.

291. What is revealed about God through His name?

- a. That He is our pal
- b. That He is our genie
- c. That His many names speak of His character**

Matt 6:9 After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name.

A and B refer to two mistakes people make when approaching God.

**a** A refers to the problem of over familiarity. We read

Rom 8:15 For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father.

Some point out the use of the familiar reference to the use of *Abba*. We should be careful to not over use this familiarity to the point of losing the sense of awe we should have that is described all through the Bible.

**b** B might be considered the opposite of over familiarity while still diminishing the sense of awe we should have. We should not treat God as merely someone Who lives to merely do our bidding. Having God as a genie His sovereignty with our own.

**c** One consideration to make in prayer is to rehearse the names of God in the Bible. In Exodus we read that God's most personal name is Jehovah, or *the one who is*, which speaks of His transcendent holiness. Other names have been used to describe different aspects of God and His work. As we consider each one, it brings us into a deeper understanding of God and His character. It gives us a sense of awe and respect for Him.

292. What should we be looking forward to?

- a. For God to bless our plans
- b. For oneness with the universe
- c. His coming kingdom**

Matt 6:10 Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as *it is* in heaven.

**b** B refers to the pantheistic notion that All of god's creation is part of god. For example, the goal of Hinduism is to achieve a consciousness of being part of Brahman, the world soul.

A Brahmatman is one whose Atman has become one with Brahman; One who has found his identity with the Self everywhere. He is called Brahmavid, the knower of Brahman.

– Swami Chinmayananda

This is in contrast to God who transcends the universe at the same time that He pervades the universe by His omnipresence. God is sovereign over the universe, the universe is not God.

**a** A is a reference to how we often are looking for God to empower and cause our plans and efforts to succeed as *we* have determined them. Instead, we should be asking Him to bless us as we fit into His agenda and plans.

**c** We should be more concerned about the Second Coming of Christ where His will will truly be done on earth. Our plans and our lives should be part of the work toward that kingdom. Our work will not bring *on* and usher in the final kingdom as amillennialists have taught. Our work is to bring souls to the kingdom of God who will then participate in the final Kingdom and on into eternity.

293. What should we be seeking for in this life?

a. God's approval

**b. God's will as it is exercised in heaven**

c. God's judgment on people who we disapprove of

Matt 6:10 Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as *it is* in heaven.

**a** A suggests a *works for salvation* sense. We are not earning points depending on what we present to God. We should have a sense of God's glory when we approach Him, not a concern about our worthiness before Him. There is nothing worthy that we have ever done. Instead, all that we might offer Him that *is* worthy is *Christ's* work in us.

**c** Seeking God's judgement on the world totally misses the point of prayer. We are not God's avengers bringing people for Him to judge with an emphasis on whom *we* disapprove. God's will in heaven is that none should perish. His will in heaven is especially demonstrated by what actually goes on *in* heaven.

Luke 15:10 Likewise, I say unto you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth.

**b** Our desire should be to see God's rule in our personal lives to the same degree that we see His rule in heaven. We should be careful of this, however. God is going to have His will done on earth and heaven no matter what. Our *desire* should be for His will. The opposite of *desire* for His will is not desire for our will. The opposite is *rejection* of His will. His will is going to be carried out no matter what. If we live with a *desire* for His will we will be blessed. If we live *rejecting* His will, He will exercise His will anyway which, in this case, be our shame and destruction. Pray for His will, but be sure you are on the right side of that will.

294. What can we ask for from God?

**a. Our daily needs**

- b. A fat bank account to take care of us for the rest of our life
- c. Everything we think will make us happy

Matt 6:11 Give us this day our daily bread.

**b** God may indeed give us a fat bank account to take care of us the rest of our lives. If you get the fat bank account, though, that does not mean that you are going to be secure for the rest of your life. An economic collapse, a health crisis, and death to an account by a thousand cuts could wipe out the account. Our hope should not be in this world's wealth.

1John 2:15-17 Love not the world, neither the things *that are* in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.

16For all that *is* in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world.

17And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever.

**c** Turning to God is not about making *us* happy according to our lusts, but being happy in Christ (by virtue of being one with Him and knowing Him in our heart of hearts).

Jas 5:1-6 Go to now, *ye* rich men, weep and howl for your miseries that shall come upon *you*.

2Your riches are corrupted, and your garments are motheaten.

3Your gold and silver is cankered; and the rust of them shall be a witness against you, and shall eat your flesh as it were fire. Ye have heaped treasure together for the last days.

4Behold, the hire of the labourers who have reaped down your fields, which is of you kept back by fraud, crieth: and the cries of them which have reaped are entered into the ears of the Lord of sabaoth.

5Ye have lived in pleasure on the earth, and been wanton; ye have nourished your hearts, as in a day of slaughter.

6Ye have condemned *and* killed the just; *and* he doth not resist you.

Jas 4:1-6 From whence *come* wars and fightings among you? *come they* not hence, *even* of your lusts that war in your members?

2Ye lust, and have not: ye kill, and desire to have, and cannot obtain: ye fight and war, yet ye have not, because ye ask not.

3Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume *it* upon your lusts.

4Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God.

5Do ye think that the scripture saith in vain, The spirit that dwelleth in us lusteth to envy?

6But he giveth more grace. Wherefore he saith, God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble.

**a** In the next part we will discuss why we should only be concerned about our daily needs, but it is sufficient to contrast our day by day dependence on God rather than placing confidence on our power over the future.

295. Once we have recognized the goodness of God, what are we ready to consider?
- How we can impress God with how good we are
  - Our sinful estate compared to how holy God is**
  - How much we love God

Matt 6:12 And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.

**a** Sometimes friends get together and will patiently listen to each other till they have a chance to share how interesting *they* are.

**c** It might seem logical that after considering so much of God's goodness that it would drive us to love, but there is an intermediate step as described in B.

**b** This verse placed here speaks to a common pattern in the Scriptures. God often points out His goodness to us in order to present a contrast with our sinfulness. By presenting how good He is, we are able to see how gracious He is, how undeserving we are, and therefore our debt to Him whether by grace or, more likely, our sin which makes His grace so much clearer.

296. Read 1Cor 10:13. If God's plans must cause us to pass through times of temptations, what should we pray that we understand from God?
- His way of deliverance out of the temptation**
  - Why He is tempting us
  - How we can recover from our sin

Matt 6:13 And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen.

Before considering 1Cor 10:13, look at the false answers.

**b** God does not tempt anyone.

Jas 1:13-15 Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man:  
14But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed.  
15Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death.

Some have a problem with the idea that God *could* lead us into sinful temptation. Temptation does refer to sinful temptations, but also often refers to trials, as in James 1:

Jas 1:2-4 My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations;  
3Knowing *this*, that the trying of your faith worketh patience.  
4But let patience have *her* perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing.

Because *lead* is in the subjunctive mood, there is an implication that we might not go through the ultimate trials. Or, may it be that I will not have to face the ultimate trials. Or also, if it is possible to escape the ultimate trials, may it be so. The implication is that if I have to go through the ultimate trials, our prayer is to be delivered from the troubles (evil). By evil could be meant the troubles of the situation that we would escape or that we would face the worst effect of the temptation of our trials, which would include the possibility of sinful failure.

**c** There are Scriptures that deal with recovery after we have given into sin, but the emphasis of this part of the prayer is on not getting into that position.

1Cor 10:13 There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God *is* faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear *it*.

Reasons not to fall into sin:

- Shame and the loss of ability to bless others. In our sense of love, we would be devastated to see others turn away from us because of distrust due to a ruined reputation.
- The fact that our brains and souls are malleable and *must* be able to conform to a new discipline.
- The intimate knowledge of God and His power in us that comes from reading and knowing His Word.
- The terror of God – have you not read the Old Testament?
- The fear of aiding Satan.
- The fear of others going to Hell because of our ruined testimony.

297. What should all the circumstances God takes us through lead to?

- a. A thorough understanding of God's glory**
- b. A happy life
- c. Salvation through suffering

Matt 6:13 And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen.

**b** A happy life is far too weak an aspiration. Reading the book of Ecclesiastes about the vanity of all that is done under the sun should put any hope of ultimate happiness on earth into perspective.

**c** There are those who believe that those who go through the ultimate suffering, martyrdom, are saved because of that suffering.

According to Christian doctrine, martyrdom renders the soul of the martyr worthy of immediate entrance into heaven. The Church prays to the martyrs but has never prayed for the martyrs.

– catholicculture.org/culture/library/view.cfm?recnum=8633

Others think that suffering on this earth is a kind of purgatory where we pay for our sins through suffering. We should not associate any suffering that we might face as part of the salvation process. Suffering might come because of sin *or* for righteousness sake, but it does not atone for sin. Only the suffering of Jesus on the cross atones for our sin.

**a** The ultimate fruit of the effect on our lives if our prayers according to this pattern are answered is the glory of God.

298. Why can we not find forgiveness by not forgiving others' trespasses?

- a. God will get even with us for not being nice to others
- b. We have to make peace with our enemies so we can deserve to be forgiven
- c. If we do not understand the nature of grace then we cannot ask for it in the time of forgiveness from God**

Matt 6:14-15 For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you:

15But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.

**a** God is not vindictive as A implies.

**b** There is nothing we could ever do to have us *deserve* to be forgiven. If we merit righteousness then we do not *need* forgiveness.

**c** This emphasis on forgiving others goes to the issue of why only those who are saved could pray this prayer. If we cannot forgive others because we think there is nothing that could be done to make up for their offense, then that demonstrates we don't even know what forgiveness is. If you do not know what forgiveness is, then how can you ask for it from God. This then is the underlying power in the whole prayer: as a forgiven one you are then able to enter into the Lord's model prayer.

299. When adding fasting to our prayers, what should we be sure to focus on?

- a. How we encourage others to piety by our sad and suffering appearance
- b. The spiritual effect, not the outward appearance, of fasting**
- c. The healthful and energizing purging of toxins from our system

Matt 6:16-18 Moreover when ye fast, be not, as the hypocrites, of a sad countenance: for they disfigure their faces, that they may appear unto men to fast. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward.

17But thou, when thou fastest, anoint thine head, and wash thy face;

18That thou appear not unto men to fast, but unto thy Father which is in secret: and thy Father, which seeth in secret, shall reward thee openly.

**c** Fasting might be something that people have come to do today for some health benefit, but that is not the spiritual purpose behind fasting. Remember

from looking at the Beatitudes that fasting is associated with mourning over sin in the Scriptures.

**a,b** *Looking* like you are fasting for the purpose of impressing men will get you what men can provide. People are more encouraged by the strength that God gives us in the time of trial than the strength *we* can muster going through trials.

## Putting God First

300. What is the ultimate end of earthly riches?

- a. They are corrupted and fade away or are subject to theft**
- b. They provide an inheritance to take care of our children
- c. They are confiscated to share with the poor because it is not fair to have money

Matt 6:19 Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal

**b** B represents a very worthwhile purpose for riches, just not for the ultimate *end* of earthly riches. Each individual has a natural right not only to be his own person, but also by extension to that which he produces. This can be seen in the case of intellectual property where others may not lay hold of the benefit derived from your intellectual property, such as music, literature, or design. In the case of physical property, you have the right to the benefit of your physical labor whether it be something you have directly created or attained the right to by the conversion of your labor into a negotiable instrument, such as cash or credit. In the case of B, government is seen as the protector of the rights of the individual.

**c** C presents a different purpose of government as the grantor of rights. If the government determines that you do not have a right to your intellectual or physical property, then it is free to appease the envy of others and redistribute your wealth depending on how it defines fairness. When trying to appease universal envy, the only way it can do so is by giving each individual a fair, or equal, share. This has been demonstrated to discourage and suppress individuals from exercising the initiative to excel.

**a** B and C both deal with the way societies organize themselves to handle day to day commerce, but Jesus put forward a perspective that directs our attention to God and finding true security in Him. *Whatever* system is used, the ultimate end of earthly possessions hangs like a specter over whatever we have. This does not mean that Jesus condemned wealth. He merely called for a sense of reality and lack of dependence on wealth.

301. Where are our true treasures?

- a. In our friendships
- b. In heaven**
- c. In our health

Matt 6:20 But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal:

**a,b** Both A, friendships, and B, health, are of truer and more significant value, but they fall short in that they can also fail.

**c** Our true treasures are laid up in heaven. The best investment we can make in our friends is to bring them to heaven with us. Health is going to fail on earth, but our ultimate health will also be in heaven when we dwell in our resurrected bodies.

302. What ultimately influences our values?

- a. Popular opinion
- b. Government propaganda
- c. What we treasure**

Matt 6:21-25 For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.

22The light of the body is the eye: if therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light.

23But if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great *is* that darkness!

24No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.

25Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment?

**c** Popular opinion and government propaganda are certainly used to shape people's opinions, but the ultimate influence on what we value is what we treasure. If we treasure earthly wealth, then our values will be more mercenary. If we treasure family, we will be more inclined to protect them and value relationships. According to vs. 25, life is more than meat and the body is more than how raiment (which could include not only the trinkets we wear but how we are adorned by our cars, houses, and other riches). If we treasure God then a whole new world of values open up to us. We have to be careful to remember that we cannot serve two masters and must choose between God and earthly riches. The interesting thing is that we can retain the earthly riches by putting them into God's employ.

**a** We can see the danger of public opinion when it is used as part of the *Cancel Culture* where people's lives and livelihoods are destroyed. This used to be a problem just in junior and senior high school bullying but can reach its tentacles into entertainment, research, government work, etc.



**b** Government propaganda is the result of popular opinion becoming institutionalized. The danger of this can be seen in the promotion of the "alphabet" (LGBQ....Z) agenda, or the socialist agenda, etc., in public policy.

303. How is God's provision illustrated all around us?

- a. How everyone has everything they could want
- b. How God helps those who helps themselves
- c. How God sustains the beauty of nature**

Matt 6:26-29 Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they?

27Which of you by taking thought can add one cubit unto his stature?

28And why take ye thought for raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin:

29And yet I say unto you, That even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these.

**a** God does not just dump on everyone whatever they want. When we do this to children we called them spoiled. One group of adults we do this to is called *Hollywood*. There is another group we do this to called *the homeless*. Except for special circumstances, the homeless strangely qualify to be included here. It is not as though they are given everything they want, but there are many who *do* want to be given and *depend on* being given whatever they want. They are not necessarily willing to change in responsibility to attain what they want and end up spoiled, truly, to discover that the world is not willing to comply with what they want.

**b** Referring to the exceptions among the homeless, we have to face the fact that we have no guarantee that if we simply work hard we can achieve. "God helps those who help themselves" has some Biblical truth to it, but this is not actually found as a verse in the Bible. While there are some great motivational success stories of people who have gone from rags to riches, we have to remember that there is nothing guaranteed in this life.

**c** We *can* see that God is at work as He provides for things in nature strictly by His grace. Flowers do not work and birds do not labor in *gainful* employment. Whatever we see in nature that is good is there simply because God is good. If our definition of good, however, is simply that we have pleasure on earth then we open up a lot of problems. However, the concept that Jesus is developing here is dependence on God which will carry us through difficult as well as good times.

304. How should our priorities be set?

- a. Be sure to love yourself so that you can be free to love others
- b. Replacing our agenda with God's agenda**
- c. Take care of our physical needs first because poverty and hunger distract us from God

Matt 6:30-34 Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which to day is, and to morrow is cast into the oven, *shall he* not much more *clothe* you, O ye of little faith?

31Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed?

32(For after all these things do the Gentiles seek:) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things.

33But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.

34Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day *is* the evil thereof.

**c** Having food programs is not bad to do and can even be good to do. However, this has nothing to do with being able to turn people's attention to God. One of the great false notions about reaching people is that you have to take care of their physical needs first before you can talk to them about God. It is true that people *allow* themselves to be distracted by their circumstances, but this is often just a mask for their general rejection of God. Even when people get what they "need" they find that they are still unsatisfied and "need" just a little bit more, always pushing God off. This also applies to believers. They can also allow themselves to be distracted by not quite having what they "need." It is something like the person who bargains with God for relief and when God answers his prayer he responds, "Never mind God, I have everything under control!" People have to consider their spiritual state in spite of and apart from their physical state.

**a** Having to love yourself first before you can be free to love others is one of the most ridiculous ideas that is popularly promoted. It qualifies as one of the most because it is founded on the most basic problem of self-centeredness. All sin can be traced back to self-centeredness. If love is wanting the best for someone, then loving self becomes the excuse for the greatest sin against others as live like animals who truly put self needs ahead of others. If, as by the world's standards, love is an emotion then loving and feeling good about self will never be sufficiently fulfilled.

**b** Sometimes what you want is a savory saltine cracker. At just the right moment a cup of coffee and a fresh buttered roll is a feast. If we are driven by envy of what we don't have we won't be able to enjoy what God *has* given us. After years of experience, I can confirm that there is absolutely no greater experience than bringing someone to God, or at least closer to God. God's agenda is the most fulfilling agenda. Chasing off after satisfaction in this life will never be fulfilled. Always worrying about tomorrow and trying to secure the morrow is impossible. Knowing that God will take care of us in His way for what we *truly* need should free us up to pursue Godliness in our service to Him. In the worst of circumstances we should be able to find strength and joy in serving Him.

## Judging

305. How shall we judge?

**a. Cautiously**

b. Not at all because it is wrong to judge

c. Freely because it is so pleasant to people to have their faults pointed out

Matt 7:1-2 Judge not, that ye be not judged.

2For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged: and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again.

**b** The most naive and common attitude about exercising judgment is that it is unconditionally wrong. The knee jerk reaction to criticism is that it is *categorically* wrong and should never be used, that is, there is no circumstance where judgment is used. What is amazing is that no one who ever criticizes "judgmental" people realize that in order to do so they are being judgmental themselves! These verses do not teach that we should not judge at all, but to be careful in judgment.

**c** C is the opposite of B. Exercising judgment and discernment can be complicated because it is not just about using simple logic when judging someone. Although sparing someone's feelings does not render judging to be wrong, we have to be careful how we frame our message so that it is the most effective. This could include, among many other things, considering someone's feelings. We might ask, are there faults due to being under-informed, having less ability, or a sinful attitude?

**a** We need to be cautious as we proceed because judgment can actually be complicated. Christian love is not blind.

Ph 1:9,10 And this I pray, that your love may abound yet more and more in knowledge and *in* all judgment;

10**That ye may approve things that are excellent;** that ye may be sincere and without offence till the day of Christ;

306. What might the effect of our judgment of others be?

**a. Our hypocrisy will be judged**

b. Our mercy towards others might go unrewarded

c. People will think that we are very wise and discerning

Matt 7:2-4 For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged: and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again.

3And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye?

4Or how wilt thou say to thy brother, Let me pull out the mote out of thine eye; and, behold, a beam *is* in thine own eye?

Luke 6:37-40 Judge not, and ye shall not be judged: condemn not, and ye shall not be condemned: forgive, and ye shall be forgiven:

38 Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom. For with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again.

39 And he spake a parable unto them, Can the blind lead the blind? shall they not both fall into the ditch?

40 The disciple is not above his master: but every one that is perfect shall be as his master.

**b** The principle of giving and receiving can actually work two ways: we might receive judgment or mercy pressed down, shaken together, and running over. The placement of giving and receiving in Luke could make it look like Jesus is referring to forgiveness only being meted out in kind, but Matthew does not include the idea of forgiveness so we can see that judgment is included in the measure we could receive.

**c** When we go to judge someone, we usually think we have it all figured out how someone will respond and we are ready with counter-arguments. We are often surprised to find that we did *not* anticipate everything possible. Our expectation is that they will be amazed at how wise and discerning we are and then humbly repent and comply.

**a** The more natural reaction is for someone to look for some fault in you (even though that is a false way of arguing). This might be done for various reasons. Perhaps they are looking for a sense of mercy and understanding so they don't have to feel so bad. They might also hope that your judgment would be softened because if you had done the same thing then you should understand that you probably used the same reasoning they had and so they were at least somewhat justified in what they had done. They also might try to get rid of your influence by getting you to recuse yourself because you are just as guilty, as if this would nullify your argument leaving them to feel comfortable to continue in their sin.

307. What should we do before judging others?

a. Consider how we would feel if others judged us

b. Be ready to make people pay for their offenses

**c. Make sure we have taken care of the same problem in our own lives**

Matt 7:5 Thou hypocrite, first cast out the beam out of thine own eye; and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye.

**a,c** A is significant, but not sufficient. Of course we should consider ourselves, but then we should act to take care of the sin we find!

**b** The purpose of judgment is not retribution, but restoration; this should characterize our outlook and perception. It is possible that it might require making restitution, but not necessarily.

308. How valuable is our judgment even if we have not taken care of the same problem in our own lives?

a. Our solutions are always valuable even if they don't work for us

**b. It is like the blind leading the blind**

c. Each person's truth has something to offer others

**a** A is a reference to how we deceive ourselves into thinking that the ways that never work for us are of any value. Sometimes we do the things we do because they are right, even if the world in its rebellion and doing what is right doesn't seem to be successful. It might seem unsuccessful because we judge success by what the world calls success. However, this is different from thinking that we are so clever and apply ourselves to methods that can't actually work. Before we can offer advice to anyone, we should make sure that those things have worked on *ourselves*.

**c** It is common for people to avoid applying truth to their own lives because of a lack of confidence in what *is* truth. When exercising judgment, the effect of post-modern thinking makes people emphasize the value of their imaginations. Post-modernism resists the significance of objective truth because of its emphasis on how our filters, wishful-thinking, and misperceptions alter our ability to accurately report reality. It is common for people to speak of *their* truth. This might make sense if what they are talking about is only the true things that make up their experience like climbing a mountain. If you had not climbed a mountain then your truth is that walking is very natural while the truth about their experience is that walking uphill can be laborious. However, "speaking their truth" becomes a problem when your living responsibly, which is your truth, turns into being an oppressor according to someone else's truth. You upholding the law might not be convenient to someone else and so you may be judged and penalized for lawful behavior. The penalty will often be social or physical, but not legal. If we are not truthful about the truth as demonstrated by correcting our own heart and actions, we are no better than others who are speaking their truth.

**b** The idea of the blind leading the blind indicates that at some point someone has got to open their eyes to the truth not only about others, but about themselves, also, in order to properly judge.

309. How freely should we offer our judgment?

a. Very freely because people love to hear about their faults

b. Cautiously because people might use your advice to advance ahead of you

**c. Cautiously because people might not be ready to receive what you have to say**

Matt 7:6 Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn again and rend you.

This question is similar to 305, which was about the *nature* and *way* we should judge. Here, the issue is how *freely* we should judge.

**a,c** Because people are poised to resist any advice or challenge, we need to not be so free with our counsel.

Prov 9:8 Reprove not a scorner, lest he hate thee: rebuke a wise man, and he will love thee.

Prov 23:9 Speak not in the ears of a fool: for he will despise the wisdom of thy words.

There is a very real possibility that people will not only not accept what you offer, they will not be neutral either. In their rebellious human nature they could easily turn on you.

**b** Even though we should be cautious as we confront others, we should not hold back because of envy. Whenever we speak the truth, it should be out of a sense of love, desiring the best for others.

Eph 4:14-15 That we *henceforth* be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, *and* cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive;  
15But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, *even* Christ:

## Asking and Receiving

310. What governs how God will answer our prayers?

- a. He has to give us what we want because we are His children
- b. He gives us according to His goodness**
- c. He gives us what we want according to how earnestly we plead with Him

Matt 7:7-11 Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you:

8For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened.

9Or what man is there of you, whom if his son ask bread, will he give him a stone?

10Or if he ask a fish, will he give him a serpent?

11If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him?

**a** A is a reflection of modern parenting which depends on the concept that children should never have to suffer. Playground equipment is highly debated because of the mentality that child getting hurt is too big of a risk to take. The risk factor is counterintuitive and a no-risk caution can create the problem of "helicopter parents" (parents that hover over their children to make sure they do not suffer). There is a certain amount of growth that takes place when there is risk and limited degrees of danger. We should have a childlike faith, not a childlike maturity.

**b** In God's goodness to us, He answers our prayers according to what we need, not by giving in to our every whim, spoiling us in the process.

**c** Although Jesus' remarks do not reflect the idea of withholding from us as part of God's goodness, His goodness would include *all* that is good. *Whatever* He does is because it is the good thing that we need, even if it is to grow through suffering.

311. Since God is good to us, how should we treat others?

- a. We should do for them as we would have them do for us**
- b. We should do to them what they do to us
- c. We should not do to them what we don't want them to do to us

Matt 7:11-12 If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him?

12Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets.

This question is related to question 281 so check out the discussion there about the Golden rule. The difference in Matthew 7:7-12 is that it is based on God's goodness to us. The concept of God's goodness is referenced in Matthew 5:45 and Luke 6:36, but it is more developed in Matthew 7:7-12.

Matt 5:45 That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust

Luke 6:31,36 And as ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise.

36Be ye therefore merciful, as your Father also is merciful.

**b,c** The previous passages emphasizes that our goodness to others should not depend on their goodness to us. If our goodness is based on others then we are no better than the average person who is polite for the sake of getting along in society, which could be construed as self-centered taking advantage of others. In Matthew 7:7-12, the reason for the Golden Rule (vs. 12) is because of the example set by God as a Father.

312. What is at the heart of the Law and the Prophets?

- a. God's wrath
- b. God's mercy**
- c. God's power

Matt 7:12 Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets.

**a,b** A does not mean that the Law was not created as an excuse for God to be mean to us. The Law and the Prophets is a reference to most of the Old Testament (the poetical books are excluded). The foundation of the Old

Testament is God's desire to show mercy as in B; God's wrath is based on the departure from the Law.

**c** The Law and the Prophets are not founded on the fact that God is bigger and more powerful than us in a might-makes-right sense. God's righteousness is based on His holiness. We should seek Him out not because He threatens us, but because He is righteous.

### **Beware of False Prophets**

313. How shall we find the way of life?

- a. All religions lead us to God if we follow them sincerely
- b. There is only one way to God through the cross**
- c. We make our own way to God by what seems like a good idea to us

Matt 7:13-14 Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide *is* the gate, and broad *is* the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat:

<sup>14</sup>Because strait *is* the gate, and narrow *is* the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.

**c** C represents several problem values that influence the way we seek life. The first is post-modern subjectivity that treats all views as roughly equal so one way is as good as another. The next problem is that this is the lazy way people like to avoid thinking about God because of their general rebellion against Him. A third problem is that this is also blasphemy (even perhaps idolatry), making ourselves out to be God by putting our views ahead of God's.

**a** A is similar to C, but the emphasis here is on the primacy of emotion. It doesn't matter how *strongly* one feels. Even when it comes to following God according to truth, our emotions should come second after we give due consideration to understanding the will of God, we should make a firm, yet simple, commitment to following Him lest we become more impressed with ourselves than being committed to God.

**b** Some people think that being narrowminded is only negative. There are many times when we need to be narrowminded, like doing brain surgery or putting a man on the moon. This should also apply to raising children. There might be latitude as far as how they will apply their natural talents, but teaching them to be responsible before God should not be optional. When it comes to salvation, it is not reasonable that God would send His holy Son to become man and take on the suffering that the world deserves if there were many options to choose from.

314. What will be a clue as to whether a prophet is true?

- a. The true fruit of his ministry**
- b. His success
- c. The largeness of his ministry



Matt 7:16-20 Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles?

17Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit.

18A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither *can* a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit.

19Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire.

20Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them.

**a** There are a number of things that might be considered to be a part of the fruit of one's ministry. It is possible that the largeness of one's ministry or success could be included, but not necessarily so. In the face of great opposition, one's fruit might only consist of the character of the minister (internal fruit). Certainly, the character of the fruit of one's studies should be considered. However, rejection by the hearer's of the messages delivered should not be disqualifying.

**b,c** B and C by themselves are worldly measures of the fruit of ministry. One should hearken to and follow a ministry simply because one is called to serve God. A good preacher is a bonus.

315. How should we regard spiritual leaders?

a. By their eloquence

b. By how they make us feel

**c. By their message that comes from their heart**

Luke 6:45 A good man out of the good treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is good; and an evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is evil: for of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaketh.

**c** In the Sermon on the Plain (Luke), when referring to judgment based on someone's fruit, Jesus adds on that the source of the fruit is the condition of their heart. He associates this with false teachers in the Sermon on the Mount (Matt). The connection that Jesus makes is that the message and the heart are connected and one can be used to judge the other.

**b** A generation that is centered on self will gravitate towards those who cater to their emotions. Offering false confidence and unwarranted hope in a charged atmosphere at church will yield disappointment later in private. We have to be careful to keep in touch with reality, even when we *feel* the strength of Biblical doctrine and principles.

**a** It is important to practice our presentation of the Bible for the sake of maximizing our effectiveness. However, you have to carefully consider at what point a line is crossed and if we are depending on worldly wisdom for backing our arguments. Quoting Mahatma Gandhi or Mother Theresa, for example, might not seem to be a problem when something they said happens to coincide with the Scripture, but it is very easily possible that what they

have said actually has some twist to it that is introduced. It is also possible that the one could be lulled into generally accepting them as wise sources who have clearly false notions. This has proven to be especially true when it comes to quoting someone like Augustine or the *Church Fathers*. People who in their efforts to be very "scholarly" have been drawn into the sin and heresies of Romanism because of the eloquent sophistries of the people they have studied.

1Thess 5:21 Prove all things; hold fast that which is good.

### **Not All Are True Professors**

The Sermon on the Mount and the Sermon on the Plain end with an emphasis on the Biblical foundation for basis of the sermons.

316. What is a way that you can get an idea that someone is a true believer?
- a. If he is serving God in the name of Christ
  - b. If he is obeying and doing the will of God**
  - c. If he sounds sincere

Matt 7:21-22 Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven.

22Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works?

**b** This question goes to the heart of true faith. Salvation is based on the kind of faith *that* works, or *goes* to work. Salvation is not based *on* works. It is popular to be more discerning than other times about the sincerity or genuineness of faith since there are so many who churches claim to have gotten saved but either never make it out to church or stay in very long. It also refers to those who seem to be part of the church but lead worldly lives. We should live a life that is worthy of our profession. It might not *prove* that someone is saved, but it goes a long way to affirming someone's profession.

**c** It doesn't matter how sincere someone *says* they are. I would tell my daughters when they were little that the bad guys sound just like the good guys, which is how they get away with being bad.

**a** There are those who will blasphemously do things in the name of God. Just because someone is doing something in Christ's name doesn't mean it is so. This is demonstrated in the case of the sons of Sceva.

Acts 19:13-16 Then certain of the vagabond Jews, exorcists, took upon them to call over them which had evil spirits the name of the Lord Jesus, saying, We adjure you by Jesus whom Paul preacheth.

14And there were seven sons of *one* Sceva, a Jew, *and* chief of the priests, which did so.

15And the evil spirit answered and said, Jesus I know, and Paul I know; but who are ye?

<sup>16</sup>And the man in whom the evil spirit was leaped on them, and overcame them, and prevailed against them, so that they fled out of that house naked and wounded.

317. What will Jesus say to those who served in His name but were not true servants?

- a. **Depart from Me, I *never* knew you**
- b. Depart from Me, I knew you once but you lost your salvation
- c. Welcome home, you great imitator of me

Matt 7:23 And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.

**c** It is popular to claim to be a *follower* of Jesus Christ to make the distinction from someone who is merely *professing* Jesus. However, as with all attempts to be concise and pithy, something is open for misapplication. There are Buddhists, Hindus, and Moslems who claim to be *followers* of Christ. Jesus was not just a great example, He provided Himself as the great Savior.

**a,b** A and B are related. Some who believe that you can lose salvation will point to this passage and miss the fact that the ones Jesus was talking about were not those who *lost* their salvation, but never had it to begin with.

318. What is our sure foundation?

- a. **The sure Word of Christ**
- b. The sure word of our sincere beliefs
- c. The sure word of our best philosophy

Matt 7:26-27 And every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand:

<sup>27</sup>And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall of it.

**b,c** B and C are related to discussions we have had on post-modern thinking that does not hold to objective truth or that truth is not *knowable*. If all things are true, then nothing is true. Our "truths" are as sure as we are able to guarantee them.

**a** Since God is the One who guarantees His Word, it is indeed secure. All of our doctrine must be founded on the Word of God, otherwise it is so much opinion. When you teach your opinions, then people will be free to offer theirs as they object to yours...and it will be perfectly reasonable for them to do so.

2Tim 3:16-17 All scripture *is* given by inspiration of God, and *is* profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:

<sup>17</sup>That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.

We need to be careful to let Scripture interpret Scripture as we compare different Scriptures together.

2Pet 1:20 Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation.

We must be careful to not be like the cults, adding on clever (and not so clever) writings to go by.

Col 2:8 Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ.

319. Why were people astonished at Jesus' doctrine?

- a. Jesus spoke in nebulous terms that anyone could fit to their personal theology
- b. Jesus spoke in soundbites that were easy to quote
- c. Jesus did not depend on the authority of commentators**

Matt 7:28-29 And it came to pass, when Jesus had ended these sayings, the people were astonished at his doctrine:

29For he taught them as *one* having authority, and not as the scribes.

**a,b,c** Jesus was incisive, not vague, without boiling things down too much. He did not rely on the Talmud. The Talmud is the source from which the code of Jewish *Halakhah* (law) is derived. It is made up of the Mishnah and the Gemara. The Mishnah is the original written version of the oral law and the Gemara is the record of the rabbinic discussions following this writing down. Jesus must have been refreshing in His teaching without having to resort to numerous others for accreditation or confirmation.

## 47 - Healing of the Centurion's Servant

320. As a Gentile, how did the centurion show ethnic sensitivity in his approach to Christ?

- a. He spoke to Him through the Jewish elders and then his friends**
- b. He came to Him secretly at night
- c. He sent Him money to pay for the healing

Luke 7:3,6,9,10 And when he heard of Jesus, he sent unto him the elders of the Jews, beseeching him that he would come and heal his servant.

6Then Jesus went with them. And when he was now not far from the house, the centurion sent friends to him, saying unto him, Lord, trouble not thyself: for I am not worthy that thou shouldst enter under my roof:

9When Jesus heard these things, he marvelled at him, and turned him about, and said unto the people that followed him, I say unto you, I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel.

10And they that were sent, returning to the house, found the servant whole that had been sick.

**b** Unlike Nicodemus, the Centurion was much more bold, even though he was sensitive to Jewish sensibilities to not approach Jesus very directly.

**c** In one sense, to offer to pay for services is a respectful thing to do. I will often have someone not associated with how I generally operate and inquire how much I "charge" for doing a wedding or a funeral. I am always gracious when they might give a gift to show their appreciation later, but I always let them know that there is no charge. I am happy to preach for free, especially when there are more people to attend because of the occasion.

By coming to the Lord on Jesus' terms of healing people openly and freely, the Centurion was acting more in accord with an appreciation for what Jesus was all about.

**a** Luke indicates the exact manner in which the Centurion came to Christ. First he approached Him through the elders and then through his friends.

321. How had the centurion demonstrated his respect for the God of Israel?

a. Some of his best friends were Jewish

**b. He had generously funded the building of a synagogue**

c. He became a proselyte

**c** We don't know whether the Centurion became a proselyte or not. This is not out of the realm of possibility because it was not uncommon in that day. The fact that the Jewish elders were happy to endorse him certainly makes you wonder. However, the description of the Centurion falls short of indicating that he was a proselyte.

**a** Today it is commonly understood that claiming to have friends that are Jewish, black, white, Hispanic, Asian, or whatever else, demonstrates that you're not aware of your racism. This is absolutely ridiculous. Such an accusation reveals that people who made the accusation are not interested in anything that you have to say. Although stereotyping people has limitations it is impossible to avoid. Our brains naturally recognize patterns that would be ill advised to ignore. Even though they are far from absolute, neither are they insignificant. Extreme interpretation of our observations of people will likely reveal improper attitudes. Funding the building of a synagogue by itself is actually not sufficient proof that the Centurion was not a bigot. However, it is hard to imagine that when people are so invested in others that they do not have an affinity for them. Investing ourselves in different kinds of friends while recognizing social stereotypes is not necessarily bad when extremes are avoided. Sometimes those who are the most solicitous towards different ethnicities do not realize how patronizing they might be. They do not realize that their special attention to someone could look like it is only due to the fact that the person is of a different ethnic group. Treating someone special who is of a different ethnic group could easily be done while masking one's true thoughts.

**b** Our investment in each other should not be demeaned. Building the synagogue was consistent with the Centurion's later attitude towards Christ. While we caution people not to do good works for salvation, we should also

recognize that part of their attitude is due to a desire to please God. However, while people are in sin and need to be saved, their sinful dependence on self is only manifested the more they resist the Gospel and create systems for earning their way to heaven. The Jews were obviously thinking in terms of deserving something because of their works, but Jesus will be more impressed with his selflessness exhibited by his submission to Christ.

322. In what way did the centurion show he understood what faith was?
- a. He worked hard at keeping the Ten Commandments
  - b. As a centurion he understood what submission was and was willing to recognize Christ's authority**
  - c. He studied many religions and felt that Judaism was the most useful

Luke 7:6-9 Then Jesus went with them. And when he was now not far from the house, the centurion sent friends to him, saying unto him, Lord, trouble not thyself: for I am not worthy that thou shouldest enter under my roof:

7Wherefore neither thought I myself worthy to come unto thee: but say in a word, and my servant shall be healed.

8For I also am a man set under authority, having under me soldiers, and I say unto one, Go, and he goeth; and to another, Come, and he cometh; and to my servant, Do this, and he doeth *it*.

9When Jesus heard these things, he marvelled at him, and turned him about, and said unto the people that followed him, I say unto you, I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel.

**b** Because the Centurion was a military man, he understood the submission that accompanies discipline. The discipline he experienced went beyond self-discipline. In fact *self*-discipline could lead to pride where someone is tempted to trust in *themselves*, whether for salvation or to not need God. Being in the military, the Centurion would have been required to submit himself to the discipline of those who were over him. Because of this, he would have had an expanded conception of discipline. True faith requires the abandonment of self and submission to God because faith is more than believing that God exists, it is also trusting in Him with your life.

**a** A refers to how people might depend on their *self*-discipline to perform good works to get them to heaven. No matter how much discipline we exercise to behave it will, of course, not be sufficient to pay for our sinfulness. One can be submitted to the Law without submitting themselves to God.

**c** The Centurion did not do, as many today might do, shopping around for a religion that suited his way of life and philosophy. It is like giving a sitting dog a command to sit and then praising him for his obedience. There is no real submission when you conform to a system that you have conformed to your own character. Instead of looking for a religion based on how useful it was, the Centurion submitted himself for the use of God.

323. What did Jesus think about the future of religion?

- a. The Jews would maintain an exclusive religion
- b. The Gentiles would replace Israel
- c. The Gentiles would be part of the kingdom of heaven**

Matt 8:10-12 When Jesus heard *it*, he marvelled, and said to them that followed, Verily I say unto you, I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel.

11And I say unto you, That many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven.

12But the children of the kingdom shall be cast out into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

**b** There was never a view to the replacement of Israel.

**a** By pointing out the inclusion of the Gentiles, Jesus was only presenting to the Jews what they should have known. Fortunately for the Centurion, he had benefitted the Jews who were not quick to shun him because he was a Gentile.

**c** Jesus used the opportunity of the Centurion's faith to point out the ultimate purpose of the Jews, which was the salvation of the world.

## 48 - Raising the Son of the Widow of Nain

324. Read John 11:14-17. What is the difference between the raising of Lazarus and this resurrection (and others)?

- a. Lazarus was given a glorified body
- b. There was doubt as to whether Lazarus was actually dead or not
- c. The young man was dead less than a day (as the custom of Jewish burial) and Lazarus over three days**

Luke 7:12 Now when he came nigh to the gate of the city, behold, there was a dead man carried out, the only son of his mother, and she was a widow: and much people of the city was with her.

John 11:14-17 Then said Jesus unto them plainly, Lazarus is dead.

15And I am glad for your sakes that I was not there, to the intent ye may believe; nevertheless let us go unto him.

16Then said Thomas, which is called Didymus, unto his fellowdisciples, Let us also go, that we may die with him.

17Then when Jesus came, he found that he had *lain* in the grave four days already.

**a** A is a reference to the fact that the word *resurrection* does not only apply to the new glorified body that we will receive in the Rapture.

**b,c** In the case of Lazarus' resurrection there was no doubt that Lazarus was dead. Jesus allowed for three days to pass so that there would be no doubt about the miracle of Lazarus' resurrection.

Jewish mysticism teaches that a deceased person's spirit remains around the for up to three days after death before departing. It was well-known in Israel 2,000 years ago that someone deceased could come back to life during this 3-day period but not afterwards.

On the fourth day, the spirit left the body and went to Sheol or Hades, and there was no hope for life without a miracle. Also, by the fourth day in Israel's hot climate, advanced decay would be destroying the body and the stench would have been overwhelming. When Jesus called Lazarus to life from the dead and healed his rotted corpse, the people knew that He was the true Messiah, performing genuine miracles as the prophets had foretold.

– inspired2think.wordpress.com/2015/09/13/miracles-that-celebrate-jesus-as-messiah-part-4/

Another significant point to this resurrection is the fact that coming into contact with the dead made someone unclean for a period of time. This would happen almost all the cases when He performed a resurrection, but in this one, Jesus was not called upon to come. He acted spontaneously as he encountered the funeral procession in progress. This might be interpreted as an indication of His sense of compassion in not waiting for any more request than the tears of the boys mother. In that sense, we should be encouraged in the way Christ watches over us, not necessarily having to be asked for His blessing.

325. How did the people react to the resurrection of the young man?
- a. They ran away with fear
  - b. They identified Jesus as a great prophet (possibly like Elijah or Elisha) and that God had visited His people**
  - c. They said that the young man had probably only been in a coma

Luke 7:16-17 And there came a fear on all: and they glorified God, saying, That a great prophet is risen up among us; and, That God hath visited his people.

17And this rumour of him went forth throughout all Judaea, and throughout all the region round about.

**c** C is a reflection of how people will look for any which way to cast doubt on miracles to justify to themselves their rejection of God. We should be reminded that such people base their faith on their doubts.

**a** A is a possible reaction that people had when they saw the miraculous.

**b** However, this time they chose to strengthen their faith in Christ.

## 49 - Jesus Praises John, Who is in Prison

326. Why did John send his disciples with questions for Christ?
- a. We don't know**
  - b. Spending time in prison had challenged his faith
  - c. He wanted his disciples to have their faith built up
  - d. John was getting impatient about when Christ would start executing judgment as the Messiah



## THE GALILEAN MINISTRY – 222

Luke 7:18-20 And the disciples of John shewed him of all these things.  
19And John calling *unto him* two of his disciples sent *them* to Jesus, saying, Art thou he that should come? or look we for another?  
20When the men were come unto him, they said, John Baptist hath sent us unto thee, saying, Art thou he that should come? or look we for another?

**a** B,C, and D are all actual possibilities, but on examination, we actually don't know what he had in mind.

**d** D, as stated, is the least likely of the possibilities. It suggests a prideful challenge to Christ. It is reminiscent of the attitude that Judas took at the Last Supper:

John 14:22 Judas saith unto him, not Iscariot, Lord, how is it that thou wilt manifest thyself unto us, and not unto the world?

**b** It would certainly be understandable that John might have a human moment. However, after all that he had seen of Christ and the Father's endorsement would make that questionable.

**c** C might be the most likely of the three possibilities. It might be that he sent his disciples so *they* could hear a confirmation of what he already knew.

327. What did Jesus do to offer assurance to John?

- a. He called him a doubter and told him to man up
- b. He quoted poetry

**c. He performed many miracles and preached the Gospel to the poor**

Luke 7:21-23 And in that same hour he cured many of *their* infirmities and plagues, and of evil spirits; and unto many *that were* blind he gave sight.  
22Then Jesus answering said unto them, Go your way, and tell John what things ye have seen and heard; how that the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, to the poor the gospel is preached.  
23And blessed is *he*, whosoever shall not be offended in me.

**a** A might be a technique of a cult leader to challenge them to have blind faith. However, it is also a *Pollyanna* approach to encouraging someone: just tell them that things are not so bad. We want to remember that it is important to take people's concerns seriously. This is not to say that it is *always* wrong to challenge someone, but we should be cautious in our consideration.

**b** Poetry is oversold. Typically, the enigmatic nature of poetry requires people to think. However, a lot of poetry is written by people impressed with themselves and received by people who are anxious to show how smart they are.

**c** By demonstrating more miracles Jesus provided the information that is needed to be able to *know* anything. By having many examples and occurrences we are able to put two and two together by and by.

328. What did Jesus say would be a great blessing?

- a. **For people who would not stumble over any confusion about Him**
- b. For people who never sinned and did good works to earn favor with God
- c. For people who didn't let anything bother them because they were apathetic

Luke 7:23 And blessed is *he*, whosoever shall not be offended in me.

**b** B is obviously wrong because it speaks of works for salvation. God does not accept us because of any points we earn for good works. God accepts us because of what Jesus did on the cross and in the resurrection.

**c** C is a reflection of how people can rise above their circumstances and fall short of faith. Having an "I don't care" attitude renders you uncaring about things you *should* care about as well as the things that you don't want to let bother you.

**a** A is a reference to how blessed some are who exercise simple faith in spite of it not being tested. Those people are blessed who do not allow themselves to be distracted by being offended because of the persecution they suffer because they are in Christ.

329. What was Jesus' opinion of John?

- a. He was a great revolutionary
- b. He was the greatest prophet ever, except for Jesus**
- c. He was a great mystic

Luke 7:24-28 And when the messengers of John were departed, he began to speak unto the people concerning John, What went ye out into the wilderness for to see? A reed shaken with the wind?

25But what went ye out for to see? A man clothed in soft raiment? Behold, they which are gorgeously apparelled, and live delicately, are in kings' courts.

26But what went ye out for to see? A prophet? Yea, I say unto you, and much more than a prophet.

27This is *he*, of whom it is written, Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee.

28For I say unto you, Among those that are born of women there is not a greater prophet than John the Baptist: but he that is least in the kingdom of God is greater than he.

**a** Jesus was not a revolutionary and would not have any appreciation for John if he was just a Jewish Zealot.

**c** C is a reference to how people are impressed with those who have some kind of mysterious knowledge. Just saying randomly assembled phrases does not indicate how enlightened or elevated someone is. For example, the 10th century Indian mystic and philosopher Abhinavagupta said:

The principle of highest self-revelation is a synonym of fullness...It is full and complete in all respects. Full is always full. This fullness is beyond the related cause and effects of the universe...It is neither initiator nor initiation nor initiated. This type of state is called fullness and that fullness is Mahesvara, the highest Lord full of all glories.

– <https://hridaya-yoga.com/sayings-of-mystics/abhinavagupta-on-fullness/>

But you have to ask, what does that really mean? And, what is his authority?

**b** One of the reasons that John was the greatest prophet is that he had the greatest prophetic mission ever. Certainly, his character and constancy was also in view as he was a man dedicated to his mission instead of any comfortable worldly position.

330. How is Jesus the least in the kingdom of God?

- a. As a prophet, He was the biggest failure to get His message across to anyone
- b. As God, He experienced the most humility by becoming man and would go even further by going to the cross**
- c. As a man, He was the most unaccomplished military leader, businessman, traveler, author, entertainer, or political leader

**a** A message is more likely to be considered a failure if it fails to move anyone. Jesus certainly did get His message across. His message impacted the minds and hearts of all Israel. What *they* did with the message is a different problem.

**b** Going from the glories of heaven as divine to the corrupt world as a man is about as low as you can get...except it isn't. What is even lower is to die on the cross for man's sin.

**c** C is a reference to what the world sees as success. In spite of how some did not receive Jesus and had Him crucified, we want to remember that success is more than surviving.

Here is a man who was born in an obscure village, the child of a peasant woman. He grew up in another village. He worked in a carpenter shop until He was thirty. Then for three years He was an itinerant preacher.

He never owned a home. He never wrote a book. He never held an office. He never had a family. He never went to college. He never put His foot inside a big city. He never traveled two hundred miles from the place He was born. He never did one of the things that usually accompany greatness. He had no credentials but Himself...

While still a young man, the tide of popular opinion turned against him. His friends ran away. One of them denied Him. He was turned over to His enemies. He went through the mockery of a trial. He was nailed upon a cross between two thieves. While He was dying His executioners gambled for the only piece of property He had on earth – His coat. When He was dead, He was laid in a borrowed grave through the pity of a friend.

Nineteen long centuries have come and gone, and today He is a centerpiece of the human race and leader of the column of progress.

I am far within the mark when I say that all the armies that ever marched, all the navies that were ever built; all the parliaments that ever sat and all the kings that ever reigned, put together, have not affected the life of man upon this earth as powerfully as has that one solitary life.

– from James Allan Francis in *The Real Jesus and Other Sermons*

More than 2000 years ago there was a man born contrary to the laws of nature.

He laid aside his purple robe for a peasant's tunic. He was rich, yet for our sake he became poor. This man lived in poverty and was raised in obscurity. He received no formal education and never possessed wealth or widespread influence. He never traveled extensively. He seldom crossed the boundary of the country in which he lived.

But this man's life has changed the course of history.

In infancy he startled a king. In childhood he amazed religious scholars. In manhood he ruled the course of nature—walked on stormy waves and hushed the raging sea to sleep.

He healed multitudes without medicine and made no charge for his services. He never practiced psychiatry. Yet he has healed more broken hearts than all the doctors far and near.

He never wrote a book. Yet his life has inspired more books than any other man. He never wrote a song. Yet he has furnished the theme for more songs than all songwriters combined.

He never founded a college, but all the schools put together cannot boast of having as many students. He never marshaled an army. He never drafted a soldier or fired a gun. Yet no leader ever had more rebels surrender to him without a shot fired.

Herod could not kill him. Satan could not seduce him. His enemies could not destroy him. The grave could not hold him. After three days he rose from the dead, alive forevermore!

He is the ever-perfect One. He is the Christ, the Son of the living God. This man stands forth upon the highest pinnacle of heavenly glory, proclaimed by God, acknowledged by angels, adored by his people, and feared by demons as the risen Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

What the Bible says about the incomparable Christ...

All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all...he hath poured out his soul unto death...and made intercession for the transgressors. Isaiah 53:6, 12

Christ Jesus...being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God, but...took upon him the form of a servant...and, being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore, God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name, which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow...and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God, the Father. Philippians 2:5-11

If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. Romans 10:9-10

– <https://www.crossway.org/tracts/incomparable-christ-2823/>

331. When did the Dispensation of the Law end?
- a. At the cross
  - b. At the birth of Christ
  - c. **At the beginning of the ministry of John the Baptist**

Matt 11:12-13 And from the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force.  
13For all the prophets and the law prophesied until John.

**a,b** A and B are a reflection of the idea that there was a transition period between the Old and the New Testaments, or between law and grace.

**c** The ministration of the Law and the Prophets ended with the mission of John the Baptist. This will have implications for when the church started, also. Some think that there are teachings in the Gospels that don't apply to the church but to the Old Testament or the Jews only.

332. Read Luke 1:13-17. How was Jesus able to call John the Baptist, Elijah?
- a. John was the reincarnation of Elijah who was to appear before the coming of the Messiah in power and judgment
  - b. John came in the spirit and power of Elijah before the coming of the Messiah**
  - c. John came in the spirit and power of Elijah before the final coming of the Messiah

Matt 11:14-15 And if ye will receive *it*, this is Elias, which was for to come.  
15He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.

Luke 1:13-17 But the angel said unto him, Fear not, Zacharias: for thy prayer is heard; and thy wife Elisabeth shall bear thee a son, and thou shalt call his name John.  
14And thou shalt have joy and gladness; and many shall rejoice at his birth.  
15For he shall be great in the sight of the Lord, and shall drink neither wine nor strong drink; and he shall be filled with the Holy Ghost, even from his mother's womb.  
16And many of the children of Israel shall he turn to the Lord their God.  
17And he shall go before him in the spirit and power of Elias, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just; to make ready

**a,b** Luke 1:13-17 eliminates any notion of reincarnation. a people prepared for the Lord.

**c** Only Elijah will come before the great and dreadful day of the Lord.

Mal 3:1 Behold, I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me: and the Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple, even the messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in: behold, he shall come, saith the LORD of hosts.

Mal 4:5-6 Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD:  
6And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse.

333. Who were the ones who had ears to hear the message of Jesus?
- a. The ones who had submitted themselves in obedience in baptism**
  - b. The ones who held strictly to the traditions of the Pharisees
  - c. The ones who were looking for a Christian spa to join

Luke 7:29-30 And all the people that heard *him*, and the publicans, justified God, being baptized with the baptism of John.

30But the Pharisees and lawyers rejected the counsel of God against themselves, being not baptized of him.

**a** Those who believed made their faith manifest by being baptized.

**c** C is a reflection of the misunderstanding many today might have of following Christ. Getting baptized is serious business; it is not like joining a spa or a vacation club.

**b** The principle of Pharisaism was not so much of a problem. It mainly called upon people to take the Bible seriously in their lives. Although obedience was part of the reaction of the people to Christ, it was not the kind that was manifest in the Pharisees and their rules that were derivative from the Law.

The fact that the Pharisees submitted to baptism demonstrates that their perspective had prepared them for the truth if they were willing to receive it.

334. What problem did Jesus identify that is still prevalent today?

- a. Most people are looking for an uncompromising leader
- b. Most people are looking for an uncompromising message
- c. Most people are looking for leadership who will cater to their preferences**

Luke 7:31-34 And the Lord said, Whereunto then shall I liken the men of this generation? and to what are they like?

32They are like unto children sitting in the marketplace, and calling one to another, and saying, We have piped unto you, and ye have not danced; we have mourned to you, and ye have not wept.

33For John the Baptist came neither eating bread nor drinking wine; and ye say, He hath a devil.

34The Son of man is come eating and drinking; and ye say, Behold a gluttonous man, and a winebibber, a friend of publicans and sinners!

**a,b,c** A and B are the opposite of C. People are more concerned about a religion that conforms to their appetites than for a clear message from God.

335. How can one perceive whether something is wise?

- a. Examine how you feel about it
- b. Take a poll on how people feel about it
- c. Examine what that wisdom brings forth**

Luke 7:35 But wisdom is justified of all her children.

**a,b** A and B refer to how people approach the Bible and truth in general. They are looking for ways that they can express themselves or what is popular rather than objective truth.

**c** Refers to how we can have confidence in what is taught. There is a saying that the proof of the pudding is in the eating. Interestingly, that saying is not referring to how the only way you can see if the pudding tastes good is not just by looking at it. Originally, pudding referred to mixtures of food, especially in making sausage, and the only way to find out if there was nothing toxic about it was in actually eating it. The suggestion might be made here that if the sayings of Christ didn't kill you and only made did good for you then they must be good. This is bad logic in one way which suggests that the ends justifies the means. However, it is a beneficial logic if you are examining how we draw conclusions from our experiences.

## 50 - Chorazin and Bethsaida Rebuked

The rebuke of Chorazin and Bethsaida is repeated in Luke 10 when Jesus sent out the 70 disciples. This double reference should have made those Galilean cities take His warning very seriously.

336. Why would Chorazin, Bethsaida, and Capernaum have greater responsibility before God than Tyre, Sidon, and Sodom?
- They lived in modern times
  - They had greater testimony that they rejected**
  - They were more humble

Matt 11:20-24 Then began he to upbraid the cities wherein most of his mighty works were done, because they repented not:

21 Woe unto thee, Chorazin! woe unto thee, Bethsaida! for if the mighty works, which were done in you, had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes.

22 But I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the day of judgment, than for you.

23 And thou, Capernaum, which art exalted unto heaven, shalt be brought down to hell: for if the mighty works, which have been done in thee, had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day.

24 But I say unto you, That it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment, than for thee.

**a** Chorazin, Bethsaida, and Capernaum certainly did live in times that were more modern than the days of Tyre, Sidon, and Sodom which had been destroyed in their judgment. Having less understanding and insight is counter-intuitive to what we expect of those living in modern times. Living in modern times suggests that people should know better since they have more history to go on. Instead, having greater enlightenment can lead to pride and rejection of God. In our modern times, people latch on to theories of evolution supposedly because they are more enlightened scientifically. In reality, evolutionary theory does not prove anything, especially anything about the existence of God. Evolution was offered up as an alternate explanation for the origin of life. It didn't matter whether it was real or not. People used the suggestion of another explanation as an *excuse* for being agnostic (neither affirming nor denying God, but simply giving up and

claiming that one cannot know whether God exists). Theism doesn't attempt to prove "science" and science *can't* prove evolution so people just quit thinking about God.

**b** The Galilean cities had more responsibility not because of living in modern times alone, but because they had a greater testimony because of the ancient cities. Each generation "plays the hand they are dealt."

**c** Had any of the cities been humble, they would not have faced judgment at all. The fact that the ancient cities had less is irrelevant when it comes to their guilt. The modern cities were more guilty because they had less of an excuse with respect to the amount of information they had, but they were only *just as* guilty for the same sin of pride. The only thing that sinning does is prove what we are inside.

337. What responsibility do believers have for the destruction of the lost?

- a. The lost might believe if they had stronger witness**
- b. The lost will stay lost no matter how much testimony they have
- c. The lost are not influenced by their times and what testimony is available to them

Where the last question examines why sinners are guilty due to their response to the "hand they were dealt," this question examines our part in dealing out the truth and the Gospel.

**b** B is reflective of Calvinistic doctrine that teaches that people are chosen for salvation or damnation. The fact that they could have made a different choice only has significance if it was *possible* to choose.

**c** Being able to choose infers that the lost *are able* to be influenced.

**a** While the attitude of the lost will set them up for damnation, having more testimony and times to hear the Gospel means that they have more opportunities to apply the same wrong attitude. However, having more opportunities does not necessarily have a cumulative effect that will translate into a positive response. Depending on the individual's attitude at any moment, more opportunities could either soften *or* harden someone's heart. It is like flipping a coin. If you flip a coin and it comes up heads three times in a row, the odds of it coming up tails on the next flip are *still* only 50/50; the odds are neither greater or lesser. On the other hand, if you only hand out three tracts, then only three people have the chance to repent. If you hand out 100 tracts, then 100 have a chance. By expanding the number of tracts you are only expanding the *opportunities* for people to accept or reject the Gospel...you are not expanding the number of people who will accept the Gospel. By witnessing to less people you are definitely confirming the damnation of those who are disposed against the Gospel while *limiting* the availability of the Gospel to anyone who *might* have accepted it. 0% of



100%-maybe is 0. 100% of 100% maybe is anywhere from 0 to 100. This is why it is wrong to suggest that it is all a matter of whether God is going to intervene when the ungodly seek to destroy the faithful. Faith comes by hearing and hearing by the Word of God so that if we offer nothing, it is definitely our fault. If we offer the Word of God then at least they have a chance. A 50/50 chance is better than a 0/100 no chance.

In this particular Scripture, Jesus is not saying that they *definitely would* have gotten saved if they had the same testimony the modern cities had received. In the first case, it says they would have repented, which does not necessarily mean they would have gotten saved. For example, Judas repented but was still called the son of perdition:

Matt 27:3 Then Judas, which had betrayed him, when he saw that he was condemned, repented himself, and brought again the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and elders,

John 17:12 While I was with them in the world, I kept them in thy name: those that thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition; that the scripture might be fulfilled.

The judgment in question was the destruction of the cities. Of course, those who were lost in those cities also lost any other opportunity to get saved. Next, the word *would* was an auxiliary verb that does not appear in Greek. It is a fine translation, but another word describing an act of the will would have been stronger. The word *would* does not indicate that they *definitely* would have repented.

Lastly, there is an untranslated word indicating a supposition, possibility, or uncertainty over what might have happened. This is often accomplished by using the subjunctive verb mood, but in this case a particle is used. For example, "If I *were* to go to the store..." the word *were* is subjunctive, indicating only possibility. An example of a particle is the word *to*, as in "To be, or not to be..." Here, *to* is not a preposition and has no real sense apart from the verb *be*. The effect here is not to say that they definitely would have repented. In that case, you could equally say they definitely would *not* have repented.

The final understanding, then, is that the works done in the Galilean cities were the *kind* of works that *might* have made a difference if it was not for the fact that time and tide wait for no man. If they had more time and could have seen the works the Galileans saw, then they might have repented but without the works, their repentance would have been less possible. This is the same case for us today. If we don't witness then revival is less likely; if we do witness, there is no guarantee of revival, but our witnessing is the *kind* of thing that makes it more likely.

338. Who does Jesus invite to hear Him?

- a. Those who are not smart
- b. All**
- c. Those who are mature

Matt 11:25-28 At that time Jesus answered and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes.

26Even so, Father: for so it seemed good in thy sight.

27All things are delivered unto me of my Father: and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and *he* to whomsoever the Son will reveal *him*.

28Come unto me, all *ye* that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

**a,b** A and B refer to two classes of people who would miss the message of God: those who are wise and those who are mature. However, they are not actually eliminated in favor of babes.

**c** It is in vs. 28 that we see that Christ's invitation is to *all* who are heavy laden.

339. Read Mark 10:15, Luke 8:15, and Isa 5:21. To whom would the message of Christ be revealed?

- a. Those who were not wise in their own sight but open hearted as a child**
- b. Those who were enlightened by much study
- c. Those who were ignorant and gullible

Mark 10:15 Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein.

Luke 8:15 But that on the good ground are they, which in an honest and good heart, having heard the word, keep *it*, and bring forth fruit with patience.

Isa 5:21 Woe unto *them that are* wise in their own eyes, and prudent in their own sight!

**b** Although it is important to study, there is also a point where someone could over study. The temptation is to seek meaning beyond what is meant. They are those who are wise in their *own* eyes. They seek being significant rather than being right. They make up fanciful possibilities and then proclaim them as truth.

**c** As Luke 8:15 suggests, those who have a well tended heart who patiently prepare it are those who will receive the word of Christ. A heart that is not well tended will be gullible and ready to take in anything that sounds plausible...or not even plausible.

**a** As implied by having the heart of a child, one is open and ready to believe what they are taught, but this does not mean that they are gullible. It does

mean that they are not ready to criticize and dismiss what they are told.

340. How hard is it to follow Christ?

- a. **His yoke is actually easy and burden light**
- b. It takes great effort and anguishing in prayer to stay straight
- c. If stay within the use of our natural talent then it is easy

Matt 11:28-30 Come unto me, all *ye* that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

29 Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls.

30 For my yoke *is* easy, and my burden is light.

c Relying on our natural talent doesn't work for us anyway. All natural talent has to be trained and refined. Sometimes relying on talent makes people sloppy because they are not very focused on what they are doing. Someone who is naturally easy going might look like they are spiritual because they are not anxious in hard times, but that could also translate into having no care for others.

b There are times when we put out great effort, but that does not mean that our spirituality is based on how much pain we endure.

a Being yoked together with Christ means that Jesus is going to carry the heavier part of the load. We have to remember that the actual accomplishment of the work is not based on *our* strength, but His.

Phil 4:11-13 Not that I speak in respect of want: for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, *therewith* to be content.

12 I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound: every where and in all things I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need.

13 I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.

## **51 - Dining with Simon the Pharisee, Christ is Anointed by a Woman**

341. How did the woman show her devotion to Christ?

- a. She brought water to wash His feet as was customary when people came to visit
- b. **She washed His feet with her tears and anointed them**
- c. She secretly worshiped Him

Luke 7:41-46 There was a certain creditor which had two debtors: the one owed five hundred pence, and the other fifty.

42 And when they had nothing to pay, he frankly forgave them both. Tell me therefore, which of them will love him most?

43 Simon answered and said, I suppose that *he*, to whom he forgave most. And he said unto him, Thou hast rightly judged.

44 And he turned to the woman, and said unto Simon, Seest thou this woman? I

entered into thine house, thou gavest me no water for my feet: but she hath washed my feet with tears, and wiped *them* with the hairs of her head.

45Thou gavest me no kiss: but this woman since the time I came in hath not ceased to kiss my feet.

46My head with oil thou didst not anoint: but this woman hath anointed my feet with ointment.

**a** A is customary. What is outstanding is that the host of the feast didn't even provide so much as this.

**c** C refers to how some people justify their lack of service by suggesting they have a superior form of spirituality that is not ostentatious. Although we should not make a show of our works, neither should we keep them so secret that it covers our actual deficiencies. Our works should be done decently and in order, without fanfare or complaint, as a matter of normal responsibility so that people will glorify God.

342. How did the Pharisee regard the woman?

- a. She was a sinner just like him
- b. She was a tax collector
- c. She was a sinner since she was not one who practiced the Law like a Pharisee**

Luke 7:39 Now when the Pharisee which had bidden him saw *it*, he spake within himself, saying, This man, if he were a prophet, would have known who and what manner of woman *this is* that toucheth him: for she is a sinner.

**b,c** B and C highlight what the Pharisees' considered to be a sinner. Just as you had a Sadducee class, a Pharisee class, a Herodian class, the Pharisees considered anyone not to be a subscriber to Pharisaism to be in a sinner class. It didn't necessarily refer to one who was characterized as a *wicked* person.

**a** If the Pharisee's had a more honest definition of a sinner as not just someone who performed according to their Pharisaical interpretations of the Law, they would have had a greater humility because they truly understood the sinful condition of all men.

Rom 3:23 For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;

343. How did Jesus describe how great someone will love?

- a. Someone who writes great poetry
- b. Someone who is greatly forgiven**
- c. Someone who is very righteous

Luke 7:47 Wherefore I say unto thee, Her sins, which are many, are forgiven; for she loved much: but to whom little is forgiven, *the same* loveth little.

**a** Love is not marked by how flowery someone can be in piling on adjectives to describe their love. Poetry can be powerful, but it is not hard to substitute cleverness for love.

**b,c** Someone who is very righteous *can* have great love. However, as the Lord's model prayer demonstrates, there is a principle that recognizes God's goodness in comparison to our need to be forgiven. Having this sense truly enhances our appreciation for God. How many times are we moved by the video of an animal obviously extending an act of kindness? The person or creature who needs and accepts help truly has a greater appreciation.

344. How are someone's sins forgiven?

- a. **By faith**
- b. By obedience
- c. God has forgiven everyone

Luke 7:50 And he said to the woman, Thy faith hath saved thee; go in peace.

**b** B suggests people are saved by works. The woman had done a wonderful work, but Jesus points out that it was her faith that saved her.

**c** C could be considered the opposite of B. If one doesn't have to work for salvation then universalists teaches that no one has to do *anything* and that since Jesus suffered for all then all are saved. However, salvation rejected is salvation denied.

**b** The woman's faith is what secured her salvation.

## The Second Tour of Galilee

### 52 - Women Support Christ

345. What significance did many women have in the ministry?

- a. **They ministered from the abundance of their substance**
- b. They had no significance because they were second class citizens who had nothing to offer
- c. They took leadership roles because it wasn't fair to require men only to be held responsible

Luke 8:1-3 And it came to pass afterward, that he went throughout every city and village, preaching and shewing the glad tidings of the kingdom of God: and the twelve *were* with him,

2And certain women, which had been healed of evil spirits and infirmities, Mary called Magdalene, out of whom went seven devils,

3And Joanna the wife of Chuza Herod's steward, and Susanna, and many others, which ministered unto him of their substance.

**c** C represents the emphasis of the modern victimization mentality that promotes envy. The key word in this answer is *fair*. Demanding fairness has actually become the excuse for limiting one's interests. Aspiring to something merely out of envy and a demand for an equal right is not sufficient. Having an *equal* position does not allow for one's position to be tailored to their best

interest. Demanding equality is a technique designed to ratchet their leverage by coercing someone to meet your demands through guilt. Women not seeking leadership roles does not mean that they were being suppressed. It only means that they were acting according to their personal interests. There are expectations that we should have of men. Being motivated by envy for women to demand to have the same expectations placed on women diminishes the sense of responsibility for men. Women who believe that they don't need a man should not be surprised when men use them and leave them. Similarly, men who say they don't need a woman will find many women happy to oblige them.

**a,b** In the effort to justify women's envy for men, there is an attempt to suggest that women were second class citizens all down through history. It is true that there were widows who were dependent on their children to provide for them, but that is not the whole picture.

The notion that widows needed someone to take care of them rests on ideas about the legal and social status of women. Perhaps most important is the idea that widows could not possess their own property. A wife was dependent on her husband, and when he died, she went to live with her father's household if he was alive, or to an adult son if she had one. Having a father or son was fortunate, because otherwise widows were entirely without resources. Widows were also legally subordinate to these male relatives.

The above picture is largely false for the Mediterranean world of the first and second centuries. Legal and social norms of this period granted women property rights and substantial authority within their households and communities. While some widows were greatly disadvantaged, many would have experienced only a slight drop in economic or social status, and possibly none at all.

In the New Testament period, women owned a substantial amount of property. About one-third of all property was owned by women, two-thirds by men. The disparity reinforces our assumption that women were not social equals of men. Yet the proportion of property owned by women is also large enough to suggest women's ownership was by no means unusual.

– (Read the whole article at <https://bibleinterp.arizona.edu/articles/widows-new-testament-period>)

Women in churches have always played a large part in the work of Christian ministry.

### **53 - The Pharisees Hold Council to Destroy Jesus**

This section could be optionally placed after section 45 - *The Withered Hand Healed in the Synagogue*. It is placed here to facilitate the transition to the next events that follow in the Gospels.

346. What did Jesus do to delay the council of the Jews to destroy Him?
- a. He met them head on and argued with them
  - b. He got scared and quit the ministry
  - c. He withdrew Himself and charged people to not promote Him**

Matt 12:14-16 Then the Pharisees went out, and held a council against him, how they might destroy him.

15But when Jesus knew *it*, he withdrew himself from thence: and great multitudes followed him, and he healed them all;  
16And charged them that they should not make him known:

**a** This is a very human reaction though not necessarily a very judicious one. There *are* times when it is important to use apologetics. There *would* be a time later on in His teaching at the Temple before the crucifixion when He *did* argue with them. The problem here is that it isn't the *right time* for Him to confront the Pharisees. It was not time for Jesus to die and so He delayed the confrontation with them. This is similar to other times when Satan would love to have Jesus destroyed including when the crowd sought to cast Him off the cliff, when Herod destroyed the infants, or when Satan tempted Jesus to cast Himself off the pinnacle of the Temple, etc. Jesus did not seek to confront them which might have provoked them to act quicker.

**b** B is the opposite of A in that Jesus could have simply gotten scared and given up. The application of this to us is that when there is sufficient opposition we might be tempted to simply give up serving God.

**c** Since it was not time for Jesus to die, He merely withdrew Himself to reserve Himself for further ministry. We, also, could learn from this third option. Sometimes we might confront, never should we quit, but sometimes we might retreat and regroup.

347. What did Jesus anticipate by quoting Isaiah?

- a. The replacement of Israel
- b. The next dispensation where the Gentiles would be brought in**
- c. How all Israel would be saved

Matt 12:17-21 That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying,

18Behold my servant, whom I have chosen; my beloved, in whom my soul is well pleased: I will put my spirit upon him, and he shall shew judgment to the Gentiles.

19He shall not strive, nor cry; neither shall any man hear his voice in the streets.

20A bruised reed shall he not break, and smoking flax shall he not quench, till he send forth judgment unto victory.

21And in his name shall the Gentiles trust.

By quoting Isaiah and the mission of Israel to bless the Gentiles, Jesus was looking forward to His ultimate mission of salvation for all mankind in the church where there would be neither Jew nor Gentile. Although the Jews will be saved from destruction in the Tribulation, as in C, Jesus' was looking beyond that. There would be no *replacement* for Israel, as in A. Israel will always have its special place in God's plan and was not done away with during this present Dispensation.

## 54 - Accusation of Casting Out Demons by Beelzebub

348. How did people respond to the healing of the blind and dumb man?

- a. **They associated Christ with the restoration of the throne of David**
- b. They realized that Christ came to die for them
- c. They thought it was a cool trick

Matt 12:22-23 Then was brought unto him one possessed with a devil, blind, and dumb: and he healed him, insomuch that the blind and dumb both spake and saw.  
23And all the people were amazed, and said, Is not this the son of David?

**c** Dealing with the demonic is not something that should be treated as entertainment. We should not underestimate the influence and effect of horror movies and fantasy stories that trivialize the reality of demonic activity while at the same time promoting the occult.

**a,b** The reference to Jesus being the son of David is synonymous to the Jewish expectation of the restoration of the throne of David by the Messiah. Their general expectation was that of the Messiah in the Millennium. This overshadowed the consideration of the salvation mission of the Messiah.

349. Whose kingdom did the Pharisees think Jesus was serving?

- a. The kingdom of David
- b. The kingdom of God
- c. **The kingdom of Beelzebub**

Matt 12:24 But when the Pharisees heard *it*, they said, This *fellow* doth not cast out devils, but by Beelzebub the prince of the devils.

**a,b** The Pharisees did not share the same opinion of the people. They certainly did not see Jesus as serving the kingdom of God.

**c** The Pharisees associated Jesus with the most objectionable option, Beelzebub. This is certainly consistent with what we see today in modern politics and the cancel culture in demonizing their opposition. A careful student of God will question such extreme characterizations. It may be that such an extreme is warranted, but this will be discussed in question 353 below.

350. What would be the affect of Satan casting out Satan?

- a. **His kingdom would work against itself and cannot stand**
- b. His kingdom would thrive on healthy disagreement
- c. His kingdom would thrive on chaos

**c** Satan's rule is based on chaos and by his force it continues, but this is not the same thing as thriving. This is comparable to the chaos created by identity politics today. By trying to support the interests of conflicting identity groups there is no consistent standard that can truly succeed. It is only by an elite



power group that forces its views on all people that there is any sense of cohesion. Morality by consensus will always be subject to power politics. It won't be until the truly righteous ruler, Jesus Christ, reigns in the Millennium that there will be integrity and stability.

**a** A assumes that Satan's rule attempts to be upheld naturally. The chaos that Satan introduces into the world does not maintain itself and such a world system cannot persist by itself without being upheld artificially.

**b** B refers to what *should* be happening in this present age. The key word here is *healthy*. Healthy argumentation might yield systems that are based on reasonable compromise which we cannot avoid due to our fallible human nature. This is all we have until Jesus returns in His reign of righteousness. This does not apply to what Satan is doing. Satan is looking to destroy man by whatever means and to whatever degree he can.

351. If the Pharisees claims to casting out demons were true, how would they be different from Christ?
- a. They would not be done through the power of God
  - b. They wouldn't be, so they would have to accuse themselves of being from Satan**
  - c. They would be done by their psychic power

Matt 12:27 And if I by Beelzebub cast out devils, by whom do your children cast *them* out? therefore they shall be your judges.

**b** Jesus is comparing the casting of demons out by Him and by the followers of the Pharisees. His argument is that one cannot differentiate between the two by His and their results. This is not to say that Jesus is necessarily endorsing what the others were doing. He is merely throwing the Pharisees' logic up at them. If the Pharisees continue in their condemnation of Jesus, they would have to conclude the same thing of their followers, which they wouldn't want to do because they would have to say that their followers were of Beelzebub, too.

**a,c** A and C would not be true because the Pharisees, in their extreme attitude, left no middle ground. They did not leave open any possibility that there would be some other power, either from God or any psychic power.

352. Read John 15:26-27, 16:7-11. What is the only thing that will cause a person to remain unforgiven?
- a. Blaspheming the Holy Spirit by saying bad things about Him
  - b. Blaspheming the Holy Spirit by rejecting the conviction of the Holy Spirit**
  - c. Blaspheming the Holy Spirit by calling Him God

Mark 3:28-30 Verily I say unto you, All sins shall be forgiven unto the sons of men, and blasphemies wherewith soever they shall blaspheme:

29But he that shall blaspheme against the Holy Ghost hath never forgiveness, but is in danger of eternal damnation:

30Because they said, He hath an unclean spirit.

John 15:26-27 But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, *even* the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me:

27And ye also shall bear witness, because ye have been with me from the beginning.

John 16:7-11 Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you.

8And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment:

9Of sin, because they believe not on me;

10Of righteousness, because I go to my Father, and ye see me no more;

11Of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged.

**a,c** Saying bad things about God is certainly blasphemy, but it is not the blasphemy that will not be forgiven. Calling the Holy Spirit, God, is not blasphemy at all, but this is a reference to how the Jehovah's Witnesses and others blaspheme God by denying the Holy Spirit.

**b** When looking at the ministry of the Holy Spirit in John, we realize that rejecting His ministry means rejecting His work of conviction. Mark includes the consideration that one is only *in danger* of eternal damnation. This indicates that it is only as long one is rejecting the message they remain unforgiven. If someone repents and responds to the work of the Holy Spirit and heeds His conviction then they will be forgiven for their sins.

353. On what basis should a person be held accountable and justified or condemned?

a. By the things we know they really mean

b. By how we feel about them

**c. By the words they speak**

Matt 12:35-37 A good man out of the good treasure of the heart bringeth forth good things: and an evil man out of the evil treasure bringeth forth evil things.

36But I say unto you, That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment.

37For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned.

**a** Words mean things and we are really not free to put words into people's mouths that we would like them to mean.

**b** Our feelings about people is no substitute for the truth.

**c** We are not judged merely for saying words, but for our testimony. Certainly we are justified by our testimony of repentance and faith when we turn to

God in salvation. We must accept responsibility for what affirm or deny. People will rightfully judge us according to the reputation we create by our testimony. Also what is in mind here is that we will be judged by whether our testimony is true or not.

### **55 - Sign of Jonas - The Spirit Returns to a Swept Out House**

354. For all practical purposes, how are the scribes and Pharisees like agnostics and atheists today?

- a. They would believe if God appeared before them
- b. No matter how many signs and miracles Jesus gave them it was not good enough**
- c. They were able to appreciate spiritual truths

Matt 12:38-40 Then certain of the scribes and of the Pharisees answered, saying, Master, we would see a sign from thee.

39But he answered and said unto them, An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given to it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas:

40For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.

**c** C is a reference to how people who *truly* care about truth would be anxious to examine truth claims. Atheists present themselves as only advancing their agenda and not willing to make any admissions lest they lose any ground.

**a, b** A and B point out a fallacy that people use called *moving the goal posts*. No matter what information people receive, it will never be good enough for them. They will ultimately make the claim that they can't believe in what they can't see with their own eyes. The truth is, God *did* appear before them and then died and rose and appeared before them *again* and they didn't believe.

355. What would be the ultimate truth that the Pharisees would have to confront as the greatest sign of God?

- a. The Resurrection**
- b. The Second Coming
- c. The Transfiguration

**c** The Transfiguration was a private event that only the disciples were blessed to witness. It was given as they were about to see the *crucifixion* of Jesus.

**a, b** In the Tribulation and the Second Coming, Israel will be revived and acknowledge that Jesus is the Messiah, the Christ. However, that is not the truth that they, and actually anyone, would have to acknowledge to be saved.

1Pet 1:18-21 Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation *received* by tradition from your fathers;

19But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without

spot:

20Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you,

21Who by him do believe in God, that raised him up from the dead, and gave him glory; that your faith and hope might be in God.

Rom 4:24-25 But for us also, to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead;

25Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification.

Rom 10:8-9 But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, *even* in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach;

9That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.

356. Why would Nineveh and the queen of the south rise up in judgment against people in Christ's generation?

- a. They knew Christ and had accepted Him based on their experience of living with Him
- b. They lived by blind faith and could tell Christ's generation to just believe in spite of having no evidence that Christ was who He said He was
- c. They were not even of Israel and yet believed even though they had less witness than that generation**

Matt 12:40-42 For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.

41The men of Nineveh shall rise in judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: because they repented at the preaching of Jonas; and, behold, a greater than Jonas *is* here.

42The queen of the south shall rise up in the judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: for she came from the uttermost parts of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and, behold, a greater than Solomon *is* here.

**a,b** Just because Nineveh and the queen did not have Jesus revealed to them does not mean they had blind faith. Knowing Christ is only an advantage if your heart is disposed to receive Him. In Nineveh's and the queen's cases, they did not even have a chance to know Jesus but they were ready to have faith and trust based on the testimony available to them.

**c** Nineveh and the queen were the opposite of Chorazin and Bethsaida. The fact that they could believe without the greater works available for the Pharisees is proof that Tyre, Sidon, and Sodom could have repented based on the testimony available to them in their day. The Jews of Christ's day would be judged according to the principle of greater knowledge:

Luke 12:48 But he that knew not, and did commit things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few *stripes*. For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required: and to whom men have committed much, of him they will ask the more.

357. Read Pro 1. What would happen to the generation who witnessed Christ because of their rejection?
- a. They would not be held responsible because they were more discriminating in their spiritual sensitivity
  - b. They would be accepted by God anyway depending on how they kept the Law
  - c. They would be grossly spiritually worse off**

**c,a** Having greater knowledge brings greater judgment. According to Prov 1, people who continually reject the witness of the Spirit harden their hearts to the point that the Spirit will back off. They will become the opposite of spiritually sensitive while considering themselves more discriminating.

b People cannot just choose a different way of responding to God other than what He has designed and expect God to accept them.

## 56 - Five Parables

358. What did Jesus use to illustrate spiritual truth?
- a. Fables
  - b. Parables**
  - c. Myths

Jesus did not depend on myths and fables to present His teaching.

Mark 4:2 he taught them many things by parables, and said unto them in his doctrine,

**b** The word *parable* comes from two Greek roots meaning *to throw beside*. Parables are illustrations to throw in beside the truth that is being taught as an illustration to help understand a concept. One has to be careful with parables because they are only used in a limited sense to illustrate a concept. They are not meant to provide an extensive explanation of a Doctrine. When using a parable, only real possible situations are used. They might not have actually occurred, but they could have. Parables would never use real people. The Jehovah's Witnesses, for example, I would like to dismiss the account of Lazarus and the rich man as just a parable to discredit the doctrine of punishment in hell. They are wrong on three accounts. First, because Lazarus is named. Secondly, Jesus would never use a pagan myth to teach a Biblical truth. Third, parables are real world possibilities.

**a** Parables are different than Fables. While fables are also illustrations, they typically do not involve real world possibilities. They often involve animals and inanimate objects. When they involve people, it is usually a story that is too fabulous to be true. Just So Stories are fables that give simplistic explanations for Life Experiences. This is true for explanations of how the elephant got its trunk order Darwinian explanations for evolution. Modern day explanations of evolution and the creation of life out of non bio genetic

material still depend on the idea of "maybe" and "perhaps" to describe processes that are extremely difficult under carefully controlled laboratory conditions. Such processes are difficult under laboratory conditions and are impossible in such things as volcanic ocean vents in nature. Evolutionary Fables take on the nature of what is described in 2 Peter 1:16.

2Pet 1:16 we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of his majesty.

They depend on clever and deceptive fallacious reasoning that is also used to support conspiracy theories. Like DNA, the facts, stories, principles, and truths of the Bible are too intricately connected and woven together to be the product of a cleverly constructed conspiracy.

**c** Myths are different than Fables in that they are Depends real historical characters who has been elevated by people to a god-like status. Such figures do not carry the nature of what we understand to be God today. They were more like super humans who were subject to whim and fancy. God denying liberal theologians who diminish the significance of God's Supernatural influence view the Christian understanding of God as evolving with the evolution of men. Just as man evolved from an ignorant creature to ultimately forming civilizations, they would teach that doctrine from animism to paganism, from paganism to monotheism, from an all-powerful an infinite God in monotheism to the nature of a redeemer in Christianity. When examining Genesis 3 and Job 19, we see that such an elevated understanding of the Redeemer it's not something that evolved, but something that man understood from the very beginning.

## The Sower of the Seed

359. Why were the birds able to devour the seed on the road beside the fields?

- a. **It was trampled down on a hardened path**
- b. It was left there for them as a sacrifice
- c. It had only sprouted a little bit

Matt 13:4 when he sowed, some *seeds* fell by the way side, and the fowls came and devoured them up:

**a,b,c** The Wayside was the path that a farmer would take to get to his fields. Because of this, the ground was trampled down into a hardened path. The seed that is strewn there landed there accidentally and not deliberately offered as sacrifice to the fowls of the air. Some suggest that the Gospel was intended only for a certain elect group that was predestined for salvation because it would be wasted on the non-elect. The fact that the seed landed anywhere and everywhere indicates that it is offered to all. Because it landed on hardened ground it did not have a chance to sprout at all before it was devoured by the

fowls of the air. However, it should be noted that if the fowls did not get to it and it did not get trampled, it actually *could* have a chance to grow depending on other conditions. This indicates that a Gospel opportunity can be ruined.

360. Why was the sun able to scorch the seed among the rocks?

- a. It had too much shade from the rocks
- b. It had no depth in any soil to be nourished by water and earth**
- c. Climate change

Mark 4:5-6 And some fell on stony ground, where it had not much earth; and immediately it sprang up, because it had no depth of earth:  
6But when the sun was up, it was scorched; and because it had no root, it withered away.

**a** The rocks did not afford a protecting shade for the seed.

**c** There is no fantasy that was necessary to explain the scorching problem. This suggests that there is no elaborate explanation needed. All we need to do is look for the obvious answers.

**b** The rocky soil prevented the seed from taking root enough to get the nourishment needed to thrive under the sun.

361. Why did the seed among the thorns not survive?

- a. There was too much competition with the thorns for nourishment**
- b. There was not enough depth for the roots
- c. There was not enough sunshine

Mark 6:7 he called *unto him* the twelve, and began to send them forth by two and two; and gave them power over unclean spirits;

**b** The seed in this case had sufficient soil for roots to be laid down and the sunshine was not the issue.

**a** The seed had competition from other plants.

362. What was Jesus' challenge at the end of the parable?

- a. For those who were disposed to listen to hear**
- b. For everyone to pay attention to what He said
- c. For everyone to understand what He was saying

Mark 4:9 he said unto them, He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.

**a,b,c** Paying attention and hearing are two different things. It is possible to also have understanding without hearing. The idea of hearing suggests taking heed, or paying attention with a view to *applying* what you come to understand. This is a common problem when preaching or sharing God's Word. Unless people take and heed the message personally it is useless.

## Why Jesus Spoke in Parables

363. Why did Jesus speak in parables?

- a. To hide His truth from those who were not followers
- b. For those who have advanced understanding get His message
- c. For those who do not have advanced understanding to begin to get His message**

Matt 13:11-15 He answered and said unto them, Because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given.

12For whosoever hath, to him shall be given, and he shall have more abundance: but whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken away even that he hath.

13Therefore speak I to them in parables: because they seeing see not; and hearing they hear not, neither do they understand.

14And in them is fulfilled the prophecy of Esaias, which saith, By hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and shall not perceive:

15For this people's heart is waxed gross, and *their* ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with *their* eyes, and hear with *their* ears, and should understand with *their* heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them.

**a,c** According to vs. 13, Jesus said He was using parables which are used to illustrate spiritual truths and principles. There is no intention to hide anything, but to reveal truth.

**c** According vs. 11,12, Jesus indicated that there were those who were advanced who would have an abundance of understanding so the parables were there for those who were just getting exposed to truth.

364. What is the effect for those who will not receive Jesus' message?

- a. They will have a chance to get more instruction
- b. They will lose what understanding they have**
- c. They will have to rely on their own wisdom to get into heaven

**c** People's spiritual insight is tainted by sin. Man does not naturally understand God and so would not conceive the idea of grace. Because in our sin we are rebellious and centered on self, extending grace is a foreign concept to us. We might understand it in part and up to a certain point, but our envious heart ultimately demands some kind of payment to satisfy our sense of loss.

1Cor 2:9-10 But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.

10But God hath revealed *them* unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God.

**a,b** People often make the mistake of thinking that they can wait till later to make a decision for salvation. They don't realize that, as the parable of the sower of the seed will show, that the competing interests of life will never go away. Salvation requires a careful consideration that defies our natural



understanding. Non one gets saved by just going along with what they learn. They have to embrace it for themselves.

365. Compare Matt 13:15 and Mark 4:12 with 2Tim 2:25-26. The word *peradventure* is the same as the word *lest*. What chance do people have to understand if they are blind to the truth?

- a. **Some: they will be blind to the truth unless they be converted**
- b. None: they will be blinded to the truth so that they will not be converted
- c. Some: they will only be converted if Jesus causes them to understand

Matt 13:15 For this people's heart is waxed gross, and *their* ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with *their* eyes, and hear with *their* ears, and should understand with *their* heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them.

Mark 4:12 That seeing they may see, and not perceive; and hearing they may hear, and not understand; lest at any time they should be converted, and *their* sins should be forgiven them.

2Tim 2:25-26 In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth;  
26And *that* they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his will.

The ability to understand depends on one's repentance. That Christ did *not* intend to hold off understanding by using parables is indicated by Matt 5:13 where Jesus said He gave the parable so that they *wouldn't* see, but because they *didn't* see. It is only in misinterpreting vs. 15 that there is any suggestion that it was so that they were kept from seeing.

**b,a,** The idea that anyone is going to be blinded to the truth in order that they might not be allowed to believe comes from Calvinism's false teaching of election. It is based on a misunderstanding of the word *lest* that they are excluded; as in, "Give him some medicine lest he die," or "Give him some medicine so that he doesn't die." The misinterpretation here is "their eyes are closed so that they will not understand and be converted." However, the word *lest* can *also* be understood as *unless*. How to understand this depends on which Greek words are used. *Hina mē* (that not) or *mēpote* (unless). *Mēpote* is used here and also in 2Tim 2:25-26 and is translated as *peradventure*. The clear idea in 2Tim indicates the *possibility* of repentance, not that God would *withhold* repentance. To *give repentance* is a figure of speech used in the New Testament which speaks of someone having the opportunity to repent.

Luke does not give the full quote of Christ as Matthew and Mark. John deals with a similar situation, but he gives an *interpretation* of the quote as applied to those who have completely rejected Christ (John 12:40).

John 12:38-40 That the saying of Esaias the prophet might be fulfilled, which he spake, Lord, who hath believed our report? and to whom hath the arm of the Lord

been revealed?

<sup>39</sup>Therefore they could not believe, because that Esaias said again,

<sup>40</sup>He hath blinded their eyes, and hardened their heart; that they should not see with *their* eyes, nor understand with *their* heart, and be converted, and I should heal them.

John uses *Hina mē* (that not) to refer to those who could not believe because of their blinding. Isaiah's prophecy was *fulfilled*. Those who did not get converted were blinded which resulted in them not being able to be converted in the end.

**c** C is just another form of B in that the ability to understand is determined by Christ.

### The Sower of the Seed Explained

366. Why might the seed on the wayside be hardened enabling Satan to snatch away the Gospel message?

- a. The ground was plowed by people evangelizing
- b. The ground was hardened by doubts and worldly philosophy**
- c. The ground was fertilized with Bible truths

Matt 13:19 When any one heareth the word of the kingdom, and understandeth *it* not, then cometh the wicked *one*, and catcheth away that which was sown in his heart.

This is he which received seed by the way side.

**b** There is no distinct reason given for why the ground on the Wayside is hardened. You have to remember that parables as illustrations are only meant to go so far. However, doubts and worldly philosophy go far to harden people to the truth of God's word.

**a,c** A and C are a reflection of what is needed to prepare people's hearts to receive the Gospel. Hardened Hearts do not break up by themselves. Evangelism and Bible teaching are important things that we can do to prepare people for the Gospel. Not included in these answers is the work of the Holy Spirit and any judgment that God might send to challenge people's hearts.

367. What effect would the rocky soil have on the Gospel message growing to full fruit?

- a. People would use the trials and temptations of the world to teach them patience to receive the message
- b. The message is too weak to compete with the trials and temptations of the world
- c. The trials and temptations of this world cause some people to give up on the message**

Matt 13:20-21 But he that received the seed into stony places, the same is he that heareth the word, and anon with joy receiveth it;

<sup>21</sup>Yet hath he not root in himself, but dureth for a while: for when tribulation or persecution ariseth because of the word, by and by he is offended.

**a** A represents what should happen when people face trials and temptations.

**b,c** The problem is not the message but how people respond to the distraction of Trials and temptations.

368. What effect would the thorny ground have on the Gospel message growing to full fruit?

a. The cares and riches of this world enable people to have enough leisure time to think about the Gospel

b. Having the riches of this world help people to focus on what is important

**c. The cares and riches of this world serve as a distraction to receive the Gospel**

Mark 4:18-19 And these are they which are sown among thorns; such as hear the word,

19And the cares of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, and the lusts of other things entering in, choke the word, and it becometh unfruitful.

**a** The natural laziness of people more often leads to people stopping thinking rather than use the time to truly evaluate their circumstances.

**b** More often than not, riches are a distraction from what is truly important in life. Temporary security from having riches is no substitute for the glory of Heaven.

Rom 2:4-5 Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?

5But after thy hardness and impenitent heart treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God;

369. Why would the good ground enable the seed to flourish?

a. There was an angel scarecrow that kept Satan away

**b. The ground had been prepared by the farmer**

c. The seed was shaded from the sun

Matt 13:23 But he that received seed into the good ground is he that heareth the word, and understandeth *it*; which also beareth fruit, and bringeth forth, some an hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty.

**a** Although God uses His angels as ministers to men, people are held responsible to God for how they receive the message of the Gospel. One cannot say that "the devil made me do it."

**c** The seed needs the sun to grow, but the ability to have all that the sun provides also depends on how the ground is tended being fertilized and watered.

**b** The good ground is not good by accident. It is good because the farmer has taken the time to prepare it to receive the seed.

370. How does the kingdom of God grow?

- a. We don't know how, like watching a plant grow without knowing exactly how growth works**
- b. By making people get saved like forcing a plant to grow
- c. By creating a message to get people saved like creating seeds from chemicals

Mark 4:26-29 And he said, So is the kingdom of God, as if a man should cast seed into the ground;

27And should sleep, and rise night and day, and the seed should spring and grow up, he knoweth not how.

28For the earth bringeth forth fruit of herself; first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear.

29But when the fruit is brought forth, immediately he putteth in the sickle, because the harvest is come.

**b** Growth through evangelism cannot be forced by us and will not be forced by God. However, the more we witness, the more opportunity for growth will occur.

1Cor 3:6-7 I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase.

7So then neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase.

**a,c** Our message does not depend on our cleverness or scientific marketing. Salvation occurs in the heart. Because of good stewardship, we should do all that we can to make the message available, but we should not forget that it is a meeting between the spirit of the soul winner, the spirit of the lost, and the Holy Spirit of God that work together in the understanding of the Gospel.

## The Wheat and the Tares

371. How did the farmer deal with the tares?

- a. Nothing until the harvest so that the wheat would not be dug up and destroyed before it could come to full fruit**
- b. He would dig up the tares and hope to not ruin the wheat
- c. He would dig up the field and start all over again

Matt 13:24-30 Another parable put he forth unto them, saying, The kingdom of heaven is likened unto a man which sowed good seed in his field:

25But while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat, and went his way.

26But when the blade was sprung up, and brought forth fruit, then appeared the tares also.

27So the servants of the householder came and said unto him, Sir, didst not thou sow good seed in thy field? from whence then hath it tares?

28He said unto them, An enemy hath done this. The servants said unto him, Wilt thou then that we go and gather them up?

29But he said, Nay; lest while ye gather up the tares, ye root up also the wheat with them.

30Let both grow together until the harvest: and in the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, Gather ye together first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them: but gather the wheat into my barn.

In this parable, Jesus uses an illustration that would be common for a farming community.

**c,b** C and B represent premature actions on the part of the farmer to deal with a problem of tares among the wheat.

**c** C reminds us of how God did use His judgment to destroy the world and begin all over again in the time of Noah. The lesson of the flood is a demonstration of how God *could* deal with sin.

**b** B gives us a hint as to why God does not simply judge people as time goes along. The dynamics of redemption allows for soul winners to grow and deal with sinners at various levels of preparation in their heart.

**a** A represents the patience that the farmer needed because starting all over again or harvesting prematurely would present problems of their own.

## The Mustard Seed

372. What was the smallest herb seed that was sown in Israel? The mustard seed.

Matt 13:31 parable put he forth unto them, saying, The kingdom of heaven is like to a grain of mustard seed, which a man took, and sowed in his field:

There are those who criticize this reference scientifically, but Jesus was speaking according to the people's experience. He was not trying to give a lecture on botany but according to their understanding. The smallest *planted* seed for them was the mustard seed.

373. How does the kingdom of God grow in this parable?

- a. Secretly without anyone noticing
- b. Spreading out from the tiniest of beginnings**
- c. Like a fragile vine

Matt 13:31-32 Another parable put he forth unto them, saying, The kingdom of heaven is like to a grain of mustard seed, which a man took, and sowed in his field: 32Which indeed is the least of all seeds: but when it is grown, it is the greatest among herbs, and becometh a tree, so that the birds of the air come and lodge in the branches thereof.

**a** The growing mustard seed was very noticeable because of its rapid growth. It could be planted one day and show sprouting through the soil the next.

**c** The mustard plant was not fragile, but very durable.

**b** The mustard seed was, proverbially among the Jews, the smallest of cultivated seeds and was known for its large size at the end of the growing season.

374. How would Jesus present His message at that time?

- a. He would give a Biblical exposition to anyone who was around
- b. He would give mysterious statements that people could read into what suited them
- c. He would give explanations to those who wanted to be His disciple**

Mark 4:33-34 And with many such parables spake he the word unto them, as they were able to hear *it*.

34But without a parable spake he not unto them: and when they were alone, he expounded all things to his disciples.

**a** Jesus did not just give instruction to everyone. He often presented a challenge to hearers to deal with them.

**b** B is a reference to the mystical and transcendental nature of some poetry which people will use to mean whatever they want to mean. Jesus was direct in His illustrations and should be interpreted without embellishment.

**c** For those who were serious students He would take the time to explain things more fully.

See also <https://carm.org/is-mustard-seed-smallest-of-all-seeds>

## Leaven

375. What is the effect of leavening?

- a. It makes everything rotten
- b. It grows and pervades every part of the bread**
- c. It forms a small colony inside the bread

Matt 13:33 Another parable spake he unto them; The kingdom of heaven is like unto leaven, which a woman took, and hid in three measures of meal, till the whole was leavened.

**a,b** A is an example of how you have to be careful about the application of a parable. Leavening is associated with sin in other contexts. Here, the only purpose mentioning leavening is to demonstrate how pervasive the kingdom of God is in the world.

**c** The Kingdom of God was not something that was intended to form a private club of special enlightened ones. It is something that should reach every aspect of life. It is not just meant for the confines of a church, but

should affect art, culture, politics, enterprise, etc. also.

376. How did Christ use parables to teach?

- a. **He spoke in ways that people could identify with**
- b. He gave rigid and elaborate illustrations that could be used to form sound theological systems
- c. He avoided theology and taught stories instead

Matt 13:34-35 All these things spake Jesus unto the multitude in parables; and without a parable spake he not unto them:

35That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying, I will open my mouth in parables; I will utter things which have been kept secret from the foundation of the world.

**c** C is a reflection of how some people think of doctrine as something to be avoided in favor of just worshiping God. Jesus had strong teaching available for the disciples and did not treat everyone as children who needed to be babied.

**b** B is a reminder that strong doctrine should not be built on illustrations. We need the revealed Word of God to guide us.

**a** A is a reminder that the purpose of parables was just to help people bridge their understanding from real life experience to spiritual principles.

## The Wheat and Tares Explained

377. When are the children of the wicked one to be eradicated?

- a. Whenever they are found out
- b. **At the final judgment**
- c. Never, a loving God would only save everyone in the end

Matt 13:36-43 Then Jesus sent the multitude away, and went into the house: and his disciples came unto him, saying, Declare unto us the parable of the tares of the field.

37He answered and said unto them, He that soweth the good seed is the Son of man; 38The field is the world; the good seed are the children of the kingdom; but the tares are the children of the wicked *one*;

39The enemy that sowed them is the devil; the harvest is the end of the world; and the reapers are the angels.

40As therefore the tares are gathered and burned in the fire; so shall it be in the end of this world.

41The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity;

42And shall cast them into a furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth.

43Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Who hath ears to hear, let him hear.

**c** The judgment to come is a sure thing. There is so much time spent in the Bible about judgment that only someone who was generally ignorant of Scripture would suggest that all will be saved. Although such people might

seem like they have only the best wishes for all and that they are very loving, in reality they are dangerous and if pressed would reveal their rebellion against God. They often become indignant against God because He doesn't match *their* idea of how they should be accepted without having to submit to Him.

**a** Dispensationalism offers the best explanation for why God waits. God will be vindicated for having given men every chance to repent. Until then, each one has multiple chances to repent. If they were merely judged when found out, there would be no chance because all are already found since according to Rom 3:23 we know that all have sinned and come short of the glory of God.

### **Hidden Treasure, The Pearl of Great Price, The Draught of Fish**

378. If a soldier passing through an area had buried his treasure in a field but could not return to retrieve it, how could someone lay claim to it?
- He would loudly declare "Finders keepers, losers weepers"
  - Depending on how great the treasure was, he would do whatever they could to buy the field, and as the owner of the field have the rights to everything in it**
  - He would make up his own rule for ownership and seize the treasure

Matt 13:44 Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto treasure hid in a field; the which when a man hath found, he hideth, and for joy thereof goeth and selleth all that he hath, and buyeth that field.

**a,c** A and C are wrong because their were actual laws in place that would keep someone from seizing upon a treasure. They were actually similar to laws that we have today. If someone buys a property and the former owner leaves items on the property, they become the property of the new owner. Any mineral rights belong to the new owner.

**b** The important lesson here is that if people are truly interested, they will go to great length to obtain truth. It has to be asked, what impression do many Christians and church members make about how important God and His Word are to them?

379. How is the kingdom of heaven like a pearl of great price?
- It is worth forsaking all to possess**
  - It will make you rich in jewels
  - It will show how cultured you are

Matt 13:46-45 Who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had, and bought it.

**b,c** B and C are a reflection of how important the world is to many people.



**a** The Kingdom of Heaven, by comparison to what people find precious in the world, is worth far more than any jewel that someone might go to great length to possess.

The draught of fish is a plain declaration of Jesus that there will be a sure judgment that cannot be avoided. Jesus spoke plainly that this will be a fiery judgment.

Just as a householder brings forth his older savings and newer savings to deal with life, a good scribe will delve into old lessons learned and not disparage new teachings such as Christ was bringing forth. As time has gone on in the history of the church, different theological problems have been tackled in different periods. Christianity has struggled over the inclusion of the books of the Bible, the nature of Christ, the nature of the church, salvation by works and forms, and most lately eschatology. Certain issues will rise from time to time and more thought is applied and added to our argumentation.

### **57 - The Mother and Brethren of Jesus Seek Him**

380. In what way did Jesus respond to Mary's request to see Him?

- a. He treated her as favored above all others and went to her
- b. He went to her because she could ask anything of Him and He would do it
- c. He continued teaching the people**

Mark 3:31-32 There came then his brethren and his mother, and, standing without, sent unto him, calling him.

32And the multitude sat about him, and they said unto him, Behold, thy mother and thy brethren without seek for thee.

**a** A assumes that Christ should have responded to Mary because of some favored status she was blessed with when her cousin Elizabeth met with her.

Luke 1:41-42 And it came to pass, that, when Elisabeth heard the salutation of Mary, the babe leaped in her womb; and Elisabeth was filled with the Holy Ghost:

42And she spake out with a loud voice, and said, Blessed *art* thou among women, and blessed *is* the fruit of thy womb.

**b** B is a popular Roman Catholic teaching that is used to promote an inappropriate affinity for Mary. While Roman Catholicism affirms that Jesus is superior to Mary, it contradicts itself by then placing Mary in a position over Christ. Even though it is taught that Jesus is not compelled to comply with Mary except out of love, nevertheless the end result is that Mary has some power over Christ.

**c** C is the opposite of A and B. Jesus non-reaction to her calling Him was not lost on the people. He did not respond when Mary was calling Him, but when

the people He was teaching spoke up. Jesus did not treat Mary with any superior deference.

381. What position does Mary have compared to others in the kingdom of heaven?
- a. She is the queen of heaven
  - b. She is the same as anyone else**
  - c. She is the mother of "The Church"

Matt 12:48-50 But he answered and said unto him that told him, Who is my mother? and who are my brethren?

49And he stretched forth his hand toward his disciples, and said, Behold my mother and my brethren!

50For whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother.

**b** Jesus did not even suggest that His mother and brethren were even believers. Undoubtedly Mary was, but His brothers didn't accept Him until after the resurrection. Jesus gave made a generic statement that anyone who did the will of His Father in heaven were *equally* significant.

**c** C is a notion that the Roman Catholic presumptuously teaches. Their argument is basically is that if Mary is the mother of Jesus then she is the Mother of God. If she is the Mother of God and "the Church" is founded on Jesus, then she is the Mother of "the Church." This passage would then suggest that all the believers are the Mother of the Church since Jesus said anyone who follows Him is His mother while being simultaneously His brothers.

**a** A is another Roman Catholic notion that elevates Mary even further. The notion of a queen of heaven was a pagan idea. Queen of Heaven was a title given to a number of ancient sky goddesses worshiped throughout the ancient Mediterranean and Near East during ancient times. Goddesses known to have been referred to by the title include the Mesopotamian Inanna, Middle Eastern Anat, Egyptian Isis and Nut, Middle Eastern Astarte, Ashtaroth, and Asherah (where we get the word *Easter* from), Greek Hera, Roman Juno, Doumu, as the queen of heaven and mother of all the stars in Chinese religion and Taoism, and Mazu, also commonly known as the "Empress of Heaven," and Queen Mother of the West.

## **58 - People Fail to Follow, Jesus Calms the Sea**

382. What two ways were certain people too concerned about that led them to fail to follow Jesus?
- a. Concern over security for the future, concern for the affairs of this world**
  - b. Concern over where He was going, concern over how to pay for obligations

c. Concern over the lost, concern over their sin

Luke 9:57-60 And it came to pass, that, as they went in the way, a certain *man* said unto him, Lord, I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest.

58And Jesus said unto him, Foxes have holes, and birds of the air *have* nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay *his* head.

59And he said unto another, Follow me. But he said, Lord, suffer me first to go and bury my father.

60Jesus said unto him, Let the dead bury their dead: but go thou and preach the kingdom of God.

**b** The people addressed in this passage were willing to follow Christ without regard to where it would go, but they were turned back by the conditions they would have to live under which we recognize today could be remedied by having sufficient operational funds. This is one of the challenges facing new ministers, whether they be pastors or people heading up some church ministry. In the case of pastors this shows up in an inordinate interest in the way they seek how much pay, vacation time, benefits, etc. These things are important to know, but should not be an almost automatic deal breaker before taking a position. This is not limited to inexperienced pastors, though. People taking charge of a ministry in church might make the mistake that being well funded means success. Ministry success takes shape in all kinds of forms. Success might mean that some soul who was the only one who attended a meeting was able to resist a temptation ten years later and you don't even ever get to find out. If you were to ask which would be better, ministering to a thousand souls or one soul, the answer is that it all depends. B represents the problem not of just having obligations, but the dependence on money as the answer to the problems of ministry.

**c** C is the kind of concern that we *should* have. We should be motivated first by people who are lost or are in sin. That will spur us on, not discourage us.

**a** Concern over security for the future is revealed in two ways. First, although the one man was willing to follow Jesus, Jesus pointed out that this would lead to a path that was not all that secure. There was no security of even having a place to lay your head. Secondly, the man who was concerned about burying his father was not just wanting to go home and attend to a funeral. The Jews didn't wait for company to be able to come to town, hold a wake, etc. They buried people immediately after they died. The fact that this was an issue for the man was because he wouldn't have exactly known when his father was going to die or how long this would take. It could be days or more likely an ongoing process that was indefinite. Waiting until all matters are sown up could impede people from ever making and fulfilling a commitment.

383. What did Jesus say would make someone unfit for the kingdom of God?

a. Those who didn't perform all the works of the law

**b. Those who were more concerned about their old life of the past**

c. Those who were not excited about the work of the Lord

Luke 9:61-62 And another also said, Lord, I will follow thee; but let me first go bid them farewell, which are at home at my house.

62And Jesus said unto him, No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God.

**a** Our works or lack of works don't make us fit before God. Whatever work we do we do by the power of God according to the gifts with which He blesses us.

Rom 12:3-6 For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think *of himself* more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith.

4For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office:

5So we, *being* many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another.

6Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, whether prophecy, *let us prophesy* according to the proportion of faith;

**c** It is fitting to be excited about the work of God, but not everyone has such a personality that expresses itself that way. Very often, those who are more staid or less expressive are concerned that they do not have the same excitement that they see in others. They even wonder if something is wrong with their spirituality. Excitement is just one aspect of our emotional nature. Also, emphasizing emotion out of proportion to our spiritual mind creates problems. The more important aspect of emotion to the Christian is in his willful submission to truth and righteousness.

**b** In our commitment to truth and righteousness, faithfulness is more important. Turning back to what we left behind in the world is what Demas and the Jews in the wilderness were known for. There will always be unfinished business that we can use as an excuse to keep us from committing ourselves to the Lord's work. The problem, of course, is with the heart.

1Cor 4:1-5 Let a man so account of us, as of the ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God.

2Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful.

3But with me it is a very small thing that I should be judged of you, or of man's judgment: yea, I judge not mine own self.

4For I know nothing by myself; yet am I not hereby justified: but he that judgeth me is the Lord.

5Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts: and then shall every man have praise of God.

384. Why were the disciples amazed that Jesus was asleep?

a. The storm was so loud that no one should be able to sleep through it

**b. They thought that Jesus didn't care enough about them**

c. They thought that Jesus didn't have enough sense to be afraid

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Mark 4:37-38 And there arose a great storm of wind, and the waves beat into the ship, so that it was now full.

38 And he was in the hinder part of the ship, asleep on a pillow: and they awake him, and say unto him, Master, carest thou not that we perish?

Matt 8:25 And his disciples came to *him*, and awoke him, saying, Lord, save us: we perish.

**a** Paying attention to the problem of the loudness of the storm would miss the mark of what was going on. A is a reference to how odd it is that sometimes people fail to identify true problems in life. For example, money problems speak more loudly to them than the spiritual failures of their hearts

Ps 89:8,9 O LORD God of hosts, who *is* a strong LORD like unto thee? or to thy faithfulness round about thee?

9 Thou rulest the raging of the sea: when the waves thereof arise, thou stillest them.

**c** The fact that they didn't notice that Jesus wasn't afraid and find it strange demonstrates how they were more focused on themselves. The disciples *could* have wondered about the welfare of Jesus, but they didn't.

**b** Jesus, being God and having an understanding of all things, would have been able to sleep because of the spiritual confidence He had within.

Isa 26:3 Thou wilt keep *him* in perfect peace, *whose* mind *is* stayed *on thee*: because he trusteth in thee.

The disciples knew enough to call upon Jesus to save them, but appeared disturbed that He didn't seem to care enough about them to jump into action.

385. What surprised the disciples about Jesus' reaction to the storm?

- a. His counsel on how to be brave
- b. His own fears about perishing
- c. His power over all nature**

Mark 4:40-41 And he said unto them, Why are ye so fearful? how is it that ye have no faith?

41 And they feared exceedingly, and said one to another, What manner of man is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?

**a** Jesus didn't merely counsel them to not be fearful. Neither did He suggest that nothing is ever fearful or dangerous.

**b** Of course, Jesus didn't have fears about perishing, but they didn't have a chance to contemplate that.

**c** What they found out was the extent to which He had power over nature. They had seen Him heal people and overcome nature. It is odd that they would have been surprised by this. However, we have to remember that the

disciples had entered into a ship; they had not taken a vessel they owned. The owners of the ship were part of the company and would have especially marveled over this power. The disciples, who could have known better, were evidently caught up in the passion of the moment and joined in with the powerful emotions all were experiencing. If anything, they lost the opportunity to promote Christ and deserved the rebuke for their faithlessness.

Psalms 89:8,9 O LORD God of hosts, who *is* a strong LORD like unto thee? or to thy faithfulness round about thee?

9Thou rulest the raging of the sea: when the waves thereof arise, thou stillest them.

## 59 - Jesus Cast Demons Out into Pigs

386. What more specific name did Matthew use to describe the Gentile area east of the Jordan?
- The country of the Gadarenes
  - The province of Decapolis
  - The country of the Gergasenes**

Matt 8:28 And when he was come to the other side into the country of the Gergesenes, there met him two possessed with devils, coming out of the tombs, exceeding fierce, so that no man might pass by that way.

Mark 5:1 And they came over unto the other side of the sea, into the country of the Gadarenes.

Luke 8:26 And they arrived at the country of the Gadarenes, which is over against Galilee.

The word Gergasenes comes from the name of the region Gerasa, which itself was a northern part of the larger area of Perea near the Sea of Galilee. Perea was the area east of the Jordan River. It is known to us as a region Jesus visited on tour later on before His end in Jerusalem.

**a,c** Gadara was the name of *two towns*, one of which belonged to the region of Gerasa. Mark and Luke refer to the country, or region, that Gadara is associated with. However, Matthew's reference to Gerasa enables us to know which Gadara is in question. The immediate benefit of identifying the difference between Matthew's account with Mark and Luke's is to point out that there is no contradiction between the Gospels.

**b** Matthew does not mention Decapolis, but it is significant to know that Gerasa was a name for the region that was known as Decapolis by the Romans and was part of the larger area of Perea, the area east of the Jordan. The Decapolis (deka for "ten" and polis for "cities" in Greek) was a league of 10 Greco-Roman cities that were set up by Alexander the Great's generals for Greek settler-soldiers to live in. They had their own court system, currency, temples, theaters, and armies, but they were at odds with the

Hebrew population who they considered beneath their civilized society. The cities included Scythopolis, Hippos (the ruins of which are the only remnants of the Decapolis in modern Israel). The rest are now in Jordan (Pella, Gadara, Dion, Gerasa, Canatha, and Raphana), and Syria (Damascus and Philadelphia).

387. What is an ultimate characteristic of demon possession?

- a. **Self destruction**
- b. Power
- c. Strange behavior

Mark 5:3-5 Who had *his* dwelling among the tombs; and no man could bind him, no, not with chains:

4Because that he had been often bound with fetters and chains, and the chains had been plucked asunder by him, and the fetters broken in pieces: neither could any *man* tame him.

5And always, night and day, he was in the mountains, and in the tombs, crying, and cutting himself with stones.

**c** Strange behavior can be common to both the possessed and the "normal." Strange behavior does not necessarily indicate demon possession.

**b** Although the demon possessed man had great strength, demon possession can manifest as sickly weakness, also.

**a** Although A and B *can* be associated with demon possession, the most outstanding characteristic of the end of Satan is the destruction that he would like to bring to God's creation. In this case, it is self destruction. Satan's desire to destroy what God has created is manifest in the cultural day of a society that is increasingly given over to denying and rebelling against God.

388. What was the response of the demon to Christ?

- a. **Submission**
- b. He tried to overpower Christ
- c. He mocked Christ

Matt 8:29 And, behold, they cried out, saying, What have we to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of God? art thou come hither to torment us before the time?

Mark 5:7 And cried with a loud voice, and said, What have I to do with thee, Jesus, *thou* Son of the most high God? I adjure thee by God, that thou torment me not.

Luke 8:28 When he saw Jesus, he cried out, and fell down before him, and with a loud voice said, What have I to do with thee, Jesus, *thou* Son of God most high? I beseech thee, torment me not.

Mark 5:13 And forthwith Jesus gave them leave. And the unclean spirits went out, and entered into the swine: and the herd ran violently down a steep place into the sea, (they were about two thousand;) and were choked in the sea.

**b,c** As fallen spiritual beings, demons have a greater awareness of Christ than men do. As such, they know that they can't overpower Christ or mock Him. They know what their ultimate end is.

**a** Knowing who Jesus is, the demons only have one choice, which is to submit to Him.

389. Read Rev 20:1-3. What did the demons want to avoid?

- a. Exposure as being less powerful than God
- b. To be sent the bottomless pit**
- c. Leaving their home in the man

Rev 20:1-3 And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand.

2And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years,

3And cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled: and after that he must be loosed a little season.

**a** Being less powerful than God or leaving the man was the least of their concerns.

**b,c** They were not so tied to the man but just wanted to be anywhere other than the deep. The word for *deep* is *abussos*, or abyss, and is translated *bottomless pit* in the Revelation. It is from the bottomless pit in Rev 9:1-11 that demonic creatures will be released in the Tribulation.

390. What was the possessed man's condition like after the demons were cast out?

- a. He was strange
- b. He was clothed and in his right mind**
- c. He was depressed

Mark 5:15 And they come to Jesus, and see him that was possessed with the devil, and had the legion, sitting, and clothed, and in his right mind: and they were afraid.

**a** The man might have appeared strange to the people who were used to seeing him the way he was.

**b,c** The man was not only demon free, but his mind was healed.

2Tim 1:7 For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind.



391. How did the people respond to this miracle?
- a. They were impressed with the power of Jesus
  - b. They were fearful and rejecting of Jesus**
  - c. They were happy for the man who was now in his right mind

**a,b** A and B represent how the people *should* have felt about the restoration of the man. They *should* have been impressed with His power and also happy for the man.

**c** Instead, they rejected what Christ had done. This is something that is true even today. Instead of being happy for people whose lives are together because of Christ, they choose to mock it and even call Christians thinking dangerous. [Talk about many examples of government policies and cultural standards that are anti-Christian and destructive] They see Christianity as something to be canceled if it will not change and conform to the Godless and destructive culture they are creating.

392. Read Mark 1:44-45 and John 6:2-6. Why might Jesus have no problem with the man drawing attention to Him, sharing what had been done to him?
- a. He was in the province of Decapolis where Jesus was not generally ministering**
  - b. He wanted to turn His attention to the Gentiles of Decapolis and leave His mission to Israel
  - c. He wanted to bring the Gentiles to worship at the Temple in Jerusalem

Mark 1:44-45 And saith unto him, See thou say nothing to any man: but go thy way, shew thyself to the priest, and offer for thy cleansing those things which Moses commanded, for a testimony unto them.

45But he went out, and began to publish *it* much, and to blaze abroad the matter, insomuch that Jesus could no more openly enter into the city, but was without in desert places: and they came to him from every quarter.

John 6:2-6 And a great multitude followed him, because they saw his miracles which he did on them that were diseased.

3And Jesus went up into a mountain, and there he sat with his disciples.

4And the passover, a feast of the Jews, was nigh.

5When Jesus then lifted up *his* eyes, and saw a great company come unto him, he saith unto Philip, Whence shall we buy bread, that these may eat?

6And this he said to prove him: for he himself knew what he would do.

**b,c** Leaving His mission to Israel behind has never been the objective of God for His work. However, bringing the Gentiles into the Jewish Temple was not part of the scope of the work of Jesus at this time. Recognizing Decapolis helps understanding John 6:2-6. Since Philip was from the area of Decapolis, it makes it more understandable that he was asked about where to buy bread instead of the other apostles.

**a** Because Decapolis was outside of the Jewish culture, Jesus did not have the same issues with the people as He did with the Jewish leaders. The Jewish leaders saw Jesus as a threat and would have killed Him prematurely. Even though the people of Decapolis at *this* event were fearful of Christ, this was not necessarily true of the entire region.

Matt 4:24-25 And his fame went throughout all Syria: and they brought unto him all sick people that were taken with divers diseases and torments, and those which were possessed with devils, and those which were lunatick, and those that had the palsy; and he healed them.

25And there followed him great multitudes of people from Galilee, and *from* Decapolis, and *from* Jerusalem, and *from* Judaea, and *from* beyond Jordan.

There is a possibility that being further away from Galilee that there was not as much likelihood that the man's promotion of Christ would present a problem.

Sometimes it seems difficult to serve God where He has placed us. We may imagine how life would be if only our circumstances were easier, our companions were more like minded, or our town were more sympathetic to Christianity. However, the Lord has a way of leading us into situations we would have not chosen apart from Him for His ultimate glory. (Is. 55:8-9) In three of the Gospels, we find the account of the maniac of Gadara. For many years, he had suffered demonic possession. He lived in a cemetery, wild, naked, and unusually strong. He broke free of all chains that were placed on him for his own sake as well as for the sake of others. After an encounter with Jesus, the man was gloriously delivered of the devil's hold on him. He was then calm, clothed, and in his right mind. But his new and unfamiliar demeanor frightened the people of the Gadarenes. Word of what happened began to spread and they wanted Jesus to leave town because they didn't understand. The transformed man asked the Lord if he could go along with Him, but Jesus had a different plan. God's will for this formerly tormented soul was to go back home and live out the consistent testimony of his changed life. He was to tell everyone about all the wonderful things Jesus had done for him. Judging from their initial reaction, the man may have thought there would be no point to that. He could have begged Christ to let him start over elsewhere where no one knew his past. He could have thought he would benefit more by being around the Lord Himself to build up his faith, rather than try to witness to his terrified community as a new believer. But instead of arguing with the Lord, the man simply obeyed. As a result, his audience "marveled." While we should never stop studying God's word, the Lord does not expect us to become theologians before sharing the Gospel. Many times, our transformed lives will speak volumes to others who know us best and they will "marvel."

– N. Zeron

## **60 - Daughter of Jairus Resurrected, The Woman with the Issue of Blood**

393. How would the woman who wanted to be healed be considered unclean?
- a. She was a sinner who didn't conform to the Jewish law
  - b. She didn't bathe
  - c. She had an issue of blood**

Mark 5:25-26 And a certain woman, which had an issue of blood twelve years,  
26And had suffered many things of many physicians, and had spent all that she had,  
and was nothing bettered, but rather grew worse,

**a** In one sense, the woman might have been considered unclean because it was supposed that she was a Gentile and that a Jew would have known not would have known not to be present in the crowd with the uncleanness. However, there is nothing in the text to indicate she was a Gentile and although an observant Jew might have not mixed with the crowd a sick person wanting to be healed certainly would.

**b** B is obviously wrong, but it is a reflection of how in our churches today there are those who are considered unclean because they are actually dirty from not having proper hygiene. We should be careful to not treat anyone as a pariah just because we look at them as beneath us because we deem them socially unacceptable.

**c** There were a number of issues regarding blood in Leviticus 15-17 that include this woman's problem. However, the problem she had was a health issue beyond what was directly described in Leviticus. The aspect of being unclean could have contributed to her fear of approaching Christ.

394. Why might the woman have been fearful of approaching Jesus?

- a. She was unclean
- b. Jesus didn't value women
- c. He was obviously very busy**

Mark 5:27 When she had heard of Jesus, came in the press behind, and touched his garment.

**b** There should never be a presumption due to any modern political social justice error regarding Biblical standards for women that they were less valuable as in B.

**a,c** However, whether A or C is most correct is debatable. The fact that there was a press of people surrounding Jesus and that the woman had some difficulty reaching Him suggests that she might have had some apprehension about approaching Him because of how busy He was. However, she was also a little embarrassed when He called her to present herself, which suggests that she was under some social pressure due to her condition, also. For whatever reason, people should not feel that Jesus is hard to approach. This concern shows up sometimes as people being afraid to pray for anything for themselves as if they are afraid they might be a nuisance to God. They think they shouldn't bother Him with anything that doesn't have major spiritual importance.

395. How did Jesus demonstrate that He is mindful of every single person?

- a. He made sure to meet with everyone who was around Him
- b. He was aware of one touching even His garment in the midst of a throng**
- c. He told the people that He loved them as a group

Mark 5:30-31 And Jesus, immediately knowing in himself that virtue had gone out of him, turned him about in the press, and said, Who touched my clothes?

31And his disciples said unto him, Thou seest the multitude thronging thee, and sayest thou, Who touched me?

**c** Jesus does not just love in a general way, but in a personal way. We have to be careful to love people individually. So many people make the mistake of "loving" their church when they mean that they enjoy going to church and hearing the sermons, singing the hymns, listening to the special music, eating the meals, playing the games, etc. We should be seeking personal relationships which can only be done with personal involvement.

**a** Meeting with everyone around you is an important thing to do. Good politicians will have a genuine interest in others, for example, as opposed to those who merely maintain an appearance of sincerity. Again, it is even more important to have personal involvement. Jesus stopped everything to minister directly to the woman.

**b** Jesus being God could know the sense of someone touching His garment. It is interesting that it is possible that we can tell the difference between something that weighs one pound and something else that weighs a half-ounce more. There are those who can hear ever so slight difference in musical pitches. Some who are blind have developed their ability to echo-locate in order to navigate their way around. Although we might not have the kind of sensitivity that Jesus had, we should be careful to be sensitive to others around us. This should mean more than be sensitive to their touch, but to all they are going through.

396. What did Jesus do to get the woman to step out of her fearfulness?

- a. He invited her to respond by asking who had touched Him**
- b. He pointed to her and told her to speak up
- c. He was very kind and left it up to her to call out to Him

Mark 5:30-32 And Jesus, immediately knowing in himself that virtue had gone out of him, turned him about in the press, and said, Who touched my clothes?

31And his disciples said unto him, Thou seest the multitude thronging thee, and sayest thou, Who touched me?

32And he looked round about to see her that had done this thing.

**a,b,c** The word *virtue* is *dunamis*-power. We almost always think of virtue as goodness or righteousness. But Jesus knew that power had gone out to this woman. By asking who touched Him it might be thought that He didn't know

who had done it. However, this was done more for the woman's sake to be able to come forward. We see this because Jesus tried to reach out to the woman according to vs. 32.

A is a blend of B and C. Jesus could have pointed to her and put her on the spot. This was not what He usually did; an exception is like the time Jesus confronted Peter after the resurrection. It was not like Jesus to totally leave someone alone, although there were exceptions to this, too. An example might be speaking in parables to the masses. By calling out for the "one" who touched Him, Jesus initiated the action but left it for the woman to act of her own volition. This is similar to God in the Garden of Eden. When He came calling for Adam, He, of course, knew very well Adam was but called out so that Adam could make the choice to speak up. One might suggest that there was no other option for Adam, but that is always true. Our only *real* option is to respond to God, although we find a way to imagine a few others.

397. How were the people treating the death of Jairus' daughter?

- a. They were praying in faith for the family
- b. They were weeping and wailing**
- c. They were trusting in God

Mark 5:38 And he cometh to the house of the ruler of the synagogue, and seeth the tumult, and them that wept and wailed greatly.

Matt 9:23 And when Jesus came into the ruler's house, and saw the minstrels and the people making a noise,

**b** It was customary for a presentation of weeping and wailing, even to the point of *hiring* people to join in the cries of mourning.

**c** The people were not even considering the aspect of trusting God. If they were, they would have welcomed Christ's presence, at best. At worst, they would have admonished Christ instead of mocking him.

**a** By making it a point to be found in such mourning, there was a risk of overshadowing a very important opportunity to pray with the family and seek God.

398. What spiritual reality did Jesus declare in response to the people?

- a. He said that death is only an illusion
- b. He used the figure of speech of sleep to indicate that no one ceases to exist in death**
- c. He said that if your faith is strong enough you can make anything happen

Mark 5:39-40 And when he was come in, he saith unto them, Why make ye this ado, and weep? the damsel is not dead, but sleepeth.

40And they laughed him to scorn. But when he had put them all out, he taketh the father and the mother of the damsel, and them that were with him, and entereth in where the damsel was lying.

**a** The idea of death being an illusion is used by mystics and also by Christian Science. Jesus's response was not poetic, even though He used a figure of speech.

**c** Although Jesus taught that all things are possible by faith, He never suggested that faith was a super power by which we can *make* things happen.

**b** The word *sleep* was used to speak of the temporary nature of death, but it was still a reference to death. Jesus described the death of His friend Lazarus this way and then had to plainly tell the apostles that Lazarus was dead. In each case, death is not an end in itself. Whether one was raised from the dead while on earth or at the end of the age in the rapture, life goes on in heaven.

399. How did the people respond to Jesus saying that she only slept?

- a. They thought it was ludicrous**
- b. They thought that God had heard them and sent Jesus
- c. They continued crying in their mourning in front of Him

Mark 5:40 And they laughed him to scorn. But when he had put them all out, he taketh the father and the mother of the damsel, and them that were with him, and entereth in where the damsel was lying.

**a,b,c** The people's scornful response demonstrated that they were not truly interested in God's perfect will. Had they merely been incredulous it would have been understandable. Their negative reaction was proportionate to the power of the reputation of Jesus. If they were reacting positively, they would have welcomed the One for whom they had called. If they were neutral, they might have merely gone on crying. Their quick change to mockery is very easily an indication of their insincerity and suggesting that they were possibly mere hired mourners. This is also suggested by the reference to the minstrels who were present.

400. How normal was the girl after she was raised up?

- a. She was handicapped, but alive
- b. She was supernatural in that she shared her story of what it was like on the other side
- c. Normal enough to have something to eat**

Luke 8:54-55 And he put them all out, and took her by the hand, and called, saying, Maid, arise.

55And her spirit came again, and she arose straightway: and he commanded to give her meat.

**a** Handicapped but alive would have been welcome, but Jesus blessed Her above that.

**b,c** However, there was nothing supernatural, even though her resurrection was supernatural. She merely was given something to eat. There are a number of fantasy accounts of people who died and came back with stories from beyond the grave. Many stories have been demonstrated to be fraudulent for money. For others, their stories do not match up with Scripture teachings. We might have to be careful with how we deal with such stories because of gullible sensibilities. No matter how much people insist that such things are so real, it is notable that no one resurrected had even a single verse recording any report of what they had seen "on the other side." Other times, prophets received apocalyptic visions, but we call these Scripture and are recorded as inspired text in the Bible. There is an account by Paul that some might suggest was a case of one someone dying and coming back to tell.

2Cor 12:1-4 It is not expedient for me doubtless to glory. I will come to visions and revelations of the Lord.

2I knew a man in Christ above fourteen years ago, (whether in the body, I cannot tell; or whether out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth;) such an one caught up to the third heaven.

3And I knew such a man, (whether in the body, or out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth;)

4How that he was caught up into paradise, and heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter.

There are several problems here. The first is that there is no mention of death, just being in the body or out – and he did not know which. Secondly, he is referring to visions and revelations. Next, whatever was seen was not lawful to utter.

## 61 - Two Blind Men Healed

401. Read Luke 7:11-16, Matt 12:9-13, 2Cor 12:6-10. Is faith always a requirement for healing?

a. Yes

**b. No**

Luke 7:11-16 And it came to pass the day after, that he went into a city called Nain; and many of his disciples went with him, and much people.

12Now when he came nigh to the gate of the city, behold, there was a dead man carried out, the only son of his mother, and she was a widow: and much people of the city was with her.

13And when the Lord saw her, he had compassion on her, and said unto her, Weep not.

14And he came and touched the bier: and they that bare *him* stood still. And he said, Young man, I say unto thee, Arise.

15And he that was dead sat up, and began to speak. And he delivered him to his mother.

16And there came a fear on all: and they glorified God, saying, That a great prophet

is risen up among us; and, That God hath visited his people.

The dead man had no faith.

Matt 12:9-13 And when he was departed thence, he went into their synagogue:

10And, behold, there was a man which had *his* hand withered. And they asked him, saying, Is it lawful to heal on the sabbath days? that they might accuse him.

11And he said unto them, What man shall there be among you, that shall have one sheep, and if it fall into a pit on the sabbath day, will he not lay hold on it, and lift *it* out?

12How much then is a man better than a sheep? Wherefore it is lawful to do well on the sabbath days.

13Then saith he to the man, Stretch forth thine hand. And he stretched *it* forth; and it was restored whole, like as the other.

Jesus did not inquire about the man's faith.

2Cor 12:6-10 For though I would desire to glory, I shall not be a fool; for I will say the truth: but *now* I forbear, lest any man should think of me above that which he seeth me *to be*, or *that* he heareth of me.

7And lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure.

8For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me.

9And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.

10Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong.

Paul *had* faith, but that does not mean that it can be used to leverage God into doing *our* will.

402. Why did Jesus heal these men?

- a. **Because they believed that Jesus could do it**
- b. Because they had great faith that Jesus could do it
- c. Because they were unbelieving and Jesus wanted to prove Himself to them

Matt 9:29 Then touched he their eyes, saying, According to your faith be it unto you.

**b** "According to their faith" does not indicate the *strength* of their faith so it cannot be determined that it was their great faith.

**c** There are times when God did things to help and even challenge people to faith. In that sense God will prove things to people.

Mal 3:8-12 Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings.

9Ye *are* cursed with a curse: for ye have robbed me, *even* this whole nation.

10Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house,



and prove me now herewith, saith the LORD of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that *there shall not be room enough to receive it.*

11And I will rebuke the devourer for your sakes, and he shall not destroy the fruits of your ground; neither shall your vine cast her fruit before the time in the field, saith the LORD of hosts.

12And all nations shall call you blessed: for ye shall be a delightsome land, saith the LORD of hosts.

However, there is another sense of proving that is more like blasphemy. For example, when Satan tempted Christ in the wilderness he was daring Christ to prove that He was God.

These men were not unbelieving putting Jesus in a position of catering to them and appeasing them in order to persuade them to believe. He left it according their faith, not whether they got Him to perform enough before they insincerely accepted Him. Sometimes we will encounter people who will try to manipulate us, dangling a carrot of acceptance in front of us. This is more like the kid who tries to tempt you with friendship if you will do what they want. Although Jesus is happy to bless us He does not do it based on responding to our manipulations.

**a** In this case, the men were blessed simply because they believed. We also need to see this in the larger context as in the last question because we might go to the opposite extreme of tempting the Lord – assuming that we have to muster a great faith. We need simple faith that God does good and that we should receive whatever He does with trust in Him.

403. Read James 4:13-15, 5:16-17, Matt 6:7, and 1John 5:14. What are some sure limitations God will put on His interactions with us in prayer?
- a. Our prayers must be elaborate and eloquent
  - b. Our prayers must be compatible with His will and overall plan**
  - c. Our prayers must be casual so as not to over pressure God

**b** James 4:13-15 and 1John 5:14 teach that our prayers must be according to *God's* will, fulfilling *His* agenda, not *our* will, fulfilling *our* agenda.

James 4:13-15 Go to now, ye that say, To day or to morrow we will go into such a city, and continue there a year, and buy and sell, and get gain:

14Whereas ye know not what *shall be* on the morrow. For what *is* your life? It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away.

15For that ye *ought* to say, If the Lord will, we shall live, and do this, or that.

1John 5:14 And this is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us:

**c** Even though we are trusting things to God's will, that doesn't mean that we should be flippantly casual, as indicated in James 5:16-17

James 5:16-17 Confess *your* faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.

17Elias was a man subject to like passions as we are, and he prayed earnestly that it might not rain: and it rained not on the earth by the space of three years and six months.

**a** Neither should our expectations be based on how much we can impress God with how elaborately and eloquently we pray as taught in Matt 6:7.

Matt 6:7 But when ye pray, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen *do*: for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking.

## **62 - A Prophet is Not Without Honor Except in His Own House**

404. Besides the mighty works that Jesus did, what were the people astonished by?

- a. How many followers He had
- b. How talented He was
- c. How wise He was**

Mark 6:1-2 And he went out from thence, and came into his own country; and his disciples follow him.

2And when the sabbath day was come, he began to teach in the synagogue: and many hearing *him* were astonished, saying, From whence hath this *man* these things? and what wisdom *is* this which is given unto him, that even such mighty works are wrought by his hands?

**a** People will often be impressed by crowds as if that is proof that someone is right and worthy.

**b** Similarly, people are often impressed with outward appearance.

**c** What struck people was the wisdom with which He spoke.

405. Read Luke 1:36, Matt 1:24-25, and John 7:1-5. What relation did James, Joses, Simon, Judas, and their sisters have with Jesus?

- a. They had to be cousins like John the Baptist because Mary was a perpetual virgin
- b. They were spiritual brethren (disciples) even though they did not believe in Him
- c. They were half-brothers and sisters**

**a** Roman Catholicism teaches that Mary was still a virgin even after the birth of Christ, as though somehow having other children would be considered defilement. However, her virginity was only *until* she had brought forth her firstborn son, Jesus.

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Matt 1:24,25 Then Joseph being raised from sleep did as the angel of the Lord had bidden him, and took unto him his wife:  
25And knew her not till she had brought forth her firstborn son: and he called his name JESUS.

Also, the word for cousin is distinct from the word brother in Greek so that there is no confusing them.

Luke 1:36 And, behold, thy cousin Elisabeth, she hath also conceived a son in her old age: and this is the sixth month with her, who was called barren.

**b** They were not spiritual brothers because we know that they did not believe in Jesus until after the resurrection.

John 7:1-5 After these things Jesus walked in Galilee: for he would not walk in Jewry, because the Jews sought to kill him.  
2Now the Jews' feast of tabernacles was at hand.  
3His brethren therefore said unto him, Depart hence, and go into Judaea, that thy disciples also may see the works that thou doest.  
4For *there is* no man *that* doeth any thing in secret, and he himself seeketh to be known openly. If thou do these things, shew thyself to the world.  
5For neither did his brethren believe in him.

Ps 69:8 I am become a stranger unto my brethren, and an alien unto my mother's children.

**c** The only conclusion that we can arrive at is that they were half-brothers and sisters. This is the only way that Jesus could be born of a virgin, Joseph having normal relations with Mary after His birth, other children who were not spiritual brothers.

406. How did people regard Joseph, Mary, and their children?

- a. They looked like a natural family of father, mother, brothers and sisters**
- b. They knew that their children were the only cousins in the world that were related to Jesus
- c. They knew that Mary was the mother of God and James, Joses, Simon, and Judas were disciples (spiritual brethren)

Mark 6:3 Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary, the brother of James, and Joses, and of Juda, and Simon? and are not his sisters here with us? And they were offended at him.

**a** The people spoke phenomenologically, or according to appearance. This is demonstrated by His in the world appearance as a carpenter so that there is no reason to take the reference to the children spiritually (which would be pneumenologically).

**b** John the Baptist was definitely the cousin of Jesus. The people are not even questioning the issue of cousins. If they were, it would be just as reasonable to make reference to John.

**c** This is a reference to the false Romanist doctrine of Mary as the mother of God. They had difficulty even calling Jesus the Son of God let alone thinking of God as having a mother.

407. Why did the people have such little faith that Jesus did not do many miracles in His own country?

- a. They had too much respect for Him to approach Him for a miracle
- b. His wisdom was too great for them
- c. They did not take Him seriously because they were overly familiar with Him**

Mark 6:4-6 But Jesus said unto them, A prophet is not without honour, but in his own country, and among his own kin, and in his own house.

5And he could there do no mighty work, save that he laid his hands upon a few sick folk, and healed *them*.

6And he marvelled because of their unbelief. And he went round about the villages, teaching.

**a** A actually is a reason that someone might avoid approaching someone who is famous. However, that is not a reason for not believing.

**b** Although they marveled at His wisdom, they were not impressed with His credentials. To them, He was only a carpenter. This does not mean that a person in an average position in life cannot attain a reputation for wisdom. The assumption that people who are certified as experts should be taken seriously as the final word on how to live can easily be unwarranted. In fact, people often think that someone who has been successful must be an expert in all other areas of life.

**c** Jesus points out something that is all too common. When people are very familiar with you they easily take you for granted. A stranger requires extra attention by your friends think they have you all figured out and will be prejudiced against you. Their unbelief got in their way.

## The Third Tour of Galilee

### 63 - The Apostles Sent Out

408. Who did Jesus first reach out to through the apostles?
- a. Samaria
  - b. The World
  - c. The Jews**

Matt 10:5 These twelve Jesus sent forth, and commanded them, saying, Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into *any* city of the Samaritans enter ye not:

**a,b,c** Jesus specifically told the apostles to not go to the Gentiles or even Samaria. His mission was to the Jews to present Himself as their King, even though He fully knew that they were going to reject Him. The order of God's promise to the patriarchs, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, was to establish a people who would bring salvation to the world. Israel provided the environment for providing the Messiah, even though they fell short of receiving Him themselves. This will be remedied in the Millennium and the Second Coming. However, Samaria and the uttermost parts of the world would become part of the mission of the apostles once Christ was resurrected.

Acts 1:6-8 When they therefore were come together, they asked of him, saying, Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?

7And he said unto them, It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power.

8But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.

Jesus explained to the apostles that the actual restoration of the Kingdom was not for them to be concerned about, but that they should focus on the mission to the Jews, Samaritans, and the rest of the world in spite of what the Jewish establishment was doing. All of Rom 11 pertains to the future restoration of Israel so that we understand that they will not permanently be set aside. This is evident from:

Rom 11:15,23-26 For if the casting away of them *be* the reconciling of the world, what *shall* the receiving of *them be*, but life from the dead?

23And they also, if they abide not still in unbelief, shall be grafted in: for God is able to graff them in again.

24For if thou wert cut out of the olive tree which is wild by nature, and wert grafted contrary to nature into a good olive tree: how much more shall these, which be the natural *branches*, be grafted into their own olive tree?

25For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in.

26And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob:

409. How were the apostles to be supported in their mission?

- a. **By whatever support they received**
- b. By selling their latest book and business dealings
- c. After they had built up their savings and could afford to go

Matt 10:9-11 Provide neither gold, nor silver, nor brass in your purses,  
10Nor scrip for *your* journey, neither two coats, neither shoes, nor yet staves: for the workman is worthy of his meat.  
11And into whatsoever city or town ye shall enter, enquire who in it is worthy; and there abide till ye go thence.

**c** C is a commentary on how missionaries and church planters, and even people in charge of a program at their church, could be tempted to put preparedness ahead of willingness. There can definitely be a problem with becoming a liability due to being under-prepared. However, this can also be a temptation to hold back on serving God because of dependence on materialism.

**b** Selling materials that are produced is not disallowed, but there is wisdom that must be exercised so that we are not seen as business people rather than interested in ministering to people. There are business responsibilities in ministry, but the emphasis is on taking care of responsibilities, not on making business.

**a** It is not wrong to be compensated for ministry, but that should not mean that we don't minister *unless* we are compensated. We should preach, bear witness, and work for God as part of our normal church participation.

410. What claim could be made for the Christian message (this question is actually not simple and should require discussion about when and why it would be appropriate to charge for materials)?

- a. They should be able to copyright their message to be able to demand limited use of their message
- b. They should seek as much profit from their original materials
- c. **As the original author of all truth and knowledge God wants us to give away truth and knowledge as freely as possible**

Matt 10:8 Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils: freely ye have received, freely give.

**b** In ministry it is not necessarily wrong to seek profitability, but it easily can look bad and should be avoided. B is wrong because of the emphasis making money profitability the primary importance.

**a,c** The problem idea in A is *demand limited use of their message*. The message we should be preaching should not be *our* message. It should be

*God's* message. If it is God's message, then we do not have any real claim to it. This does not mean that there is no use for copyrights. Copyrights first exist so that someone else cannot limit you, as the producer, from being able to use what you have produced. As stated in the question, the subject is not so simple. We should be anxious to have our message go out as much as possible, but it is conceivable that you might not want some bad actors to use what you have produced.

411. How did Jesus expect people to react to the apostles' message?

- a. They would be like wolves
- b. They would accept them gladly
- c. They would reject them
- d. They would persecute them
- e. All of the above**

**e** In ministry, one has to be ready to face *any* kind of reaction. Sometimes positive, sometimes negative, but always rewarded by God. Our reward does not come from men so we should deliver God's Word for the Lord, not men's praise.

412. How did Jesus know what kind of treatment the apostles would receive?

- a. He had taken a poll to see what they should do based on public opinion
- b. If the people had treated Him as the master badly, the apostles carrying His message could expect no less**
- c. He knew how each apostle's personality would enhance the reception of His message

Matt 10:24-25 The disciple is not above *his* master, nor the servant above his lord.  
25It is enough for the disciple that he be as his master, and the servant as his lord. If they have called the master of the house Beelzebub, how much more *shall they call* them of his household?

**a** Jesus did not know how they were going to treat them based upon polling data. This is something that is a marketing issue. It is something that actually has been used by churches in order to develop a ministry or even to start a ministry. They've taken surveys and asked them what kind of church would you like to go to or what things do you look for in a church. If we were to depend primarily on polling data then we might not be so anxious to start a ministry in an area. Or we might short change a ministry and have popular opinion dictate to us how we should do ministry. If Jesus let his ministry be controlled by popular opinion, He would have *only* been providing bread for people, setting up healing clinics. He wouldn't have called people to repentance. He would not have criticized as much, He would have toned His message down. But Jesus came for people to repent instead. Polling data is an actual thing that people use to tell what kind ministry to have. Instead he had a mission for the apostles to go on. His mission was with respect to what

His Father thought, not with respect to what people thought was a good idea.

c Regarding C, He knew how each Apostles personality would enhance the reception of his message. This is similar to A. The difference is that sometimes instead of tailoring ministry to popular opinion, sometimes churches look to see how to shape their ministry according to people's giftedness. It is true that the Bible *does* talk about our having spiritual gifts, and we should exercise those gifts. When you look at Romans 12, it lists a number of operational gifts for the church and for leadership to take into consideration. Over in Ephesians, it talks about how that when Jesus led captivity captive He gave gifts unto men for the work of the ministry to develop the work of the ministry. A spiritual gift is not just a talent. For example, it is possible to develop a talent for being able to use air in your mouth be pressed out by the pressure of the muscles in the mouth while inhaling through the nose which effectively turns a person into a human bagpipe. That is a talent, but not a spiritual gift. God might bless a personal talent that a person has. There is a risk, though, that someone could mindlessly be using a talent and not really thinking spiritually. This especially happens with music. You could just sing because you have a nice voice, but end up singing songs that are not necessarily Scripturally true. The problem is that although every person does have at least one gift, according to Romans 12, what is given as a gift is also given as a command elsewhere in Scripture. So, sometimes people are in church and they want to have a position that they can just fit into naturally. You have to ask yourself the question, "Are they just doing what's comfortable? Are they just using a skill set according to their natural talent?" Or, are they doing it according to a sense of gift. I think sometimes people might have a problem of confusing the two. We are concerned about not necessarily ignoring the gifts, but on the other hand we don't want to be limited by people's *perceived* giftedness. We don't even want to be limited to people's *actual* giftedness. We want to have people expand their gifts and expand themselves in order to fit not only what is easy to do. Sometimes people will balk about having a position in church because they don't feel like they are a good fit. We should *always* be ready to do what is at hand. Somebody might not *feel* like they're a gifted children's leader, but when you've got a small child in front of you, you talk to them. Somebody might not *feel* like they have a gift for research, but they had better be studying their Bible because they're going to go and share the Word with someone. Somebody might not feel like they have a gift of exhortation. But when you have someone standing in front of you who needs to be encouraged, you don't take a a spiritual gift inventory test only to say "Well, I can't talk to this person right now because this is not my gift." While we take someone's giftedness into account and reap very much because of that, someone should not rule themselves out. Don't feel rejected if someone with greater giftedness takes your place. Remember, it is *God* who gives the increase and everything that everyone does will be used by Him. If you are serving God for the earthly recognition, then that is a different problem. Don't drop out because you don't feel like you are not good enough. Don't drop out



because someone else has taken your place. Don't drop out because you don't have a position. Serve in whatever way you can.

**b** Jesus did test market His plan to be able to see what people would reject and then limit His mission. He knew that the problem they would face is that some people would simply reject Him no matter how much He tailored the mission to them. If they would reject Him out of hand, they were going to reject His apostles who represented His mission. He knew that each one of His apostles had different temperaments and different ways of doing things, but He just sent them out to preach. Preaching is something that should just be done no matter *what* gift someone thinks they have. Some may do it better than others until they study harder, but all should preach and let God give the increase. If people are going to reject the message, it is not necessarily due to the messenger (there actually *are* some exceptions to that), but due to people's willingness to hear God's Word.

413. What can people who are ashamed to witness for Christ expect?

**a. Christ will deny them before the Father**

b. Christ will understand how sensitive they are and excuse them

c. Christ will understand that they actually do believe in Him and will stand up for them before the Father

Matt 10:32-33 Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven.

33But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven.

**a** A actually makes sense. Someone might think, "Oh, how uncharitable," or, "Is Jesus going to get *even* with us if we tell people about Him?" No it's more like this: if you don't want to work with God then Jesus can't bring you before the Father and say, "Here's somebody that we're working with." Don't expect that Christ was going to say, "Here, Father bless him while he's out there in the middle of sin." He's not going to say, "Bless this one who is looking for strength right now even though he is not going to use it for Me, but because he's going to use it for his own ends." It's actually very logical. We also sort of know that by intuition. The idea that we're not allowed to make anybody feel bad mentality according to today's modern thinking makes it look like Christ is being petty.

**b** Christ will understand how sensitive they are and excuse them is the mentality of today where nothing is expected of anyone. Nothing is expected of workers because we have to be sensitive, we have to be understanding of their pain, we have to be understanding how they are oppressed. No, we do not. Our job as a society and as a church is not to make everybody happy. If our responsibility is to make everybody equally happy and if some being happier is not being fair then we end up giving everyone a participation trophy. Although God is compassionate, that does not mean that He will

excuse us from our responsibility to serve Him. Jesus doesn't say, "Well, I understand where you're coming from. I'm going to bless you anyhow." Many times I will say to people, "If you want God to bless you, give God something to bless." And then of course there are times when God doesn't seem to do good to us.

Rom 8:28 And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to *his* purpose.

**c** We know that by a man's word he's going to be justified and by a man's words he's going to be condemned. It's not like God knows our heart and that is sufficient. This is true when it comes to salvation, but we're not talking about that. We're talking about service.

2Tim 2:11-13 *It is* a faithful saying: For if we be dead with *him*, we shall also live with *him*:

12If we suffer, we shall also reign with *him*: if we deny *him*, he also will deny us:

13If we believe not, *yet* he abideth faithful: he cannot deny himself.

*Suffer* in vs. 12, is the same word *endure* in James 1:12.

James 1:12 Blessed *is* the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him.

In context, suffering, reigning, and the crown of life demonstrates that Paul is talking about rewards in 2Tim 2:12. Similarly, in Luke 19:11-27 Jesus speaks of the kingdom and describes through a parable how there will be *degrees* of reigning in the kingdom. When we deny Christ, we will be denied the rewards we *could* have had.

1Cor 3:10-15 According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise masterbuilder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon.

11For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.

12Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble;

13Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is.

14If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward.

15If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire.

Paul is very careful to point out in 2Tim 2: 11,13 that salvation is not lost because it would require Jesus denying Himself and what He did to secure eternal salvation. In the context of 2Tim and James, Jesus was speaking not of losing salvation. Denying us has to do being denied the rewards we could have had. This is consistent with the whole context of the message in Christ sending the apostles out as an issue of service. When we say Christ will understand that they actually do believe in Him and will stand up for them before the Father is true with regards to salvation (as in 2Tim 2:11,13) but it

is not true with regards to our service as in 2Tim2:12 and James 1:12.

See also

<https://faithalone.org/journal-articles/secure-yet-scrutinized-2-timothy-211-13/>

414. How did Christ describe His mission?

- a. To bring people to a critical moment in deciding to be with Him or against Him**
- b. To bring peace so that people would find it impolite to argue about religion
- c. To get people to tolerate and embrace each other's beliefs even if they were opposite so that the world could be united

Matt 10:34-40 Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword.

35For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter in law against her mother in law.

36And a man's foes *shall be* they of his own household.

37He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me: and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me.

38And he that taketh not his cross, and followeth after me, is not worthy of me.

39He that findeth his life shall lose it: and he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it.

40He that receiveth you receiveth me, and he that receiveth me receiveth him that sent me.

**b** B is a reflection of how people would *like* to have their religion. It is commonly said that you should not talk about politics and religion because that's impolite. They say we shouldn't be arguing about such things and so let's not talk about it at all. However, if we don't talk about it then they're not going to find out about salvation. People will end up going on in their own opinion about how to be saved and staying lost, going to hell. Jesus' mission was not to just bring peace, serenity, and tranquility. Jesus came to to bring about true religion and that would require some critical thinking to be able to come to a decision about Him.

**c** C refers to how people want you to tolerate and embrace each other's beliefs even if they are opposite so that the world can be united. What they really mean by united is shut up and do things their way. Not only does the world simply want you to do things their way, they want you to *approve* of them. True respect means that once you have shared opinions that the other person gets to choose what they're going to go along with or not.

**a** That's the critical moment that Jesus was talking about: if people do not want to follow Him then that is on them. He that findeth his life shall lose it, he that loses his life for my sake shall find it. He says explicitly that He came to bring a sword not peace.

415. What would people have to do to truly be joined with Christ?

- a. Join a church and visit every once in a while
- b. Tell Jesus how great He is
- c. Put self-interests last and live their life for Christ**

Matt 10:38-39 And he that taketh not his cross, and followeth after me, is not worthy of me.

39He that findeth his life shall lose it: and he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it.

**a** A is a reflection of how of how people really treat church and really treat the things of God. They join the church and then they visit every once in awhile. For a lot of people, joining a church is really like joining a club that they can either go to or not go to depending on what they feel like doing. They end up being like the joke about twice a year Christians who go Easter and Christmas to church. Then there's the person who attends once-in-a-lifetime they go to church when it's time for them to be buried. People want the church there for their weddings, they want the baptisms, for their communions, but they don't want to really put their interests aside in favor of serving working for Jesus.

**b** Joining with Christ does not mean being His fan. It does not mean that you *just* tell Jesus how great He is. This is similar to what people do in church. They are happy to compliment the leadership on how *they* are doing, but then they are happy to leave the work up to the leadership and don't join in. The leaders are supposed to feel flattered as they continue doing all the work while people cheer them on, but what use is that if you're not going to join in? We should not just cheer people on, but we are supposed to be involved ourselves. You cheer people on at a football game while you sit back in the bleachers and watch...but that doesn't make you a member of the team.

**a** To be truly joined to Christ means joining Him on the field and getting involved and that requires putting self-interest last and living our life for Christ. Some people think they are going to lose their life but in reality we get life. Jesus said that we will get *abundance* of life.

416. What should help you determine your priorities in life?

- a. If you sacrifice your life to Him you will actually receive a better life and rewards**
- b. You have to love yourself first before you can love anyone else
- c. You have to live a balanced life and make sure to provide for "me" time

Matt 10:39-41 He that findeth his life shall lose it: and he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it.

40He that receiveth you receiveth me, and he that receiveth me receiveth him that sent me.

41He that receiveth a prophet in the name of a prophet shall receive a prophet's

reward; and he that receiveth a righteous man in the name of a righteous man shall receive a righteous man's reward.

**b** Loving yourself first before being able to love anyone else is Unscriptural because love is self-sacrificing. Love is not about fair and equal outcomes. Continually being consumed with making sure that we get the same as everyone else leads to envy. Always making sure that no one gets extra and then demanding that they give back anything is not the best way to make friends.

**a,c** Living a balanced life and even providing for some "me" time is not actually bad. However, if that is all we do we are still living for self and will end up being no better than the person who grudges anyone any extra benefit. We are called to live *sacrificially*. We should be *looking* for opportunities to be a blessing to others. This reminds us of Dicken's Scrooge. Scrooge tried to commend his old partner for being a good man about business. This is the same as when we think we are just being good stewards as we take care of our business and put self first. We will find it easy to get caught up in that as a full time job.

"But you were always a good man of business, Jacob," faltered Scrooge, who now began to apply this to himself.

"Business!" cried the Ghost, wringing its hands again. "Mankind *was* my business; charity, mercy, forbearance, and benevolence, were *all* my business. The deals of my trade were but a drop of water in the comprehensive ocean of my business!"

417. In what way did Jesus want the apostles to prepare financially for their preaching mission?

- a. As little as possible, which would make them not dependent on physical supply**
- b. To exercise good stewardship and not go out if they did not have enough to pay their way
- c. To not depend on the people they were going to preach to but make sure they had enough backing from the synagogues back home

Matt 10:9-13 Provide neither gold, nor silver, nor brass in your purses,

10Nor scrip for *your* journey, neither two coats, neither shoes, nor yet staves: for the workman is worthy of his meat.

11And into whatsoever city or town ye shall enter, enquire who in it is worthy; and there abide till ye go thence.

12And when ye come into an house, salute it.

13And if the house be worthy, let your peace come upon it: but if it be not worthy, let your peace return to you.

**c** C is a statement about how we should be more concerned about preaching than being supported from a denomination or mission board. This does not mean that having a mission board or a sending church is wrong. In fact, there are those who have gone out foolishly and ended up being a bad testimony as they failed spectacularly. It is just that at some point, we could lose sight of the fact that missions is a function of God's calling and fail to go forth

because of some over dependence on a high functioning board that has *excessive* qualifications to meet.

**b** B is a reflection of how Christian workers might be distracted by serving if they think that they have to have everything taken care financially (as opposed to being spiritually perfected in a previous question).

**a** It is nice to have resources and we should feel extra responsible since we have them. However, ultimately, all we need to share the Gospel is a testimony of salvation.

418. What were the apostles supposed to do if they were not received?

- a. Keep going back to the people to give them more and more chances
- b. Move on and not even let any of the dust from the house cling to them**
- c. Find a new gimmick to get their attention

Matt 10:14-15 And whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear your words, when ye depart out of that house or city, shake off the dust of your feet.

15Verily I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrhah in the day of judgment, than for that city.

**c** Even though we should do our best to present the Gospel, the Gospel message is not something that can be manipulated and forced. By trying some new marketing scheme we will get the reputation that we are just the same as phony advertisers and hustlers. People's attention should not become dependent on the latest shiny new thing. If the Gospel message is not enough to draw someone then they should not be put in the position of having to endure our efforts.

**a,b** We have to be sensitive to the fact that some people are given over to rejecting anything from God that requires their submission to Him. They will happily receive any benefits that come from living in His world or from the effect of the blessings of believers around them. By going back and back and back to someone we run the risk of either annoying them, or just the opposite, of making them think they can always do something about the Gospel later and never get around to it. We have to be careful that we not get sidetracked in reaching others because all of our time and attention is being eaten up by someone who just doesn't care.

419. What was a key part of the apostles' message?

- a. Read a sinner's prayer out loud
- b. Believe in Christ with sincerity as best as they know how
- c. Repent**

Mark 6:12 And they went out, and preached that men should repent.

**a** A is a reference to how some churches approach soul winning. Typically driven by desire to be able to report numbers as evidence of success, anything that remotely resembles acceptance is counted. It can take various forms to as little as interpreting someone saying they agree that salvation is a good idea. The apostles were not merely success driven. They were there to deliver the message to whoever would genuinely respond. This is what is meant by being worthy.

**b** Believing in Christ with sincerity as best as they know how is a formula that some use to try to recognize and accommodate someone's concern that they are willing to accept Christ even though they recognize that there are many things left to learn. We need to be careful to not make salvation dependent on sincerity because we are creating the possibility of future doubts as people reflect on whether they had been sincere enough. The Gospel is dependent on the "sincerity" of God and the surety of His Word, which is absolute. Suggesting that someone's salvation is based on as best as they know injects some doubt into their consideration. People either believe or they don't, but the emphasis should be on the simple Gospel that is found in the Bible.

**c** There is much that can be said about the apostles' approach and presentation of the Gospel, but it is well summed up in Mark 6:12 with one idea: that men should repent. After hearing the Gospel message people need to stop testing and questioning God and submit themselves and hold themselves responsible and accountable to God. In short, repent.

## **64 - Herod Fears John Risen from the Dead, Desires to See Christ**

420. Who did Herod think that Jesus was?

- a. The Christ
- b. The forerunner of the Christ (John the Baptist/Elijah)**
- c. A potential political ally

Mark 6:14-16 And king Herod heard *of him*; (for his name was spread abroad:) and he said, That John the Baptist was risen from the dead, and therefore mighty works do shew forth themselves in him.

15Others said, That it is Elias. And others said, That it is a prophet, or as one of the prophets.

16But when Herod heard *thereof*, he said, It is John, whom I beheaded: he is risen from the dead.

**c** Although Herod would have been generally concerned about the political impact of the ministry of Christ, he had more reason for his conscience to be affected. If anything, Herod would have probably been concerned about political rivalry.

**a** Herod *should* have been concerned about Jesus being the Christ because of the reports of the people's interests in Him. This would still possibly make him jealous.

**b** Probably because of his guilt over his treatment of John the Baptist, Herod wondered if somehow Jesus was John risen from the dead.

421. How did Herod view John the Baptist?

- a. A holy man who he was glad to hear**
- b. A judgmental man who he wanted to avoid
- c. A crazy man who was very entertaining

Mark 6:17-20 For Herod himself had sent forth and laid hold upon John, and bound him in prison for Herodias' sake, his brother Philip's wife: for he had married her.

18For John had said unto Herod, It is not lawful for thee to have thy brother's wife.

19Therefore Herodias had a quarrel against him, and would have killed him; but she could not:

20For Herod feared John, knowing that he was a just man and an holy, and observed him; and when he heard him, he did many things, and heard him gladly.

**b** B is how people often react to any message that calls them into account.

**c** C is a different reaction people have to hearing anything about God.

**a** Neither B or C are justified by the way people think. They are both irrational and emotional responses. A thoughtful person will be glad to consider what God has to say. John's message had the ring of truth even in the heart of Herod as an unbeliever because the conviction of the light that all men have been given will cause the message to resonate in their heart.

422. How did Herod's sister-in-law/wife, Herodias, view John?

- a. A crazy man who was very entertaining
- b. A judgmental man who she wanted to kill**
- c. A holy man who she was glad to hear

Matt 14:3-5 For Herod had laid hold on John, and bound him, and put *him* in prison for Herodias' sake, his brother Philip's wife.

4For John said unto him, It is not lawful for thee to have her.

5And when he would have put him to death, he feared the multitude, because they counted him as a prophet.

**a,b,c** Herodias was just the opposite of Herod. She wanted to do more than avoid John, though. Her reaction is more in line with the way people really feel about the preaching of God's Word. Although they don't exactly want to kill the messengers with the Gospel, they quickly want to do more than just avoid them.



423. To what extent might a person in rebellion against God react to the Godly?

- a. No further than gossip about them to ruin their reputation
- b. To kill them
- c. No further than hating them in their heart
- d. All of the above, they are all a form of killing**

1John 3:15 Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer: and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him.

Matt 5:22 But I say unto you, That whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment: and whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be in danger of the council: but whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire.

**d** Gossiping and hating are equally murder in God's eyes. The heart of murder is what makes someone a murderer. An actual murder only reveals what was in the heart.

424. What was the mistake that Herod made to Herodias' daughter?

- a. He rashly promised her whatever she wanted and gave in to her evil request**
- b. He made a promise to her but didn't keep it when he saw how evil it was
- c. He offered her too big of a gift

Mark 6:22-26 And when the daughter of the said Herodias came in, and danced, and pleased Herod and them that sat with him, the king said unto the damsel, Ask of me whatsoever thou wilt, and I will give *it* thee.

23And he swore unto her, Whatsoever thou shalt ask of me, I will give *it* thee, unto the half of my kingdom.

24And she went forth, and said unto her mother, What shall I ask? And she said, The head of John the Baptist.

25And she came in straightway with haste unto the king, and asked, saying, I will that thou give me by and by in a charger the head of John the Baptist.

26And the king was exceeding sorry; *yet* for his oath's sake, and for their sakes which sat with him, he would not reject her.

**c** People are often thoughtless about the concessions they are willing to make to the world. They are often surprised about how the world will hold them to their commitments.

**a,b** Herod *should* have had enough conviction to turn back on his commitment to Herodias' daughter. When people have a lot of spiritual momentum behind them they often follow through with the foolish decisions they make. This is why it is important to not be just neutral in our spiritual lives. Being neutral, or just having *no* spiritual momentum, has the problem of overcoming spiritual inertia. Negative momentum or inertia will keep someone from doing right in the day it is needed. We need to maintain a

positive spiritual momentum.

## The Training of the Twelve

### 65 - The Apostles Return

425. What did Jesus have the apostles do when they returned from their preaching mission?
- He sent them out again because there is so much to do for God and so little time
  - He had them retire because they had done enough for Him
  - He took them out on a vacation**

Mark 6:30-32 And the apostles gathered themselves together unto Jesus, and told him all things, both what they had done, and what they had taught.

<sup>31</sup>And he said unto them, Come ye yourselves apart into a desert place, and rest a while: for there were many coming and going, and they had no leisure so much as to eat.

<sup>32</sup>And they departed into a desert place by ship privately.

**a** A might sound reasonable because the work of the Gospel is unending. This is also the attitude of a work-aholic.

**b** B is the opposite of A. There should never be a retirement completely from God's work.

**c** We have to remember that God is the God of the Sabbath. Although our lives should not be governed by a preoccupation with "me" time, we should be careful to not burn ourselves out. This is what the Sabbath was given for. This includes taking proper breaks and going to sleep at night.

426. How did the people react to Jesus and the Apostles when they saw them departing?
- They respected their need for rest
  - Jesus took a moment to preach to them and heal those who needed healing**
  - They got angry with them because they were being selfish

Mark 6:33 And the people saw them departing, and many knew him, and ran afoot thither out of all cities, and outwent them, and came together unto him.

Luke 9:11 And the people, when they knew *it*, followed him: and he received them, and spake unto them of the kingdom of God, and healed them that had need of healing.

**a** People don't realize the work that is involved in ministry. They very innocently kept coming.

**c** They did not react angrily to Jesus, but this actually does sometimes happen. People can get jealous of how much you are not paying attention to them. Sometimes people in their consideration end up missing opportunities to get help, but a good minister will be careful to rest properly so that they can help whenever the help is needed.

**b** The people brought others who needed healing to Jesus and He, being gracious, preached and healed them.

## **66 - Multiplying Five Loaves and Two Fishes**

427. What motivation caused Jesus to have compassion the hungry multitudes?

**a. They were as sheep without a shepherd**

b. They were his fan club

c. He was a good politician who knew how to work a crowd

Mark 6:34 And Jesus, when he came out, saw much people, and was moved with compassion toward them, because they were as sheep not having a shepherd: and he began to teach them many things.

**c** Jesus was not about politics. As compassionate as a politician might be, he has to deal with people for the purpose of securing support for him for his agenda. This might be done either out of sincere *or* insincere motives, so that C can be possibly taken in a positive way. Jesus did not have to contend with politics so He was free to just act out of compassion

**b** Jesus did not need the support of a paying fan base for His ministry. In spite of the well deserved bad reputation of Hollywood, there are some actors who have been reported to be more in touch with how human they are and had greater appreciation for their fans. Sometimes an actor looks prideful and overestimates how important he is as if his fans *owe* him their adulation. Jesus did not need groupies to keep puffing Him up.

**a** Politicians and celebrities are two types of people Jesus could have been confused with. Jesus was free of those kinds of entanglements and so He was just a shepherd looking at them with compassion.

428. How did Jesus begin to test the apostles?

a. He commanded them to open a soup kitchen and homeless shelter

**b. He commanded them to buy bread for the multitude even though they couldn't afford it**

c. He told them to let down their nets for a great draught of fish

John 6:5-6 When Jesus then lifted up *his* eyes, and saw a great company come unto him, he saith unto Philip, Whence shall we buy bread, that these may eat?  
6And this he said to prove him: for he himself knew what he would do.

**a** A is a reflection on how a church can be distracted from its true mission. There is nothing wrong with these in and of themselves. Jesus did not challenge them to create a system devoted primarily to physical needs.

**c** Jesus had told the disciples to let down their nets for a great draught of fish to demonstrate His power to provide for *them*, the disciples. This is different in that the disciples were now called upon to provide for others.

**b** The disciples would see that Jesus was able to provide for the people. This would demonstrate to them their need for His power in ministry.

429. Who supplied the loaves and fishes?

- a. A local food bank
- b. A rich patron
- c. A small lad**

John 6:7-9 Philip answered him, Two hundred pennyworth of bread is not sufficient for them, that every one of them may take a little.

8One of his disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, saith unto him,

9There is a lad here, which hath five barley loaves, and two small fishes: but what are they among so many?

**a,b** There is nothing wrong with using outside agencies or receiving special donations. But A and B describe the mistake of *depending* on outside resources for ministry.

**c** C demonstrates the participation of anyone in the ministry. There are times when people feel like they are insufficient. By using a small child, Jesus was showing that everyone has something to offer.

430. How were they able to supply enough for all the multitude?

- a. Jesus blessed the little they had that was given willingly**
- b. Jesus told each person to only take a little bit
- c. Jesus supplied manna from heaven

John 6:9 There is a lad here, which hath five barley loaves, and two small fishes: but what are they among so many?

**c** Jesus did not provide manna, but the reason this answer is here will be appreciated later when we come to John 6. The people will remind Jesus about the manna and connect it to Him providing bread.

**b** There are times when we have to be considerate of others in sharing what we have available. However, this is a demonstration of the fact that God's blessings are actually without reserve. Any limitations we have are due to our need to be disciplined in the way we live.

## THE GALILEAN MINISTRY – 290

Eph 3:20-21 Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us,  
21Unto him *be* glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen.

Phil 4:19 But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus.

**a** There is no record of the boy complaining. We should be careful to recognize that what we give to God, we give willingly, not grudgingly.

Phlm 1:14 But without thy mind would I do nothing; that thy benefit should not be as it were of necessity, but willingly. [**Paul asking Philemon to let him have the benefit of Onesimus for the ministry**]

2Cor 9:6-8 But this *I say*, He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully.

7Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, *so let him give*; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver.

8And God *is* able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye, always having all sufficiency in all *things*, may abound to every good work:

Luke 21:1-4 And he looked up, and saw the rich men casting their gifts into the treasury.

2And he saw also a certain poor widow casting in thither two mites.

3And he said, Of a truth I say unto you, that this poor widow hath cast in more than they all:

4For all these have of their abundance cast in unto the offerings of God: but she of her penury hath cast in all the living that she had

431. Read 2 Kings 4:42-44, Eph 3:20, and John 10:10. How does God bless?

- a. He supplies abundantly above and beyond all that we ask or think**
- b. He supplies only what we need
- c. He supplies anything we want

**a** God desires to bless us.

2Kings 4:42-44 And there came a man from Baalshalisha, and brought the man of God bread of the firstfruits, twenty loaves of barley, and full ears of corn in the husk thereof. And he said, Give unto the people, that they may eat.

43And his servitor said, What, should I set this before an hundred men? He said again, Give the people, that they may eat: for thus saith the LORD, They shall eat, and shall leave *thereof*.

44So he set *it* before them, and they did eat, and left *thereof*, according to the word of the LORD.

Eph 3:20 Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us,

John 10:10 The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have *it* more abundantly.

**c** Jesus *does* give us what we ask for, but not necessarily everything we lust for.

Jas 4:2-3 Ye lust, and have not: ye kill, and desire to have, and cannot obtain: ye fight and war, yet ye have not, because ye ask not.

3Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume *it* upon your lusts.

**b** We *are* allowed to ask for things, but we know that God generally is going to provide for our daily bread, not necessarily for our fat 401k retirement fund. B is wrong in that He does not *limit* His blessings to our bare needs.

432. What mistake did the people make in responding to the miracle of the loaves and fishes?

a. They wanted to provide dessert

**b. They wanted to make Him a king**

c. They wanted Him to take money from the rich and distribute it to the poor so everyone would be equal

John 6:14-15 Then those men, when they had seen the miracle that Jesus did, said, This is of a truth that prophet that should come into the world.

15When Jesus therefore perceived that they would come and take him by force, to make him a king, he departed again into a mountain himself alone.

A, B, C are actually very similar. They *specifically* wanted to make Him their king, but A and C are actions that a king takes. The people had a very natural reaction. By looking for a king, they were demonstrating their interest in having their happiness secured. Although they were not ungratefully asking for dessert to go with their bread, that would be the natural progression of those looking for what the king could do for them. It suggests that government is the source and guarantor of our happiness. The people were not mindful of the fact that Jesus had provided for them miraculously. The only thing a king can do to appease the masses is take from one to give to another. If a king wants to appease everyone at the same time, it can only be done by making everyone equally poor. Human governments cannot create wealth, so to expect that government should be the guarantor of happiness means that they have to get the wealth from some people in order to give to other people. Jesus provides out of His bounty while government provides by confiscation.

## 67 - Jesus Walks on Water

433. Why did Jesus constrain the apostles to go ahead of Him in a ship?

a. He was getting tired of them

b. Jesus wanted a little "me" time

**c. To have personal time in prayer with His Father**

Matt 14:22-23 And straightway Jesus constrained his disciples to get into a ship, and to go before him unto the other side, while he sent the multitudes away.

23And when he had sent the multitudes away, he went up into a mountain apart to pray: and when the evening was come, he was there alone.

**a** Even though Jesus as a man could get tired physically, the idea that he could get tired of the disciples implies the ability to be resentfully annoyed. It is certainly possible for Jesus to be appropriately indignant, but that is different. To be resentfully annoyed refers to a self-centered attitude.

**b** Wanting a little "me" time is another way of suggesting being self-centered. There was no problem with separating for a time of rest but referring to it as "me" time has the connotation of a me first self-centered attitude.

**c** Having personal time with God is something that we should expect that Jesus had automatically with His Father. What is especially instructive is that Jesus set aside time and the physical space to be able to do so. We would expect that He just walked with the Father, being one in the Spirit, and that that there was no special need to schedule a time. We should also be deliberately planning time for devotions. This is part of what it means to have a Sabbath. We don't only cease from our labors to rejuvenate our souls physically, but also to refresh ourselves spiritually. Jesus, being in the form of a man, also needed that time.

434. Somewhere between 3 and 6 o'clock, after they had rowed around 3 or 4 miles, how did Jesus appear to the disciples?

**a. As a fearful spirit**

b. As a super hero swooping in to save the day

c. As God who could calm the seas and storms

Matt 14:24-26 But the ship was now in the midst of the sea, tossed with waves: for the wind was contrary.

25And in the fourth watch of the night Jesus went unto them, walking on the sea.

26And when the disciples saw him walking on the sea, they were troubled, saying, It is a spirit; and they cried out for fear.

**b** When we go through troublous times, it is a blessing to receive unexpected help. But the truth be told, we are always in troubled times. Having a super hero swooping in to save the day is not limited to fantasy movies. People are susceptible to demagogues and tyrants who offer hope that the demagogue or tyrant is actually not able to deliver. In general, we do well to have a sense of responsibility for our lives. But that does not mean that we live independently of God. Societies fail when they live dependently on government rather than responsibly before God with His enablement.

**c** C is the way that the apostles should have viewed Jesus coming to them on the sea. They had previous experience with him calming the storm when he was with them on the boat.

**a** In this instance, Jesus had not been present with them in the boat. Now he was approaching them in an entirely different fashion. He came to them walking on the water. This presents a picture of our own spiritual growth. Even though we might grow spiritually through our experience, there are always new dimensions to increase our faith. Because of this new factor, Jesus appeared to them to be a spirit to trouble them.

435. How did Jesus calm the apostles?

- a. He told them don't worry, be happy
- b. He told them that nothing bad could ever happen to them
- c. He called out to them with encouragement to not be afraid because it was He who was there**

Mark 6:50 For they all saw him, and were troubled. And immediately he talked with them, and saith unto them, Be of good cheer: it is I; be not afraid.

**a** Telling people to not worry but to be happy is the first level to glossing over the fears and pain of life. We depend on trivial sociable expressions as a kind of oil to lubricate polite relationships. Things like, "How do you do, have a nice day, the weather sure is (fill in the blank) today."

**b** Sometimes we have to resort to stronger encouragement but this can only make matters worse. It is even worse to blindly suggest that nothing bad could ever happen to them. This is the kind of mistake that an immature Christian might make sincerely. It doesn't take long before an older Christian has to come along and explain that when someone gets saved things get both better and worse. They get better in that they will have God's strength and the knowledge that heaven awaits. They get worse in that, while Satan is happy to let people walk around unaware of the extent of God's judgment, he will do what he can to shut us down because we now are a threat to him because we are of the truth.

**c** Jesus presence will ultimately be the very thing that carries us through the trials of life. In Matthew 28 we are reminded that He will be with us always to the end of the world.

436. How did Peter seek further proof that it was Jesus?

- a. He asked Jesus to give him greater faith
- b. He asked Jesus to call him out to be with him**
- c. He asked Jesus to come all the way into the boat so they could see Him better

Matt 14:28 And Peter answered him and said, Lord, if it be thou, bid me come unto thee on the water.



**c** Sometimes it does not matter how much proof we get, we want just a little bit more before we make a decision. At some point, we have to make the decision to commit to Christ our ways.

**a** Peter was going to need to have greater faith. Even though the end result was that Peter was going to begin to sink, we need to recognize that it is commendable to be willing to do whatever Christ wants. We are going to learn along the way, but all of life involves risk to one degree or another.

**b** We often look askance at the boldness of Peter, even to the point of what looks like presumption. But this moment is easily understood as something positive. It shows a readiness of mind to serve Christ.

437. What did the usually brash Peter have to do in order to walk on the water to Christ?

- a. He had to muster up a stronger faith
- b. He had to put on a flotation device in case he should start to sink
- c. He had to take action and get out of the boat**

Matt 14:29 And he said, Come. And when Peter was come down out of the ship, he walked on the water, to go to Jesus.

**a** Serving God does not require a stronger faith so much as the faith in God who is strong. Psyching a congregation up on Sunday becomes questionable when you convey the idea that this is supposed to be the norm for Christian living. It is impossible to live in that same state of excitement continually.

**b** Having a *Plan B* is not entirely wrong. It can be a measure of good stewardship. However, we can become so focused on the possibility of failure that we are consumed by the faithlessness that is generated by being focused on ourselves and our weakness. Waiting to make sure you have your bases covered in case God's plan doesn't work out will lead to what has been called the *paralysis of analysis*. We have to be sensitive to the point where we have crossed the line from planning to dependence on our own ability and planning.

**c** There is a wonderful saying that if you want to walk on water, you have to get out of the boat. Although we want to recognize that there can be a fine line between faith and foolishness, faith often looks like foolishness to those who don't know God. There are so many times when believers fail to act when they should have stepped out on faith. The reason people don't recognize the significance of this is because they only associate stepping out on faith with big decisions. Believers might not be noticing the multitudinous times to step out on faith by just handing a tract to someone, giving someone a bit of spiritual advice, speaking a word of encouragement to a stranger. When we exercise faith all through the day we will be more familiar with the greater opportunities to step out when God presents them.

438. Why did Peter start to sink?

- a. He wasn't walking fast enough
- b. He had greater regard for the wind that was boisterous than for Jesus**
- c. The other apostles were not supportive

Matt 14:30 But when he saw the wind boisterous, he was afraid; and beginning to sink, he cried, saying, Lord, save me.

**a** Theoretically, if someone could move fast enough, they could walk on water. A is wrong because it suggests that one's works could be sufficient to make up for a lack of faith.

**c** It is nice and even helpful to have the support of our brothers and sisters, but they should get neither the credit nor the blame for our relationship to Christ. We must be committed from our own heart to follow Christ.

**b** The problem that Peter had was that he had placed more attention on the wind and the waves than on Jesus. It's not hard to understand how this can happen, but we are still going to have to keep our eyes on Jesus if there is going to be any spiritual success. However, please take note that we are referring to spiritual success, not success as the world might think. The world might think that walking on water is the success that Peter was trying to achieve. In a way, Peter was entirely successful in that he had stepped out on faith and knew who to call on when he got in trouble.

439. How did Jesus challenge Peter?

- a. He said that Peter was of little faith but should not have doubted Him**
- b. He told him he should practice walking on water more
- c. He said that Peter was of little faith but should not have doubted himself

Matt 14:30-31 But when he saw the wind boisterous, he was afraid; and beginning to sink, he cried, saying, Lord, save me.

<sup>31</sup>And immediately Jesus stretched forth *his* hand, and caught him, and said unto him, O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?

**c** Peter was not the Little Engine that Could. His problem was not that he should have had greater faith in himself. Perhaps we might have greater confidence as we think about the blessings God has given us, but we should never think in terms of having more faith in ourselves.

**b** B also points out that we should not depend on our works. Practice is important, but success due to practice might obscure the fact that the way we can anything at all is through the power of Christ. In Peter's case, his dependence on Christ was unquestionably apparent.

**a** Even though our faith might be small, there is never reason to doubt the power of God. We might not always understand what Christ is doing, but we know that His wisdom and strength are operating in our life.

440. Why was the apostles' doubt unreasonable?

- a. They had just seen the multiplying of the loaves**
- b. Because faith is easy
- c. Because you should be able to do anything you set your heart to do

Mark 6:51-52 And he went up unto them into the ship; and the wind ceased: and they were sore amazed in themselves beyond measure, and wondered.

52For they considered not *the miracle* of the loaves: for their heart was hardened.

**b** Faith is actually easy; trust might not be so easy, though.

**c** Faith is not wishful thinking. Another bad piece of advice is to suggest that you can do anything you set your heart to. Success is not just a matter of commitment. True spiritual success, which we remember is different from success as the world sees it, depends on our commitment to God's will for our lives.

Ps 3:5 I laid me down and slept; I awaked; for the LORD sustained me.

Prov 3:5 Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding.

**a** It is hard to understand how they could have just witnessed such a big miracle as the multiplying of the loaves and then have doubt about what Christ could do. We also have the same problem on a smaller scale from day to day. Over time, we watch God working in miraculous ways in our lives and all across the world. And yet we often fail to step forward out of our boat, out of our comfort zone, to serve the Lord.

## 68 - The Reception at Gennesaret

441. How did the people of Gennesaret on the west side of the sea of Galilee receive Christ?

- a. As a stranger
- b. With fear
- c. With faith for healing**

Mark 6:54-56 And when they were come out of the ship, straightway they knew him, 55And ran through that whole region round about, and began to carry about in beds those that were sick, where they heard he was.

56And whithersoever he entered, into villages, or cities, or country, they laid the sick in the streets, and besought him that they might touch if it were but the border of his garment: and as many as touched him were made whole.

**a,b** A and B are not so far-fetched. Jesus is already had people reacting to him in this way. We often look like this to the world: people who are alien to their experience and not to be trusted.

**c** This is the normal reaction that people should have toward Christ as they learn about him. The fact that they reacted this way demonstrates their guilt in the day they crucified him. He had established enough of a reputation that people should have turn to him in faith instead of rejection at the prompting of the jealous religious leaders.

## 69 - Jesus Is the Bread of Life

442. What were the people interested in finding out about Jesus when they got to Capernaum?

- a. What it would take to be a genuine follower of His
- b. How He got there since they had not seen Him get in any boats**
- c. If He would reconsider becoming their king

John 6:22-25 The day following, when the people which stood on the other side of the sea saw that there was none other boat there, save that one whereinto his disciples were entered, and that Jesus went not with his disciples into the boat, but *that* his disciples were gone away alone;

23(Howbeit there came other boats from Tiberias nigh unto the place where they did eat bread, after that the Lord had given thanks:)

24When the people therefore saw that Jesus was not there, neither his disciples, they also took shipping, and came to Capernaum, seeking for Jesus.

25And when they had found him on the other side of the sea, they said unto him, Rabbi, when camest thou hither?

**b** B is the correct answer and speaks of a sense of mystery that the people had about Jesus.

**a,c** The people did not indicate here at this point that they were interested in being genuine followers of His. At least they no longer seem to be interested in Him as a king. If anything, Because they seemed backed off from pressing Him to be king, it would have been reasonable for them to become genuine disciples. However as the next verses reveal, they still had mundane worldly interests in what Jesus could do for them.

443. What did Jesus say was the *real* reason they were looking for Him?

- a. They were only interested in getting fed**
- b. They wanted to find out how to get eternal life
- c. They wanted to tell Him thank you

John 6:26 Jesus answered them and said, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Ye seek me, not because ye saw the miracles, but because ye did eat of the loaves, and were filled.

**c** The first thing that was most reasonable that the people could have done would be to have expressed their gratitude to Jesus. You have to wonder when they asked what time he came there if there could have been a touch of annoyance about him being unavailable to them.

**b** B is a reference to what they did not seem to grasp about Jesus' message. However, just as when Jesus met with the woman at the well and Nicodemus, He is about to turn the situation around to present the gospel.

**a** This situation is similar to how Jesus handled the concerns of the woman at the well. He helped them to understand what their true interests were in order to redirect their attention to what they needed.

444. What did Jesus offer the people?

- a. Manna
- b. Food stamps
- c. Meat (bread) that endures to everlasting life**

John 6:27 Labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of man shall give unto you: for him hath God the Father sealed.

**a** God had given manna as a type so that the future generations would be able to understand the antitype, Jesus (an *antitype* is the future thing that the type foreshadows). Jesus would not offer them the type, even though it will occur to them to ask for it a few verses later.

**b** Offering food stamps is a reference to the earthly kingdom that people might have been looking for. This reminds us that Jesus did not come to present an earthly kingdom, but a spiritual one.

**c** By referring them to the meat that does not perish, Jesus was turning their attention to what would not have necessarily occurred to them, but what they *really* needed. This is similar to the situation that Nicodemus had where Jesus quickly turned to the real issue.

445. What work did Jesus tell them to do when they asked how to labour for that meat?

- a. Believe in Him who God had sent**
- b. Change their sinful ways before they could accept Him
- c. Keep the 10 Commandments and the Beatitudes

John 6:27-29 Labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of man shall give unto you: for him hath God the Father sealed.

28 Then said they unto him, What shall we do, that we might work the works of God?

29 Jesus answered and said unto them, This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent.

**a** Bread is something people normally labor for so Jesus used this concept to turn a phrase. Belief is not a work. Because people are generally looking for literal and concrete expressions, but Jesus was not limited to those only. For example, He referred to Lazarus as sleeping, which the apostles took literally. Jesus let them know that He was only using a figure of speech when He then plainly told them that Lazarus was dead. Later on in this passage, Jesus is going to tie up the whole meaning of this Bread of Life Discourse by explaining the figurative meaning of eating His flesh and drinking His blood. The work that they were to figuratively attend to was placing their faith in Him.

**b** B is a reflection of how some, today, emphasize the importance of repentance to the point of making it confused with works for salvation.

**c** We know that keeping the Commandments is not necessary for salvation. In fact, the purpose of the Commandments is to help people understand that they are sinners.

Rom 3:20 Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law *is* the knowledge of sin.

"Keeping the Beatitudes" is a reference to how some people think that they are *really* keeping the spirit of the Law by treating the Beatitudes as a kind of New Testament Law. There are those who are called "Red Letter Christians" because they hold that anything else in the New Testament doesn't count because they are the words of men. Because some printers use red for the Words of Christ, they identify these as the only *real* words of God. Then there are those who only look at the Sermon on the Mount where the Beatitudes appear as the only rule for life.

446. How did Jesus respond to their request for a sign?

a. He gave them manna

**b. He offered them the true bread from Heaven, Himself**

c. Multiplied loaves

John 6:31-35 Our fathers did eat manna in the desert; as it is written, He gave them bread from heaven to eat.

32Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Moses gave you not that bread from heaven; but my Father giveth you the true bread from heaven.

33For the bread of God is he which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world.

34Then said they unto him, Lord, evermore give us this bread.

35And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst.

**c** Jesus had already multiplied loaves for the people and now He was giving them the next steps to understanding their need to receive *Him*.

**a** The people, instead of taking Christ at His word to believe on Him, tried to turn Jesus' attention back to the provision of worldly bread. This also is similar to what the woman at the well had done.

**b** Jesus did not get distracted but used the moment to bring people's attention to the lesson He was trying to give them. They should have believed with the first lesson. Now Jesus is going to give them a bolder lesson by comparing Himself to bread and His blood for drink.

447. How did the people respond to the challenge of Jesus?

- a. They believed Him based on the powerful miracles they had observed
- b. They started to doubt Him and turn back**
- c. They were anxious to recognize Him from Heaven

John 6:36-43 But I said unto you, That ye also have seen me, and believe not.

37All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.

38For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me.

39And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day.

40And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day.

41The Jews then murmured at him, because he said, I am the bread which came down from heaven.

42And they said, Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? how is it then that he saith, I came down from heaven?

43Jesus therefore answered and said unto them, Murmur not among yourselves.

John 6:64-66 But there are some of you that believe not. For Jesus knew from the beginning who they were that believed not, and who should betray him.

65And he said, Therefore said I unto you, that no man can come unto me, except it were given unto him of my Father.

66From that *time* many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him.

**a,b** Miracles by themselves should not be necessarily considered as theological statements, but the people could have been impressed enough with the miracles they had seen Him perform to believe. At the very least, the miracles should have been sufficient to warrant further examination. The insincerity of their interest is revealed by what little it takes to turn away.

**c** Their concern for heaven should have made them interested in finding out more, also.

448. How could people come to Jesus and get saved according to Jesus?

- a. If they persevered in their faith to the end they would someday have everlasting life and not be cast out
- b. If when they see Jesus and live a life of obedience they would be raised up in the last day

**c. If they would respond to God drawing them by learning of Him and believing on Him they would have everlasting life**

John 6:44-47 No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day.

45It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me.

46Not that any man hath seen the Father, save he which is of God, he hath seen the Father.

47Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me hath everlasting life.

**a** Calvinism places such an emphasis on people persevering to the end as a proof of salvation that the importance of works becomes exaggerated. There are those who doubt whether they are saved because of this. They wonder if they have either done enough works to be able to prove to themselves they are saved, or worry that their moments of yielding to temptation are proof that they are not saved.

**b** Then there are also those who believe that a life of obedience will yield salvation.

**c** Jesus plainly says, "He that believeth on me **hath** everlasting life." It is not that they will have it someday, but at the moment they believe. They don't have to wait until the end of their life to judge if their works measure up to what should be expected of a child of God. They don't have to wonder if their failures either caused them to *lose* their salvation or serve as proof that they are not saved. They have *everlasting* life, not temporary life, based on their faith.

449. What figure did Jesus say the people had to receive to live forever?

a. Bread and wine turned into His flesh and blood by a priest

**b. His flesh and blood**

c. Manna from God

John 6:48-58 I am that bread of life.

49Your fathers did eat manna in the wilderness, and are dead.

50This is the bread which cometh down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof, and not die.

51I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world.

52The Jews therefore strove among themselves, saying, How can this man give us *his* flesh to eat?

53Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you.

54Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day.

55For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed.

56He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him.

57As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father: so he that eateth me,



even he shall live by me.

<sup>58</sup>This is that bread which came down from heaven: not as your fathers did eat manna, and are dead: he that eateth of this bread shall live for ever.

**b,c** Jesus is turning from manna and describing how He is figuratively the Bread of Life.

**a** Roman Catholicism and Orthodox Churches stop reading at this point and take the flesh and blood out of context to justify the work of a priest to turn the elements of communion into Jesus literal bread and blood. We should point out that there was no suggestion of this in the Jewish feasts. In fact, eating blood was prohibited. Also, there is no office of the priesthood in the New Testament. In just a few verses, Jesus will clarify that He is speaking figuratively.

450. What actually is effectual for our salvation?

- a. The spirit of the words that Christ spoke which quickens (makes alive)**
- b. His flesh and blood that we eat and cleanses us from sin
- c. The power of a priest to get our sins pardoned

John 6:60-63 Many therefore of his disciples, when they had heard *this*, said, This is an hard saying; who can hear it?

<sup>61</sup>When Jesus knew in himself that his disciples murmured at it, he said unto them, Doth this offend you?

<sup>62</sup>*What* and if ye shall see the Son of man ascend up where he was before?

<sup>63</sup>It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, *they* are spirit, and *they* are life.

**b,c** B and C are a reference to the concept of sacrament in the Roman Catholic Church. Sacraments are more than symbols in that they have some spiritual effect, or "salvific power" on the person receiving them.

**a** Jesus plainly states that the flesh and blood do not have any power and that He is speaking figuratively. That is what it means when He refers to the signification by His words. The figure presented in the words make someone alive.

451. Why did Peter not turn away as many others did?

- a. He had not yet been offended enough by Jesus
- b. He was a brainwashed cult member of Jesus
- c. Jesus' message was the only real message of salvation**

John 6:66-69 From that *time* many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him.

<sup>67</sup>Then said Jesus unto the twelve, Will ye also go away?

<sup>68</sup>Then Simon Peter answered him, Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life.

<sup>69</sup>And we believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God.

**a,b,c** Peter was a realist (C). People only take offense in their imaginations when they don't like reality (A). Peter only dealt with what was plainly demonstrated by Christ and did not succumb to any mind games of brainwashing (B).

452. Who had Jesus chosen for His purpose and yet was not a believer?

- a. Thomas
- b. Peter
- c. Judas Iscariot**

John 6:70-71 Jesus answered them, Have not I chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil?

<sup>71</sup>He spake of Judas Iscariot *the son* of Simon: for he it was that should betray him, being one of the twelve.

**a** Thomas would end up doubting, but only doubting and that temporarily. His true heart would be revealed by facing and acknowledging the reality of the print of the nails in Jesus' hands.

**b** Peter would end up denying Christ in a moment of weakness, but Jesus had not only revealed to Peter that he *would* do this, but that he would be *converted*, or more fully understand, afterward.

**c** It is interesting, of course, that Judas was chosen but was an unbeliever. He would have an opportunity right up to the end to repent, even though he did not. It is instructive to us that it is possible for someone to be very active in a church even though they never got saved.

## **70 - Reproving the Pharisees For That Which Leaves the Heart**

453. What elaborate rituals had the Pharisees visiting from Jerusalem established regarding eating?

- a. The proper setting and use of salad forks, soup spoons, dinner forks and spoons, dessert spoons and forks, bread knives, seafood forks, bread plates, chargers, etc.
- b. Washing of hands and utensils**
- c. Preparing their minds and hearts to serve God

Mark 7:1-5 Then came together unto him the Pharisees, and certain of the scribes, which came from Jerusalem.

<sup>2</sup>And when they saw some of his disciples eat bread with defiled, that is to say, with unwashen, hands, they found fault.

<sup>3</sup>For the Pharisees, and all the Jews, except they wash *their* hands oft, eat not, holding the tradition of the elders.

<sup>4</sup>And *when they come* from the market, except they wash, they eat not. And many other things there be, which they have received to hold, *as* the washing of cups, and

pots, brasen vessels, and of tables.

5Then the Pharisees and scribes asked him, Why walk not thy disciples according to the tradition of the elders, but eat bread with unwashen hands?

**b** There was an actual Biblical basis of washing, but the Pharisees had gone much further.

Shepard writes concerning the Pharisaic tradition surrounding handwashing:

Mark refers to the traditional custom of the Pharisees, which had become general among the people, not to eat without diligently washing their hands. Indeed these ablutions had grown to be exceedingly numerous and very binding. Before and after every meal and whenever they came from the market-place or townsquare, they had to wash or take a bath according to certain ceremonial restrictions. All cups, pots, and brazen vessels as well as tables and perhaps dining couches must be thoroughly cleansed.

The Pharisees carried their ablutions to such an extent, as to completely overshadow with their ritual the fundamental moral principles of the Scriptures. The Sadducees remarked in derision when a Pharisee washed the golden candle-stick of the Temple, that "soon they would think it necessary to wash the sun."

The Pharisees claimed that these oral traditions had been handed down in part from Moses, consisted partly of decisions made by the judges from time to time and partly of explanations and opinions of eminent teachers. The body of these traditions continued to accumulate until after the time of Christ, when they were codified in the Mishna and its commentaries. Traditional rites and restrictions stood higher in the esteem of the Jews than their Scriptures. Where Scripture and tradition seemed opposed the latter was treated as the higher authority. The Pharisees said that the Covenant was made on account of the oral law. The Talmud adds: "My son, give more heed to the words of the Rabbis than to the words of the Law." This attitude of Judaism toward their oral law has been a deciding factor in the high esteem in which the Church of Rome holds oral tradition as "of equal weight with the Scriptures."

The legal washing of the hands was considered of great importance by the Rabbis. To slight hand-washing was a crime worthy of death. "Better go four miles to water, than incur guilt by neglecting hand-washing." One who neglected hand-washing after eating was "as bad as a murderer." Hillel and Shammai, two great rival teachers and heroes of Jewish traditionalism just before the time of Christ, united on eighteen decrees which might not under any circumstances be modified. These decrees were designed to separate the Jews from all contact with the Gentiles. To touch a Gentile involved defilement; hence the necessity of a complete bath (immersion) after returning from the market-place. The opposing schools of Hillel and Shammai though antagonistic in many points were agreed on the ordinance of hand-washing. "It had come down from Solomon," they said, "and must be honored with the highest reward. Anyone living in the land of Israel eating his daily food in purification, speaking the Hebrew of the day, and morning and evening praying duly with the phylacteries is certain that he will eat bread in the kingdom of God."

It nettled the Pharisees, and especially the Scribes, that the disciples of Jesus were indifferent to the Pharisaic traditions, evidenced in the fact that they did not wash their hands according to the prescribed rules before and after meals. Doubtless these selfconstituted critics had observed that the disciples did not wash when the five thousand were fed and perhaps at other times.

Edersheim describes the careful attention given to the observance of this ritual:

It was the practice to draw water out of these with what was called a *natla*, *antila*, or *antelaya*, very often of glass, which must hold (at least) a quarter of a log—a measure equal to one and a half "egg-shells." For, no less quantity than this might be used for affusion. The water was poured on both hands, which must be free of anything covering them, such as gravel, mortar, etc. The hands were lifted up, so as to make the water run to the wrist, in order to ensure that the whole hand was washed, and that the water polluted by the hand did not again run down the fingers. Similarly, each hand was rubbed with the other (the fist), provided the hand that rubbed had been affused; otherwise, the rubbing might be done against the head, or even against a wall. But there was one point on which special stress was laid. In the "first affusion," which was all that originally was required when the hands were not Levitically "defiled," the water had to run down to the wrist (*lappereq*, or *ad happereq*). If the water remained short of the wrist (*chuts lappereq*), the hands were not clean. Accordingly, the words of St. Mark can only mean that the Pharisees eat not "except they wash their hands to the wrist."

When Christ was approached by the Pharisees and teachers of the law, they did not question the disciples' conformity to the law of Moses, but rather their conformity to the traditions of the elders.

– Pentecost §79

**a** The Pharisees were not just concerned with issues of etiquette that had evolved over time. A refers to how we can be just as overly concerned with "the proper" way of doing things. We have to be careful to not get hung up on just the right way to do things, or having the most polished presentation, or adhering to the best professional standards. D.L. Moody shared a story that illustrates this:

I remember when in the old country a young man came to me – a minister – and said he wanted to talk with me.

He said to me: "Mr. Moody, you are either all right and I am all wrong, or else I am right, and you are all wrong."

"Well, sir," said I, "You have the advantage of me. You have heard me preach, and you know what doctrines I hold, whereas I have not heard you, and don't know what you preach."

"Well," said he, "the difference between your preaching and mine is that you make out that salvation is got by Christ's death, and I make out that it is attained by His life."

"Now, what do you do with the passages bearing upon the death?" and I quoted the passages, "Without the shedding of blood there is no remission," and "He Himself bore our own sins by His own body on the tree," and asked him what he did with them, for instance.

"Never preach them at all."

I quoted a number of passages more, and he gave me the same answer. "Well, what do you preach?" I finally asked.

"Moral essays," he replied.

Said I, "Did you ever know anybody to be saved by that kind of thing, did you ever convert anybody by them?"

"I never aimed at that kind of conversion; I meant to get men to heaven by culture – by refinement."

"Well," said I, "If I didn't preach those texts, and only preached culture, the whole

thing would be a sham."

"And it is a sham to me," was his reply.

I tell you the moment a man breaks away from this doctrine of blood, religion becomes a sham, because the whole teaching of this book is of one story, and this is, that Christ came into the world and died for our sins.

It is said that D. L. Moody (1837-1899) started his career as an uneducated shoe salesman but turned into one of the greatest evangelists of all time. With only a fifth grade education, he seemed to be uniquely unqualified for his lifelong calling. His grammar was terrible, and he was far from an eloquent orator. But he took his plain talk approach to evangelism and preached the gospel throughout the United States and Great Britain, leading hundreds of thousands of people to faith in Jesus Christ.

– (<https://www.learnreligions.com/biography-of-d-l-moody-evangelist-4797988>)

**c** If people put such time into preparing their hearts and minds to serving God churches would be much more powerful.

454. What did Jesus think of their outward rituals?

- a. They talked a good line but their hearts were far from God**
- b. They were very thorough in all they did
- c. They performed the commandments of God through their added on traditions

Mark 7:6-9 He answered and said unto them, Well hath Esaias prophesied of you hypocrites, as it is written, This people honoureth me with *their* lips, but their heart is far from me.

7Howbeit in vain do they worship me, teaching *for* doctrines the commandments of men.

8For laying aside the commandment of God, ye hold the tradition of men, *as* the washing of pots and cups: and many other such like things ye do.

9And he said unto them, Full well ye reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your own tradition.

**b** The Pharisees were not just thorough in their efforts, but they went beyond the intention of the Law. Sometimes people make the mistake that if a little is good, then a lot is better. A little salt is good, but a lot of salt is not just not good, it is wrong.

**a,c** Christ's problems with the Pharisees often involved their *additions* to the Law, not the fact they were trying to observe the Law. He even approved of their attendance to the Law and He, Himself, kept the Law.

Matt 23:23 Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin, and have omitted the weightier *matters* of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone

Matt 5:17-20 Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil.

18For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no

wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled.

19Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach *them*, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.

20For I say unto you, That except your righteousness shall exceed *the righteousness* of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven.

The way that we need to *exceed* the righteousness of the Pharisees is by our heart attitude.

455. How did Jesus describe their treatment of gifts?

- a. Their concern for their parents demonstrated that it really is the thought that counts when it comes to honoring parents
- b. Their dedication of gifts to God meant they could keep and use that which should have gone to taking care of and honoring their parents**
- c. They were very clever in their stewardship to minutely observe the law

Mark 7:10-12 For Moses said, Honour thy father and thy mother; and, Whoso curseth father or mother, let him die the death:

11But ye say, If a man shall say to his father or mother, *It is Corban*, that is to say, a gift, by whatsoever thou mightest be profited by me; *he shall be free*.

12And ye suffer him no more to do ought for his father or his mother;

**b** The idea of dedicating something to God should have obligated one to give the devoted thing to the Temple, but the practice was not necessarily so. Swearing by God or by the Temple was done so rashly that people would violate the fifth commandment by merely saying something was dedicated to God. See Edersheim p. 704, on Korban.

**a** People will jokingly excuse themselves by declaring that it is the thought that counts when they offer a small gift. Sometimes that is actually true – large gifts are not a proof of someone's love and people who receive gifts should be set to receive gifts graciously. We should not neglect the small social responsibilities of gifts on special occasions. The problem with the Jews practice of Corban was that they were expecting the thought to not only count, but be the complete fulfillment of their responsibility. Giving an offering in someone's memory is good. Sometimes, when there is someone who really doesn't need for anything, a gift to the Lord in honor of them is thoughtful, but even then you have to be considerate of how they might take this.

**c** C is a reference to how some people blame their irresponsibility in fulfilling their obligations in the name of being a good steward. People abused Corban by *saying* they were observing the Law but used it for themselves instead. Similarly, people will think they are merely practicing Biblical stewardship by using their tithe for themselves.

456. What did Jesus say defiles a man?

- a. **What comes from his heart**
- b. Dirt that he takes into his mouth
- c. That which is cast into the draught

Mark 7:14-23 And when he had called all the people *unto him*, he said unto them, Hearken unto me every one *of you*, and understand:

15 There is nothing from without a man, that entering into him can defile him: but the things which come out of him, those are they that defile the man.

16 If any man have ears to hear, let him hear.

17 And when he was entered into the house from the people, his disciples asked him concerning the parable.

18 And he saith unto them, Are ye so without understanding also? Do ye not perceive, that whatsoever thing from without entereth into the man, *it* cannot defile him;

19 Because it entereth not into his heart, but into the belly, and goeth out into the draught, purging all meats?

20 And he said, That which cometh out of the man, that defileth the man.

21 For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders,

22 Thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness:

23 All these evil things come from within, and defile the man.

People can't avoid dirt that they take in with their mouth. Even if you wash your hands often, we actually ingest dirt from the air by breathing and swallowing. Jesus emphasizes how unavoidable physical defilement is but how avoidable spiritual defilement is.

457. How did Jesus respond to the Pharisees who were offended by His teaching?

- a. **He resigned them to their error and those who would follow them**
- b. He softened His message so they could get along together
- c. He dialogued with them so they could agree on common goals

Matt 15:12-14 Then came his disciples, and said unto him, Knowest thou that the Pharisees were offended, after they heard this saying?

13 But he answered and said, Every plant, which my heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up.

14 Let them alone: they be blind leaders of the blind. And if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch.

**b** We should not soften our stands in order to make them more palatable. Catering to people's self-centered sensibilities often leads to them falling short and not taking Biblical responsibilities seriously. For instance, we should by all means feel strongly about attending all services. Telling someone that they don't have to go to church to be a Christian is technically true, but it sets the attitude that leads to failure to a strong dedication to serving God.

c "Dialoguing" with people to better understand them and how we can work together is not necessarily bad. However, dialoguing can produce ungodly compromise. Leading up to World War II, Neville Chamberlin and the Russian Molotov dialogued with Hitler and were deceived by him. People will often abandon their distinctives in order to satisfy some sense of obligation to unity. Unity should not come at all costs.

a Sometimes we leave people in their error because of their blind obstinacy. The blame rests on their attitude and resistance. This does not mean that we give in and agree with them, though. It *does* mean that sometimes you just have to part ways with them.

458. List the kind of things that defile a man:

Mark 7:18-23 And he saith unto them, Are ye so without understanding also? Do ye not perceive, that whatsoever thing from without entereth into the man, *it* cannot defile him;

19Because it entereth not into his heart, but into the belly, and goeth out into the draught, purging all meats?

20And he said, That which cometh out of the man, that defileth the man.

21For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders,

22Thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness:

23All these evil things come from within, and defile the man.

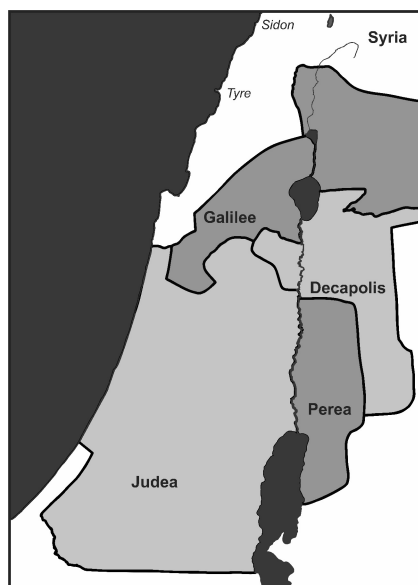
evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness

Jesus often pointed out that sin comes from the heart. One does not actually have to commit sins outwardly to be sinful. In salvation, God goes directly to the source of sin and changes it.

## 71 - Jesus in Galilee because the Jews Sought to Kill Him

459. Why did Jesus concentrate His time in Galilee at this point in His ministry?

- a. He was afraid of dying
- b. Jewry (those in Judea in the south) and their priests sought to kill Him before His time**
- c. He enjoyed being a celebrity in Galilee





The northern province of Galilee was decisively distinct—in history, political status, and culture—from the southern province of Judea which contained the holy city of Jerusalem.

Admitting that the following is a drastic oversimplification but hoping that it's not a complete caricature, Professor France summarizes seven differences:

Racially the area of the former Northern Kingdom of Israel had had, ever since the Assyrian conquest in the eighth century B.C., a more mixed population, within which more conservative Jewish areas (like Nazareth and Capernaum) stood in close proximity to largely pagan cities, of which in the first century the new Hellenistic centers of Tiberias and Sepphoris were the chief examples.

Geographically Galilee was separated from Judea by the non-Jewish territory of Samaria, and from Perea in the southeast by the Hellenistic settlements of Decapolis.

Politically Galilee had been under separate administration from Judea during almost all its history since the tenth century B.C. (apart from a period of "reunification" under the Maccabees), and in the time of Jesus it was under a (supposedly) native Herodian prince, while Judea and Samaria had since A.D. 6 been under the direct rule of a Roman prefect.

Economically Galilee offered better agricultural and fishing resources than the more mountainous territory of Judea, making the wealth of some Galileans the envy of their southern neighbors.

Culturally Judeans despised their northern neighbors as country cousins, their lack of Jewish sophistication being compounded by their greater openness to Hellenistic influence.

Linguistically Galileans spoke a distinctive form of Aramaic whose slovenly consonants (they dropped their aitches!) were the butt of Judean humor.

Religiously the Judean opinion was that Galileans were lax in their observance of proper ritual, and the problem was exacerbated by the distance of Galilee from the temple and the theological leadership, which was focused in Jerusalem.

The result, he says, is that even an impeccably Jewish Galilean in first-century Jerusalem was not among his own people; he was as much a foreigner as an Irishman in London or a Texan in New York. His accent would immediately mark him out as "not one of us," and all the communal prejudice of the supposedly superior culture of the capital city would stand against his claim to be heard even as a prophet, let alone as the "Messiah," a title which, as everyone knew, belonged to Judea (cf. John 7:40-42).

[thegospelcoalition.org/blogs/justin-taylor/7-differences-between-galilee-and-judea-in-the-time-of-jesus/](http://thegospelcoalition.org/blogs/justin-taylor/7-differences-between-galilee-and-judea-in-the-time-of-jesus/)

John 7:1 After these things Jesus walked in Galilee: for he would not walk in Jewry, because the Jews sought to kill him.

**a,c** A and C represent the basic motivation for man of survival. The natural man avoids those things that threaten his sense of survival and seeks out those things that ensure his survival. Both represent our basic sense of insufficiency. While we can avoid those things that threaten us, the only way to make sure of our survival is to depend on help that is beyond us. The sense of celebrity is related to the idea that we need others to not only survive but to thrive.

**b** Jesus was not concerned about survival. He knew that He was going to die and that His time was not yet come. By avoiding Jewry He was making sure of the time of His death to fulfill His mission. Our concern should be more of a sense of mission rather than some mere fulfillment of an animal instinct.

## 72 - The Syro-Phoenician Woman

460. Where did Jesus go to further avoid the Jews?

- a. **Tyre and Sidon in Syrian Phoenicia**
- b. India
- c. The Americas

Matt 15:21 Then Jesus went thence, and departed into the coasts of Tyre and Sidon.

**b,c** B and C are not just silly answers. There are some fanciful claims that Jesus spent time in India and other far east locations during the silent years of His age from 13-29. Also, the Mormons claim that Jesus came to the Americas after the resurrection.

**a** Jesus went to Tyre and Sidon as part of His avoiding the Jews.

461. What was Jesus' primary mission in His first coming?

- a. To bring the Gentiles into the kingdom
- b. **To present Himself to Israel**
- c. To judge the Gentiles

Matt 15:24 But he answered and said, I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel.

Mark 7:27 But Jesus said unto her, Let the children first be filled: for it is not meet to take the children's bread, and to cast *it* unto the dogs.

**c** Jesus' mission was never to judge the Gentiles. That does not mean to say that the Gentiles will not be judged in the future, though.

Matt 25:31-34 When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory:

32And before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth *his* sheep from the goats:

33And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left.

34Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world:

Jesus' mission was to fulfill all those things that were given to the Jews to present Him as the King to whom all the rest of the world would come.

**a** Jesus was going to bring the Gentiles into the kingdom of God, but it was just not at that time.

**b** Jesus' first mission was to present Himself to the Jews. He will be presented to them again at the end of the Tribulation and then they *will* acknowledge Him as will also the rest of the world.

462. What does the healing of the Syro-Phoenician woman portend?
- a. The rejection of Israel
  - b. The restoration of the throne of David
  - c. The Gospel outreach to the Gentiles**

Matt 15:25-28 Then came she and worshipped him, saying, Lord, help me.

26But he answered and said, It is not meet to take the children's bread, and to cast *it* to dogs.

27And she said, Truth, Lord: yet the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from their masters' table.

28Then Jesus answered and said unto her, O woman, great *is* thy faith: be it unto thee even as thou wilt. And her daughter was made whole from that very hour.

**a** Nothing in Jesus' response to the woman indicates any disavowal of Israel, just the benefit that extends from Israel to others. This is consistent with the teaching that the Jews were to bless the world.

Isa 49:5-6 And now, saith the LORD that formed me from the womb *to be* his servant, to bring Jacob again to him, Though Israel be not gathered, yet shall I be glorious in the eyes of the LORD, and my God shall be my strength.

6And he said, It is a light thing that thou shouldest be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved of Israel: I will also give thee for a light to the Gentiles, that thou mayest be my salvation unto the end of the earth.

Israel was never to be rejected, merely put on hiatus until they would be restored later.

Acts 13:46-47 Then Paul and Barnabas waxed bold, and said, It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you: but seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles.

47For so hath the Lord commanded us, *saying*, I have set thee to be a light of the Gentiles, that thou shouldest be for salvation unto the ends of the earth.

**b** The restoration of the throne of David was something that the Jews expected, but it will come *after* the inclusion of the Gentiles. It *should* have logically come before the outreach to the Gentiles, but the Jews' rejection of their king would not stop God's plan, it would only delay *their* participation in His kingdom.

**c** The crumbs from the table are a token of what was to come in the outreach to the Gentiles after the resurrection.

## 73 - Deaf and Dumb Man Healed

463. After leaving Tyre and Sidon, where did Jesus continue His ministry?
- a. In Jerusalem of Judea
  - b. Back to Galilee
  - c. In the Gentile area of Decapolis**

Mark 7:31 And again, departing from the coasts of Tyre and Sidon, he came unto the sea of Galilee, through the midst of the coasts of Decapolis.

**a** The time was not come for Jesus to present Himself to Israel, so He would not have gone to Jerusalem.

**b,c** Jesus was on His way back to Galilee, but by passing through the Gentile area of Decapolis He further signaled the mission of the Jews to be a blessing to the whole earth.

Gen 22:16-18 And said, By myself have I sworn, saith the LORD, for because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only *son*:

17That in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which *is* upon the sea shore; and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies;

18And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed my voice.

464. What impressed the people with the healing of the man?

a. This was the first time they had ever seen a healing

**b. The healing was so thorough for two problems**

c. The recovery time for the man's hearing and speech only required a short time of therapy

Mark 7:37 And were beyond measure astonished, saying, He hath done all things well: he maketh both the deaf to hear, and the dumb to speak.

**a** The Demoniac of Gadara in the region of Decapolis had been healed according to Mark 5, so this was not the first time Decapolis had witnessed a miracle. Also, in Matthew 4 we read how people of Decapolis had gone to Jesus when He was in Galilee.

**b,c** Jesus' healing was not like that of a physician. This does not mean that God is not behind the healing when physicians are involved. When God heals directly He is not constrained by man's involvement. When Jesus does the healing, He does it *well*. This includes the idea, though, that if there is something left behind, it is also according to God's wisdom. The man healed was left with the condition of being a physical human being who *would* get sick and die eventually. If God leaves any remnant of our physical being behind it also is part of His plan. This is seen best in Paul's entreaty for his condition.

2Cor 12:6-10 For though I would desire to glory, I shall not be a fool; for I will say the truth: but *now* I forbear, lest any man should think of me above that which he seeth me *to be*, or *that* he heareth of me.

7And lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure.

8For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me.

9And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.

10Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong.

## 74 - The Seven Loaves and Two Fishes

465. How did the people of Decapolis respond to Jesus' healings?

- a. **They glorified the God of Israel**
- b. They worshiped Him as one of the Roman gods
- c. They said thank you and went home

Matt 15:29-31 And Jesus departed from thence, and came nigh unto the sea of Galilee; and went up into a mountain, and sat down there.

30And great multitudes came unto him, having with them *those that were* lame, blind, dumb, maimed, and many others, and cast them down at Jesus' feet; and he healed them:

31Insomuch that the multitude wondered, when they saw the dumb to speak, the maimed to be whole, the lame to walk, and the blind to see: and they glorified the God of Israel.

**b B** is a mistake that the people of Lystra made.

Acts 14:8-12 And there sat a certain man at Lystra, impotent in his feet, being a cripple from his mother's womb, who never had walked:

9The same heard Paul speak: who stedfastly beholding him, and perceiving that he had faith to be healed,

10Said with a loud voice, Stand upright on thy feet. And he leaped and walked.

11And when the people saw what Paul had done, they lifted up their voices, saying in the speech of Lycaonia, The gods are come down to us in the likeness of men.

12And they called Barnabas, Jupiter; and Paul, Mercurius, because he was the chief speaker.

This would have been an overreaction, but it would be consistent with the fact that they were still in the region of Decapolis that was near the Sea of Galilee.

**c C** would be an under reaction. Sometimes people don't realize the scope of God's offer to them. They are glad for the benefit they might receive, but do not realize that God is offering much more than that.

**a** Their proper reaction was to acknowledge God's sovereign power and righteousness.

466. Read Matt 14:15, Mark 6:35-37, Luke 9:12, John 6:7. What was different about the way the apostles responded to the need to feed the multitudes?

- a. **They did not try to send the people away**
- b. They had made sure to buy provisions in advance
- c. They pressed Jesus to do another miracle

Matt 14:15 And when it was evening, his disciples came to him, saying, This is a desert place, and the time is now past; send the multitude away, that they may go into the villages, and buy themselves victuals.

Mark 6:35-37 And when the day was now far spent, his disciples came unto him, and said, This is a desert place, and now the time *is* far passed:

36Send them away, that they may go into the country round about, and into the villages, and buy themselves bread: for they have nothing to eat.

37He answered and said unto them, Give ye them to eat. And they say unto him, Shall we go and buy two hundred pennyworth of bread, and give them to eat?

Luke 9:12 And when the day began to wear away, then came the twelve, and said unto him, Send the multitude away, that they may go into the towns and country round about, and lodge, and get victuals: for we are here in a desert place.

Compare with:

Matt 15:32-34 Then Jesus called his disciples *unto him*, and said, I have compassion on the multitude, because they continue with me now three days, and have nothing to eat: and I will not send them away fasting, lest they faint in the way.

33And his disciples say unto him, Whence should we have so much bread in the wilderness, as to fill so great a multitude?

34And Jesus saith unto them, How many loaves have ye? And they said, Seven, and a few little fishes.

**b** The apostles could have made the mistake after receiving the first miracle of the loaves to think that they should not be caught short handed again. Sometimes people fail to learn from the miracles God has for them and resort to their own strengths again.

**a,c** The apostles could have been demanding of Jesus, which would be an issue of tempting the Lord with a "What have you done for me lately?" kind of attitude. This would be provoking the Lord, judging Him and tempting Him to do our bidding in order to prove Himself. Looking for another miracle might not have been as serious as that, but the apostles had some humility to keep them waiting on the Lord. They merely presented the problem to Jesus and waited to see what Jesus would do.

## 75 - Pharisees Demand a Sign

467. Read 1Cor 1:21-24. Instead of the clear prophecies of Scripture, what did the Jews depend on as proof?

- a. Philosophical speculations
- b. The fulfillment of Scriptural prophecy
- c. Miraculous signs**

1Cor 1:21-24 For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe.

22For the Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom:

23But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumblingblock, and unto the Greeks foolishness;

24But unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God.

**a** The Greeks are the ones who desire philosophical proof that is based on assumptions and speculation that are created by the ideas of man.

**c** The Jews depended on miraculous signs. Often you see throughout the Old Testament God at work giving them signs which included the Exodus and the wilderness wanderings as well as many interventions. Such interventions would be like Hezekiah and the sundial, Joel and the prophecy of signs and wonders in the heavens.

**b** The fulfillment of Scriptural prophecy is the actual proof that people need to have confidence in the reality of God. Just as much as God held them accountable to signs in the Old Testament, He also held them even more accountable to His Word. This can be seen in Psalm 119.

468. How did the Jews tempt Christ?

- a. They had seen so many miracles and believed so they tried to make Him an earthly king
- b. They wanted to make Him do things according to *their* will**
- c. They offered Him money to perform tricks for them

Matt 16:1,4 The Pharisees also with the Sadducees came, and tempting desired him that he would shew them a sign from heaven.

4A wicked and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given unto it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas. And he left them, and departed.

**a** A would be true only after they had seen enough signs. This would be wrong to ask of Him, but it is not so much a matter of temptation as it is not understanding the mission of Christ. On the occasion that they did want to make Him king, it could be understood that they were looking for the Messiah to take the throne of David.

**b** At this point, the temptation is the common temptation the Jews had for God. It was of the variety where after they had been given enough already, they moved the goal posts and wanted more. This speaks of their lack of faith, their doubt of God, and a self centered attitude of making God their servant.

**c** C speaks of how people go to conferences looking more for entertainment than they are for repentance.

469. After denying them a sign, what did Jesus say *would* be the ultimate sign?

- a. A great revival enabling Him to come and take His place on the throne of David
- b. The appearance of the heavenly host to defeat the world empires
- c. The resurrection as signified by Jonah**

Matt 16:4 A wicked and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given unto it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas. And he left them, and departed.

**a** The Jews in their day anticipated Elijah coming and the restoration of the throne of David, but they had no place in their theology for a suffering Messiah to come first. In our day, this same concept is taught by Amillennialism which teaches that Jesus was expanding His kingdom from Judaism to include the Gentiles until we make the world good enough for Him to come take His throne. The mistake that the Amillennialists make is that they don't see a suffering *Israel* first going through the time of Jacob's trouble.

Jer 30:7 Alas! for that day *is* great, so that none *is* like it: it *is* even the time of Jacob's trouble; but he shall be saved out of it.

**b** The appearance of the heavenly host to defeat the world empires will certainly occur. The Jews were looking for that, but the whole idea of a suffering Messiah, as in A, was not in their purview.

**c** By referring to the resurrection, Jesus is both giving them a sign of His absolute power and introducing to them the fact that He is the fulfillment of Isa 53 and Job 19. He is also very careful to define what the resurrection will be like – three days and three nights in the grave. The power of the resurrection is different from all other signs. Where other signs that Jesus gave were a picture of the healing power of Christ, the resurrection speaks of the ultimate healing that comes in the transformation at the resurrection.

Isa 53:1-12 Who hath believed our report? and to whom is the arm of the LORD revealed?

2For he shall grow up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground: he hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him, *there is* no beauty that



we should desire him.

3He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were *our* faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not.

4Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted.

5But he *was* wounded for our transgressions, *he was* bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace *was* upon him; and with his stripes we are healed.

6All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.

7He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth.

8He was taken from prison and from judgment: and who shall declare his generation? for he was cut off out of the land of the living: for the transgression of my people was he stricken.

9And he made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death; because he had done no violence, neither *was any* deceit in his mouth.

10Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise him; he hath put *him* to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see *his* seed, he shall prolong *his* days, and the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in his hand.

11He shall see of the travail of his soul, *and* shall be satisfied: by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities.

12Therefore will I divide him *a portion* with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he hath poured out his soul unto death: and he was numbered with the transgressors; and he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors.

Job 19:23-27 Oh that my words were now written! oh that they were printed in a book!

24That they were graven with an iron pen and lead in the rock for ever!

25For I know *that* my redeemer liveth, and *that* he shall stand at the latter *day* upon the earth:

26And *though* after my skin *worms* destroy this *body*, yet in my flesh shall I see God:

27Whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another; *though* my reins be consumed within me.

## 76 - Beware of Leavening of Pharisees

470. What mistake did the disciples make about the leaven of the Pharisees?
- They thought Jesus was getting ready to multiply bread again
  - They should have learned their lesson about being prepared to feed people**
  - They thought that Jesus was concerned about spoiled bread

Matt 16:5-7 And when his disciples were come to the other side, they had forgotten to take bread.

6Then Jesus said unto them, Take heed and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees.

7And they reasoned among themselves, saying, *It is* because we have taken no bread.

**a** A would be better than nothing, but they didn't even take into consideration the miracles that Jesus had performed before and assume another one was taking place.

**c** C would have been a good guess because leavening is pervasive in its effect on a rising loaf of bread. It would have brought them closer to what Jesus was getting at.

**b** The disciples were short sighted and failed to think beyond the immediate when they thought the problem was only related to their previous experiences of not being prepared. Often people fail to see far enough beyond the immediate and miss out on the spiritual lessons available to them. For example, many people only think of their need or, more likely, their *lack* of need for Christian fellowship and miss out on their opportunity to engage in the bonding and informal discipleship opportunity that fellowship affords. Not all discipleship comes from a scheduled class. If everything was done by scheduled class there would be many who miss out on discipleship because of the things that would interfere with attending regularly.

471. Why would the doctrines of the Pharisees and Sadducees be like leavening?

**a. Such bad doctrine would affect all other good doctrine**

b. Leavening was not to be used in the Passover and so leavening was sin

c. Their extra doctrines would help the church expand beyond what the Bible taught

Matt 16:6,11-12 Then Jesus said unto them, Take heed and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees.

<sup>11</sup>How is it that ye do not understand that I spake *it* not to you concerning bread, that ye should beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees?

<sup>12</sup>Then understood they how that he bade *them* not beware of the leaven of bread, but of the doctrine of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees.

**c** The Pharisees, especially, held to derivative doctrines, which is not necessarily bad. However, they did it with such authority that their applications became equal to the Scriptures instead of merely dependent upon them. The trouble then comes when things that are not necessarily good ideas become treated like the Word of God. Mixed with academic or social pride, those teachings become spiritually toxic. This is the mentality that has prevailed in churches today where different fads are thought to be what the church needs to grow.

**b** Although leavening and the Passover is actually related to the problem, the problem with B is that it would be shortsighted. The concern for leavening would only be about ritual practice and fail to address the doctrinal issues.

**a** Bad doctrine spreads. The reason is that if you start off with bad premises, you evolve bad conclusions which then join in with other bad conclusions to create monsters.

Being familiar with what a church teaches will fight against bad doctrine growing. This really requires attending regularly and engaging in discussions to be able to really become familiar with what is taught.

## 77 - The Confession of Peter

472. Who did some people think that Jesus was?

- a. **They thought Jesus was a powerful prophet**
- b. They thought of Jesus as possibly returning as the herald for the Messiah
- c. They thought Jesus was one of many Messianic figures

Matt 16:13-14 When Jesus came into the coasts of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, saying, Whom do men say that I the Son of man am?

14And they said, Some *say that thou art* John the Baptist: some, Elias; and others, Jeremias, or one of the prophets.

**a,b** B would be correct except that Jeremiah was included in the list. He was known as the weeping prophet. As such, Jesus lamentation over Israel might be associated with Jeremiah.

**c** Although there were other delivers in Israel, the Jews only expected one who would come as the Son of David to restore the throne of Israel in the Day of the Lord.

473. Read 1Cor 3:11,10:4, Ps 18:31, 2Sam 22:32, 1Pet 2:6. Why would Jesus switch from Peter (a stone) to the rock (a great foundation stone) when talking about the Gospel?

- a. He wanted Peter to be known as the rock and foundation of the church
- b. **He was declaring that He, and faith in Him, is the foundation of the church**
- c. He wanted to make it know that He and Mary were the foundation of the church

1Cor 3:11 For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.

1Cor 10:4 And did all drink the same spiritual drink: for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ.

Ps 18:31 For who *is* God save the LORD? or who *is* a rock save our God?

2Sam 22:32 For who *is* God, save the LORD? and who *is* a rock, save our God?

1Pet 2:6 Wherefore also it is contained in the scripture, Behold, I lay in Sion a chief corner stone, elect, precious: and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded.

**a,c** A is a Catholic misconception to allow for a pope. Even though Mary is not considered the foundation of the church, the emphasis on her as the mother of the church is tantamount to being part of the foundation. She is certainly treated that way as on par with Christ in many ways.

**b** Jesus was switching the words to signal a change in subject, declaring Himself and belief in Him to be the Rock.

474. What significance is it that Jesus uses the future tense (shall be) along with a past perfect tense (bound, loosed) with respect to sins?

- a. Any work that Peter would do to bring the Gospel and forgiveness of sins would have already been accomplished in heaven**
- b. Peter was to have the final say according to his own knowledge about who should get to be forgiven
- c. Salvation depends on Peter

Matt 16:19-20 And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.

20Then charged he his disciples that they should tell no man that he was Jesus the Christ.

**a** Any pardon for sin would only be a reflection of what God has already done in heaven.

**b,c** Peter is not omniscient and sovereign. God does not wait for Peter's opinion and bow to Peter's will.

475. What would the powers of hell not be able to do?

- a. Succeed in attacking the church
- b. Succeed in discouraging believers
- c. Succeed when the church attacks them**

Matt 16:18 And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.

**a,b** A and B imply that we take a defensive stance against Satan.

**c** We do not cower hoping we will be able to survive. Instead, the church should always be on the attack. We should be proactive, not just waiting for an opportunity to come our way.

476. Why did Jesus not want the apostles to promote that He is the Messiah?

- a. He felt that religion is a private matter
- b. He left room for others to be Messiahs after Him
- c. He would have to go through rejection and resurrection**

Luke 9:21-22 And he straitly charged them, and commanded *them* to tell no man that thing;

22Saying, The Son of man must suffer many things, and be rejected of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be slain, and be raised the third day.

**a** Religion being a private matter is something that the world believes. Although we should not be obnoxious when sharing the Gospel, it is not in poor taste to talk about religion. The world considers it an offense as if we are marginalizing people who don't follow Christ, but this is merely a manifestation of their hatred for Christ and a manipulation to try to silence the Gospel.

**b,c** Jesus was not poised for failure. Even though there have been many who have claimed to be the Messiah since Jesus who look at the fact that Jesus was crucified as a failure (such as Unification Church teaching), the Cross and the Resurrection were actually a great victory over sin and death. It was merely not time for Jesus to be yielded up yet.

## 78 - Peter Rebuked

477. Read Luke 9:45. How did the disciples react to the idea of Jesus' crucifixion?

- a. They did not totally get it**
- b. They were sad but knew it had to be done
- c. They were anxious to go to battle for Jesus

Luke 9:45 But they understood not this saying, and it was hid from them, that they perceived it not: and they feared to ask him of that saying.

Matt 16:21-22 From that time forth began Jesus to shew unto his disciples, how that he must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised again the third day.

22Then Peter took him, and began to rebuke him, saying, Be it far from thee, Lord: this shall not be unto thee.

**c** Peter's reaction was not so much about going to battle for Christ as much as it was about disagreeing with God's plan.

**b** Sadness would not have been quite the right reaction if they had understood what Jesus was saying about the necessity of the Crucifixion, but at least it would have been reasonable. Sober seriousness would have been a more appropriate response.

**a** As Luke elsewhere pointed out, they really did not fully appreciate the meaning of what Jesus was telling them.

478. How did Jesus regard Peter's objection to the revelation of His death?
- a. He was touched by his devotion
  - b. He associated it with the desire of Satan to keep Him from the cross**
  - c. He was glad he was using human reasoning

Matt 16:22-23 Then Peter took him, and began to rebuke him, saying, Be it far from thee, Lord: this shall not be unto thee.

23But he turned, and said unto Peter, Get thee behind me, Satan: thou art an offence unto me: for thou savourest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men.

**a** People can be misguided by their emotions. Although we should be emotionally committed to the decisions we make, our decisions should not be based on emotion. There are many who appear to be spiritual because of their religious fervor, but religious fervor does not make up for bad reasoning. In the extreme, killing has been done out of misguided devotion to God. People have done many hurtful things in the name of love.

**c** This wrong answer presents an opportunity to examine the role and limitations of human reasoning. There actually was a time when an emphasis on human reasoning was important. This occurred as a reaction to the preeminence of poorly founded dogma in Romanism at the time of the Renaissance, 1400-1500s. Humanism rose up with an emphasis on the ability of people to know God through their own reasoning rather than depending on the interpretations of a priestly class. In the Catechism of the Catholic Church we find:

The Magisterium of the Church: The task of giving an authentic interpretation of the Word of God, whether in its written form or in the form of Tradition, has been entrusted to the living teaching office of the Church alone. Its authority in this matter is exercised in the name of Jesus Christ." This means that the task of interpretation has been entrusted to the bishops in communion with the successor of Peter, the Bishop of Rome.

– [https://www.vatican.va/archive/ENG0015/\\_PM.HTM](https://www.vatican.va/archive/ENG0015/_PM.HTM)

As a result of humanism, original study and research was encouraged. Studying classic languages was an emphasis of the humanists. This heavily influenced the work of Erasmus to produce a Greek New Testament in 1516. He had noticed problems with Jerome's Latin Vulgate and sought to correct for that by use of the original Greek text. Because of the prevailing attitudes toward dogma, Catholic leaders regarded the *Vulgate* as sacred and sacrosanct. The humanist influence put more trust in people's ability to understand which also influenced the rise of translations into the common tongues of the people. The irony is that the word *Vulgate* is a reference to having the Bible in the *common language of the people*, which, at the time of its translation in the late 4th century, was Latin in the Catholic churches. The Catholic Church by its "Magisterium" strengthened its dogmatic stand in reaction to the new emphasis on the original Greek text. The *Vulgate* was declared to "be held as authentic" by the Catholic Church's Council of Trent,

1545-1563...30 to 40 years after Erasmus' work. Humanism had had its effect. It was not until later that Humanism came to mean a rejection of *all* things supernatural. Instead of Religious Humanism that placed an emphasis on philanthropy and independence of the individual, simple Humanism has evolved into Secular Humanism and the independence of the individual from anything supernatural. While Humanism was able to have a positive influence on reasoning, there human reasoning should not be taken to excess which would exclude the role of the Holy Spirit.

**b** It was because of Peter's self reasoning and fervor that he reacted to Christ's explanation of what was to come. When our reasoning and fervor run contrary to God's will, then our purposes serve Satan instead. What we do should be consistent with or complementary to God's nature.

## 79 - The Command to Take up the Cross

479. What does someone have to do to be a disciple of Christ?
- a. Practice good stewardship and build a strong program
  - b. Put himself first and use his talents and wisdom to protect himself from any negativity
  - c. Sacrifice self so God can have the preeminence in his life**

Mark 8:34-35 And when he had called the people *unto him* with his disciples also, he said unto them, Whosoever will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me.

35For whosoever will save his life shall lose it; but whosoever shall lose his life for my sake and the gospel's, the same shall save it.

**a** Practicing good stewardship and building a strong program is a common method for self advancement that is based on personal responsibility and discipline. While these are two admirable qualities, the problem here is that it makes it sound like all you need to do is rely on how hard you work. What is not mentioned here is spirituality and dependence on God. Although hard work is important, it is not a replacement relying on God. If we are not careful, we can slip over into trusting in our own ability to serve God. This can lead to looking down on others and becoming prideful in what *we* are able to accomplish in our own strength. We see a warning about this in James:

Jas 4:13-15 Go to now, ye that say, To day or to morrow we will go into such a city, and continue there a year, and buy and sell, and get gain:

14Whereas ye know not what *shall be* on the morrow. For what *is* your life? It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away.

15For that ye *ought* to say, If the Lord will, we shall live, and do this, or that.

The problem we next face is how to tell when we are working hard while depending on the Lord or working hard while depending on self. They can both look the same. It is more easily seen in the way we react when things

don't go according to our well developed program. Jas 4:15 implies this. We can plan out our program for the next year...only to have God insert something according to *His* program. We have to be able to say, "I will do this or that...if God wills. Otherwise, when He changes things for me, I will roll with what He allows." Our attitude shows our spirituality. However, this is *still* not the final answer. It gets even harder when something comes along to distract us and it *wasn't* God's will and we are *supposed to* stick to our plan!

1Kgs 13:1-25 And, behold, there came a man of God out of Judah by the word of the LORD unto Bethel: and Jeroboam stood by the altar to burn incense.

2And he cried against the altar in the word of the LORD, and said, O altar, altar, thus saith the LORD; Behold, a child shall be born unto the house of David, Josiah by name; and upon thee shall he offer the priests of the high places that burn incense upon thee, and men's bones shall be burnt upon thee.

...[After dealing with the king, Jeroboam tried to get the man of God to join him in a meal.]

7And the king said unto the man of God, Come home with me, and refresh thyself, and I will give thee a reward.

8And the man of God said unto the king, If thou wilt give me half thine house, I will not go in with thee, neither will I eat bread nor drink water in this place:

9For so was it charged me by the word of the LORD, saying, Eat no bread, nor drink water, nor turn again by the same way that thou camest.

10So he went another way, and returned not by the way that he came to Bethel.

...[An old prophet heard what happened and tried to get the man of God to join him. He declined at first but...]

16And he said, I may not return with thee, nor go in with thee: neither will I eat bread nor drink water with thee in this place:

17For it was said to me by the word of the LORD, Thou shalt eat no bread nor drink water there, nor turn again to go by the way that thou camest.

18He said unto him, I *am* a prophet also as thou *art*; and an angel spake unto me by the word of the LORD, saying, Bring him back with thee into thine house, that he may eat bread and drink water. *But* he lied unto him.

19So he went back with him, and did eat bread in his house, and drank water.

20And it came to pass, as they sat at the table, that the word of the LORD came unto the prophet that brought him back:

21And he cried unto the man of God that came from Judah, saying, Thus saith the LORD, Forasmuch as thou hast disobeyed the mouth of the LORD, and hast not kept the commandment which the LORD thy God commanded thee,

22But camest back, and hast eaten bread and drunk water in the place, of the which *the LORD* did say to thee, Eat no bread, and drink no water; thy carcase shall not come unto the sepulchre of thy fathers.

23And it came to pass, after he had eaten bread, and after he had drunk, that he saddled for him the ass, *to wit*, for the prophet whom he had brought back.

24And when he was gone, a lion met him by the way, and slew him: and his carcase was cast in the way, and the ass stood by it, the lion also stood by the carcase.

25And, behold, men passed by, and saw the carcase cast in the way, and the lion standing by the carcase: and they came and told *it* in the city where the old prophet dwelt.

It takes discernment to determine which way to go.



**b** Where A reflects a take charge kind of attitude, B is the opposite. It speaks of an attitude of defeat and avoidance of responsibility. It rejects God's leadership, putting self-interest first. It represents a victim mind-set.

Rom 8:35-37 Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? *shall* tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?

36As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter.

37Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us.

This attitude can masquerade as a false humility where a person says he just wants to avoid attention and praise, but ends up doing nothing. Such false humility is a form of pride in that it considers self first.

**c** Sacrificing self means considering God's will first and being willing to submit to it. It means that if things do go according to how we think they should go it doesn't matter: we are happy to leave the results to God. It means not being offended at how people react to us.

480. What does someone have to do to gain eternal life?

- a. Die to self**
- b. Work hard to impress God
- c. Be spiritual

Mark 8:35 For whosoever will save his life shall lose it; but whosoever shall lose his life **for my sake and the gospel's**, the same shall save it.

**b** Working hard to impress God is actually self-centered in that we expect God to work according to *our* wisdom. Salvation does not depend on what *we* think is a good idea, but what God says. To go by one's own plan of salvation is an elevation of self above God.

**c** C is another substitute for God's will. It is nebulous. Vague spirituality is not sufficient. This is why we have to test the spirits:

1John 4:1 Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world.

Cults think they are spiritual and have sometimes been founded on "spiritism" and the occult. Eastern meditation techniques open themselves to foreign spirits.

**a** Our rebellious heart against God is manifest in our reliance, protection, and provision for self. This is why we have to die to self, at which point we become alive unto God. This passage presents one of the great paradoxes of the Bible. To gain life you have to lose your life...but, specifically, you have to lose your life to Christ.

481. What is of the utmost value?

- a. **Salvation**
- b. Everything that the world has to offer
- c. Our dignity

Mark 8:36-38 For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?

37 Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?

38 Whosoever therefore shall be ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation; of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of his Father with the holy angels.

**a,b,c** Some people consider themselves too cool to be named with Christ (C). Gaining everything the world has to offer is a cheap price to sell away our eternity (B). Instead of being worried about what our friends might say or what we stand to lose here on earth, consider the joys of heaven that we might lose (A) and the words of God:

Matt 7:23 And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity

482. What will Christ do if we are ashamed of Him?

- a. He will reward us for our honesty
- b. He will reward us for our works
- c. **He will be ashamed of us**

Mark 8:38 Whosoever therefore shall be ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation; of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of his Father with the holy angels.

Matt 16:27 For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels; and then he shall reward every man according to his works.

**a** There is nothing noble about being honest about our sin. When the sinner stands before God getting his just judgment, he will have no choice but to be honest with himself that he had rejected his opportunity to stand with God.

**b** When someone rejects Christ, God will not let us in to heaven on Plan B. Our works will not even be considered.

**c** God's shame will be applied in two different ways. For those of the adulterous and sinful generation, it will be death in Hell. For those who are saved, our shame will be in the loss of reward. Keep in mind the context of this passage. It is primarily meant for the person who is completely self-centered. It still is significant to us in that we should not want to have any vestige of self.

## 80 - The Transfiguration

483. Who did Jesus select to go with Him to the mount?

Peter, James, and John

These three are regularly mentioned as the most prominent apostles. Very often there are those who rise naturally to the top in church leadership.

484. Read Rev 11:3-6. How do the two witnesses of the Revelation compare to Moses and Elijah?

- a. **They do miracles like Moses and Elijah**
- b. They are the most important Old Testament characters
- c. They are reincarnations of Moses and Elijah

Rev 11:3-6 And I will give *power* unto my two witnesses, and they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred *and* threescore days, clothed in sackcloth.

4These are the two olive trees, and the two candlesticks standing before the God of the earth.

5And if any man will hurt them, fire proceedeth out of their mouth, and devoureth their enemies: and if any man will hurt them, he must in this manner be killed.

6These have power to shut heaven, that it rain not in the days of their prophecy: and have power over waters to turn them to blood, and to smite the earth with all plagues, as often as they will.

c There is no reincarnation. There is no need to use fantastic imagination to find some way to explain away the Bible.

b They certainly are important Old Testament Characters, but there are a number of people who are just as significant.

a The fact that the two witnesses do miracles on the order of Moses and Elijah is very interesting, but the way the Bible speaks of Moses' death makes it very difficult to conclude that he is the second witness in the Revelation (Elijah is certain). On the other hand, it is also interesting that it is Moses and Elijah who appear with Jesus at the Transfiguration.

485. How did Jesus appear in the Transfiguration?

- a. He had an aura about Him
- b. He had power in Him that was showing forth
- c. **He had glory that was like the glory of God in the Tabernacle**

Luke 9:28- And it came to pass about an eight days after these sayings, he took Peter and John and James, and went up into a mountain to pray.

29And as he prayed, the fashion of his countenance was altered, and his raiment *was* white *and* glistening.

**a** Some might use the term *aura* to describe the glowing nature of Jesus in the Transfiguration. It is best to not use this term since it is so widely used by the New Age mystics to describe an energy field that comes from us, complete with interpretations of colors of auras. Psychics use this idea to scam people into thinking they can read their future and reveal their deepest issues.

**b** Jesus did not simply have a *power* that came from within, which would be akin to an aura.

**c** A Biblical way to recognize what was happening is contained in the term *glory*. Both in the Temple and the Tabernacle God's glory descended and filled them. The idea of God's *glory* is not just some kind of energy. It has a sense of divine *righteousness*. When we are resurrected our mortal flesh bodies which are corrupted by sin will take on a sinless, heavenly, spiritual, quality which is called *glorification*. Our spirits are currently glorified, or righteous, born again, and one with God in His glory.

John 17:1-24 These words spake Jesus, and lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee:

2As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him.

...4I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do.

5And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was.

...

10And all mine are thine, and thine are mine; and I am glorified in them.

11And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee. Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we *are*.

...

22And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one:

23I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me.

24Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world.

486. What did Moses and Elijah talk to Jesus about?

**a. His crucifixion**

b. We don't know

c. The Father's plans

Luke 9:30-31 And, behold, there talked with him two men, which were Moses and Elias:

31Who appeared in glory, and spake of his decease which he should accomplish at Jerusalem.

**b** There are some things that we just don't know, but this is not one of them. What Jesus wrote on the ground when the woman taken in adultery was brought to Him is something that is not revealed to us. We have to be ready to accept the fact that there are some things that are just beyond us.

**c** The Father's plans are too broad a term. Luke reveals that there was one specific topic that was discussed. The appearance of Moses and Elijah is similar to the angels who ministered to Christ after the Temptation in the Wilderness. Here, they are supporting Christ in His mission.

**a** The prominence of His decease in Jerusalem again speaks of what the apostles should have picked up on.

487. What were the disciples supposed to do about the Transfiguration?

- a. Pray to Moses and Elijah for guidance
- b. Build a shrine to worship at
- c. Tell no man about it until after the resurrection**

Mark 9:9-10 And as they came down from the mountain, he charged them that they should tell no man what things they had seen, till the Son of man were risen from the dead.

<sup>10</sup>And they kept that saying with themselves, questioning one with another what the rising from the dead should mean.

**b** Peter in his religious zeal wanted to make tabernacles which would have served as some kind of shrine. The fact that they were so quick to do this reveals something about human nature. People easily cross the line from being respectful in an awe struck way to becoming superstitious. Lists of relics that medieval churches had collected are consistent with what we think of primitive men who saw demons and spirits behind every rock, river, or tree. As obvious as this is to us, we probably shouldn't be *too* quick to judge because even someone who walked with Christ was making this mistake. We should be careful not to get caught up in the fantastic and miss the thoughtful nature of serving God.

**a** Even though Peter made the mistake about building the tabernacles, at least he did not take it to the next level of spiritual error. He did not look at Moses and Elijah as canonized saints who he could pray to and seek guidance and miracles from.

**c** Jesus did not want the focus put on His decease in Jerusalem until after the resurrection. If He had, modernists would be able to claim that the only reason Jesus was crucified was because He campaigned for it. His rejection had to be by the free will of the people without any influence from Jesus. He presented the message of the kingdom and the Jews had to reject that. In spite of Jesus' plain statement about the resurrection, the apostles still wondered about it.

488. Read Luke 1:17. Even though Elijah will appear before the Second Coming, how had this already happened?
- Through John as the reincarnation of Elijah
  - Through John who came in the spirit and power of Elijah**
  - Through John who was the reappearance of Elijah

Luke 1:17 And he shall go before him in the spirit and power of Elias, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just; to make ready a people prepared for the Lord.

Matt 17:10-13 And his disciples asked him, saying, Why then say the scribes that Elias must first come?

11 And Jesus answered and said unto them, Elias truly shall first come, and restore all things.

12 But I say unto you, That Elias is come already, and they knew him not, but have done unto him whatsoever they listed. Likewise shall also the Son of man suffer of them.

13 Then the disciples understood that he spake unto them of John the Baptist.

**a,b** We have already pointed out that John was not the reincarnation of Elijah, who had been promised to come before Jesus. Neither was he actually Elijah appearing with a new name.

**b** John clearly came in the spirit and power of Elijah, not as Elijah, himself.

## **81 - Fasting and Prayer Required for the Lunatic Son**

489. What was associated with demon activity?
- A destructive attack on man**
  - A celebration with candy
  - Empowerment to do what we want

Matt 17:15 Lord, have mercy on my son: for he is lunatick, and sore vexed: for oftentimes he falleth into the fire, and oft into the water.

Mark 9:17-18 And one of the multitude answered and said, Master, I have brought unto thee my son, which hath a dumb spirit;

18 And wheresoever he taketh him, he teareth him: and he foameth, and gnasheth with his teeth, and pineth away: and I spake to thy disciples that they should cast him out; and they could not.

Luke 9:39 And, lo, a spirit taketh him, and he suddenly crieth out; and it teareth him that he foameth again, and bruising him hardly departeth from him.

**a,c** For those who seek to dabble in the occult and graduate into Satanism there is some sense that they are going to achieve some kind of power. The idea of power coming from evil spirits is associated with Jinni, or Jinn (pl), in Arabic mythology, a supernatural spirit below the level of angels and devils. There are popular notions about genies today, but in Arabic mythology

they can be willful, deceptive, and harmful even though according to magic they can be taken advantage of. Popular notions of wish granting genies include the idea that the wishes granted come with a curse. The idea of employing or interacting with genies is demonic and only part of an overactive imagination. People should not be deceived by such a temptation. Ultimately, the devil seeks to ruin people. What is more true of demonic involvement is described in the Bible and is borne out in the real world even today.

**b** It is unconscionable that people have turned the demonic into something that is a "fun" celebration. Christians should have nothing to do with Halloween as if it is some mere celebration with candy.

Eph 5:11 And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove *them*.

Rom 13:12 The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light.

490. What should our attitude be towards demonic activity?

- a. We should be bold and commanding because their power is weak and fainting
- b. We should regard it as mental illness that can be cured with medication
- c. We should take it very seriously to the point of prayer and fasting**

Mark 9:28-29 And when he was come into the house, his disciples asked him privately, Why could not we cast him out?

29And he said unto them, This kind can come forth by nothing, but by prayer and fasting.

**a** Some people foolishly deal with the demonic with a flippant, arrogant attitude. We need to always be mindful that we live in a seriously dangerous world where Satan has been working for thousands of years to maneuver people and systems to their destruction. The best advice is in

1Cor 10:12 Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall.

**b** There is a different way that people take the demonic for granted by assuming it doesn't exist; it is nothing more than some problem with mental illness. There is no doubt that mental illness exists, but some of it is attributable to demonic activity.

**c** C speaks of how seriously we should take our work as believers. We might not have to deal with demonic activity, but the fact that Jesus speaks of prayer and fasting should reveal to us the scope of our preparation for service. We do not get to pick and choose how life happens to us and so should be ready to meet the problem that are presented to us no matter what.

491. How powerful is genuine faith?
- a. It can force God to do our bidding
  - b. It can accomplish great things**
  - c. It can help us do anything we want

Matt 17:19-20 Then came the disciples to Jesus apart, and said, Why could not we cast him out?

20And Jesus said unto them, Because of your unbelief: for verily I say unto you, If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you.

**a** We should not view our faith as a tool to manipulate God. Generally our faith changes *us* to be able to receive God's will.

**c** Our faith is not a matter of mind over matter, giving us some kind of psychic power or psychological ego strength to achieve the impossible. It might be true that we have the capacity to do good work if we get out of our own way. What gets accomplished only appears to have been the impossible when compared to our usual way of doing things. We have real limitations and should not think that we can accomplish certain things merely by strength of will.

**b** Faith which aligns us with God allows us to be tools in the hands of God. If God so chooses to empower us beyond our actual abilities He may do so (not that He needs our permission). However, faith is not the fuel that powers us. It is the Holy Spirit at those times who empowers us.

## 82 - The Passion Foretold

492. Why might the disciples have not been able to understand Jesus' explanation of His coming death?
- a. He had not told them enough times about it
  - b. The idea of His rejection and death didn't seem realistic compared to all the miracles He had done**
  - c. They thought He was going to bring an end to the world

Luke 9:43-45 And they were all amazed at the mighty power of God. But while they wondered every one at all things which Jesus did, he said unto his disciples,

44Let these sayings sink down into your ears: for the Son of man shall be delivered into the hands of men.

45But they understood not this saying, and it was hid from them, that they perceived it not: and they feared to ask him of that saying.

**a** Luke 9:45 speaks of how this saying was hid from them, but that does not necessarily mean that it was something they were completely blind to. Matt 17:23 declares that they were exceeding sorrowful about this information, which indicates that there was *some* kind of understanding. The fullest impact of His death and resurrection was evidently not grasped. We are reminded



that all of this indicates that they certainly *instructed* about it. Their sorrow would be consistent with the fact that they had been told, but the lack of understanding was not due to not hearing about it enough.

**b** They were amazed at His mighty power of God so when they compared it with what Jesus then revealed to them the incongruity would certainly cause them concern and sorrowful frustration.

**c** Jesus' plan in the Tribulation when He brings judgment on the nations for their rejection and rebellion under Satan was something that *could* have been in their view, but it was not at this time.

### 83 - Jesus Paying the Tax

493. Why did Jesus object to paying the tribute?

**a. Taxes are only paid to oppressors**

b. The collectors didn't have the power that the publicans had to enforce the collection

c. He didn't believe in taxes because they fund ungodly programs

Matt 17:25-26 He saith, Yes. And when he was come into the house, Jesus prevented him, saying, What thinkest thou, Simon? of whom do the kings of the earth take custom or tribute? of their own children, or of strangers?

26Peter saith unto him, Of strangers. Jesus saith unto him, Then are the children free.

**b** The collectors here are not the same as publicans. This is revealed by the word for *tribute* which shows that it is the Temple tax. The publicans worked on behalf of the Roman government. Jesus didn't question whether they had the authority to collect the tribute.

**c** C represents a popular line of reasoning in tax protestors today. Although tax protests where people refuse to pay taxes as a way to impact the government are not practiced now since the courts have been effective in countering them, the reasoning is still used to draw attention to the problem of corruption in government. The concept is that the as citizens we should not be forced to pay for government programs that are ungodly. In 1976, congressman Henry Hyde introduced an amendment to legislation to prohibit any government funding that paid for abortions. Ungodly legislators have fought to get around the provisions of the Hyde amendment ever since then. The debate over taxpayer funding over this and other immoral activity is at the heart of much legislation.

**a** The Temple tribute issue was similar to the modern question of whether the government should collect taxes for a state church. The argument in that day was that the Temple had become like a foreign government in its compulsory collection. After a struggle of seven days in the Sanhedrin, the Pharisees had carried their point and made the tribute a compulsory payment, and kept an

annual festival in commemoration of their victory. They were placing the Israelite on the level of a "stranger," not of a "son." The true law for "the children of the kingdom" was that which Paul afterwards proclaimed:

2Cor 9:7 Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, *so let him give*; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver.

494. How did Jesus respond to avoid being pressured to contribute involuntarily?
- a. He declared that He was not subject to law
  - b. He sneaked out of town before He could be pressured any further
  - c. He miraculously provided a coin in the mouth of a fish**

**b** B represents the attitude of many people who try to find ways to justify getting around hard truths. The question of the Tribute was not whether someone should pay it at all, just whether it should be compulsory. People are tempted to take the path that keeps them from *having to* do anything. Instead, Jesus dealt with the issue whether it was uncomfortable and inconvenient or not.

**a** Jesus did not press the point that He should not have to pay the tribute. He might have done this since it is possible that rabbis were considered exempt from it. He also could press the point that He was greater than the Temple. He might have joined in the debate and taken the side of the protestors. Instead, He followed the spirit of the Law and paid the tribute.

**c** What Jesus actually did was to show His mastery by neither refusing nor complying. He voluntarily paid the tribute, but it was by a miraculous obtaining the coin from a fish which had attempted to swallow the coin. At once He was not directly paying but demonstrating His greater mastery in the moment.

## 84 - Who Shall Be Greatest

495. How does someone achieve greatness before God?
- a. Coming to Him with the faith of a child to be converted**
  - b. Doing many works for God
  - c. Having a church official declare you to be a saint

Matt 18:1-4 At the same time came the disciples unto Jesus, saying, Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?

2And Jesus called a little child unto him, and set him in the midst of them,

3And said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.

4Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven.

c C is actually a reflection of how people revere celebrities. Although we can recognize that celebrities are profane and it borders on sacrilege to elevate them, *canonizing* someone to be a saint is not much different. Just because they are associated with godliness does not confer on them celebrity status. It might sound odd to describe them as celebrities, but that is closer to the truth since they are actually considered to be celebrated with a feast day.

What *does* make a saint is believing in Jesus Christ as one's eternal Savior. The word saint merely means one who is separated from others and most specifically dedicated to God. Even in the pagan temples the temple prostitutes were considered dedicated to the service of the pagan worship and called saints. All through the New Testament the common believers were referred to as the saints of God. Examine these Scriptures on how the word *saint* is used:

Acts 9:13 Then Ananias answered, Lord, I have heard by many of this man, how much evil he hath done to thy saints at Jerusalem:

Acts 9:32 And it came to pass, as Peter passed throughout all *quarters*, he came down also to the saints which dwelt at Lydda.

Acts 9:41 And he gave her *his* hand, and lifted her up, and when he had called the saints and widows, presented her alive.

Acts 26:10 Which thing I also did in Jerusalem: and many of the saints did I shut up in prison, having received authority from the chief priests; and when they were put to death, I gave my voice against *them*.

Rom 1:7 To all that be in Rome, beloved of God, called *to be* saints: Grace to you and peace from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Rom 8:27 And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what *is* the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to *the will of* God.

Rom 12:13 Distributing to the necessity of saints; given to hospitality.

Rom 15:25 But now I go unto Jerusalem to minister unto the saints.

Rom 15:26 For it hath pleased them of Macedonia and Achaia to make a certain contribution for the poor saints which are at Jerusalem.

Rom 15:31 That I may be delivered from them that do not believe in Judaea; and that my service which *I have* for Jerusalem may be accepted of the saints;

Rom 16:2 That ye receive her in the Lord, as becometh saints, and that ye assist her in whatsoever business she hath need of you: for she hath been a succourer of many, and of myself also.

Rom 16:15 Salute Philologus, and Julia, Nereus, and his sister, and Olympas, and all the saints which are with them.

1Cor 1:2 Unto the church of God which is at Corinth, to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called *to be* saints, with all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs and ours:

1Cor 6:1 Dare any of you, having a matter against another, go to law before the unjust, and not before the saints?

1Cor 6:2 Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world? and if the world shall be judged by you, are ye unworthy to judge the smallest matters?

1Cor 14:33 For God is not *the author* of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints.

1Cor 16:1 Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given order to the churches of Galatia, even so do ye.

1Cor 16:15 I beseech you, brethren, (ye know the house of Stephanas, that it is the firstfruits of Achaia, and *that* they have addicted themselves to the ministry of the saints,)

2Cor 1:1 Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, and Timothy *our* brother, unto the church of God which is at Corinth, with all the saints which are in all Achaia:

2Cor 8:4 Praying us with much intreaty that we would receive the gift, and *take upon us* the fellowship of the ministering to the saints.

2Cor 9:1 For as touching the ministering to the saints, it is superfluous for me to write to you:

2Cor 9:12 For the administration of this service not only supplieth the want of the saints, but is abundant also by many thanksgivings unto God;

2Cor 13:13 All the saints salute you.

Eph 1:1 Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, to the saints which are at Ephesus, and to the faithful in Christ Jesus:

Eph 1:15 Wherefore I also, after I heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus, and love unto all the saints,

Eph 1:18 The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints,

Eph 2:19 Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God;

Eph 3:8 Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ;

Eph 3:18 May be able to comprehend with all saints what *is* the breadth, and length, and depth, and height;

Eph 4:12 For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ:

Eph 5:3 But fornication, and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not be once named among you, as becometh saints;

Eph 6:18 Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints;

Phil 1:1 Paul and Timotheus, the servants of Jesus Christ, to all the saints in Christ Jesus which are at Philippi, with the bishops and deacons:

Phil 4:22 All the saints salute you, chiefly they that are of Caesar's household.

Col 1:2 To the saints and faithful brethren in Christ which are at Colosse: Grace *be* unto you, and peace, from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Col 1:4 Since we heard of your faith in Christ Jesus, and of the love *which ye have* to all the saints,

Col 1:12 Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light:

Col 1:26 *Even* the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to his saints:

1Thess 3:13 To the end he may stablish your hearts unblameable in holiness before God, even our Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all his saints.

2Thess 1:10 When he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe (because our testimony among you was believed) in that day.

1Tim 5:10 Well reported of for good works; if she have brought up children, if she have lodged strangers, if she have washed the saints' feet, if she have relieved the afflicted, if she have diligently followed every good work.

Phlm 1:5 Hearing of thy love and faith, which thou hast toward the Lord Jesus, and toward all saints;

Phlm 1:7 For we have great joy and consolation in thy love, because the bowels of the saints are refreshed by thee, brother.

Heb 6:10 For God *is* not unrighteous to forget your work and labour of love, which ye have shewed toward his name, in that ye have ministered to the saints, and do minister.

Heb 13:24 Salute all them that have the rule over you, and all the saints. They of Italy salute you.

**b** All the work we do is not by our own strength so we cannot really claim any way of offering our own work anyway.

Phil 2:13 For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of *his* good pleasure.

Phil 4:13 I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.

**a** It is by humbly submitting ourselves to God with simple faith that we are able to then serve Him.

Gal 2:20 I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.

496. Why will those who desire to be first end up being last?

a. Because it is hard to maintain being good enough to be first

**b. Because of pride**

c. Because God has determined who shall be first from time immemorial

Mark 9:33-35 And he came to Capernaum: and being in the house he asked them, What was it that ye disputed among yourselves by the way?

34But they held their peace: for by the way they had disputed among themselves, who *should be* the greatest.

35And he sat down, and called the twelve, and saith unto them, If any man desire to be first, *the same* shall be last of all, and servant of all.

**a,c** Since our works to do not earn favor with God, we should not be unduly emphasizing their significance. Some believe that their works are proof that they are part of the elect of God and so if they do not persevere in their good works that that is proof that they were never chosen of God. They live a life focused on their own goodness and service rather than the work of God through them.

**b** It is when someone humbles himself that he is truly able to be used of God. This is why it is important to be serving in a church. It takes humility to put one's comforts and convenience aside and place themselves at the service to others around them. This is done not only in physical service, but also in spiritual service of aiding, encouraging, and supporting each other.

497. How did Jesus respond to disciples that were not part of His group?

a. He rejected them because they weren't doing things in the official right way

**b. He recognized that there are people who are followers because they are in agreement with Him**

c. He worried that His followers might run off to join another leader

Mark 9:38-41 And John answered him, saying, Master, we saw one casting out devils in thy name, and he followeth not us: and we forbad him, because he followeth not us.

39But Jesus said, Forbid him not: for there is no man which shall do a miracle in my name, that can lightly speak evil of me.

40For he that is not against us is on our part.

41For whosoever shall give you a cup of water to drink in my name, because ye belong to Christ, verily I say unto you, he shall not lose his reward.

**b** This entire question goes to the issue of the competition that is engendered by a partisan attitude. Some believe they are of the party of Baptists, or the party of Pentecostals, or some other party. As long as someone is not teaching contrary to the doctrine of salvation, they are our brothers and sisters in Christ. The great thing about being a Baptist, or in a group that is considered Baptist, is our independence which makes each group independently responsible before God for what *they* do.

**a** Denominations hold their constituent churches accountable to set practices to one degree or another. Some reject other groups and even declare them to not be truly Christian based on *orthopraxy*, or having the right practice of religion.

**c** C speaks of the problem of jealousy that could plague a group as if there should be winners and losers before God. We should ignore whether *we* are winning or losing compared to the success of another church and rejoice in souls who coming to Christ instead. We might not be able to explain all that goes on in different churches, but we *can* always explain that souls are saved by the miraculous power of God.

498. What should our attitude be toward sin?

- a. It is something that we should not worry about if it is not very big
- b. Everything is okay to do in moderation

**c. It is more worthwhile to cut out the way offenses come than to enter into hell whole**

Mark 9:42-46 And whosoever shall offend one of *these* little ones that believe in me, it is better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and he were cast into the sea.

43And if thy hand offend thee, cut it off: it is better for thee to enter into life maimed, than having two hands to go into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched:

44Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.

45And if thy foot offend thee, cut it off: it is better for thee to enter halt into life, than having two feet to be cast into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched:

46Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.

**a** People often categorize sins as big or little, mortal or venial. Sin is sin. It is what proves that we are sinners.

Jas 2:10-11 For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one *point*, he is guilty of all.

11For he that said, Do not commit adultery, said also, Do not kill. Now if thou commit no adultery, yet if thou kill, thou art become a transgressor of the law.

The effect of sin can creep up on someone so they should not diminish the significance of the little sins.

**b** B speaks of some people's attitudes who don't take their spirituality seriously. They want enough spirituality to feel comfortable that they belong to God, but not so much that would convict them of their bad testimony.

**c** It is more worthwhile to cut off our offending members than to stay lost and end up going to hell. However, this is not so much teaching that people should maim themselves in order to get saved. The implication is that they should stay whole and submit themselves to God. We should use our good eyes and ears and body to serve the Lord.

Rom 6:16-23 Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?

17But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you.

18Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness.

19I speak after the manner of men because of the infirmity of your flesh: for as ye have yielded your members servants to uncleanness and to iniquity unto iniquity; even so now yield your members servants to righteousness unto holiness.

20For when ye were the servants of sin, ye were free from righteousness.

21What fruit had ye then in those things whereof ye are now ashamed? for the end of those things *is* death.

22But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life.

23For the wages of sin *is* death; but the gift of God *is* eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

499. How is Hell described?

a. It is a state of mind

**b. It is a place of unquenchable fire**

c. It is a place where we will at least be with some of our friends

Mark 9:43-46 And if thy hand offend thee, cut it off: it is better for thee to enter into life maimed, than having two hands to go into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched:

44Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.

45And if thy foot offend thee, cut it off: it is better for thee to enter halt into life, than having two feet to be cast into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched:

46Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.

**a,c** A and C are two popular notions that people use to minimize the nature of Hell. It is not a place where we will be with friends. There is no partying in Hell. The rock band AC/DC probably thought they were quite clever in the

song *Highway to Hell*

Living easy, living free	No stop signs, speed limit
Season ticket on a one way ride	Nobody's gonna slow me down
Asking nothing, leave me be	Like a wheel, gonna spin it
Taking everythin' in my stride	Nobody's gonna mess me around
Don't need reason, don't need rhyme	Hey Satan, payin' my dues
Ain't nothing I'd rather do	Playing in a rocking band
Goin' down, party time	Hey mama, look at me
My friends are gonna be there too,	I'm on the way to the promised land
yeah	Woo!

I'm on the highway to hell	Don't stop me
On the highway to hell	Heh, heh!
Highway to hell	And I'm going down
I'm on the highway to hell	All the way
	I'm on the highway to hell

**a,b** Hell is not a state of mind, or merely separation from God. It is unquenchable fire. Parables do not contain mythology or fables. They represent real possibilities. Jesus was not misleading people but giving plain teaching that Hell is a place of fire.

500. As we offer our bodies as a living sacrifice, what should we be careful to do?

**a. Prepare ourselves with the salt of sanctification**

- b. Mutilate ourselves to practice self discipline
- c. Reserve part of our heart for our own interests

Mark 9:47-50 And if thine eye offend thee, pluck it out: it is better for thee to enter into the kingdom of God with one eye, than having two eyes to be cast into hell fire:

48Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.

49For every one shall be salted with fire, and every sacrifice shall be salted with salt.

50Salt is good: but if the salt have lost his saltness, wherewith will ye season it? Have salt in yourselves, and have peace one with another.

**b** There have been those in church history who have taught that self-abuse is a discipline to bring someone closer to God. There are those who practice actual crucifixion with nails in their hands and feet to try to demonstrate greater devotion to God. Self beating, crawling up steps on ones knees at a shrine, do not make someone closer.

**c** C is the opposite where people think that engaging in worldliness is a healthy balance to too much spirituality.

**a** We should be careful to be practicing the discipline of sanctification.



501. How valuable are the least of us to Jesus?

- a. You might have to lose some every once in a while
- b. It all depends on how much they have to offer
- c. They are as valuable as all the rest of us**

Matt 18:10-14 Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones; for I say unto you, That in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven.

11For the Son of man is come to save that which was lost.

12How think ye? if a man have an hundred sheep, and one of them be gone astray, doth he not leave the ninety and nine, and goeth into the mountains, and seeketh that which is gone astray?

13And if so be that he find it, verily I say unto you, he rejoiceth more of that *sheep*, than of the ninety and nine which went not astray.

14Even so it is not the will of your Father which is in heaven, that one of these little ones should perish.

**a** Even though we might end up not getting everyone into the kingdom, we should not be casual with a win some, lose some attitude.

**b,c** Our efforts should not be targeted to those who fit some benefit to the church. Sometimes this is reflected in the mistake some make in thinking that someone would make a good Christian and that we should really prize them. This appears in the way that those who are less than are relegated to the outskirts of the church. *Every* soul should get their opportunity to respond to Christ.

502. What was Jesus mission on earth?

- a. To bring peace to earth
- b. To judge the lost
- c. To save that which was lost**

Matt 18:11-14 For the Son of man is come to save that which was lost.

12How think ye? if a man have an hundred sheep, and one of them be gone astray, doth he not leave the ninety and nine, and goeth into the mountains, and seeketh that which is gone astray?

13And if so be that he find it, verily I say unto you, he rejoiceth more of that *sheep*, than of the ninety and nine which went not astray.

14Even so it is not the will of your Father which is in heaven, that one of these little ones should perish.

**b** When Jesus came to the earth, it was not to judge the world. He *will* be the judge in the end, just not on His mission then.

**a** Some think of the role of Jesus and religion as bringing comfort and peace. This is only true to the extent that people find their relationship to God through salvation.

**c** Jesus was concerned that none should be lost.

## 85 - Church Discipline

503. What is the first recourse when dealing with a problem with a brother?

- a. Give him the silent treatment
- b. Try to resolve the problem on a personal level**
- c. Quit going to church

Matt 18:15 Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother.

**a** Being silent is a tactic often associated with married couples. It is hypocritical because it suggests that one's anger is not anger just because it is not being expressed. When applied in Christian relationships it appears to be noble because someone thinks they are just being "longsuffering" when all they are doing is holding a grudge – which inevitably grows and gets worse.

**c** Sometimes people think they are being even more noble by choosing to walk away instead of engage in conflict. This is actually just another way that self is manifested where one's comfort is put above the work it takes to have a relationship. Walking away and engaging in conflict are not the only two choices. Working on understanding problems and finding a way to accommodate each other is another choice...but there are others besides that. Confession and forgiveness is another. There are also situations where nothing actually wrong has been done, its just that something does not meet someone's expectations, preferences, or values. In such a case people need to be able and willing to accept and move on to the next challenges (which won't be perfect either!).

**b** In the case where there is genuine conflict the first step is to actually talk to the person you have a problem with

504. What step should be followed if the brother won't resolve the problem on a personal level?

- a. Get together with him and two or three other spiritual people to try to resolve the conflict**
- b. Tell others in the church about how bad he is
- c. Try to get others to leave the church with you

Matt 18:16 But if he will not hear *thee*, *then* take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established.

**a** If there is no satisfactory resolution at the first level of reconciliation, then getting help should not be thought of as too embarrassing. Godly people can possibly have insight to the things we miss, or even have misinterpreted. However, this requires two people who are anxious to find resolution and are of a ready mind to move past a problem.

**b,c** Unfortunately, people have interpreted the involvement of others into a problem as running a campaign against someone which ends up in causing people or, worse, driving people against the church.

Prov 6:16-19 These six *things* doth the LORD hate: yea, seven *are* an abomination unto him:

17A proud look, a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood,

18An heart that deviseth wicked imaginations, feet that be swift in running to mischief,

19A false witness *that* speaketh lies, and he that soweth discord among brethren.

505. What should be done if the brother fails to respond to several spiritual people called together?

a. Accuse the leadership of the church of being in sin for not handling the problem the way you thought it should be done

**b. Bring the matter before a church business meeting to determine steps for dealing with the problem**

c. Reject any efforts of being contacted

Matt 18:17-20 And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell *it* unto the church: but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican.

18Verily I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.

19Again I say unto you, That if two of you shall agree on earth as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven.

20For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.

**c** Spiritually and socially immature people will often let their self-centered nature fuel their rebellion against God and find ways to hide completely away from any contact to find restoration. They will not answer any phone messages, respond to any mail, never answer a door, and in public be rude and hostile. This often occurs even before the second step of reconciliation.

**a** Another common reaction to a sin problem rather than dealing with it is to find fault with the leadership as if they just chose the wrong way of handling a problem. The reality is often that the leadership had already tried to handle the problem in numerous other ways that were rejected.

**b** The final attempt to deal with a problem is to bring it to the church at a business or other such meeting. This is done not in the sense of putting a person on trial in order to punish the offensive person, but for the church to be united in finding a way to set up some means of accountability to remedy a problem.

506. As a last resort, how should an unrepentant brother be treated?

**a. He should be dismissed from church, assuming he is like a heathen**

b. He should be appeased and left in the church to sow discord

- c. He should be left alone and the person who brought up the complaint should be criticized for being so unloving

Matt 18:17 And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell *it* unto the church: but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican.

**b** Sometimes people think that the Christian loving thing to do is to not only overlook but to cater to someone's immature and selfish actions. Appeasement never works but leaves them unchanged and ready to be offended again. It often emboldens them to demand more. People often mistake dealing with an issue as being unloving. The most unloving thing to do would be to never encourage spiritual growth. If a person does not grow spiritually, they will be likely to have their immaturity affect the rest of their life.

**c** C is a reflection of how those who people will often level charges of intolerance and, in doing so, are practicing intolerance themselves.

**a** If someone insists on acting like a heathen then he should be dismissed from the church. It is important that the whole church participate because if someone is being generally offensive then everyone should be aware that everything possible is being done and that they be united when the offensive person tries to take them off to the side to sow discord.

507. How quickly should we move to judge someone?

- a. We should be anxious to forgive them as often as possible**
- b. We should be ready to forgive them seven times
- c. We should keep score and judge them after forgiving them 490 times

Matt 18:21-22 Then came Peter to him, and said, Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? till seven times?

22Jesus saith unto him, I say not unto thee, Until seven times: but, Until seventy times seven.

**b,c** B and C are similar in that they both speak of an unrighteous and uncharitable attitude; C is an aggravated expression of B. A legalistic and uncharitable mindset nitpicks over the details of how to apply forgiveness. C actually refers to people who keep score over offenses which reveals a heart that is hypersensitive and looking for offense. The loving and charitable heart is always looking for the opportunity to restore people to a right relationship with God. This is also evident in Christ's reference to the lost sheep, the one out of a hundred, whom the shepherd is not willing to perish. Forgiveness requires humility and the ability to put self last. This does not mean that we should invite abuse or not take disciplinary measures to deal with problems, but neither does it mean we should measure out retribution trying to get even with someone.

**a** We should be anxious to forgive and restore someone because the cause of Christ is bigger than our own world. Satan would take great pleasure in dividing the body of Christ so that His work can be destroyed.

Remember that the idea of forgiveness is that instead of requiring someone to have to pay for their offense, we pay the price of the offense to ourselves; we don't merely overlook an offense. This is what happened on the cross. God did not overlook how offensive we are in our sin. He demanded justice and judgment, which would have required that we go to Hell. In forgiving us, He paid the price of the judgment Himself, on the cross. This presents an interesting corollary to the concept of forgiveness which might reveal something in ourselves that involves going out to dinner. Sometimes people pore over a bill to see who owes what when the check comes. A person who has a forgiving heart is likely to be the charitable one who presses to pay the whole bill. When it comes time to give a tip, he doesn't leave a penny to show the waiter what he thinks of him; neither does he leave the minimum 15%. He might even go further by complimenting the waiter on what he did right to inspire him to do more of the same. The same principle is in effect in our tithing to the penny instead of rounding up. Our generosity is often a reflection of our heart attitude in the ability to be a forgiving person.

By telling Peter to forgive 70 times 7 Jesus is speaking of the superlative of perfection. Seven is the number of perfection so it is like He is saying be perfectly perfect in your forgiveness. It is actually hard work to be keeping such accounts and the idea is that we should be so given over to forgiving that we quickly lose track and end up being perfectly forgiving.

508. Why should we be anxious to be forgiving?

- a. Because we want to smooth things over to keep peace
- b. Because we would rather not talk about problems
- c. Because we have been forgiven much**

Matt 18:23-35 Therefore is the kingdom of heaven likened unto a certain king, which would take account of his servants.

24And when he had begun to reckon, one was brought unto him, which owed him ten thousand talents.

25But forasmuch as he had not to pay, his lord commanded him to be sold, and his wife, and children, and all that he had, and payment to be made.

26The servant therefore fell down, and worshipped him, saying, Lord, have patience with me, and I will pay thee all.

27Then the lord of that servant was moved with compassion, and loosed him, and forgave him the debt.

28But the same servant went out, and found one of his fellowservants, which owed him an hundred pence: and he laid hands on him, and took *him* by the throat, saying, Pay me that thou owest.

29And his fellowservant fell down at his feet, and besought him, saying, Have patience with me, and I will pay thee all.

30And he would not: but went and cast him into prison, till he should pay the debt.

31So when his fellowservants saw what was done, they were very sorry, and came and told unto their lord all that was done.

**32**Then his lord, after that he had called him, said unto him, O thou wicked servant, I forgave thee all that debt, because thou desiredst me:

**33**Shouldest not thou also have had compassion on thy fellowservant, even as I had pity on thee?

34And his lord was wroth, and delivered him to the tormentors, till he should pay all that was due unto him.

35So likewise shall my heavenly Father do also unto you, if ye from your hearts forgive not every one his brother their trespasses.

**a** We should not try to avoid dealing with problems because we just want them to go away. Smoothing things over is another way to say appeasement. Appeasement never works. It only trains the offender to embolden himself.

**b** Out of a sense of laziness to be involved when we want to escape having to deal with problems we end up letting our churches rot. Ministry requires that we engage people not only when they are easy to deal with but also when it is difficult. The fact of the matter is that all people are a mixture of difficulty and receptivity. Even when people are receptive, ministry takes work and a willingness to talk.

**c** The ultimate reason we should be forgiving is because we have been forgiven.

## THE LATER JUDEAN MINISTRY

### 86 - Jesus is Challenged by His Brethren to Go to the Feast of Tabernacles

509. Why did Jesus' brothers challenge Jesus to go to Jerusalem to prove Himself?

- a. They thought He would be showed to be just an ordinary man
- b. They didn't believe in Him**
- c. They wanted the leaders to kill Him

John 7:3-5 His brethren therefore said unto him, Depart hence, and go into Judaea, that thy disciples also may see the works that thou doest.

4For *there is* no man *that* doeth any thing in secret, and he himself seeketh to be known openly. If thou do these things, shew thyself to the world.

5For neither did his brethren believe in him.

**a** There is nothing in this passage that suggests they wanted to go so far as to prove that He was an ordinary man, but neither did they have any disposition to take His Messianic role seriously. They did not seem to want to discredit Him.

**c** Their indifference is probably more obvious by the fact that they didn't exhibit any desire for His condemnation. If they had taken Him seriously, they would have known that He would be facing grave danger by going up to Jerusalem. The fact that they didn't even mention this might be an indicator that they didn't think it was of grave importance.

**b** They just generally didn't believe or have confidence in what He stood for or His claims of who He was.

510. When is it time to accept the Lord?

- a. Now**
- b. When He is absolutely proved to be the Savior
- c. After we have done and seen all that we would like in this life

John 7:6 Then Jesus said unto them, My time is not yet come: but your time is always ready.

**b** Instead of pushing Him to prove that He was a man as in the last question, a possible interpretation was that they were pushing Him to do something big enough to prove that He *was* Who He presented Himself as. One of the defenses people put up against God is to find something greater than what He has provided for them. This is why B has the word *absolutely* in it. For some

people, there seems to be always something left that could make something absolutely proven.

**c** C represents the problem who don't care about *whatever* is presented to them. They are more consumed with what *they* want God to be satisfied with.

**a** As Jesus pointed out to His brothers, the time for them to believe was always at hand. There is something of a warning to them that they should not be like the world who was predisposed against Him. They had enough to go on and unless they were set against Him like the world, there was no reason that they should not believe. Similarly, for any soul which is just not wanting to submit to God for salvation, the time to accept Christ is "now." Their "time is always ready."

511. Why do people hate Jesus?

a. Because they don't like miracles

**b. Because He dared to point out that they were sinners in need of salvation**

c. Because He said so many wrong things about them

John 7:7 The world cannot hate you; but me it hateth, because I testify of it, that the works thereof are evil.

**a** People don't hate Jesus because they hate miracles. They love miracles, even if they don't believe in the supernatural and call it "great luck," or "amazing coincidences." They would be happy to have the miraculous as long as they don't have to be grateful and indebted to God. This would mean that they would have to acknowledge God's authority. This is similar to the problem that atheists have at Thanksgiving. They want to be thankful but such gratitude is meaningless without God to thank.

**c** People know that they are guilty sinners. They don't like to have it revealed to others or even to themselves. Generally people will rationalize away their guilt, or at least enough of it so they can feel excused from judgment. What Jesus said about their sin reveals what He knows about us, even though we don't like to admit it.

**b** Jesus talked about how He had pointed out their sin, but elsewhere we know that He also talked about the salvation that was available to them. People don't like to think about their need of the Savior because that means they would have to admit that they were sinful.



512. Why would Jesus not fully reveal Himself at the Fall Feast of Tabernacles?

- a. He wanted to have more time to minister in Galilee
- b. He was running out of miracles
- c. It was not yet time for Him to be exposed to the leadership who wanted to kill him**

John 7:8 Go ye up unto this feast: I go not up yet unto this feast; for my time is not yet full come.

**b** Of course, Jesus could not run out of miracles, but the people *can* run out of appreciation for the miraculous. Every day we survive our life has been the result of the miraculous. Our heart pumping, kidneys processing, thyroid regulating, memory activating, etc., are miracles sustaining us for the work that God has for us which we ignore. "Big" miracles are no more miraculous than the common miracles and yet we should be no more moved to serve God over the big miracles than we should be over the common miracles. We should be concerned that we are running out of time until the greatest miracle of all comes, the completion of our salvation in the resurrection.

**a,c** This later Judean ministry is in preparation for what was now coming upon Jesus. He had spent sufficient time in Galilee to prepare the people with enough exposure to Him so that they would be without excuse. The time was almost, but not yet, for Him to present Himself in Jerusalem as King.

## 87 - Jesus Goes to Judaea

513. What was Jesus' attitude about going to Jerusalem at this time?

- a. He wanted to avoid those who would kill Him
- b. He was happy to begin a new phase of ministry
- c. He was resolute and determined**

Luke 9:51-53 And it came to pass, when the time was come that he should be received up, he stedfastly set his face to go to Jerusalem,

52And sent messengers before his face: and they went, and entered into a village of the Samaritans, to make ready for him.

53And they did not receive him, because his face was as though he would go to Jerusalem.

**b** This was not just some new phase of ministry for Christ that was going to be cut short by people who were jealous of Him.

**a,c** The fact that He was set for Jerusalem with full knowledge of what was going to happen demonstrates that He would not be deterred. He was resolute and determined.

514. Why was Jesus not well received by the Samaritans as He passed through?
- a. They did not want anything to do with God
  - b. They could see that He was set in His mind to go to Jerusalem**
  - c. Jesus was not performing miracles for them

Matt 19:1-2 And it came to pass, *that* when Jesus had finished these sayings, he departed from Galilee, and came into the coasts of Judaea beyond Jordan;  
2And great multitudes followed him; and he healed them there.

**c** In spite of His resolution to move on, He *did* do many miracles in the area. The fact that He did many healings in the surrounding region could be contrasted with how those in Galilee did not have many mighty works due to their unbelief.

Matt 13:57-58 And they were offended in him. But Jesus said unto them, A prophet is not without honour, save in his own country, and in his own house.  
58And he did not many mighty works there because of their unbelief.

**a** Their reluctance could not be said that it was because they wanted nothing to do with God. Jesus had already had an encounter with the Samaritans and they had experienced revival.

**b** The fact that they could see that He was resolute is more of a reason for them to not receive Him than that they were offended in Him. If anything, they might have let their old prejudices about Jerusalem lead them to not receive Him into their village.

515. How did Jesus respond to James and John when they wanted to call down fire from heaven on the Samaritans?
- a. He rebuked them because His mission was to save people, not destroy them**
  - b. He said He would do it Himself because they were not as spiritual as Elijah
  - c. He said they were unclean and should be left to God's judgment

Luke 9:55-56 But he turned, and rebuked them, and said, Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of.  
56For the Son of man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save *them*. And they went to another village.

**c** C is a reflection of how we might treat people who are very different from us. We should be just as concerned about those who we feel are opposed to us and work against us as those who we think are possible recruits.

**b** The idea that they proposed to Christ about calling down fire from heaven like Elijah did stands in contrast to Jesus' attitude. If the One who is greater than Elijah did not condemn them, then it would be wrong for them to suggest that their attitude was justified because they were trying to be like Elijah. We have to be careful to see people as Jesus saw them.

**a** Jesus' mission was to save men, not to seek them out to punish them. Our mission should be the same. If someone does not receive Christ, we should move on to the next one.

## **88 - Jesus Teaches at the Feast of Tabernacles**

The healing in question for this passage is the paralytic man at the pool of Bethesda for which Jesus was highly criticized on the previous Passover visit of Christ to Jerusalem. See p. 45 in the book.

516. How did the people differ from the Jewish leadership?

- a. They were amazed at His teaching wondering if Jesus was the Christ**
- b. They wanted to kill Him
- c. They were interested in meeting a celebrity

John 7:11-15,19-20,26-27 Then the Jews sought him at the feast, and said, Where is he?

12And there was much murmuring among the people concerning him: for some said, He is a good man: others said, Nay; but he deceiveth the people.

13Howbeit no man spake openly of him for fear of the Jews.

14Now about the midst of the feast Jesus went up into the temple, and taught.

15And the Jews marvelled, saying, How knoweth this man letters, having never learned?

19Did not Moses give you the law, and *yet* none of you keepeth the law? Why go ye about to kill me?

20The people answered and said, Thou hast a devil: who goeth about to kill thee?

26But, lo, he speaketh boldly, and they say nothing unto him. Do the rulers know indeed that this is the very Christ?

27Howbeit we know this man whence he is: but when Christ cometh, no man knoweth whence he is.

**b** The people who were at the feast, not including the Jews, were taken aback by the idea that anyone would want to kill Jesus. Remember that as a class in Israel, the Jews identified with their historical traditional culture.

**c** C is a reflection of the modern attitude people might have toward famous people. These were more impressed with what Jesus taught, not by some public persona like that of an actor or politician.

**a** According to vs. 15, the people were impressed by the fact that Jesus was not a man of "letters." This is a reference to not having an education in one of the Jews' more approved schools such as in the area of Jerusalem.

517. Why did people avoid talking about Jesus openly?

- a. They thought it was impolite to talk about religion and politics
- b. People like to avoid pop stars
- c. They were afraid of what Jewish leadership would say**

John 7:11-13 Then the Jews sought him at the feast, and said, Where is he?

12And there was much murmuring among the people concerning him: for some said, He is a good man: others said, Nay; but he deceiveth the people.

13Howbeit no man spake openly of him for fear of the Jews.

This question involves the various ways people are inhibited in speaking of their faith.

**a** It is common for people to pick religion and politics to avoid talking about because they believe that there is something wrong with arguing. Certainly being mean and insulting is wrong, but that is not true arguing. People can very well present logic and sharing of points of view but not in the way people think of arguing. There is a difference between fighting and arguing. Fighting involves seeking the harm for someone else by putting them down and demeaning them.

**b** This answer is more about people avoiding talking *to* some kind of celebrity. Although people might be drawn to popular figures, they also might feel awkward about talking to them.

In 2009, the outspoken atheist Penn Jillette effusively praised a Christian businessman for giving him a Bible and proclaiming that salvation comes only through faith in Jesus Christ.

While Jillette, known for his magic act as half of the team Penn & Teller, didn't accept the invitation to become a Christian, his assessment of religious believers who don't "proselytize" caught the attention of Christian filmmaker Ray Comfort...

Jillette, an actor, TV personality, activist and author of the New York Times bestseller "God, No!: Signs You May Already Be an Atheist and Other Magical Tales," said in 2009 the businessman was "really kind and nice and sane and looked me in the eyes and talked to me and then gave me this Bible."

"And I've always said that I don't respect people who don't proselytize. I don't respect that at all," Jillette said at the time. "If you believe that there's a heaven and hell and people could be going to hell or not getting eternal life or whatever, and you think that it's not really worth telling them this because it would make it socially awkward," Jillette asked, "how much do you have to hate somebody to believe that everlasting life is possible and not tell them that?"

In contrast, he said, the businessman "cared enough about me to proselytize and give me a Bible."

"I'll tell you, he was a very, very, very good man, and that's really important...that was a really good man who gave me that book," Jillette said.

Comfort said he was so moved by Jillette's words that he "longed to speak with him and thank him for making that clip."

Years later, Comfort said, "through a number of unusual circumstances, God worked it out that I got my heart's desire."

Comfort told World News Daily that Jillette's "insight just blew me away, and then to meet him personally and to thank him personally was just wonderful."

The encounter with Jillette is not included in the movie because Comfort wanted to honor the famous atheist's request for privacy.

– <https://www.livingwaters.com/mystery-man-who-gave-bible-to-famous-atheist-revealed/>

**c** We might have referred to this as peer pressure, or fear of popular opinion. But, today it has grown into something more extreme and is known as *cancel culture*. Cancel culture is a mean spirited effort that goes so far as to harass and destroy people's lives. The people at the Feast of Tabernacle were no less intimidated then as they are today by this attitude.

518. How did Jesus expect the people to be convinced that He was from God?

- a. If He did many more miracles they would finally believe Him
- b. If they had the will to be open they would be able to see**
- c. If they trusted in their hearts

John 7:15-17 And the Jews marvelled, saying, How knoweth this man letters, having never learned?

16 Jesus answered them, and said, My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me.

17 If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or *whether* I speak of myself.

**a** Jesus ministry had especially been marked by miracles, and there would be more miracles to come, but it is interesting that when He was in Jerusalem there was a greater accountability to respond to His teaching. They who had considered themselves superior in their Judaism and Jewish culture had greater accountability. Looking for the miraculous as proof was a form of tempting God, as if God could be bribed by their acceptance of Him if He would only do their bidding.

**c** C is a reflection of the popular modern notion that people should trust in what their heart tells them. *We should* make commitments with all our heart, but only *after* we have established truth and consistency with the Word and will of God.

Jer 17:9-10 The heart *is* deceitful above all *things*, and desperately wicked: who can know it?

10 I the LORD search the heart, *I* try the reins, even to give every man according to his ways, *and* according to the fruit of his doings.

Prov 28:26 He that trusteth in his own heart is a fool: but whoso walketh wisely, he shall be delivered.

This is what enables numerous cognitive fallacies where someone is looking to believe something and so discounts those things that are not convenient.

**b** People always arrive at the point where their will gets in the way of belief. Those who are disposed against the Gospel are willfully rejecting. Those who are disposed to the truth will be honest and open to where the truth leads. This might require extra study when initially dealing with things that we have been strongly attached to, but an honest evaluation will be more interested in being right.

519. How did Jesus justify the fairness (judging with righteous judgment) of healing a man on the Sabbath?
- a. He regularly healed on the Sabbath just as the priests regularly did circumcisions on the Sabbath
  - b. He did away with the Sabbath so He could do whatever He wanted
  - c. The priests by the law of Moses made many ceremonially whole by circumcision on the Sabbaths, He made one man physically whole on a Sabbath**

John 7:21-24 Jesus answered and said unto them, I have done one work, and ye all marvel.

22Moses therefore gave unto you circumcision; (not because it is of Moses, but of the fathers;) and ye on the sabbath day circumcise a man.

23If a man on the sabbath day receive circumcision, that the law of Moses should not be broken; are ye angry at me, because I have made a man every whit whole on the sabbath day?

24Judge not according to the appearance, but judge righteous judgment.

**a** Jesus could not be accused of regularly violating the Sabbath, even though He occasionally did heal on the Sabbath. By Jewish standards, it could not be said that Jesus wantonly broke the Sabbath. There is always a rationale for applying the spirit of the Law.

**b** Jesus did not break the Law that He had created as some capricious god might do. He always had spiritual and Scriptural justification for what they ever called violation of the Sabbath according to their added on interpretations. They added on their interpretations. We have to be careful that in seeking justification for what we want to do that we merely apply the Scriptures conveniently when we want to do what we want.

**c** Jesus wanted to make sure that people used *righteous* judgment. He had a strong rationale for any healing He had performed. Using *righteous* judgment is the main point here. Righteous judgment does not cheat in its logic. This is a case where we are told that we *should* judge, but be careful to use sound argumentation when we judge. Unrighteous judgment would include playing psychologist and attributing incorrect, bad motives to people, jumping to conclusions, avoiding the main argument, changing the issue and arguing

about something entirely different, hypocrisy, etc.

520. A common tradition was that the Messiah would appear suddenly. Why did the people then think that Jesus might not be the Messiah?
- a. Because Jesus never made any Messianic claims
  - b. Because they knew all about Jesus birth and ministry**
  - c. Because they were skeptical of the Jewish leaders who declared Him to be the Messiah

John 7:25-29 Then said some of them of Jerusalem, Is not this he, whom they seek to kill?

26But, lo, he speaketh boldly, and they say nothing unto him. Do the rulers know indeed that this is the very Christ?

27Howbeit we know this man whence he is: but when Christ cometh, no man knoweth whence he is.

28Then cried Jesus in the temple as he taught, saying, Ye both know me, and ye know whence I am: and I am not come of myself, but he that sent me is true, whom ye know not.

29But I know him: for I am from him, and he hath sent me.

**a** Jesus had indeed made Messianic claims. A special example is in Luke 4, right after Jesus had been tempted in the wilderness. On His return, He spoke in the synagogue and claimed that a Messianic prophecy of Isaiah applied to Him. They could tell exactly what He meant because they tried to stone Him for His blasphemy. He would do this also later in John 8.

Luke 4:16-30 And he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up: and, as his custom was, he went into the synagogue on the sabbath day, and stood up for to read.

17And there was delivered unto him the book of the prophet Esaias. And when he had opened the book, he found the place where it was written,

18The Spirit of the Lord *is* upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised,

19To preach the acceptable year of the Lord.

20And he closed the book, and he gave *it* again to the minister, and sat down. And the eyes of all them that were in the synagogue were fastened on him.

21And he began to say unto them, This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears.

22And all bare him witness, and wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth. And they said, Is not this Joseph's son?

23And he said unto them, Ye will surely say unto me this proverb, Physician, heal thyself: whatsoever we have heard done in Capernaum, do also here in thy country.

24And he said, Verily I say unto you, No prophet is accepted in his own country.

25But I tell you of a truth, many widows were in Israel in the days of Elias, when the heaven was shut up three years and six months, when great famine was throughout all the land;

26But unto none of them was Elias sent, save unto Sarepta, *a city* of Sidon, unto a woman *that was* a widow.

27And many lepers were in Israel in the time of Eliseus the prophet; and none of them was cleansed, saving Naaman the Syrian.

28And all they in the synagogue, when they heard these things, were filled with wrath,

29And rose up, and thrust him out of the city, and led him unto the brow of the hill whereon their city was built, that they might cast him down headlong.  
30But he passing through the midst of them went his way,

**c** They were not *skeptical* of the Jewish leaders, but wondered what they felt about Jesus' claims.

**b** By this time, the people had had plenty of opportunity to be very familiar with Christ and His ministry. Their reaction also reveals the depth to which they studied the Old Testament to be able to recognize the Messiah.

521. What did Jesus claim was the source of His authority?

- a. God, whom they really didn't know**
- b. Mary, whom they really did know
- c. Himself, because He was so wise

John 7:16-18,28-29 Jesus answered them, and said, My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me.

17If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or *whether* I speak of myself.

18He that speaketh of himself seeketh his own glory: but he that seeketh his glory that sent him, the same is true, and no unrighteousness is in him.

28Then cried Jesus in the temple as he taught, saying, Ye both know me, and ye know whence I am: and I am not come of myself, but he that sent me is true, whom ye know not.

29But I know him: for I am from him, and he hath sent me.

**b** B is a reference to who people will recognize as an authority. Jesus in His ministry was not authenticated by Mary.

**a,c** Although there was enough that was impressive about Jesus to accept Him, Jesus pointed to what really matters the most: that He had His authority from God the Father. This is actually an important consideration. Jesus did all things by the authority of the Father and through the power of the Holy Spirit. This is seen by the testimony of John the Baptist in John 3:

John 3:31-34 He that cometh from above is above all: he that is of the earth is earthly, and speaketh of the earth: he that cometh from heaven is above all.

32And what he hath seen and heard, that he testifieth; and no man receiveth his testimony.

33He that hath received his testimony hath set to his seal that God is true.

34For he whom God hath sent speaketh the words of God: for God giveth not the Spirit by measure *unto him*.

People have difficulty with the whole concept of the Trinity being three and yet one, but that is primarily because there are just some things about the divine that are beyond us. The real problem is that people just don't know God in a personal relationship otherwise they would have been able to



recognize the divine in Jesus.

522. How did the Jews respond to Jesus' claims?

- a. They thought He was lunatic and wanted to dismiss Him
- b. They thought He was presumptuous and wanted to kill Him
- c. They thought He was a liar and wanted to imprison Him
- d. Some believed because of the miracles, others did not because of questions about prophecy**

John 7:30,30-31,40-45 Then they sought to take him: but no man laid hands on him, because his hour was not yet come.

31And many of the people believed on him, and said, When Christ cometh, will he do more miracles than these which this *man* hath done?

40Many of the people therefore, when they heard this saying, said, Of a truth this is the Prophet.

41Others said, This is the Christ. But some said, Shall Christ come out of Galilee?

42Hath not the scripture said, That Christ cometh of the seed of David, and out of the town of Bethlehem, where David was?

43So there was a division among the people because of him.

44And some of them would have taken him; but no man laid hands on him.

45Then came the officers to the chief priests and Pharisees; and they said unto them, Why have ye not brought him?

**a** Some did indeed think that Jesus had a devil, which might look like He was crazy. They were not dismissive of Him, though.

**b** Although they wanted to get rid of Him, it was not because they thought him presumptuous. One thing is for sure and that is you couldn't just ignore Jesus.

**c** If they thought Him a liar they might very well have tried to not only imprison Him but even to kill Him for blasphemy.

**d** In verse 31 there were those who saw the miracles as lining up with prophecy and wondered if there was something left. They challenged others who might have been still wondering about this. It might not have been their fault, but their misgivings were because they had insufficient information about Jesus. This goes to the point that the stronger any conclusion, decision, or statement to be made, the stronger an argument must be. This requires strong information.

523. How did the Pharisees respond to the murmuring about Jesus?

- a. They sent officers to help Jesus escape
- b. They sent officers to take Him**
- c. They thought if they ignored Him He would go away

John 7:32 The Pharisees heard that the people murmured such things concerning him; and the Pharisees and the chief priests sent officers to take him.

**a,c** The Pharisees were certainly not sympathetic to Christ. They at least had the sense to know that you could not just ignore a problem like this.

524. Where did the Jewish leaders think Jesus was going to go?

- a. To the Jews among the Gentiles where He would teach the Gentiles**
- b. To take the throne of David in Jerusalem
- c. To heaven

John 7:33-36 Then said Jesus unto them, Yet a little while am I with you, and *then* I go unto him that sent me.

34Ye shall seek me, and shall not find *me*: and where I am, *thither* ye cannot come.

35Then said the Jews among themselves, Whither will he go, that we shall not find him? will he go unto the dispersed among the Gentiles, and teach the Gentiles?

36What *manner of saying* is this that he said, Ye shall seek me, and shall not find *me*: and where I am, *thither* ye cannot come?

**c** Jesus meant the cross, and then to ascend to heaven to appear before God with the blood for the heavenly mercy seat and back, but this was totally lost on the Jewish leaders.

**b** They could have at least thought that Jesus was going to take David's throne.

**a** The conclusion that He would go to teach the Gentiles was about as far fetched as they could get. This demonstrates how much they did not understand Jesus. They thought that Jesus was going to try to escape their hands. This is reasonable because He had been in Galilee to avoid them. This might not have occurred to them, but certainly being elusive was something they were sensitive to.

525. What offer did Jesus make to the people at the end of the feast?

- a. To give them a political office if they followed Him
- b. To give them bread
- c. To give them fuller understanding by the Holy Spirit after the resurrection**

John 7:37-40 In the last day, that great *day* of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink.

38He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water.

39(But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet *given*; because that Jesus was not yet glorified.)

40Many of the people therefore, when they heard this saying, said, Of a truth this is the Prophet.

**a,b** Giving them power or bread, or patronage and welfare, the gifts of a politician.

**c** Jesus was going to give them something far greater: the gift of the Holy Spirit.

526. How did the officers who were sent respond to Jesus?

- a. They remembered He was from Bethlehem, where the Messiah was to come from so they left Him alone
- b. He spoke very convincingly and they could not justify taking Him**
- c. They were persuaded by Nicodemus that they should hear Him out
- d. They stayed after the feast was over to continue debating about Him

John 7:40-53 Many of the people therefore, when they heard this saying, said, Of a truth this is the Prophet.

41Others said, This is the Christ. But some said, Shall Christ come out of Galilee?

42Hath not the scripture said, That Christ cometh of the seed of David, and out of the town of Bethlehem, where David was?

43So there was a division among the people because of him.

44And some of them would have taken him; but no man laid hands on him.

45Then came the officers to the chief priests and Pharisees; and they said unto them, Why have ye not brought him?

46The officers answered, Never man spake like this man.

47Then answered them the Pharisees, Are ye also deceived?

48Have any of the rulers or of the Pharisees believed on him?

49But this people who knoweth not the law are cursed.

50Nicodemus saith unto them, (he that came to Jesus by night, being one of them,)

51Doth our law judge *any* man, before it hear him, and know what he doeth?

52They answered and said unto him, Art thou also of Galilee? Search, and look: for out of Galilee ariseth no prophet.

53And every man went unto his own house.

**b** The officers had a greater responsibility and treated it properly. Perhaps it was because of their sense of gravity that made them take extra care in their decision to leave Him alone.

**c,d** The people were not so much persuaded by Nicodemus as much as they were just willing to disperse.

**a** Some of the people struggled because of their lack of information and only thought He was from Galilee. This is why it is important to make sure you have all the information you need to make truly informed decisions.

## **89 - The Woman Caught in the Act of Adultery**

527. Where did Jesus like to stay when He was in Jerusalem?

- a. At the Temple
- b. At a busy hotel
- c. At the Mount of Olives**

John 8:1-2 Jesus went unto the mount of Olives.

2And early in the morning he came again into the temple, and all the people came unto him; and he sat down, and taught them.

**a** Some might think of the Temple as God's house and so it should have been. Instead, it had become a place of contention for Christ.

**b** Jesus was not a tourist but a man on a mission. Because this was at the time of the Feast of Tabernacles, Jesus possibly stayed in one of the temporary "booths" that was put up for the occasion.

**c**

In the Old Testament, the Mount of Olives is mentioned once in relation to King David. When David's son Absalom wrested control of Jerusalem, David and his loyal followers fled the city via an eastern route: "David continued up the Mount of Olives, weeping as he went; his head was covered and he was barefoot. All the people with him covered their heads too and were weeping as they went up" (2 Samuel 15:30). Later, King Solomon used the Mount of Olives for idol worship: "On a hill east of Jerusalem, Solomon built a high place for Chemosh the detestable god of Moab, and for Molek the detestable god of the Ammonites" (1 Kings 11:7). In one of Ezekiel's visions, the prophet sees the glory of the Lord depart from Jerusalem and come to rest "above the mountain east of it" (Ezekiel 11:23).

Jesus made many visits to the Mount of Olives (Luke 21:37). In fact, it was "usual" for Him to go there when in the vicinity of Jerusalem (Luke 22:39). Every time Jesus visited Lazarus and Mary and Martha, He was on the Mount of Olives, for their village of Bethany was situated on the eastern slope. The road from Bethany to Jerusalem lay over Olivet.

– <https://www.gotquestions.org/Mount-of-Olives.html>

528. Where was the man with whom the woman had committed adultery

a. They couldn't find him with her so he got away

**b. They did not bring him**

c. They had nothing to accuse him of so they let him go

John 8:3-4 And the scribes and Pharisees brought unto him a woman taken in adultery; and when they had set her in the midst,

4They say unto him, Master, this woman was taken in adultery, in the very act.

**a,b,c** The fact that the woman was caught in "the very act" of committing adultery and brought before Jesus without the other party to the act demonstrates their hypocrisy.

529. What did the people pressure Jesus to do?

- a. Get Jesus to be merciless
- b. Get Jesus to help them judge their hearts and motives
- c. Reinterpret the Law of Moses so they could accuse Him**

John 8:5-6 Now Moses in the law commanded us, that such should be stoned: but what sayest thou?

6This they said, tempting him, that they might have to accuse him. But Jesus stooped down, and with *his* finger wrote on the ground, *as though he heard them not*.

Deut 22:22 If a man be found lying with a woman married to an husband, then they shall both of them die, *both* the man that lay with the woman, and the woman: so shalt thou put away evil from Israel.

**a** They were not so concerned about Jesus and His mercy as they were to trip Him up.

**b** They had no anticipation that this was going to reveal their hypocrisy. They were not genuinely interested in what would come of this.

**c** They said that the Law commands that such a woman should be stoned, but what it really says is that both the man and the woman should be stoned (which we shall look at in the next question). The pressure to come to a hasty conclusion based on the emotion of the moment would have required a reinterpretation of the Law.

530. What did Jesus write on the ground?

- a. We don't know**
- b. He wrote a judgment against them
- c. He wrote mystical symbols

John 8:6 This they said, tempting him, that they might have to accuse him. But Jesus stooped down, and with *his* finger wrote on the ground, *as though he heard them not*.

**a** We actually just don't know.

**b** B is a reasonable guess, but we have to be careful to not let plausible explanation take the place of Biblical exposition.

**c** If B is ruled out just because we don't know, writing mystical symbols seems just ridiculous. However, people are known to take the absence of information and turn it into wild speculations.

531. Who was the first person Jesus got to throw a stone at the woman?

- a. **The only person who had not sinned**
- b. The man who had committed adultery with her
- c. The accuser who was righteous because he brought the man to be stoned with her

John 8:7 So when they continued asking him, he lifted up himself, and said unto them, He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her.

**b** B points out the hypocrisy of the moment. If the man is not part of the accused, then should he not be there to condemn her for what she had done to him? In Deu 22:22-29 you can conclude that this death for adultery only applies to any man but only if he goes after a married or an engaged woman. It does not apply to a woman in cases of rape, just to a man. Their hypocrisy is that if the couple was caught in the act, the man should have been brought forward also, there is no way that he should have given a pass.

**c** Under the Law of Moses the accuser had a lot of responsibility. Looking at the various passages regarding stoning, the only person who could bring charges against another person was a direct witness of the crime. Two or three witnesses were required.

Deut 17:6-7 At the mouth of two witnesses, or three witnesses, shall he that is worthy of death be put to death; *but* at the mouth of one witness he shall not be put to death.  
7 The hands of the witnesses shall be first upon him to put him to death, and afterward the hands of all the people. So thou shalt put the evil away from among you.

Deut 19:16-21 If a false witness rise up against any man to testify against him *that which is* wrong;

17Then both the men, between whom the controversy *is*, shall stand before the LORD, before the priests and the judges, which shall be in those days;

18And the judges shall make diligent inquisition: and, behold, *if* the witness *be* a false witness, *and* hath testified falsely against his brother;

19Then shall ye do unto him, as he had thought to have done unto his brother: so shalt thou put the evil away from among you.

20And those which remain shall hear, and fear, and shall henceforth commit no more any such evil among you.

21And thine eye shall not pity; *but* life *shall go* for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot.

They had to be the first ones to cast the stones. Jesus was placing the burden of spirituality on the accusers, challenging about sin in their heart in the same way. He did not denounce the Law, but required *greater* judgment. In Deut 19:16-21 false accusations were taken seriously: the false accuser could receive the punishment he sought to impose. Jesus called for the men to not judge lightly, but judge themselves first according to what they knew of their own hearts. Grace involves greater responsibility. It requires that we live for God not just by some outward conformity but genuinely from the heart.

532. Who was left with the woman?

- a. The accusers who had repented of their guilty conscience
- b. The people who Jesus was teaching**
- c. The accusers who had not repented but wanted to learn from Jesus what to do

John 8:9-10 And they which heard *it*, being convicted by *their own* conscience, went out one by one, beginning at the eldest, *even* unto the last: and Jesus was left alone, and the woman standing in the midst.

10When Jesus had lifted up himself, and saw none but the woman, he said unto her, Woman, where are those thine accusers? hath no man condemned thee?

**a,c** The accusers were convicted of their conscience, but rather than repent, they just tried to escape notice. They were not interested in truth.

**b** Jesus had been in the process of teaching and now the woman was there "in the midst" of them. *They* were the ones interested in what Jesus was teaching.

533. Why did Jesus not condemn the woman?

- a. He wanted her to feel free to do as she pleased**
- b. He wanted her to like Him
- c. He had not caught her in the act of adultery

John 8:11 She said, No man, Lord. And Jesus said unto her, Neither do I condemn thee: go, and sin no more.

**b** Jesus did not "go easy" on the woman so that she would like Him. This is what people do sometimes because they are more interested in being popular.

**c** Although it is true that He did not catch her in the act of adultery, Jesus is not speaking in legal terms here. He has been called upon as the One Who knows all hearts and can rightfully judge, not as an accuser, and speaks as the only One Who has a right to judge. A judge is free to offer mercy.

**a** This is something of a trick question. If a person loves God and does as they please, they will not sin.

## 90 - Jesus, the I Am

534. Why would people who follow Jesus not walk in darkness?

- a. Because Jesus is the light of the world**
- b. Because Jesus was a great teacher
- c. Because Jesus was one of the ascended masters who appeared from time to time in history to show us the way

John 8:12 Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.

**b** People are willing to acknowledge that Jesus was a great teacher thinking that this is a way they can find common ground and agreement with believers. The problem with this is that Jesus claimed to be far more than that. If they truly believe that Jesus was a great teacher then they should give credence to what He taught: that He is God the Son.

**c** C represents New Age teaching that there are superior beings, whether they be called gods, aliens, angels, divine beings, guides, ascended masters, enlightened ones, etc., who have appeared from time to time in the course of human history such as Buddha, Mohammed, etc. They, like B, think they have found a way for people to get along and have ecumenical unity. The same problem as in A exists for them logically.

**a** This section is titled *Jesus, the I Am* because it is about Jesus claiming to be part of the Trinity and identified as one in the same with Jehovah, but it should not be missed that by saying "I am" the light of the world He is not just making a statement about His nature enlightening the world. He is making an "I Am" claim to be one with the Father. This is done elsewhere where Jesus claims "I am" the way, the truth, the life, the good Shepherd, the door, etc.

535. Jesus had claimed to be the water of life earlier and now the light of life. How did the Pharisees respond to this?
- a. They had been impressed with His miracles so they wanted to know how to receive Him
  - b. They had been impressed with His wisdom and mercy so they wanted to know more
  - c. They believed His credentials were insufficient and so they argued to reject Him**

John 8:13 The Pharisees therefore said unto him, Thou bearest record of thyself; thy record is not true.

**a** People in general are impressed with the sensational. They flock to the rallies, conferences, large events, Christian rock concerts, and charismatic miracle meetings. In 1995 a supposed revival broke out in Pensacola at the Brownsville Assembly of God. 10 years later one reporter (who was a supporter of the events) wrote, "I am wondering why the church that hosted hundreds of thousands of visitors has shrunk to a few hundred members, and now owes millions of dollars for a building they can't fill."

– (<https://www1.cbn.com/spirituallife/what-happened-to-brownsville's-fire>)



While we can appropriately criticize the emotional, we want to remember that we also rejoice when we have been moved at a service that goes very well. Generally speaking, facts should precede feelings, the rational before the emotional. In the light of how people tend to respond to such things, you have to ask how it was that the Pharisees were able to resist the miraculous things that Jesus did. There is no question about the genuineness of what Jesus did.

**b** The same thing could be said about Jesus' wisdom. We appreciate articulate speakers who have a true understanding of our social challenges. *They* may come from opposite sides of the political spectrum and are doubted by the other side, but Jesus' wisdom is unquestionable.

**c** In spite of all that was attractive about Jesus' work and wisdom, the Pharisees were happy to find a loophole. Earlier at the pool of Bethesda, in John 5, Jesus had talked about the corroborating testimony of John the Baptist:

John 5:31-33 If I bear witness of myself, my witness is not true.

32There is another that beareth witness of me; and I know that the witness which he witnesseth of me is true.

33Ye sent unto John, and he bare witness unto the truth.

Perhaps it is this that the Pharisees are now pressing on Christ. Jesus is going to call on His Father as the best corroborating witness. The works that He was doing were evidently done by the support of His Father.

536. What credentials did Jesus offer?

a. His seminary degree

**b. His own reputation and the witness of His Father**

c. His ordination certificate

John 8:14-18 Jesus answered and said unto them, Though I bear record of myself, *yet* my record is true: for I know whence I came, and whither I go; but ye cannot tell whence I come, and whither I go.

15Ye judge after the flesh; I judge no man.

16And yet if I judge, my judgment is true: for I am not alone, but I and the Father that sent me.

17It is also written in your law, that the testimony of two men is true.

18I am one that bear witness of myself, and the Father that sent me beareth witness of me.

**b** Here, Jesus specifically points out the cooperation of His Father.

**a,c** A and C speak of the kinds of things that people will accept as authority. Seminary degrees are offered by people who have approved themselves as authorities. They might go the extra route of making themselves accountable to an outside accrediting agency, but they are still people approving the work

of other people. This does not mean that such things are useless in and of themselves. The seminary degree and the ordination certificate both are testimonies that someone has been examined to the best of human ability. The real power of such testimony is whether they align with and represent what God gave in the Bible.

537. Why did the Pharisees not know Jesus' Father?

- a. They had not met Joseph
- b. They had gone beyond old notions of who or what God was
- c. The way to know the Father was through Jesus**

John 8:19 Then said they unto him, Where is thy Father? Jesus answered, Ye neither know me, nor my Father: if ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also.

**a** A is a reminder that Joseph is not the father of Jesus.

**b** B refers to such modernists who through philosophy have redefined God to the point of distorting the divine. The Pharisees had not gone this far.

**c** It is only through salvation that one can truly know God. If someone goes to God, He points them to Jesus with the support of Scripture and history. Once they receive that testimony, they are able to know the Father and then truly know Jesus.

538. How did Jesus impress upon them to take Him more seriously?

- a. He talked about how they could have more political power
- b. He talked about how after He was gone they were still going to die in their sins**
- c. He talked about how they would always be able to come find Him to learn more about Him

John 8:21-27 Then said Jesus again unto them, I go my way, and ye shall seek me, and shall die in your sins: whither I go, ye cannot come.

22Then said the Jews, Will he kill himself? because he saith, Whither I go, ye cannot come.

23And he said unto them, Ye are from beneath; I am from above: ye are of this world; I am not of this world.

24I said therefore unto you, that ye shall die in your sins: for if ye believe not that I am *he*, ye shall die in your sins.

25Then said they unto him, Who art thou? And Jesus saith unto them, Even *the same* that I said unto you from the beginning.

26I have many things to say and to judge of you: but he that sent me is true; and I speak to the world those things which I have heard of him.

27They understood not that he spake to them of the Father.

**a** Jesus did not appeal to their natural desire for political power.

Matt 16:24-27 Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any *man* will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me.

25For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it.

26For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?

27For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels; and then he shall reward every man according to his works.

**b,c** He *did* appeal to their sense of self preservation. However, their time was running out. If we don't accept Christ, then we are left with our nagging sin nature problem. We are compelled to come back to Christ until we get this figured out.

539. How did Jesus begin to explain that He was from the Father?

**a. He would fulfill His Father's plan for redemption through the crucifixion**

b. He performed another thousand miracles

c. He altered their minds to be able to receive the truth

John 8:28-30 Then said Jesus unto them, When ye have lifted up the Son of man, then shall ye know that I am *he*, and *that* I do nothing of myself; but as my Father hath taught me, I speak these things.

29And he that sent me is with me: the Father hath not left me alone; for I do always those things that please him.

30As he spake these words, many believed on him.

**b** At some point, the miraculous has got to speak for itself. One miracle might be a fluke. Two might be coincidental. By the third miracle one ought to start to be convinced. We have good reason to question the modern day miracle workers (although the miraculous does happen), but there is no reason to question the miracles that Jesus worked.

**c** C is a reference to Calvinism that says that God will change people's nature so that they can hear and understand Him. They say that one becomes born again with a new nature and then they will find the Gospel irresistible and then choose to get saved.

**a** In vs. 23, Jesus pointed out that there was one miracle that was going to be the final proof and that was the resurrection.

540. How would the people find true spiritual freedom?

**a. From the Word of God**

b. From good practice

c. From meditation and seeking serenity

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John 8:31-32 Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, If ye continue in my word, *then* are ye my disciples indeed;  
32And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.

**b** People can never do enough good works to rid themselves of their very nature of sin. "Practice makes perfect" is no replacement for the new birth.

**c** Meditation and achieving a state of serenity speak of people substituting spirituality for the new birth. Telling yourself over and over again that you are at peace might help you ignore reality, but only the new birth can actually bring peace.

**a** Real peace with God in salvation can only be achieved if it matches up with what God gave us in the Bible. People often claim they know they are going to heaven without even knowing how to get there. If you simply gave someone an address without giving them directions to get there they would not be able to claim they know they will get there by just wandering around randomly. The Bible is our "GPS" to get us to salvation.

541. How did Jesus explain that they were not truly of their father Abraham?

- a. They were in bondage to Rome
- b. They had conquered sin

**c. They sought to kill Jesus Who the Father had sent**

John 8:33-40 They answered him, We be Abraham's seed, and were never in bondage to any man: how sayest thou, Ye shall be made free?

34Jesus answered them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin.

35And the servant abideth not in the house for ever: *but* the Son abideth ever.

36If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed.

37I know that ye are Abraham's seed; but ye seek to kill me, because my word hath no place in you.

38I speak that which I have seen with my Father: and ye do that which ye have seen with your father.

39They answered and said unto him, Abraham is our father. Jesus saith unto them, If ye were Abraham's children, ye would do the works of Abraham.

40But now ye seek to kill me, a man that hath told you the truth, which I have heard of God: this did not Abraham.

**a** The Jews would have been insulted if it was suggested that the reason they were not accepting of Jesus was because they were under Roman influence.

**b** Being born Jewish does not give someone a special standing in salvation. There are some who teach that the Jews don't need salvation because they are God's chosen people.

**c** The fact that the Jews sought to kill Jesus whom Abraham sought after was a clue that they were not of Abraham. However, Jesus is going to pointedly confront them with this later in the passage.

542. Why could the people not understand what Jesus was telling them?

- a. They were not educated enough
- b. They were of their father, the devil, and resisted Him**
- c. They loved Him for the wrong reasons

John 8:41-47 Ye do the deeds of your father. Then said they to him, We be not born of fornication; we have one Father, *even* God.

42Jesus said unto them, If God were your Father, ye would love me: for I proceeded forth and came from God; neither came I of myself, but he sent me.

43Why do ye not understand my speech? *even* because ye cannot hear my word.

44Ye are of *your* father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it.

45And because I tell *you* the truth, ye believe me not.

46Which of you convinceth me of sin? And if I say the truth, why do ye not believe me?

47He that is of God heareth God's words: ye therefore hear *them* not, because ye are not of God.

**a** No matter how much education you can give someone, if they don't have a heart to receive it, it won't matter.

**c** Although the Pharisees didn't love Jesus at all, loving Jesus for the wrong reasons would be just as bad as resisting receiving Him.

**b** The real reason people resist Christ is because they are in sin. In the Pharisees' case, their resistance was aggravated and put them more in tune with the devil.

543. In what way did Jesus compare the people to Abraham?

- a. They were not happy to receive Jesus the way Abraham did**
- b. They were happy to do the works of Abraham and sought to receive Jesus
- c. They sought to receive what Jesus said so that they would never see death

John 8:51-56 Verily, verily, I say unto you, If a man keep my saying, he shall never see death.

52Then said the Jews unto him, Now we know that thou hast a devil. Abraham is dead, and the prophets; and thou sayest, If a man keep my saying, he shall never taste of death.

53Art thou greater than our father Abraham, which is dead? and the prophets are dead: whom makest thou thyself?

54 Jesus answered, If I honour myself, my honour is nothing: it is my Father that honoureth me; of whom ye say, that he is your God:

55 Yet ye have not known him; but I know him: and if I should say, I know him not, I shall be a liar like unto you: but I know him, and keep his saying.

56 Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day: and he saw *it*, and was glad.

**a,b** If the Jews had been happy to do the works of Abraham, they would have realized that he had gotten saved by faith before the work of circumcision had been given.

Rom 4:10-12 How was it then reckoned? when he was in circumcision, or in uncircumcision? Not in circumcision, but in uncircumcision.

11 And he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which *he had yet* being uncircumcised: that he might be the father of all them that believe, though they be not circumcised; that righteousness might be imputed unto them also:

12 And the father of circumcision to them who are not of the circumcision only, but who also walk in the steps of that faith of our father Abraham, which *he had* being *yet* uncircumcised.

**c** If they had sought to see Jesus just to not die and go to Hell this could have disposed them to listen to Him. They were not even acting in their own self-interest.

544. Read Exo 3:13-14. What did Jesus do that made the people want to stone Him?

a. He tried to teach them to believe in a different god

b. He was too argumentative

**c. He claimed to be God, the "I AM," which was the title of Jehovah**

Exo 3:13-14 And Moses said unto God, Behold, *when* I come unto the children of Israel, and shall say unto them, The God of your fathers hath sent me unto you; and they shall say to me, What *is* his name? what shall I say unto them?

14 And God said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM: and he said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you.

John 8:57-59 Then said the Jews unto him, Thou art not yet fifty years old, and hast thou seen Abraham?

58 Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I am.

59 Then took they up stones to cast at him: but Jesus hid himself, and went out of the temple, going through the midst of them, and so passed by.

**b** Even though people can be annoying to the point of frustration, this is not what made them want to kill Jesus.

**a** A is a reference to blasphemy. If anyone taught a false god, they were supposed to be stoned. Jesus was not teaching a false god.

**c** They correctly understood that if Jesus was not actually God then He was

being blasphemous in a different way. This is what makes vs. 58 the most significant part of this passage. The Jehovah's Witnesses deliberately mistranslate this verse and gloss over its significance. *The New World Translation* says, "Before Abraham was, I was." They don't mind Jesus preexisting Abraham, but by saying "I am," Jesus was identifying Himself with the One Who exist in eternity.

## 91 - The Blind Man Healed, Testifies of Christ

545. How did Jesus show that He was the light of the world?

- a. He started a school of philosophy for enlightenment
- b. He healed a man blind from birth**
- c. He made the Pharisees born again so they could believe on him

John 9:1-5 And as *Jesus* passed by, he saw a man which was blind from *his* birth.

2And his disciples asked him, saying, Master, who did sin, this man, or his parents, that he was born blind?

3Jesus answered, Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents: but that the works of God should be made manifest in him.

4I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work.

5As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world.

**c** C is a teaching of Calvinism that does not recognize believing as a capacity of man such as reasoning, willing, recognizing good and evil, feeling, etc. All these abilities are at play whether one applies them to a god of our own design and choice or not.

**a** The Enlightenment in history refers to the time period from the early 1600s through the 1700s that emphasized the sovereignty of reason, and the evidence of the senses as the primary sources of knowledge. However, it departed from earlier periods which emphasized theological issues and interests.

- Church Fathers (Patristic Age), where Biblical doctrine was passed on to the faithful
- Scholasticism, which was characterized by an emphasis on methods to reconcile faith with philosophy
- Renaissance humanism that emphasized the humanities (art, poetry, literature, etc.) and sought a return to original documents. This led to an effort to get back to classical literary works which created an environment favorable to going back to Greek Scriptures instead of the inferior Latin Vulgate.

The Enlightenment turned out to be darkness and produced intolerance of Christianity and religion in general. It sought to produce values based on a

consensus that was acceptable to both believer and unbeliever. This presents a problem since Christianity believes in exclusivity with no room for error alongside of truth. In the Enlightenment, society tried to develop a universal standard that was *inclusive* of atheism which was at odds with Christianity that was *exclusive*. The only way to have a universal standard would be to get rid of those elements that were contradictory. We see the same problem today where the only way to achieve unity is to get rid of those who disagree with you. Jesus did not seek to bring a *philosophical* enlightenment.

**a** All of this information about the Enlightenment points out the arrogance of man and what he thinks he has created. In contrast to the sophisticated systems that man creates that fail at enlightenment, the enlightenment that Jesus brought was *personal* as well as *spiritual*.

546. What was the role of sin in the blind man's suffering?

- a. None, his misfortune was to be an opportunity for Christ's glory**
- b. All sickness is caused by sin so either his parents or he had sinned
- c. All suffering is the natural consequence of our transgressions so the blind man must have sinned

**c** Although we *do* reap what we sow and often suffering *can* be the natural consequence of our sin, there are other reasons for suffering also.

**b** Even though John was able to record how this man's affliction was from his birth, the disciples being in Jerusalem would not have any knowledge of this man, which would explain why they wondered if the man's affliction was due to his sin even though this was not possible at his birth. However, sometimes we are the victim of our own choices, but sometimes we are the victim of someone else's choice. Neither was the case here.

**a** As Jesus indicates here, there is suffering in the world because there is a general judgment on the world. Here, God's grace is glorified in touching this man. The issue is not whether God is not fair for not healing everyone's suffering equally. If He were being fair He would just judge everyone and we wouldn't have *any* relief. The fact that any of us have any good days is because of God's goodness and grace. This is reminiscent of an old joke where a man with a withered hand prays that God makes his hands equal. God answers and his good hand becomes withered. You might ask what is the purpose of God being gracious at all. This is answered in

Rom 2:4 Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?



The man was not singled out to be created blind from birth so God could make a miracle. Jesus points out how His Father has allowed corrupted nature to take its course to demonstrate all along the way through His miracles that man doesn't have to remain on his course to Hell.

547. Why would the people have brought the healed man to the Pharisees?
- a. Because they wanted the Pharisees to see the power of Christ
  - b. Because the Pharisees were looking for proof of Christ's power
  - c. Because Jesus had healed the man on the Sabbath contrary to their interpretation of the Law**

John 9:13,14 They brought to the Pharisees him that aforetime was blind.  
14And it was the sabbath day when Jesus made the clay, and opened his eyes.

**a,b** It is not so clear exactly why they brought the man to the Pharisees, but the Pharisees were not known for looking for more proof. They were not familiar with the power of Christ and did not even really know Who He was.

**c** By implication, the fact that they made sure to bring the man being healed on the Sabbath to the Pharisees instead of throwing a party and rejoicing with him suggests that they were looking for how the Pharisees would react to this event on the Sabbath.

548. What amazed the healed man?
- a. If Jesus was a sinner, how could He heal?**
  - b. How the Pharisees knew all about Jesus
  - c. How logical the Pharisees were

John 9:24,27-34 Then again called they the man that was blind, and said unto him, Give God the praise: we know that this man is a sinner.  
27He answered them, I have told you already, and ye did not hear: wherefore would ye hear *it* again? will ye also be his disciples?  
28Then they reviled him, and said, Thou art his disciple; but we are Moses' disciples.  
29We know that God spake unto Moses: *as for this fellow*, we know not from whence he is.  
30The man answered and said unto them, Why herein is a marvellous thing, that ye know not from whence he is, and *yet* he hath opened mine eyes.  
31Now we know that God heareth not sinners: but if any man be a worshipper of God, and doeth his will, him he heareth.  
32Since the world began was it not heard that any man opened the eyes of one that was born blind.  
33If this man were not of God, he could do nothing.  
34They answered and said unto him, Thou wast altogether born in sins, and dost thou teach us? And they cast him out.

**b,c** According to vs. 29,30, the Pharisees reveal that they really do not know enough about Jesus and the man called them on this. The bad logic that the

Pharisees used was to build upon presuppositions that were mere baseless assumptions. Instead of ascertaining *where* Jesus was from, as in vs. 28,29, they merely assumed that He was not one of them. They assumed that because Jesus was not one of them that He was part of the common sinner class of non-practitioners of Pharisaism.

**a** The man was not impressed with their logic. In vs. 33 he plainly points out that if Jesus were not of God then He could do nothing, which they themselves had argued in vs. 16. The Pharisees resorted to an *ad hominem* attack and illogically suggest that the man was born in sin (which was distinct from what Jesus had taught) and so his opinion had no value.

549. How did people respond to the healing of the blind man?

- a. They became more committed to following Jesus
- b. They were afraid of the officials so they were afraid to testify of Him**
- c. They denied that a miracle had taken place

John 9:19-23 And they asked them, saying, Is this your son, who ye say was born blind? how then doth he now see?

20His parents answered them and said, We know that this is our son, and that he was born blind:

21But by what means he now seeth, we know not; or who hath opened his eyes, we know not: he is of age; ask him: he shall speak for himself.

22These *words* spake his parents, because they feared the Jews: for the Jews had agreed already, that if any man did confess that he was Christ, he should be put out of the synagogue.

23Therefore said his parents, He is of age; ask him.

**a,c** There was no denying that a miracle had taken place and we do not see here people flocking to follow Jesus.

**b** The response of the man's parents is representative of the state of mind of the people.

550. How did the healed man respond to Jesus when He met Him again?

- a. He thanked Him and went on His way
- b. He believed and worshiped Him**
- c. He asked for further proof of Who He was

John 9:35-38 Jesus heard that they had cast him out; and when he had found him, he said unto him, Dost thou believe on the Son of God?

36He answered and said, Who is he, Lord, that I might believe on him?

37And Jesus said unto him, Thou hast both seen him, and it is he that talketh with thee.

38And he said, Lord, I believe. And he worshipped him.

**c** As we have noted elsewhere, someone who is resistant to God would try to raise the bar or move the goal posts and seek further proof. This seems like it would be an unlikely response for someone who had had such great deliverance, but indeed this really does happen even in the face of such blessing.

**a** With such great deliverance, a casual response is totally inappropriate. However, judging by how people treat church so casually it should be obvious that this is also a very real reaction that people have.

**b** The obvious response would be to worship Jesus.

551. What judgment did Jesus have for the Pharisees?

a. They were to be excused for their lack of knowledge

b. They were given salvation based on their sincerity

**c. They were guilty because they chose not to believe in the face of His testimony**

John 9:39-41 And Jesus said, For judgment I am come into this world, that they which see not might see; and that they which see might be made blind.

40And *some* of the Pharisees which were with him heard these words, and said unto him, Are we blind also?

41Jesus said unto them, If ye were blind, ye should have no sin: but now ye say, We see; therefore your sin remaineth.

**b** B points out how someone can be sincere and yet sincerely wrong. Sincerity doesn't count if it is misplaced sincerity.

**a** A represents how some people think that ignorance is an excuse. Just because someone is brought up in a wrong belief system does not mean that they will be judged by how faithful they were to the system they knew.

**c** Everyone has light given to them from God for faith. C points out how those who have truth presented to them are extra responsible.

## 92 - Jesus is the Good Shepherd

552. In what two ways is Jesus the I Am in John 10:1-19? The Door, the Good Shepherd

John 10:9,11 I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture.

11I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep

When Jesus claims to be "the door of the sheep" (v. 7), He is really indicating that He is the door of the sheepfold. In ancient Palestine, Jewish shepherds brought their

flocks back to the sheepfold for protection after a day of grazing. Predators such as wolves and other animals sought to eat the sheep, and they were particularly active at night. But they could not penetrate the sheepfold, which was a walled structure topped with briars to keep out those who wanted to destroy the sheep. It had but one entrance—its gate—and many shepherds would share the same sheepfold. Thus, sheep might get separated from their flocks in the sheepfold, but in the morning, when the shepherd called, everything got sorted out, for every sheep knew the voice of its shepherd.

<https://www.ligonier.org/learn/devotionals/door-sheepfold/>

553. How do the sheep know the Shepherd?

- a. **By His voice calling their names**
- b. By philosophical speculations
- c. By what people say about Him

John 10:3-5,27 To him the porter openeth; and the sheep hear his voice: and he calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out.

4And when he putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him: for they know his voice.

5And a stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him: for they know not the voice of strangers.

27My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me:

**c** Leaders are often known by their followers from a distance. Their constituency often has to depend on what is reported about them. This is an increasing problem because marketing a leader has been known to cover the frailties of a person and hide the true person.

**b** B is similar to C in that philosophy involves assumptions that are used to arrive at conclusions. Philosophical conclusions are only as good as the assumptions that are used to justify them. Unless they are well grounded, assumptions can be purely speculative or just a reflection of a personal bias. People need a Biblical Jesus, not one who fits their conception of Who He is.

**a** When considering how you know someone, it is important to go beyond what is offered in B and C. While B and C involve subjective opinions that might or might not represent reality, we can protect against them by making sure we are grounding our conclusions in the Word of God. A, by His voice calling their names, includes something beyond falling into a trap of knowing something only intellectually, though. While we are dubious of those who justify themselves by their experience, that does not mean that we should eliminate the significance of our spiritual experience. Hearing the voice of our Shepherd speaking to us as we read the Bible *ought* to be something we should expect. It is always possible that the voice we hear is only our own voice justifying decisions. Over time we should expect to be more discerning to be able to suspect the voice we hear as ours, or even that of someone who is trying to convince us, rather than the voice of the Shepherd. As you read the Bible, God's message should resonate with you that it is the Word of God.

Isa 55:11 So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper *in the thing* whereto I sent it.

554. What is the difference between a hireling and the good shepherd?
- a. The hireling will fulfill his job protecting the sheep no matter what happens
  - b. The good Shepherd provides for the sheep
  - c. The good Shepherd knows no limit to protecting the sheep**

John 10:12-15 But he that is an hireling, and not the shepherd, whose own the sheep are not, seeth the wolf coming, and leaveth the sheep, and fleeth: and the wolf catcheth them, and scattereth the sheep.

13The hireling fleeth, because he is an hireling, and careth not for the sheep.

14I am the good shepherd, and know my *sheep*, and am known of mine.

15As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father: and I lay down my life for the sheep.

**b,c** B is only partially correct. It allows for minimal provision and still claim that the sheep are provided for. Jesus, as the Good Shepherd, will provide even to the point of giving up His life, which He did, on the cross.

**a** The responsibility of a hireling is much less than that of a good shepherd. He is only hired to fulfill the requirements of a contract. Although a hireling's attitude is more noticeable in spiritually immature pastors, it is possible for church members to have such an attitude, also. Whether it is doing only what is asked of you, doing a bare minimum, not taking care of things that were not anticipated, not taking care of extra things you notice that need to be done, disappearing after a task is finished so you can't be asked for anything extra, waiting to be asked instead of volunteering, taking no initiative, not seeking mastery of skills that are associated with a job, taking no initiative to take care of needs that emerge as you are working, are all a demonstration of someone whose heart is not in the work. Jesus amply exhibited the heart of someone who was not a hireling by going above and beyond in everything He did whether it was healing when He was going for rest, washing the feet of the disciples, answering the gainsayers, and ultimately giving of His life.

555. Why does the Father love Jesus?

- a. Because He is God
- b. Because He lived for God
- c. Because He died for us**

John 10:17-18 Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again.

18No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father.

**a,b** A and B are true, they are just not true enough.

**c** Giving one's life for others is something that Jesus will later point out is the sign of the greatest kind of love:

John 15:13 Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.

This is also true even on a logical basis. To love requires true selflessness.

556. Read Eph 2:11-22, How would the Gentiles fit into the plans of Jesus?

a. They would replace the Jews

**b. They would become one with the Jews in the church**

c. They would start a new religion called Christianity

John 10:16 And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, *and* one shepherd.

Eph 2:11-22 Wherefore remember, that ye *being* in time past Gentiles in the flesh, who are called Uncircumcision by that which is called the Circumcision in the flesh made by hands;

12That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world:

13But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ.

14For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition *between us*;

15Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, *even* the law of commandments *contained* in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, *so* making peace;

16And that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby:

17And came and preached peace to you which were afar off, and to them that were nigh.

18For through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father.

19Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God;

20And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner *stone*;

21In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord:

22In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit.

**a** The Gentiles would not replace the Jews. Romans 11 abundantly shows that the Gentiles would not do this.

**c** Christianity is not a new religion. With various elements of Judaism fulfilled in Christ, the church stepped into expanded ministry while those elements no longer have the same significance. There are many ways in

which our expression of ministry are different, but that happens in every social context we find ourselves.

Some Modernists teach that the message of Jesus, and later James, was that of an observant Jew. They believe that Paul essentially hijacked a new movement in Judaism and transformed it into Christianity. They fail to see that the church leaders reacted to and resisted the Judaizers before Paul was fully engaged in ministry. They think that the book of Acts was created to support the theology and person of Paul. One of Paul's messages, though was not to create a new religion, but to demonstrate from the Old Testament had in view the divine progression from the Law to grace with the Gentiles brought together with the Jews in this dispensation.

The Mormons use John 10:16 to justify their teaching that Jesus went to America after the resurrection as in 3 Nephi 15:21.

Christians have traditionally viewed the above passage as a reference to the Gentiles who would soon be presented the Good News of salvation and engrafted into the Christian fold. Mormons, however, have used John 10:16 as a proof-text to support the existence of one of the people groups in the Book of Mormon. According to LDS Apostle James E. Talmage, "The 'other sheep' here referred to constituted the separated flock or remnant of the house of Joseph, who, six centuries prior to the birth of Christ, had been miraculously detached from the Jewish fold in Palestine, and had been taken beyond the great deep to the American continent" (Jesus the Christ, p. 419).

– <https://www.mrm.org/john-10-16>

**b** God's plan for the Jews and Gentiles would be to become one in the church. Other passages teach that there is no difference between those who are in the church and this should be carefully guarded in church operations. Each soul should maximize their effort for the work of the Lord.

557. Who would end up being the killers of Jesus?

- a. No one, Jesus offered Himself willingly to be a sacrifice**
- b. The Jews and the Romans for political purposes
- c. We did by our sin

John 10:18 No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father.

**c** C Is true in a way, but not technically so. This thought should help us seriously consider the fact that Jesus died for us. Someone dying merely in the course of saving someone innocent is not the same thing as dying by taking the responsibility for our sin. Still, He did not die by our *decision* so it was not us who killed Jesus.

**b** In modern history, antisemitic forces have tried to blame the Jews for the death of Christ to justify Satanically inspired rebellion to eliminate God's chosen people, the Jews. Others counter this by pointing out that crucifixion was something that only the Romans could authorize, which would point to them as the killers of Christ.

Antisemitism is on the rise today among those who teach that the Jews were eliminated from God's plan especially due to a lack of understanding of Dispensationalism. They teach that God has moved on and that anything that applied to the Jews is to be fulfilled by the Church.

**a** While both Jews and Romans were involved, Jesus died by His own choice. They were merely players who willfully facilitated His death.

### **93 - The Mission of the Seventy**

Compare this passage with how the Apostles were sent out on p. 116.

558. How many people were involved in the ministry for Christ?

- a. The apostles and now seventy others**
- b. Just the Apostles
- c. The Apostles, Pharisees, Sadducees, Lawyers, Scribes, and Priests

Luke 10:1 After these things the Lord appointed other seventy also, and sent them two and two before his face into every city and place, whither he himself would come.

**c** C points out how that the Pharisees and others were not being persuaded at this point. They were missing the opportunity to serve God. They are the same kind of people who attend churches, today, and missing *their* opportunity to do something really great through the power of Christ.

**a,b** A and B point out how the ministry was not meant to be focused on just a select group who would exercise some greater kind of authority over others. The ministry is meant to be shared.

559. How can we best serve Christ?

- a. We can handle snakes and let them bite us to show that we are protected by God
- b. We can freely give the Gospel if we are saved**
- c. We can make sure we are saved by doing good works

Luke 10:4-7 Carry neither purse, nor scrip, nor shoes: and salute no man by the way.  
5And into whatsoever house ye enter, first say, Peace *be* to this house.  
6And if the son of peace be there, your peace shall rest upon it: if not, it shall turn to you again.



<sup>7</sup>And in the same house remain, eating and drinking such things as they give: for the labourer is worthy of his hire. Go not from house to house.

**a** Based on an exaggerated interpretation of Mark 16, there are those who tempt God by handling snakes as a testimony of their spirituality. Indeed, some work at developing an immunity to snake venom. Such efforts are mere manipulations to impress others.

**c** Our focus should not be on ourselves and how good we can be. Also, our focus should not just be on others by doing good works for them. Cults often use religious service as a way of scoring points for heaven.

**b** The full purpose of our focus should be on getting the Gospel out. The Gospel was paid for by Jesus with His blood and so we should give it out as freely as possible. This brings into question the practice of charging for the ministry. The church is supposed to be supported by tithes and offerings, not by going from house to house or person to person to seek out what they can give.

560. What did Christ want the ministers to pray for?

- a. Laborers for the harvest**
- b. Power to do miracles
- c. Power over Satan

Luke 10:2 Therefore said he unto them, The harvest truly *is* great, but the labourers *are* few: pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he would send forth labourers into his harvest.

**b,c** B and C represent the emphasis that some ministries place on the sensational.

**a** Our desire, always being for the Gospel, should be to seek souls for salvation. If there is one thing that every church needs is people to join in the work, not merely be recipients of the work.

561. What is the only way to know the Father?

- a. Through knowing Jesus**
- b. Through meditation for enlightenment
- c. Through knowing God's Word

Luke 10:21-22 In that hour Jesus rejoiced in spirit, and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes: even so, Father; for so it seemed good in thy sight. <sup>22</sup>All things are delivered to me of my Father: and no man knoweth who the Son is, but the Father; and who the Father is, but the Son, and *he* to whom the Son will reveal *him*.

**b** B is more obviously wrong because it speaks of Eastern meditation.

**c** C could look right but it is an insufficient statement. One can *intellectually* know *about* God by studying the Word without truly knowing Him.

**a** The only way to know the Father is through Jesus.

562. What would prophets wish they had gotten?

- a. The knowledge that was available from Jesus in His first coming**
- b. The knowledge on how to have more power
- c. The ability to have greater discernment

Luke 10:23-24 And he turned him unto *his* disciples, and said privately, Blessed *are* the eyes which see the things that ye see:

24For I tell you, that many prophets and kings have desired to see those things which ye see, and have not seen *them*; and to hear those things which ye hear, and have not heard *them*.

**b** B represents the way the natural man works. Power for survival and control underlie all of our fleshly efforts.

**c** C is better than B, but that pales in comparison to what is even better, which is the ability to have questions answered directly from God, Himself, Jesus Christ. Although we could possibly wish we could have been there with Jesus, we do have the benefit of the lessons learned from 2000 years of people struggling to get a right and good understanding of the Scriptures. Even though being with Jesus seems like we would have the best access to the best information, we have to remember that the apostles had that kind of access and they *still* didn't get certain things until after the resurrection. There is no reason to think that we would have done any better.

## 94 - The Lawyer and The Good Samaritan

563. What test did Jesus put to the lawyer concerning eternal life?

- a. To create a personal code of ethics to live by
- b. To summarize the meaning of the Law**
- c. To find a way for people to be good without God

Luke 10:25-28 And, behold, a certain lawyer stood up, and tempted him, saying, Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?

26He said unto him, What is written in the law? how readest thou?

27And he answering said, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbour as thyself.

28And he said unto him, Thou hast answered right: this do, and thou shalt live.

**b** Jesus was using a hypothetical test to the man to reveal something to himself. The fact that Jesus did not take this situation further does not mean that He was giving a complete lesson on salvation to the man. Jesus was not teaching that all you had to do was fulfill the Law. In many of His contacts with those who challenged Him He simply brought the challenge back to them. When someone is disposed to listen then Jesus would give more information. Instead, what Jesus did was to challenge him by using the Law to give someone knowledge of his sin.

Gal 3:23-25 But before faith came, we were kept under the law, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed.

24Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster *to bring us* unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith.

25But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster.

Apostle Paul puts the hypothetical test this way, too.

Rom 2:13 (For not the hearers of the law *are* just before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified.

However, he goes on to show that absolutely no one is a doer of the Law.

Rom 3:10-20 As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one:

11There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God.

12They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one.

13Their throat *is* an open sepulchre; with their tongues they have used deceit; the poison of asps *is* under their lips:

14Whose mouth *is* full of cursing and bitterness:

15Their feet *are* swift to shed blood:

16Destruction and misery *are* in their ways:

17And the way of peace have they not known:

18There is no fear of God before their eyes.

19Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God.

20Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law *is* the knowledge of sin.

**a,c** Jesus was not trying to present a way that someone could feel comfortable without having to fully believe in Jesus. If anything, with what was to follow, Jesus did not leave him comfortable in a personalized plan of righteousness by self-justification.

564. Read Rom 13:8-10. In what way was the lawyer right in his summary of the law?

**a. Love is the fulfilling of the Law**

- b. If one has sincere feelings for God and man then he will go to heaven
- c. Performing the Law proves that you love God

Rom 13:8-10 Owe no man any thing, but to love one another: for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law.

<sup>9</sup>For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Thou shalt not covet; and if *there be* any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.

<sup>10</sup>Love worketh no ill to his neighbour: therefore love *is* the fulfilling of the law.

**c** C represents a logic problem. If/then constructions only work in one direction. For example, take the argument "If you go to the store you will see John who is there at the store. You went to the store, therefore it would be reasonable to conclude that you saw John." However, it would not be reasonable to conclude that if you saw John you must have gone to the store because it would be just as possible that you saw John some other way. Similarly, someone who loves God will perform the Law, but this statement does not work in reverse. Someone can perform the Law without loving God which happens regularly.

**b** The strength of one's sincerity is irrelevant if they sincerely believe the wrong thing. For example, Hitler was sincere in his beliefs to the point of acting on them to extreme degrees. Mormons sincerely teach that God was once a man and that we can become gods also. Moslems sincerely believe that Jesus was only a prophet. The fact that someone is able to muster great sincerity is irrelevant. It is the simple sincerity of simple faith that is enough to save a person. A willingness to believe based on receiving the simple Gospel is what will save a person. We do not have to muster up passion in order for our submission to the Gospel to count.

**a** Love will fulfill the demands of the Law because love is not centered on self. In the Ten Commandments, the first four commandments are focused on loving God, putting Him first, and the last six on loving your neighbor, putting his interests above yours. Putting God and others first is the very definition of love. The definition of love that is feelings based places the emphasis on self and how self is affected. Simply put, if you love your neighbor and put his interests above self interest you will not kill him or steal from him. We *do* need to cultivate a love for others by nurturing and training our consciousness serving others. This requires us to get beyond ourselves and loving and serving self interests. One can *enjoy* love, *offer* love, but cannot *require* love. The moment you demand love you are thinking of self and putting self above others.

565. What challenge did Jesus give to the lawyer?
- To become confident that his works were sufficient
  - To try to actually live the Law by love**
  - To forget the Law and live by love

Luke 10:28 And he said unto him, Thou hast answered right: this do, and thou shalt live.

**a** Jesus left him with an open-ended proposition. He did not try to console him by concluding that he had done sufficient works to prove his love. Remember, works do not prove love.

**c** C represents the view of some that the Law is too judgmental and that we should never judge anything. Jesus never suggested that the Law was old fashioned, out of vogue, unpopular and should be discarded. Such people don't even mean to replace the Law with a Biblical sense of self sacrificing love. By love they mean coddling, appeasing, and ignoring the sin of someone.

**b** By challenging the man to actually live the Law by love he was confronted with an opportunity for self examination, which he does.

566. What loophole did the lawyer try to use?
- He ignored problems in his synagogue and left people in their sin
  - He left his synagogue rather than have to deal with people he didn't like
  - He tried to define what a neighbor in such a way to limit his obligation**

Luke 10:29 But he, willing to justify himself, said unto Jesus, And who is my neighbour?

**c** By careful redefining of our obligations we think we can escape them. This is a common trick of debate. People try to avoid the plain truth by sophistry, the clever twisting of words. They give special meanings to words so that they can be applied in an abnormal way. This was concept was well demonstrated by George Orwell in *1984* where newspeak was used to break down critical thinking and even turn words to mean the opposite of what they would normally mean. For example, "Freedom Is Slavery" because, according to the Party, the man who is independent is doomed to fail. By the same token, "Slavery Is Freedom," because the man subjected to the collective will is free from danger and want. Today, male and female distinctions are being erased by terms like "birthing person" instead of *mother* to allow for female who "self identifies" as male give birth. Lewis Carroll, the satirist, captured this way of thinking in *Through the Looking Glass*. We think of Alice in Wonderland and *Through the Looking Glass* as some kind of Disney fantasy movie that is silly, but they contained some great philosophical and political

criticism. Alice's encounter with Humpty Dumpty describes the mechanism of propaganda by word control.

"When I use a word," Humpty Dumpty said, in rather a scornful tone, "it means just what I choose it to mean—neither more nor less." "The question is," said Alice, "whether you can make words mean so many different things." "The question is," said Humpty Dumpty, "which is to be master—that's all."

– (Lewis Carroll, *Through the Looking Glass*)

If the lawyer could control the word *neighbor* he would be able to avoid having it apply to him. By the Good Samaritan, Jesus was able to give power to the word to make it apply to the lawyer.

**a,b** Both A and B are derivative of C in that someone tries to avoid any obligation to deal with his neighbor. A and B also represent how people leaving their church is a violation of love. They often think that the way to deal with people is to avoid problems especially by walking away from them.

**a** If someone ignores problems then he is actually being hurtful by letting someone suffer the consequences being left in sin, as in A.

**b** B highlights how someone is a snob and is guilty of pride. They might think that their way of dealing with people by not dealing with them is excusable, but in the light of Jesus' challenge there is no excuse.

567. Read Leviticus 21:1-3. What would happen if the priest approached the man lying in the road?

- a. He thought he couldn't do anything to help
- b. He was very busy but was going to ask someone to go back to help
- c. He would be defiled if he touched the man if he were dead**

Lev 21:1-3 And the LORD said unto Moses, Speak unto the priests the sons of Aaron, and say unto them, There shall none be defiled for the dead among his people:

2But for his kin, that is near unto him, *that is*, for his mother, and for his father, and for his son, and for his daughter, and for his brother,

3And for his sister a virgin, that is nigh unto him, which hath had no husband; for her may he be defiled.

**a** A represents the attitude of someone who doesn't care enough about others to bother thinking about how he could actually help.

**b** B would be better than doing nothing, but it especially represents a lack of caring when we suggest that being busy is an excuse in a time of emergency. Being busy is certainly a concern when it comes to prioritizing day to day activities and excluding those things that detract from our responsibilities, but the story presents an emergency.

**c** C represents how people misuse a Scripture principle to justify themselves. Leviticus presents a general rule, but Jesus was presenting an exceptional situation. Even the Law contained provisions for exceptional situations. If someone were to see his neighbor's ox in a ditch, he was obliged to help get it out and it would be a violation of the principle of the Law to not care for an animal. If this came into conflict with the Sabbath, the rule for life superceded the observance of the Sabbath. The priest is shown being unloving, but if he were trying to avoid the man even on a flimsy Scriptural pretense of staying clean then his guilt would be even greater. By choosing the priest as an example, Jesus makes his unloving action even more serious because he would have been showing a self-righteous attitude.

568. Read Numbers 19. Why might the priest have avoided the man lying on the road according to this passage?
- He was very busy but was going to ask someone to go back to help
  - If the man were dead, he might not want to become unclean and not be able perform his tasks at the Temple**
  - He thought he couldn't do anything to help

This question and answer is similar to the last question. Numbers 19 presents the same principle as Lev 21, except it spells out what a nuisance it would be to have to deal with someone who might be dead.

569. How did the Samaritan compare to the priest and the Levite?
- He went and saw that the man was not dead and took care of him as a neighbor would**
  - He was not as holy as the priest and Levite
  - He was just as compassionate as the priest and Levite

Luke 10:33-35 But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was: and when he saw him, he had compassion *on him*,  
34And went to *him*, and bound up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine, and set him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn, and took care of him.  
35And on the morrow when he departed, he took out two pence, and gave *them* to the host, and said unto him, Take care of him; and whatsoever thou spendest more, when I come again, I will repay thee.

**b** If anything, the Samaritan was even *more* holy because he was truly separated unto God for His service.

**c** Compassion is demonstrated by action. Even though performing good works is not proof of love, it does give you a hint that someone is loving.

**a** A suggests that living out of love is not very far off. There is a sense of normal decency that should drive us to bless others. It takes effort to overcome this sense, even though it doesn't necessarily take *much* effort to do

so. Normal excuse making will often serve to do this in some normal day to day problems, but it takes some real effort to go to the lengths of morally justifying self in the more extreme kind of situation that Jesus presented. Someone who is practiced at love should have no problem with doing the right thing.

570. Why would the Samaritan's actions inspire the lawyer?

- a. **He would be put to shame if an unclean Samaritan performed more honorably as a neighbor**
- b. The compassion of the Samaritan was a reminder of what anyone would do
- c. The Samaritans did everything by the Law and so they were a good example

**b** The fact that *any normal person* would probably have reacted the way the Samaritan did *should* have been a good enough example. B represents how people on a *personal* level have a God given conscience.

**c** The Samaritans did *not* have as good an understanding of the Law. If anything, the lawyer *should* have been inspired by how those who don't even have such a high regard for the Law could have enough conviction to do good. C represents how people on a *societal* level have a God given conscience.

**a** As a Jew who had the entire Old Testament available to him, the lawyer should have been inspired to be able to do better than someone he considered to be his inferior. A represents how people who actually have the superior position having *the Word of God* from above have even greater accountability.

These three positions are parallel to Romans 1-3 where the uncivilized heathen personally, the civilized with God's law in their conscience, and the Jew who has the Word of God are all found guilty of sin before God and without excuse.

If you really love someone, your love will extend even to your enemies, not just to someone who is "less than" you.

## **95 - Jesus in the House of Mary and Martha**

571. How did Jesus respond to Martha's call for her sister, Mary, to help?

- a. He rebuked her for working when she could be worshipping
- b. He told her not to worry so much
- c. **He expressed how Mary's worship was better**



Luke 10:38-42 Now it came to pass, as they went, that he entered into a certain village: and a certain woman named Martha received him into her house.

39And she had a sister called Mary, which also sat at Jesus' feet, and heard his word.

40But Martha was cumbered about much serving, and came to him, and said, Lord, dost thou not care that my sister hath left me to serve alone? bid her therefore that she help me.

41And Jesus answered and said unto her, Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things:

42But one thing is needful: and Mary hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her.

**a,b** Jesus doesn't actually say that Martha worried *too much*. Martha was not doing anything wrong and had a good work ethic. She was attentive to details. Jesus merely stated the obvious without rebuking her.

**c** If anything, Jesus was teaching the importance of our devotional life in addition to our work. Work is not a means to salvation, but neither is it condemned in general.

## 96 - The Disciples in Judea Want to Learn How to Pray

See the section on Prayer on p. 77.

This prayer is presented differently than on the occasion of the Sermon on the Mount. In Matthew 6:9, Jesus taught the disciples to pray "after this manner," not, "say these words." In Luke 11:2, Jesus teaches the same concept. The word for *say* (*lego*) has the connotation of expressing a certain sentiment. This is different than the word say (*laleo*) meaning to utter certain words. Some distinguish Luke 11 and Matthew 6 as the Catholic vs. the Protestant *Lord's Prayer*. Neither one is the *Lord's Prayer*, but both are lessons on prayer. There is one notable difference in the prayers.

572. What aspect of sin does Jesus point out in this lesson on prayer that is different from Matt 6?
- Sin is breaking the Law
  - Sin creates a debt to the person we sin against**
  - Sin does not have to be paid for when we create an offense

Luke 11:4 And forgive us our sins; for we also forgive every one that is indebted to us. And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil.

Matt 6:12 And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.

**a** Luke does indeed add on the aspect of sin, but it is insufficient to point out that sin is breaking the Law. By adding the word *sin*, Luke is pointing out the connection of sin to indebtedness. When Jesus forgave us our sins, He simultaneously forgave us our debt.

**b,c** Sin *does* require a payment. It is not overlooked. When it comes to forgiveness, the sin payment for sin that must be made to the offended person debt is paid by the offended one to himself when he discharges the debt of the offender. In that way, when God forgives *us*, He does not merely overlook our sin when He forgives us, but pays the debt to Himself by the blood of His Son. This is meant by *propitiation*. Propitiation refers to a judgment being *satisfied*. These are legal terms and speaks of a sentence a judge imposes and the punishment is executed. The sentence is a declaration of a debt owed to society or an offended individual. In the payment of the debt when the sentence is executed then the offended party should be satisfied with the payment made.

573. Why would a friend be more compelled to lend someone three loaves for a surprise guest?

- a. Because that is what friends do
- b. Because of his nagging
- c. Because of his boldness in his request**

Luke 11:5-8 And he said unto them, Which of you shall have a friend, and shall go unto him at midnight, and say unto him, Friend, lend me three loaves;

6For a friend of mine in his journey is come to me, and I have nothing to set before him?

7And he from within shall answer and say, Trouble me not: the door is now shut, and my children are with me in bed; I cannot rise and give thee.

8I say unto you, Though he will not rise and give him, because he is his friend, yet because of his importunity he will rise and give him as many as he needeth.

**b** When we pray to God, we should not think that we can manipulate Him the way a whiny child might seek to get under the skin of someone until he gets what he wants.

**a** Although we might expect our friends to be more accommodating than others, friends usually are not so nervy with each other. It is impolite to presume that we can just ask for whatever we want with someone.

**c** C refers to the *importunity* of the friend, which refers to boldness, not nagging. It means, without bashfulness. Probably only with the closest of friends might someone be so bold. This speaks of the kind of relationship we have with God in prayer. Even though we should still be concerned about being over-familiar with God, it should be comforting to know that, since He knows everything in our hearts already, we can be plain spoken with Him. This would look like boldness to anyone else, but to God it is acknowledging our special relationship.

574. What response should we get to our prayers?
- a. God will do whatever we command Him to do
  - b. God will do the best thing in answer to our prayers**
  - c. God will show us right away what His perfect will is

Luke 11:11-13 If a son shall ask bread of any of you that is a father, will he give him a stone? or if *he ask* a fish, will he for a fish give him a serpent?

12Or if he shall ask an egg, will he offer him a scorpion?

13If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall *your* heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?

**a,c** C speaks of how we should wait on God's timing. Just because we can be bold does not mean that we can be demanding.

**b** We can count on God as a loving Father Who will be good in what He gives us. One of the problems that people have is with the definition of goodness. The philosophy of Epicureanism was very popular amongst the Greeks. It defined goodness as that which brings pleasure, if not immediately then ultimately. The goodness of God is defined by His character of holiness and not only refers to what is good in quality but also what is right as well as best for us.

## **97 - Jesus Again Accused of Casting Out Demons by Beelzebub**

See the sections on Christ Casting out Demons on p. 94, The Sign of Jonas on p. 96, and Putting God First on p. 79.

575. How was the bias of the Jews revealed?
- a. They celebrated the success of anyone who was powerful
  - b. They had no trouble with the idea of their own people casting out demons without proof of their ministry**
  - c. They had rejected Him after carefully considering His claims

Luke 11:19-20 And if I by Beelzebub cast out devils, by whom do your sons cast *them* out? therefore shall they be your judges.

20But if I with the finger of God cast out devils, no doubt the kingdom of God is come upon you.

**a,b** The people were ready to accept the claims of one of their own, but not the evidence of Jesus' work. This reveals the bigotry of partisanship that we have to be careful of. It is revealed in the hypocrisy of politicians who can be all for a policy or action as long as they are in power but when they are not in power they find their opponents actions and policies to be of the devil (not so figuratively speaking).

**c** Instead of giving something careful consideration, people are quick to reject Jesus based on their emotional responses to Him.

## **98 - Dining with a Pharisee, Jesus Denounces Pharisees**

See the section on Reproving the Pharisees For That Which Leaves the Heart on p. 177.

576. How did Jesus feel about the Pharisee's minute attention to the Law?

- a. He felt that they should do the Law but not ignore the spirit of the Law exercising God's love**
- b. He felt that the Law should be replaced with the love of God
- c. He felt that the Law should be reinterpreted to allow for the love of God

Luke 11:42 But woe unto you, Pharisees! for ye tithe mint and rue and all manner of herbs, and pass over judgment and the love of God: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone.

**b** B is a reflection on the way people, in order to avoid feeling bad, take advantage of the change in dispensation from Law to Grace to change the *character*, not just the responsibility, of God's work. There is *increased* responsibility under grace in that one not only perform the works of the Law but that they do it from the heart. In modern thinking, instead of God's work retaining the character of accountability to a Divine standard of holiness, its character is changed to a standard of relativistic emotionalism. It is not even a Biblical sense of love, which would have still retained the sense of holiness. Fortunately, the idea that love replaces law is only held by believers who are shallow and immature.

**c** The idea of going by a new interpretation of the Law is as bad as replacing the Law. There is always one interpretation to Scripture, though there are multiple applications of the Word.

**a** While B and C represent effectively abandoning of the Law, Jesus actually embraced the Law. The difference that He ever made was on the application of it. Notice that Jesus says that tithing is still good and ought to be done. The only thing He emphasizes is the *reason* for tithing: how it should be done with the right attitude.

577. How did the Pharisees behave in public?

- a. They exercised discretion and wisdom
- b. They loved celebrity**
- c. They looked for ways to help others

Luke 11:43 Woe unto you, Pharisees! for ye love the uppermost seats in the synagogues, and greetings in the markets.

Detailed proof is scarcely required of the charge of vanity and self-seeking inclining marked outward honours, such as the upper-most places at feasts and in the Synagogue, respectful salutations in the market, the ostentatious repetition of the title 'Rabbi,' or 'Abba,' 'Father,' or 'Master,' or the distinction of being acknowledged as 'greatest.' The very earnestness with which the Talmud sometimes warns against such motives for study or for piety sufficiently establishes it. But, indeed, Rabbinic writings lay down elaborate directions, what place is to be assigned to the Rabbis, according to their rank, and to their disciples, and how in the College the most learned, but at least the most aged, among the Rabbis, are to occupy the 'upper seats.' So weighty was the duty of respectful salutation by the title Rabbi, that to neglect it would involve the heaviest punishment. Two great Rabbis are described as literally complaining, that they must have lost the very appearance of learning, since in the market-place they only had been greeted with 'May your peace be great,' without the addition 'My masters.'

– Edersheim, p. 1072

**a** The Pharisees hoped that they would be known for their discretion and wisdom but only for the place it would afford them in the sight of the public.

**c** They were not known for their love and service to others. By puffing themselves up with their wisdom, they had no room for serving others. Paul refers to this problem as it appeared in the Corinthian church:

1Cor 8:1 Now as touching things offered unto idols, we know that we all have knowledge. Knowledge puffeth up, but charity edifieth.

**b** Loving celebrity is just another manifestation of human pride. There is nothing surprising about this. Of course this must be guarded against in churches. An anxiousness to be resourceful to serve and make the ministries of the church work should help to avoid this problem. The most common way this is manifested is in the management of the programs of the church. Many immature Christians will assume that the success of a program is dependent on the plan for the program. In their zeal for the best plan, they assume that what occurs to them to be helpful will make the program fail if their ideas are not adopted. However, the worst program in the world can be wildly successful if it is blessed by God. No doubt people thought that Gideon was nuts when he sent away 20,000 and then nearly 10,000 more leaving him with only 300 men whom God used. What is important is God's blessing. Of course, in the name of good stewardship we should try to do our best but only because we want to praise God, not because we want to praise ourselves for how good *we* are. There is a time to consider advice, but then, when the leader of a program has decided what to do, it is important to do our best to make the program work. This is especially true when the program is being executed. The leadership has got to be able to think quickly and adapt to what he sees emerging. Never be so sure that what looks like a failure to be so. It is up to God to use our work in whatever way He sees fit. We should be ready to trust that if we fulfilled our responsibility to do our best, God will fulfill

His responsibility *not* to make our work successful according to a worldly view of success but according to whatever He is working whether we get to see it or not. Indeed, something that might seem successful according to what *we* think could have some failures to it that we are not aware of. If celebrity means seeking credit then we might have the same attitude today as the Pharisees. Not having a celebrity mindset means not worrying about the credit and recognition but just being thankful for the opportunity to serve and marvel over what God is doing. This is especially true because even when we *do* good, it is by God's hand and power that we do good.

Phil 2:13 For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of *his* good pleasure.

578. How did the lawyers react to Jesus' reproof of the Pharisees?

- a. They were secretly happy the Pharisees were being slighted by Jesus
- b. They recognized that the traditionalism of the common Pharisees was the same as the expert lawyers**
- c. They thought that Jesus would be approving of them since they were so much more educated than the Pharisees

Luke 11:45-46 Then answered one of the lawyers, and said unto him, Master, thus saying thou reproachest us also.

46And he said, Woe unto you also, ye lawyers! for ye lade men with burdens grievous to be borne, and ye yourselves touch not the burdens with one of your fingers.

**a,c** They might have been happy the Pharisees were being so criticized because there was something of rivalry between them as described by Edersheim:

He is the Divine aristocrat, among the vulgar herd of rude and profane 'country-people,' who 'know not the Law' and are 'cursed.' More than that, his order constitutes the ultimate authority on all questions of faith and practice; he is 'the Exegete of the Laws,' the 'teacher of the Law,' and along with 'the chief priests' and 'elders' a judge in the ecclesiastical tribunals, whether of the capital or in the provinces. Although generally appearing in company with 'the Pharisees,' he is not necessarily one of them - for they represent a religious party, while he has a status, and holds an office. In short, he is the Talmid or learned student, the Chakham or sage, whose honour is to be great in the future world.

- Edersheim, pp 118-119

**b** There is something that is common about human motivation. We are actually blessed if we can realize something about ourselves as we find it in others, but that takes the willingness to be honest with ourselves. In the Pharisees' case, they only resented Jesus when they realized that what He said applied to them also.

579. The lawyers were known for binding and loosing the burdens of the law having the keys of knowledge. How did Jesus regard them for the burdens they increased upon the people through their interpretations of the Law?
- a. **He held their outlook accountable for the killing of the true prophets that God had sent from the beginning of the world**
  - b. He was thankful for their efforts to purify the world by increasing regulation of life
  - c. He appreciated how they opened the way for others to join them in the kingdom

Luke 11:46-52 And he said, Woe unto you also, *ye* lawyers! for ye lade men with burdens grievous to be borne, and ye yourselves touch not the burdens with one of your fingers.

47Woe unto you! for ye build the sepulchres of the prophets, and your fathers killed them.

48Truly ye bear witness that ye allow the deeds of your fathers: for they indeed killed them, and ye build their sepulchres.

49Therefore also said the wisdom of God, I will send them prophets and apostles, and *some* of them they shall slay and persecute:

50That the blood of all the prophets, which was shed from the foundation of the world, may be required of this generation;

51From the blood of Abel unto the blood of Zacharias, which perished between the altar and the temple: verily I say unto you, It shall be required of this generation.

52Woe unto you, lawyers! for ye have taken away the key of knowledge: ye entered not in yourselves, and them that were entering in ye hindered.

**b** It is the nature of elitists in human government to control life for the collective good of the community. Jesus did not seek increased control for the powers that be. The saying was true for them that power corrupts and absolute power corrupts absolutely. Jesus looked for revival in the hearts of men who would then serve Him in their personal relationship with Him.

**c** By their corrupted sense of power, those who followed them served *them* and their *systems*. They were not interested in the kingdom and served as a distraction from the kingdom instead of serving in the kingdom and bringing others on board. This can happen in churches where people are sidetracked from the overall mission of the church into serving the agenda of a clique in the church.

**a** In fact, their influence was so corrupting that they were responsible for the mindset of the people who killed the prophets who came preaching repentance and relationship with God. This is reflected today, also, in the cultures of the world who will not tolerate compliance with the diktats of the elitists.

580. Why did the Pharisees and the scribes try to engage Jesus in more discussion?
- a. They were amazed at His teaching
  - b. They were hungering and thirsting after righteousness
  - c. They wanted to trap Him in His words**

Luke 11:53-54 And as he said these things unto them, the scribes and the Pharisees began to urge *him* vehemently, and to provoke him to speak of many things:  
54 Laying wait for him, and seeking to catch something out of his mouth, that they might accuse him.

**a,b** If the Pharisees and scribes were not hungering and thirsting after righteousness, or disposed to recognize and be receptive to the teaching of Christ, they could at least have been surprised and convicted by it.

**c** Instead, they looked to bolster their justification for destroying Him. The problem they faced was that they were in opposition to the infinite wisdom of God and were constantly frustrated by Jesus. For one who will not allow a crack of honesty in their heart, they will only become hard-hearted and stiffnecked.

## 99 - Admonitions to the People

581. What did Jesus warn would ruin them spiritually?
- a. The ignorance of the Pharisees
  - b. The hypocrisy practiced by the Pharisees**
  - c. The devotion practiced by the Pharisees

Luke 12:1 In the mean time, when there were gathered together an innumerable multitude of people, insomuch that they trode one upon another, he began to say unto his disciples first of all, Beware ye of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy.

**a** The Pharisees were definitely not ignorant. In fact their studies made them even more accountable for their hypocrisy. The hypocrite knows better but is called a hypocrite because he does not live up to what he preaches.

**a,c** Even though the Pharisees had problems due to an overemphasis on the Law, they also had a certain kind of devotion. When Jesus was teaching during the Passion Week (Matt 23, p. 238), He gave similar instruction but said specifically:

Matt 23:3 All therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, *that* observe and do; but do not ye after their works: for they say, and do not.



What Jesus faulted them for was their hypocrisy. There is also a lesson for us that when truth is taught we should be ready to accept it even though our teachers are imperfect.

582. What did Jesus say was more important than the denunciations of the Pharisees?

- a. **How God saw their hearts and could condemn them to Hell**
- b. How embarrassed they would be if their neighbors knew what was in their hearts
- c. How the courts would judge them if they couldn't find a clever way to defend their crimes

Luke 12:2-5 For there is nothing covered, that shall not be revealed; neither hid, that shall not be known.

3Therefore whatsoever ye have spoken in darkness shall be heard in the light; and that which ye have spoken in the ear in closets shall be proclaimed upon the housetops.

4And I say unto you my friends, Be not afraid of them that kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do.

5But I will forewarn you whom ye shall fear: Fear him, which after he hath killed hath power to cast into hell; yea, I say unto you, Fear him.

**c** According to vs. 5, there should be more concern for God's heavenly court than what goes on in an earthly court. Even though a corrupt earthly court could possibly cover for people, the same won't hold for God.

**b** Similarly, what people might think about us if they could see what was *really* going on in our hearts is not to be compared with the judgment they should fear before God. What they *can* be sure of is that their sin will not be hid before God.

Heb 4:12-13 For the word of God *is* quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and *is* a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

13Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight: but all things *are* naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do.

The power of God's Word is that it exposes our sin and God's righteousness to us.

**a** When talking to someone about the Gospel, it is not necessary to have them get specific about their sin. You run the risk of having them defend or minimize their sin so as to lighten their guilt. What is important is to recognize that one is guilty as a sinner and that that is enough to judge them to Hell. It is popular to emphasize the love of God, but done to the extreme, churches make the mistake of not confronting sin in the interest of making just anyone feel accepted. Their idea is that someone will accept Christ because of His love. However, there is no salvation without recognizing that

we *need* to be saved because we are sinners. Without that conviction, there is no sense of need for the new birth because they are made to feel they are fine just as they are. When we sing *Just as I Am*, the idea is not that God has to accept us just as we are. It is entirely different. We come to Him just as we are without any works that we attempt to impress Him with.

583. How did Jesus encourage them about God's love for them?

- a. He told them how if they did good enough that God would love them
- b. He told them about the detail of God's attention to the care of even the sparrows**
- c. He told them how God loves the entire world

Luke 12:6-7 Are not five sparrows sold for two farthings, and not one of them is forgotten before God?

<sup>7</sup>But even the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear not therefore: ye are of more value than many sparrows.

**c** God's love for the world and His goodness toward us different. In His love for the world He sent His Son to die for us. In His goodness, He provides for us. God's goodness is a demonstration of His love.

**a** Jesus places an emphasis on God's goodness to us, not our goodness to Him as if we have to earn His love.

**b** Instead of living in fear of the kind of judgment the hypocrite should beware of, we, in Christ, can live in confidence trusting in the goodness of God as evidence of His faithful love. When bad things happen does not mean that God is unloving; His love is manifest through the fact that good happens in spite of the bad that happens. This is why we always need to take time to reflect on the details about God's goodness to us.

584. What warning did Jesus give to those who were ashamed of Him?

- a. They would miss an opportunity to have blessings in life
- b. They would have to invent a religion that could get them into Heaven
- c. They would be denied by Christ in front of even the angels of God**

Luke 12:8-9 Also I say unto you, Whosoever shall confess me before men, him shall the Son of man also confess before the angels of God:

<sup>9</sup>But he that denieth me before men shall be denied before the angels of God.

**a** Although A is true it does not go far enough.

**b** Those who deny Christ *will* create a religion in an effort to justify themselves, but with God there is no alternate "Plan B."

**c** The idea that the judgment will take place before the angels indicates that the judgment is from heaven above. This does not apply to the saved but to those who consistently reject Christ. It is similar to those whom Christ *never knew* –

Matt 7:23 And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.

The context of this passage is that of the hypocrite who says he knows God and should fear the judgment of being cast into Hell vs. believers who have the reminder of God's goodness to strengthen them. Those who will be cast into Hell are those whom Christ will deny as in Matt 7:23.

585. How would people be judged for resisting and rejecting the conviction of the Holy Ghost?

**a. They would not be able to be forgiven**

b. They would be given a second chance when they faced God in the judgment

c. They would be given consideration for all the good they do

Luke 12:10 And whosoever shall speak a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him: but unto him that blasphemeth against the Holy Ghost it shall not be forgiven.

**a** This passage is similar to Mark 3:28,29 and Matthew 12:31,32 where Jesus had been accused of casting out demons in the name of Beelzebub.

Mark 3:28,29 Verily I say unto you, All sins shall be forgiven unto the sons of men, and blasphemies wherewith soever they shall blaspheme:

29But he that shall blaspheme against the Holy Ghost hath never forgiveness, but is in danger of eternal damnation:

Matt 12:31,32 Wherefore I say unto you, All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men: but the blasphemy *against* the *Holy* Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men.

32And whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him: but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the *world* to come.

According to Romans 1, a person can get to the point where God will cease reproving them.

Rom 1:28-32 And even as they did not like to retain God in *their* knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient;

29Being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity; whisperers,

30Backbiters, haters of God, despiteful, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents,

<sup>31</sup>Without understanding, covenantbreakers, without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful:

<sup>32</sup>Who knowing the judgment of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them.

Since it is the Holy Spirit who convicts us of sin and righteousness and judgment (John 16:8), then rejecting the Holy Spirit leaves one unable to repent if they keep on rejecting His conviction to the point of being reprobate. This can be an ongoing process as people are not forgiven of being unforgiven. The moment they receive forgiveness, they are no longer guilty of blaspheming the Holy Spirit.

**b** The ability to be in a forgiven state lasts only as long as they are alive and stop rejecting the Spirit. They don't get a chance once they stand before God in judgment.

Heb 9:27 And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment:

**c** There is no consideration for any good works at the judgment. People will be judged solely by whether they received Jesus as their Savior or not.

John 3:36 He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him.

586. How should we feel about speaking up for Jesus publicly?

**a. We should trust that the Holy Spirit will help us**

b. We should avoid embarrassment because of our feelings of inadequacy

c. We should study hard so that we will be able to impress people with our wisdom

Luke 12:11-12 And when they bring you unto the synagogues, and *unto* magistrates, and powers, take ye no thought how or what thing ye shall answer, or what ye shall say:

<sup>12</sup>For the Holy Ghost shall teach you in the same hour what ye ought to say.

**b** We should speak up in spite of any *social* embarrassment that is based on a sense of inadequacy. This is different than any sense of embarrassment which causes people to deny Christ and miss salvation.

**c** The remedy for inadequacy is to study:

2Tim 2:15 Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.

However, we have to be careful that our study does not make us proud and confident in our own ability. It can be surprising when we are so sure of our judgment and ability only to find out that we wrongfully second guessed

people we are talking to.

**a** The *ultimate* remedy for inadequacy is trusting that the Holy Spirit will help us in the times we need to speak up for Christ. However, it is true that we should study and serve God so that the Holy Spirit will have something to draw up from us in the time of need. At the very least, our testimony of salvation will be something that the Holy Spirit will use, but how much better if there is more in our spiritual lives. Consider how God used Paul whose training, even before salvation, was used.

587. What did the problem of the man's inheritance reveal?

- a. That God wants everyone to have equal shares in life
- b. The man's self-centered concerns**
- c. The importance of material security

Luke 12:13-15 And one of the company said unto him, Master, speak to my brother, that he divide the inheritance with me.

14And he said unto him, Man, who made me a judge or a divider over you?

15And he said unto them, Take heed, and beware of covetousness: for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth.

**c** People think they are *always* being good stewards by maximizing their wealth. A problem that this man had was putting wealth *first* before spiritual concerns. Poverty is not a virtue to strive to attain, but neither is it an impediment to service. Consider the widow's mites how she gave all of her substance and how the church at Jerusalem sold all their land and provided for the expansion of the ministry. Since poverty is neither a virtue, we have to be careful to balance our understanding of what God would have us do by putting God's service first. For many people, they can do with a lot less in life and eliminate some things in favor of taking on more ministry and finding greater fulfillment as they get closer to God and build Christian relationships.

**a** The world measures fairness by equal outcome. In order to accomplish this, some elite agency is used to determine according to their finite wisdom and experience about what is acceptable and then impose their standard on the collective society. The Christian message includes each individual developing their understanding of their responsibility before God. In the process of growing, or *not*, society will work out naturally and organically its rewards. This *presupposes* that the church is preaching and serving God. If there is no Christian message for people to respond to then society will descend into a mere *might-makes-right* despotism.

**b** B identifies the heart of the problem that causes people to fight or avoid responsibility before God. In vs. 15 Jesus identifies this as covetousness. In our effort to support the ministry with time, talent, and treasure, we will not be so depressed and resentful of what we don't have.

588. What did the rich man overlook?

- a. How a catastrophe could wipe out his wealth
- b. How he should have shared his wealth
- c. How there is no guarantee for how long he could live to enjoy his wealth**

Luke 12:16-20 And he spake a parable unto them, saying, The ground of a certain rich man brought forth plentifully:

17And he thought within himself, saying, What shall I do, because I have no room where to bestow my fruits?

18And he said, This will I do: I will pull down my barns, and build greater; and there will I bestow all my fruits and my goods.

19And I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, *and* be merry.

20But God said unto him, *Thou* fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided?

**a,c** Although a catastrophe could certainly wipe out wealth, Jesus points to an even greater problem that includes *keeping* your wealth and not getting to enjoy it.

**b** Sharing our wealth is of concern, but Jesus is pointing out the problem of how we are ultimately not in control of life. Even at that, sharing wealth must be done judiciously. People in need are able to be covetous just as much as the rich who cling to wealth. Because of this, money can often cause hard feelings even when you are trying to be generous. Sometimes sharing wealth is appropriate, but other times helping someone get a job or learn how to improve their attitude is more important. The world is often simplistic in its thinking and ends up throwing money at problems where money did not help to begin with.

589. What treasure should we be concerned about?

- a. Being spiritually rich toward God**
- b. Meat and raiment for the body
- c. Provision for the future

Luke 12:21 So *is* he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God.

**a** People need to develop an appreciation for things that are spiritual. Many times in our inability to cope with delayed gratification we can't wait long enough to achieve spiritual rewards.

**b** Our meat and raiment can be very satisfying and simple at the same time. This reminds us of "foodies" who run the risk of appearing to be hedonists who are have an undue emphasis on food. People who are very hospitable might like to really treat people in a special way but they have to be careful to challenge themselves to ask if they are also giving proper attention to the

spiritual. Sometimes it can be even more special to bring someone into a greater intimate moment by bringing them into your favorite "greasy spoon" diner or out of the way coffee shop where you like to hang out when you want a nice quiet comfortable place. Neither extravagance nor survival mode should be our first concern, but relationship with the Lord and each other.

**c** We will probably always have difficulty in our concerns for the future because our nature is to seek control in order to guarantee our survival. Seek life and length of days is a regular concern that the Bible identifies as a chief concern. We will be happier to the degree that we are able to trust in God that no matter what our condition or station in life we will be able to serve Him. Having a sense of satisfaction is relative. To the person who needs a break, a coffee and a buttered roll is a feast. To the person who has suffered from bad health, a walk in a warm sun in a park is a great relief.

Vs. 22-34 should sound very familiar because they are an example of how some lessons were repeated by Jesus. These vs. are very much the same as were taught in the Sermon on the Mount in Matthew 6 (p.79). The Sermon on the Plain, which also repeats lessons from the Sermon on the Mount, does not contain this teaching about the lilies of the field, etc.

590. Where will our heart be?

- a. In the things that we have to do to survive
- b. In the things that amuse us
- c. In the things that we treasure**

Luke 12:31-34 But rather seek ye the kingdom of God; and all these things shall be added unto you.

32Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom.

33Sell that ye have, and give alms; provide yourselves bags which wax not old, a treasure in the heavens that faileth not, where no thief approacheth, neither moth corrupteth.

34For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.

**a,b** The things that amuse us and the things we do to survive are similar in that they contribute to our sense of well being. Our basic instinct that motivates us is not reward or punishment as Skinner might have taught, self-actualization as Rogers taught, some psycho-sexual pressure as Freud, or self-fulfillment as Maslow taught, but something more basic: the instinct for survival. We see this reflected in the Bible:

Matt 16:26 For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?

Ps 49:6-9 They that trust in their wealth, and boast themselves in the multitude of their riches;

7None of them can by any means redeem his brother, nor give to God a ransom for

him:

8(For the redemption of their soul *is* precious, and it ceaseth for ever:)

9That he should still live for ever, *and* not see corruption.

Luke 9:24 For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: but whosoever will lose his life for my sake, the same shall save it.

John 12:25 He that loveth his life shall lose it; and he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal.

Num 21:8 And the LORD said unto Moses, Make thee a fiery serpent, and set it upon a pole: and it shall come to pass, that every one that is bitten, when he looketh upon it, shall live.

Deut 8:3 And he humbled thee, and suffered thee to hunger, and fed thee with manna, which thou knewest not, neither did thy fathers know; that he might make thee know that man doth not live by bread only, but by every *word* that proceedeth out of the mouth of the LORD doth man live.

There is always a concern about surviving and living that man is challenged with...especially into eternity. All of the world seems to be obsessed with this. What we truly treasure is our survival and the things we think will help us in that sense.

**c** People will always find ways to do the things they really want to do. Even if it seems to only be out of a sense of obligation, what they want is to be responsible.

591. What should we treasure?

a. All the things that bring us joy on earth

**b. Heaven where our spiritual treasures are secure**

c. The destruction of our enemies

Luke 12:33 Sell that ye have, and give alms; provide yourselves bags which wax not old, a treasure in the heavens that faileth not, where no thief approacheth, neither moth corrupteth.

**a,b** We should not just treasure anything. Being happy on earth is so fleeting. If all we think about is our earthly well being then we will seek to get rid of those things that threaten it. This can lead to the destruction of others around us. It might not be blatant as killing someone physically. It can be far more insidious like killing a relationship by neglect, slander, or being unkind. The more we learn to love the joy of heaven we can have greater joy in general because that is something that can't be threatened.

**b** Simply put, when we learn to treasure God instead, that is when our sense of survival becomes truly satisfied. People have been able to face martyrdom with peace. The covetousness of the world can fade away when our treasures are in heaven.



Rom 8:16-18 The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God:

17And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with *him*, that we may be also glorified together.

18For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time *are* not worthy *to be compared* with the glory which shall be revealed in us.

592. How should we be waiting for the Lord to come?

- a. With anticipation as we approach a date that can be determined from the Scriptures by those who are truly His
- b. With anticipation as one who has scheduled an appointment with a burglar to visit
- c. Like a master returning from a feast for his servants to wait on him**
- d. With the dread of a steward who is going to have to give an account

Luke 12:35-40 Let your loins be girded about, and *your* lights burning;

36And ye yourselves like unto men that wait for their lord, when he will return from the wedding; that when he cometh and knocketh, they may open unto him immediately.

37Blessed *are* those servants, whom the lord when he cometh shall find watching: verily I say unto you, that he shall gird himself, and make them to sit down to meat, and will come forth and serve them.

38And if he shall come in the second watch, or come in the third watch, and find *them* so, blessed are those servants.

39And this know, that if the goodman of the house had known what hour the thief would come, he would have watched, and not have suffered his house to be broken through.

40Be ye therefore ready also: for the Son of man cometh at an hour when ye think not.

**c** C is a reflection of the role of a servant in waiting upon his master. As servants of God, we should be serving and looking to serve whenever the master calls upon.

**a** There are those who have gotten into trouble by setting a date for the coming of the Lord after being convinced that they have such insight into the Bible. They did this only to be proven wrong.

**b** Just as no one schedules a burglary for their house, we should expect to be just as surprised at the coming of Christ.

**d** As stewards of God we should be anxious to see Him...which of course would depend on how we carried out our stewardship.

593. What mistake should people not do with all knowledge, means, and opportunity they have been given?
- a. To work hard so they can be confident of their salvation
  - b. To think they are only as accountable as anyone else**
  - c. To seek irrefutable information and proof so they can be absolutely sure before they make a decision to accept Christ

Luke 12:41-48 Then Peter said unto him, Lord, speakest thou this parable unto us, or even to all?

42And the Lord said, Who then is that faithful and wise steward, whom *his* lord shall make ruler over his household, to give *them their* portion of meat in due season?

43Blessed *is* that servant, whom his lord when he cometh shall find so doing.

44Of a truth I say unto you, that he will make him ruler over all that he hath.

45But and if that servant say in his heart, My lord delayeth his coming; and shall begin to beat the menservants and maidens, and to eat and drink, and to be drunken;

46The lord of that servant will come in a day when he looketh not for *him*, and at an hour when he is not aware, and will cut him in sunder, and will appoint him his portion with the unbelievers.

47And that servant, which knew his lord's will, and prepared not *himself*, neither did according to his will, shall be beaten with many *stripes*.

48But he that knew not, and did commit things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few *stripes*. For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required: and to whom men have committed much, of him they will ask the more.

**b** We should realized that the more we have been given, the more responsible we are. This is the sense of *nobles oblige* where nobles are obliged by the blessings they have to care for the serfs and others less fortunate under them. It was sort of in the same sense people talk about celebrities and businesses "giving back" to the community that made them successful.

**a** Of course this cannot mean that we are obligated to work harder for our salvation since salvation is not by works anyway.

**c** Sometimes people over think about the Gospel because they are more educated. They have to be careful to make a decision at some point with all they have lest they be held accountable for squandering their opportunity.

594. Read Rom 5:1. What did Jesus come to bring people on earth?

- a. Peace based on doctrinal agreement on the Gospel**
- b. Peace based on comfort in this world
- c. Peace based on overlooking each others' faults

Luke 12:49-53 I am come to send fire on the earth; and what will I, if it be already kindled?

50But I have a baptism to be baptized with; and how am I straitened till it be accomplished!

51Suppose ye that I am come to give peace on earth? I tell you, Nay; but rather division:

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52For from henceforth there shall be five in one house divided, three against two, and two against three.

53The father shall be divided against the son, and the son against the father; the mother against the daughter, and the daughter against the mother; the mother in law against her daughter in law, and the daughter in law against her mother in law.

Rom 5:1 Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ:

**b** Jesus did not come to bring comfort into the world, but comfort in spite of the world. There is a difference between tranquility and peace.

**c** Neither did Jesus bring peace by ignoring the sin of the world.

**a** True peace is based on doctrinal agreement with God such as our sinfulness and the only payment for sin, the blood of Christ, and then living in agreement with the commands of God. Peace literally comes from the idea contained in the root meaning of the word of joining two things together. When people do not follow Christ they bring division even to those who seem to be otherwise in the closest of relationships. Letting a loved relative go who will not reconcile with you over Christ is difficult to do, but it is typically something that is done *to* you.

595. What does Jesus say about people's discernment?

- a. They pride themselves on the ability to understand the weather but not discerning when it comes to the truth He was giving them**
- b. They are always so careful to not be conclusive about anything and should be praised for their skepticism
- c. They have such sincerity in the things they hold to so they don't have to worry about truth

Luke 12:54-56 And he said also to the people, When ye see a cloud rise out of the west, straightway ye say, There cometh a shower; and so it is.

55And when ye see the south wind blow, ye say, There will be heat; and it cometh to pass.

56Ye hypocrites, ye can discern the face of the sky and of the earth; but how is it that ye do not discern this time?

**c** People will let their sincerity take the place of rationality. There is an old adage about lawyers:

"If you have the facts on your side, pound the facts; if you have the law on your side, pound the law; if you have neither the facts nor the law, pound the table."

**b** People sometimes pride themselves in their discernment when all they are doing is being critical. A number of scholarly people have been quoted as pointing out that you should not be so open minded that your brains fall out.

Older quotes are "Their minds are so open that nothing stays in" (1932), "a mind so 'open' that almost anything can blow through it without leaving a trace" (1928) or "a mind so open that it had nothing in it at all" (1908). While there should be a healthy inquisitiveness, being a doubting Thomas is not complimentary.

**a** Jesus' complaint was about people's disposition towards the truth. They are willing to make judgment calls on something so mundane as the weather over which they have no true control, but when it comes to submitting themselves over something that was predicted over and over again in God's Holy Word they take it for granted and don't concern themselves.

596. To what length should people go to have good understanding?

- a. They should be prepared to manipulate issues to escape from receiving any judgement they deserve
- b. If they are convinced of their case they should not have to worry about how they might be wrong and hope it passes in the judgment
- c. They should make sure they have explored all possibilities and achieved resolution because they could be surprised with being found guilty in the judgment**

Luke 12:57-59 Yea, and why even of yourselves judge ye not what is right?

58 When thou goest with thine adversary to the magistrate, *as thou art* in the way, give diligence that thou mayest be delivered from him; lest he hale thee to the judge, and the judge deliver thee to the officer, and the officer cast thee into prison.

59 I tell thee, thou shalt not depart thence, till thou hast paid the very last mite.

**b** People should take great care to go beyond what seems plausible to them and explore the possibility of being wrong. This requires what is called suspending our beliefs to see if there is something we have not considered (this is the opposite of a logical fallacy called suspending disbelief where we avoid critical thinking). If we don't, we advance on the hope that no one will bring up another argument that we couldn't even imagine existed.

**a** People don't always just lean on the plausible, but will manipulate words and intentions as they play psychologist to manipulate others.

**c** Jesus applies our responsibility to truth in the case of people taking each other to court that we should seek resolution and not false application of logic.

## **100 - Christ Preaches Repentance, Reminds People of Galilaens and the Tower of Siloam**

597. What mistake did the people make about the Galileans who had been sacrificed or the people killed by the fallen tower?
- a. They thought it was not fair for God to let them suffer
  - b. They thought they must have had more sin than others to have suffered so**
  - c. They thought the people were unlucky

Luke 13:2 And Jesus answering said unto them, Suppose ye that these Galilaeans were sinners above all the Galilaeans, because they suffered such things?

**a** A represents how some people react to bad things that happen in the world. Instead of examining their hearts before God, they prefer to blame God for the bad things that happen.

**c** C is something opposite of A. Instead of blaming God, people assume that there *is no* God and that people are just subject to unfortunate events. However, even using the word *unfortunate* is a problem because it comes from the word *fortune* which suggests that there is a destiny determined upon people.

**b** B is more realistic. It at least recognizes that people's choices have something to do with their problems. However, people will try to excuse themselves instead of consider how their own choices could put them in jeopardy.

598. What did Jesus say about judgment?
- a. There is judgment for all who die in their sin**
  - b. Sometimes you just have a bad day
  - c. God will spare those who He has determined before they were born

Luke 13:5 I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.

**b** B demonstrates how people will avoid self-examination and just blame things on having a bad day.

**c** C is a Calvinistic interpretation of life but it suggests that we are subject to fate which we cannot escape.

**a** A is a reflection of how we will have to stand before God and give an accounting for our choices.

599. How does God determine one's judgment?
- He has decided according to His own counsel who will be spared and who will be judged
  - He will not judge anyone but all will be spared
  - He gives people a chance to repent before finally judging them**

Luke 13:8,9 And he answering said unto him, Lord, let it alone this year also, till I shall dig about it, and dung *it*:

9And if it bear fruit, *well*: and if not, *then* after that thou shalt cut it down.

- a** A is similar to the previous question and suggests that we have no choice.
- b** Some people are willing to assume that God is making all the choices, but since He is responsible and He is good, then He will save everyone in the end.
- c** God *is* fair in that He allows people to choose what they will do and let them have the destiny they choose.

## 101 - Healing of a Crippled Woman

600. How did Jesus point out the hypocrisy of the people at the synagogue where He was teaching?
- The people would be willing to have more care for an ox than a daughter of Abraham**
  - The people would have been happy to have the woman healed if her suffering had been longer
  - The people would have been more willing to carry her around rather than have her healed on the Sabbath

Luke 13:14-17 And the ruler of the synagogue answered with indignation, because that Jesus had healed on the sabbath day, and said unto the people, There are six days in which men ought to work: in them therefore come and be healed, and not on the sabbath day.

15The Lord then answered him, and said, *Thou* hypocrite, doth not each one of you on the sabbath loose his ox or *his* ass from the stall, and lead *him* away to watering?

16And ought not this woman, being a daughter of Abraham, whom Satan hath bound, lo, these eighteen years, be loosed from this bond on the sabbath day?

17And when he had said these things, all his adversaries were ashamed: and all the people rejoiced for all the glorious things that were done by him.

- a** The people's heartless attitude is revealed by the fact that Jesus points out that they would have more care for their material wealth than for this woman's plight.

**b** B represents a certain kind of heartlessness and judgmentalism that people can have. We have to be careful that we do not take a joy in seeing people suffer. However, this would have been an improvement on their uncaring attitude.

**c** C would also be an improvement. If the people would have been so misguided in their principles they could have at least compensated for the healing they would have denied this woman.

## **102 - Parable of the Mustard Seed and Leaven**

See the sections on *The Mustard Seed* and *Leaven* starting on p. 102.

## **103 - Jesus Refuses to Reveal Himself at the Feast of Dedication**

601. Why did the people not think that Jesus was plain enough?
- a. He refused to give in to their further questions after He had satisfactorily answered them
  - b. They were not of His sheep and didn't have ears to hear what He had to say**
  - c. They were indecisive and double minded so that they couldn't commit themselves to Him

John 10:24-27 Then came the Jews round about him, and said unto him, How long dost thou make us to doubt? If thou be the Christ, tell us plainly.

25Jesus answered them, I told you, and ye believed not: the works that I do in my Father's name, they bear witness of me.

26But ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep, as I said unto you.

27My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me:

**a** One of the false reasoning methods is called "moving the goal posts." When a question is answered satisfactorily the method is used to introduce new problems that were not included in the original question as a way to deny the answer that was just given. Jesus kept teaching and explaining so that there is no reason that they should think that He was not plain enough.

**c** Although it is true that people can be double minded, this is not the case with Christ's opponents. They were willfully committed against Him and anything He did they sought to use as evidence against Him. As has been said, "If someone is predisposed against you, in their eyes you can't even breathe correctly."

**b** Their problem was that they had refused to believe.

602. Why did the Jews try to stone Jesus?

a. They were tired of Him being around

**b. They understood His claim to be one with the Father was making Himself God**

c. Impeachment was not an option in those days

John 10:33 The Jews answered him, saying, For a good work we stone thee not; but for blasphemy; and because that thou, being a man, makest thyself God.

**a** They were not merely tiring of Christ. They were proactive in looking to be rid of Him.

**c** This study was prepared a couple years before the recent debacles of impeachment in our Federal government. After witnessing what has gone on, you have to wonder if they might have been secretly jealous of stoning instead.

**b** They could tell that Jesus was making Himself God. At least they had the right framework for judging Him, but after seeing His life they should have been more inclined to accept Him than to execute Him.

603. What did Jesus offer as proof so that they *might* be able to understand?

a. The testimony of Scripture from God

b. The speculations of philosophical ideas about God

**c. The empirical evidence of His works**

John 10:32 Jesus answered them, Many good works have I shewed you from my Father; for which of those works do ye stone me?

**b** Jesus did not resort to mere sophisticated reasoning that no one wants to really sit still for. There is no power in that except the power of pride that people might have in themselves which would lead them to believe something stupid rather than admit that they are being stupid.

**a** Although Jesus refers to Scripture to point out that at the very least they are being unjust since the Scriptures point out that even they would be great in their works. They actually realize that if they agreed to this, this would lead them to accepting the claims that He made for Himself. They show this because they pressed to kill him.

**c** Empirical evidence is not conclusive, but it can surely be persuasive. Having Scripture is better to go on, but that does not mean that evidence has *no* place in our reasoning.



# THE PEREAN MINISTRY

## 104 - Teaching in Perea

604. Why were the people willing to believe in Jesus in Perea?
- a. They were very spiritual people
  - b. They had the testimony of John the Baptist who had preached there about the coming Messiah**
  - c. They were more educated than people in Judea and Galilee

John 10:41-42 And many resorted unto him, and said, John did no miracle: but all things that John spake of this man were true.

42And many believed on him there.

**a** Being spiritual, as in A, is not enough. There are many people who are "spiritual" in a vague sort of way. You might think that someone who is spiritually minded would be sympathetic to Godly Christianity. However, people who pride themselves in their spirituality are very easily just prideful people who resist God. They think more highly of their own spiritual values than they do of God.

**c** If anything, the people of Perea were not more educated than the Jews of Judea or even Galilee who were not known for their religious education.

**b** John the Baptist had prepared the way for the Messiah. Even though the scripture says that they were impressed with the miracles that Jesus had done, they were favorably disposed to believe in him because of the teaching of John the Baptist.

605. Read 2 Tim 2:24,25. What characterized Jesus' approach to people?
- a. He was always ready to teach them**
  - b. He provided bread to win their allegiance
  - c. He used His apostles as thought police and enforcers to crush any opposition

2Tim 2:24-25 And the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all *men*, apt to teach, patient,

25In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth;

**b** B reminds us of how Jesus had refused to win the people over the way a politician might try to do today. He never tried to buy people's loyalty.

**c** Neither did Jesus resort to the methods of political oppression to gather a following while destroying those who oppose him.

**a** Jesus was always ready to teach people and let them decide what they were going to do with what they heard. That does not mean that we should not challenge people at all, but that people have to willingly and willfully accept what God has to offer.

## 105 - Strive to Enter at the Strait Gait

606. Read Matt 20:16, 22:14. How many will be saved?

- a. As many as God has foreordained
- b. As many as keep the faith
- c. Few**

Luke 13:24 Strive to enter in at the strait gate: for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able.

Matt 20:16, 22:14 So the last shall be first, and the first last: for many be called, but few chosen.

<sup>14</sup>For many are called, but few *are* chosen.

**a** Without examining other scriptures some have suggested that those who are chosen are chosen by God for salvation. In Ephesians 1:4, Paul carefully states that we are chosen because we are in him.

Eph 1:4 According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love:

This has been called corporate election. Those who are incorporated in Jesus, or part of his body, participate in his special status. *Our* choosing did not take place before the foundation of the world. Jesus was the chosen one from the foundation of the world and those who are made one with him by faith participate in his election. We have our special status because we are in Christ.

Rom 8:1 *There is* therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.

Rom 12:5 So we, *being* many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another.

2Cor 5:17 Therefore if any man *be* in Christ, *he is* a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.

Gal 3:28 There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus.

Eph 1:3 Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly *places* in Christ:

Eph 2:6 And hath raised *us* up together, and made *us* sit together in heavenly *places* in Christ Jesus:

Eph 2:13 But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ.

**a** A is a reference to the idea that there are those who have been chosen to get saved. The concept of being chosen in the Scriptures is for those who are chosen for a purpose. In God's grace, Israel was chosen to provide and preserve God's Word and to present the Messiah. As such, in spite of their regularly straying from God, He preserved them so they could fulfill His purpose. It is jokingly asked why God couldn't give them a break and choose someone else for a while. The problem is that if God set them aside in just desserts for their sin they would be obliterated. They keep getting preserved and suffering, but the alternative would be to pass into oblivion like every other ancient people has.

**b** As many as keep the faith refers to how some people believe that you can lose your salvation if you give up on your faith. However, there are others who believe that perseverance of faith is proof that you were one of God's chosen ones for salvation to begin with. The assumption is that someone who was truly chosen by God for salvation would never give up on their faith. In the best case, one is led to doubt and fear because of the insecurity of subjectivity. In the worst case, salvation becomes a function of works to prove the sincerity of one's faith.

**c** Jesus just points out the fact that there will be few who actually end up getting saved. What we should be surprised with is that *any* ever believe.

607. Read John 6:27-29, Acts 17:27. How easy is it to get saved?

- a. It is hard because it requires so much
- b. It is easy because it depends on how faithful we are to what we believe about God
- c. It is easy if one believes according to very specific things about salvation**

Luke 13:24 Strive to enter in at the strait gate: for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able.

John 6:27-29 Labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of man shall give unto you: for him hath God the Father sealed.

28 Then said they unto him, What shall we do, that we might work the works of God?

29 Jesus answered and said unto them, This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent.

Acts 17:27 That they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him, and find him, though he be not far from every one of us:

**a,b** The fact that the gate is strait, or narrow, does not mean that the way is difficult. It means that it is narrow. It is not so wide that people with just any set of beliefs might enter. There are few but very strict requirements for our faith.

**c** John 6:27-29 Acts 17:27 indicates that God is very close to be found. This makes faith easy because He is so accessible, but salvation must be received on *His* terms.

608. Why will there be those who do not get saved?

- a. They don't have the ability in themselves to get saved
- b. They don't actually believe what Jesus taught about salvation**
- c. They don't care about salvation

Luke 13:24-27 Strive to enter in at the strait gate: for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able.

25 When once the master of the house is risen up, and hath shut to the door, and ye begin to stand without, and to knock at the door, saying, Lord, Lord, open unto us; and he shall answer and say unto you, I know you not whence ye are:

26 Then shall ye begin to say, We have eaten and drunk in thy presence, and thou hast taught in our streets.

27 But he shall say, I tell you, I know you not whence ye are; depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity.

**b** Vs. 26 indicates that people will have thought they had good standing in Jesus' presence. According to vs. 27, Jesus will reject their standing because of their iniquity. They will have been professors but not possessors of that which was freely available when He was with them.

**a** The problem is not that they don't have the ability to get saved, which is a true statement. The problem is that they don't then turn to Christ for salvation.

**c** In C, the problem is not that they don't care, but that they assume they don't *need* to care.

609. Why will some from all over the world sit down in the kingdom and not the children of Abraham?

- a. The privilege of being God's chosen people is insufficient, those who were less privileged will be first because of their faith**
- b. God rejected the chosen people and would not give them another chance
- c. God favors the underdog and will make people who try hard to please Him go to the back

Luke 13:27-28 But he shall say, I tell you, I know you not whence ye are; depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity.

28There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when ye shall see Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets, in the kingdom of God, and you *yourselves* thrust out.

**a** A is a reflection of how some people think that just because they were born into a religious tradition that they have some kind of immunity from judgment. Such people will be surprised to find themselves left out while others because of their faith will be welcomed.

**b** The Jews would not face any rejection ultimately. However, it will only be when they turn to God through faith in their Messiah, Jesus Christ, that they will be able to be welcomed.

**c** God does not look at the world through the filter of the oppressed vs. the oppressor. He does not offer social justice to equalize those who are social underdogs. Hard work does not advance anyone either, though. Oppressors and oppressed alike are sinners who need the Gospel.

## **106 - Warned of Herod, Jesus Laments Jerusalem Where He Must Die**

610. What was Jesus' response to Herod's death threat?

- a. He had to avoid him since it was not His time to die
- b. He boldly challenged him with the teaching of His death and resurrection after three days, but not in Perea**
- c. He started to gather an army to meet him in battle

Luke 13:32-33 And he said unto them, Go ye, and tell that fox, Behold, I cast out devils, and I do cures to day and to tomorrow, and the third *day* I shall be perfected.

33Nevertheless I must walk to day, and to tomorrow, and the *day* following: for it cannot be that a prophet perish out of Jerusalem.

**c** As we look at C, He started to gather an army to meet him in battle, we are reminded that Jesus did not have an earthly kingdom that he was trying to set up. There is going to come a time when He *is* going to do battle, and that will be at Armageddon. But, it will be against the entire world. We should remember that we are not fighting against flesh and blood but we're fighting against principalities and powers in high places. We should realize that, although we want to change the world, our battle is different than the ones fought in the political arenas with its methods.

**b** As we look at B, we are reminded that sometimes we can get caught up in reacting to people who challenge us. This can form a distraction from doing the thing that we were supposed to be doing. This is similar to what

Nehemiah had gone through when he was rebuilding the temple. In this case here, Jesus was on a mission and knew what the heart of Herod was so that He would not be distracted from that mission. Here, Jesus controlled the debate. Later, at the trial, Jesus would frame the debate as a question of truth, not power.

**a** It is sometimes said that discretion is the better part of valor. In Jesus case, it was not his time to die and He did what he typically did in other cases. He avoided Herod rather than get ensnared with him. Jesus response that He had His "day" in which to do His work, in other words, it was simply not yet His time to die.

611. Why did Jesus not worry about being taken in Perea?

- a. Jerusalem had a reputation of rejecting the prophets and even killing them and so He would die there**
- b. Pilate in Judea was a bigger threat than Herod in Perea
- c. His time to die was not for a long while yet

Luke 13:33 Nevertheless I must walk to day, and to morrow, and the *day* following: for it cannot be that a prophet perish out of Jerusalem.

**c** It cannot be said that Jesus was not worried because His time was not a long while yet. He knew that his death was imminent, but that it was not going to be fulfilled in Perea.

**b** Even though Herod as the tetrarch, or ruler of one fourth of Palestine, had jurisdiction over Galilee and Perea, he was neither more nor less a threat than Pilate in Judea.

**a** Jerusalem is a representation of the greater threat, the self-righteous Jews. Remember that referring to them as Jews means those who were culturally Jewish as in Jerusalem. The more educated and sophisticated one is, the more possible it is to feel safe in one's judgments because of pride and rebellion. Normally, one who is more educated is more aware of how much more there is to learn, but pride will cause someone to act with greater passion in their opposition. This is why it is more likely to see the prophets killed in Jerusalem. Their strong messages, when reacted to in a strong way due to prideful self-righteousness, could end in a tragic death.

612. What was Jesus' lament for Jerusalem?

- a. His will had always been to gather His chosen people together but they rejected Him by their will**
- b. They could not hope to be gathered together because it was God's will to reject them
- c. By God's grace they could not accept Him

Luke 13:34 O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, which killest the prophets, and stonest them that are sent unto thee; how often would I have gathered thy children together, as a hen *doth gather* her brood under *her* wings, and ye would not

**b,a** B flies in the face of the text itself. It is important to point out that the word *would* is not an auxiliary, or helping, verb. It is the verb *to will*. Suggesting that God was against them being gathered because of His will is consistent with Calvinism. Calvinism teaches that God's will is irresistible, but in this case, we are told explicitly that they rejected His will according to their own will.

**c** C might look odd, but it is a peculiar teaching of Calvinism that God's irresistible will is part of the "doctrines of grace," that God by His grace has determined who will get saved so that it is because of His gracious choice of some that others are doomed.

613. When would God's people finally accept Jesus?

- a. When they would truly say "Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord" at the Triumphal Entry
- b. When they would truly say "Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord" at the Resurrection
- c. When they would truly say "Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord" at the Millennium**

Luke 13:35 Behold, your house is left unto you desolate: and verily I say unto you, Ye shall not see me, until *the time* come when ye shall say, Blessed *is* he that cometh in the name of the Lord.

**a** They certainly would call out "Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord" at the Triumphal Entry, but this was an insincere Messianic acknowledgment. This phrase is from Psalm 118 which is part of a collection of Messianic Psalms that were recited on Holy Days. Because of this, we know that they were recognizing His status as Messiah, but the fact that they cried out to crucify Him a few days later demonstrates their hypocrisy.

**b** It is after the Resurrection during the Tribulation that the Jews will realize who Jesus is. They will not be praising God yet at the Resurrection itself.

Zech 13:1-6 In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and for uncleanness.

2 And it shall come to pass in that day, saith the LORD of hosts, *that* I will cut off the names of the idols out of the land, and they shall no more be remembered: and also I will cause the prophets and the unclean spirit to pass out of the land.

...

5 But he shall say, I *am* no prophet, I *am* an husbandman; for man taught me to keep cattle from my youth.

6 And *one* shall say unto him, What *are* these wounds in thine hands? Then he shall answer, *Those* with which I was wounded *in* the house of my friend

**c** It will be in the Second Coming at the beginning of the Millennium that the Jews will be restored and fully enjoy the promises that God had made to Abraham and his children.

### **107 - Healing on the Sabbath, Reproof for Willingness to Rescue an Ox**

See *Healing of a Crippled Woman* on p. 180.

### **108 - Parable of the Dinner Invitation**

614. What did Jesus address at a wedding feast?

- a. How people in their humility preferred the lower seating area where animals might normally have been kept
- b. How people presume that they had privilege at a feast to take a seat in the upper seating area**
- c. How people were happy they were given an invitation to the feast

Luke 14:7-11 And he put forth a parable to those which were bidden, when marked how they chose out the chief rooms; saying unto them,

8When thou art bidden of any man to a wedding, sit not down in the highest room; lest a more honourable man than thou be bidden of him;

9And he that bade thee and him come and say to thee, Give this man place; and thou begin with shame to take the lowest room.

10But when thou art bidden, go and sit down in the lowest room; that when he that bade thee cometh, he may say unto thee, Friend, go up higher: then shalt thou have worship in the presence of them that sit at meat with thee.

11 For whosoever exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.

**a** A reminds us of what our attitude should be. A household that had an upper room and a lower room would have a raised platform where the family lived and a lower area where the animals might be kept. Many people will not presume that the world should cater to them in a social setting. They might think the world should cater to them in general, but when they go to a place where they are not in control, it is more likely that they will prefer to step back to at least size up the situation.

**c** Many people are happy that they at least made the invitation list.

**b** If someone assumes that they are so privileged to take the best seat in the house then they are probably filled with pride. And yet this was the case especially with the Pharisees and the Scribes who had a very highly developed sense of order of respect. Those who think that they have such status are often found to be deficient and are oblivious to how bad they look.



615. Who did Jesus say would be preferred to invite to a feast?
- a. **People who would be more genuinely appreciative of an invitation because of their inability to pay the favor back**
  - b. People who would know you were genuinely interested in them because they were in a position to invite you to one of their feasts
  - c. Businessmen and politicians who could repay you with favors

Luke 14:12-14 Then said he also to him that bade him, When thou makest a dinner or a supper, call not thy friends, nor thy brethren, neither thy kinsmen, nor *thy* rich neighbours; lest they also bid thee again, and a recompence be made thee.

13But when thou makest a feast, call the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind:

14And thou shalt be blessed; for they cannot recompense thee: for thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just.

**b,c** B is unrealistic in that you would probably suspect that the reason you might be invited to dinner would be because of a favor that you might be able to provide. This is certainly the case in a business lunch, but it might look that way in other social situations.

**a** Your concern for others is more obvious when someone who is not able to pay you back is invited. Imagine a dinner in which your host announces that the reason he has invited you is because he wants to find out how to bless you more. This is the way church should be, where people are genuinely interested in others. It is possible that someone might only come to church because of the opportunity to network and treat others as sales leads.

616. Read Deu 24:5. Who came to the supper in Jesus' parable?
- a. The men who showed their genuine friendship and felt their business needs could be postponed because of the honor of the invitation
  - b. **The poor, maimed, halt, blind, and anyone they could strongly encourage to come from the highways and byways of life**
  - c. The man who showed his genuine friendship by using his excuse from responsibilities to attend the supper

Luke 14:16-23 Then said he unto him, A certain man made a great supper, and bade many:

17And sent his servant at supper time to say to them that were bidden, Come; for all things are now ready.

18And they all with one *consent* began to make excuse. The first said unto him, I have bought a piece of ground, and I must needs go and see it: I pray thee have me excused.

19And another said, I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I go to prove them: I pray thee have me excused.

20And another said, I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come.

21So that servant came, and shewed his lord these things. Then the master of the house being angry said to his servant, Go out quickly into the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in hither the poor, and the maimed, and the halt, and the blind.

22And the servant said, Lord, it is done as thou hast commanded, and yet there is room.

23And the lord said unto the servant, Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel *them* to come in, that my house may be filled.

Deut 24:5 When a man hath taken a new wife, he shall not go out to war, neither shall he be charged with any business: *but* he shall be free at home one year, and shall cheer up his wife which he hath taken.

**a** People who have business concerns might have some plausible explanation for why they cannot attend a dinner, but someone who is truly interested will either rearrange their schedule or at least try to find a time when they *can* get together. These people did not do that. It is like being invited to the White House. It has become more common to reveal one's conceit by not accepting such an invitation, but the more people do that the more they detract from the significance of such a statement that is being made. In the end, refusals look merely petty. One of the ways people's sincerity of faith is suspect is when they use the excuse of work or other concerns for why they can't make it to church on Sunday, but then they don't bother to seek out fellowship at least in some other way. This might be done by just getting together for coffee or something more involved like joining a prayer group on the side. It is amazing that during the course of 365 days in a year every bit of business can be conducted...*except* for meeting with other believers who one has made a covenant with.

**c** C is a reference to the man who had taken a wife. This might seem a little strange when compared to the men who had land or oxen. However, Deuteronomy 24:5 teaches that when someone has taken a wife that he is to be excused from certain responsibilities of business and war. The reason this might have been included as an excuse is to point out how ridiculous people can be. Getting an invitation to dinner is not a business obligation or a matter of going to war. It is a stretch to use that as an excuse and such overreach should be seen for what it is, an insincere reason that strains credulity.

**b** The reality is that everyone is poor, lame, blind *spiritually*. Those who recognize their need will be happy to come to the feast. The implication is that those who really recognize their need will be more likely to appreciate what God has to offer them.

617. What was the result for the people who failed to attend the supper?

- a. They would be given a rain check and invited another time
- b. They would see all the people going to the supper and try to crash the party
- c. They would not be invited again because they had rejected their opportunity**

Luke 14:24 For I say unto you, That none of those men which were bidden shall taste of my supper.

**a** So many times people who don't want to be bothered by those "religious" people will try to politely reject them by saying "not right now, maybe another time, I am busy right now." However, when it comes to getting right with God, there is no real rain check available.

2Cor 6:2 (For he saith, I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I succoured thee: behold, now *is* the accepted time; behold, now *is* the day of salvation.)

Jas 4:14 Whereas ye know not what *shall be* on the morrow. For what *is* your life? It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away.

**b** One does not need to crash the party. We are all invited to salvation and no one has to force their way in. It is a shame that people are not lining up at the doors to get in to hear God's Word.

**c** It is possible that if one waits long enough they will die and they will have lost their opportunity to get saved. There are no second chances after death.

Heb 9:27 And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment:

There is no reincarnation, there is no opportunity to say, "I change my mind, I want to be saved anyhow."

There is also the possibility that one could lose their opportunity because if they reject God enough, they will become reprobate when God ceases to even convict them any more.

## 109 - Counting the Cost of Discipleship

618. Compared to our love for Jesus, what should our sentiments be like?
- a. We should make sure to love ourselves before we can love others
  - b. We should make sure to love everyone equally to Jesus
  - c. We should love Jesus so much that anything else could be mistaken for hate**

Luke 14:26-27 If any *man* come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple.

27And whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple.

**c** The idea of hating here is figurative and used to compare the distinction between our love for Jesus and our love for others or even ourselves. We understand this because we are told to love others as we love ourselves elsewhere. Here, the idea of hating is used as a comparative, not a command.

**a** It is common in popular psychology to speak of having to love yourself before you can love others. It was a clever attempt to describe how someone should not turn inward and cave into a victim mentality because of their bad choices or because of negative people around them. It has been used to encourage and challenge people to exercise their responsibilities so that they can escape self-shaming. However, like all catchphrases, it risks being over applied to turn someone into being self-centered. Because of its easy abuse, it is better to not use it but to encourage someone to have dignity instead. It is better to think in terms of loving others better than self. This can also be overdone, but it is less likely because if someone has a mature sense of loving others first it will include properly taking care of self in order to be able to help others. We should be more concerned about Christ esteem than self esteem. This will naturally lead to esteeming others better than self since having the love of Christ will lead to a love for others.

Phil 2:3 *Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves.*

**b** Loving others equally should not be confused with loving Jesus. B represents a confusion between the Biblical concept of loving all people equally with our devotion to Christ. Interestingly, if we love others properly, we *will* be loving Jesus.

Matt 25:37-40 Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, and fed *thee?* or thirsty, and gave *thee* drink?

38When saw we thee a stranger, and took *thee* in? or naked, and clothed *thee?*

39Or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee?

40And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done *it* unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done *it* unto me.

Still, we need to make the distinction between our love for others and the primacy of Christ's place in our devotion.

619. How seriously should we take our commitment to Christ?

a. We should be ready to follow Him as long as we are able

**b. We should realize that our commitment must cost us everything lest we be put to shame**

c. We should realize there is no shame in failing in our commitment because Jesus will be happy to use us even if we keep a ruined testimony

Luke 14:28-33 For which of you, intending to build a tower, sitteth not down first, and counteth the cost, whether he have *sufficient* to finish *it*?

29Lest haply, after he hath laid the foundation, and is not able to finish *it*, all that behold *it* begin to mock him,

30Saying, This man began to build, and was not able to finish.

31Or what king, going to make war against another king, sitteth not down first, and consulteth whether he be able with ten thousand to meet him that cometh against him with twenty thousand?

32Or else, while the other is yet a great way off, he sendeth an ambassage, and desireth conditions of peace.

33So likewise, whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple.

**a,b** This passage might seem to suggest that we should not proceed to serve Christ if we don't think we have enough wherewithal to keep serving Him. Jesus is only speaking of the *awareness* of the cost. The problem that the builders and the king had was that they had not taken their challenges seriously enough. We can tell this because Jesus points out that we should be aware that the cost of serving God is to give ourselves completely to Him.

**c** C is very carefully worded and refers to two problems that someone might have. The first is that someone might think they are too far gone in being backslidden to serve God. God is happy to use us when we repent even though our ability to serve Him might be diminished. On the other hand, the second problem is that someone might think they can freely sin and bear no consequences at all. The way the question is worded is to respond to this second problem. Someone who makes the mistake that he can freely sin risks making the sin that living righteously is irrelevant. One cannot be sinning and serving God properly. I say *properly* because everything serves God's purpose. Pharaoh, Pilate, and Herod all served God's purpose in that they were examples of God's judgment.

## 110 - Parables on The Importance of a Soul

### Parable of the Lost Sheep and the Lost Piece of Silver

620. What complaint did the Pharisees have against who Jesus kept company with?

- a. They were publicans and others, who did not live separated lives according to Pharisaical standards**
- b. They were not highly cultured
- c. They were Gentiles who were considered to be strangers and foreigners

Luke 15:1,2 Then drew near unto him all the publicans and sinners for to hear him. 2And the Pharisees and scribes murmured, saying, This man receiveth sinners, and eateth with them.

**c** The Gentiles certainly could be lumped in with the "sinners." However, Jesus mission to the Gentiles was only in very small early form.

**b** Sometimes when churches lose sight of a Biblical vision and foundation they can become mere social clubs who then pride themselves on their social causes which are often misguided. They assume that they are better because they are more refined while they excuse their wealth as they champion the oppressed in their poverty. This was not the case of the Pharisees, but it could be more true of the Sadducees. At least the Pharisees were more concerned about righteousness.

**a** The Pharisees thought of people not as sinners because of what is more obviously sinful. They looked on people as being sinners merely because they were not following the Pharisaical Traditions. A publican could have been very upright and fair in his dealings, but he was guilty along the sinners because he was going against their traditions regarding complicity with a foreign government. The problem was not with actual breaking of commandments, but with breaking with the traditions.

621. How did Jesus feel about the smallest loss of a soul?

**a. It is cause for great rejoicing when they are found**

b. It is not worth the effort to go after them since the loss is so small

c. Those who go astray should be judged as not worthy of keeping

Luke 15:4-7 What man of you, having an hundred sheep, if he lose one of them, doth not leave the ninety and nine in the wilderness, and go after that which is lost, until he find it?

5And when he hath found *it*, he layeth *it* on his shoulders, rejoicing.

6And when he cometh home, he calleth together *his* friends and neighbours, saying unto them, Rejoice with me; for I have found my sheep which was lost.

7I say unto you, that likewise joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons, which need no repentance.

**a,c** Jesus' attitude toward the people that the Pharisees looked down on was one of compassion. The Pharisees did not offer any hope to the sinners. Jesus did not see them as irredeemable.

**b** Everyone is equally guilty before God and equally worth redeeming. The way we treat the least of these is important. We should not be so concerned about building the church as we should be about building souls for Jesus.

622. How significant is the recovery of a soul?

a. People rejoice because they won't have to live on public assistance

b. Politicians rejoice because they can vote for them

**c. The angels in heaven rejoice**

Luke 15:10 Likewise, I say unto you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth

**a,b** Being redeemed is not about getting off of welfare and or on to voting lists. The world might be thankful for the relief on social services, but our measure of success is whether someone gets their name on the roll that will be called up yonder. A and B are more concerned about people's behavior than the soul itself.

**c** Worldly people might even feel *bad* because someone gets saved. The world does not like to lose one of its own supporters. They might not admit it, but the loss of sinful friend makes their own sin stand out and threaten them with the need to change. The saints on earth will have varying degrees of rejoicing, but a new soul bound for heaven also represents the work that will be needed to train them up. Someone might be considered more desirable because they seem like they might not take much work to get up and running in the Lord's work. However, that is not necessarily so. People as people often have a lot of their own kind of baggage and all need a lot of work.

### Parable of the Prodigal Son

623. How did the son demonstrate his lack of appreciation of a relationship with his father?
- He felt that his father was old fashioned and left
  - He was self-centered and wanted to leave with his inheritance**
  - He thought that his father was not being fair to him and demanded his inheritance and left

Luke 15:12 And the younger of them said to *his* father, Father, give me the portion of goods that falleth *to me*. And he divided unto them *his* living.

**a** A refers to a common complaint that reveals a lack of appreciation for an older generation. Although the son didn't appreciate his father, it was not because he was old fashioned or complained about specific values of the father.

**c** The son did not have any complaint about fair treatment, which is also a complaint that immature people have. Even though he didn't demand fair treatment, he got it anyway as both brothers received their inheritance. Perhaps this would have contributed to the son's appreciation later. Because the parable illustrates God's love for us, we certainly can appreciate the goodness of God and His provision for us which should draw us to Him.

**b** The son was self-centered, which could, as seen in the other answers, lead to a number of possible bad decisions.

624. Where did the son go?

- a. Down the street where he could still maintain a relationship with his father
- b. To Jerusalem where he could study the Word of God at the Temple
- c. To a far away country where he could be away from the influence of family and faith**

Luke 15:13 And not many days after the younger son gathered all together, and took his journey into a far country, and there wasted his substance with riotous living.

**a** A reveals the utter foolishness of being self-centered. If the son had been thoughtful about it, he would have tried to keep some kind of connection to his father. His folly is demonstrated by cutting off his relationship so completely. When people cut off their relationships they are only demonstrating their hypocrisy. Leaving and cutting off relationships is sign of immaturity.

**b** It is possible to leave for proper reasons and so all departures are not evil, they are just rare.

**c** By going to a far country and to a people that are far and a job that is far removed from what he had known, the foolish son had isolated himself from the things that could have protected him. Too many people turn from God by relying on themselves instead of trying to serve and know Him more.

625. How did he fare in the country?

- a. He met many supportive friends who stayed with him through thick and thin
- b. When his money was spent, his friends left him and he had to take an unclean job feeding swine and eating their food**
- c. He called home for more money

Luke 15:14-15 And when he had spent all, there arose a mighty famine in that land; and he began to be in want.

<sup>15</sup>And he went and joined himself to a citizen of that country; and he sent him into his fields to feed swine.

**a,b** The foolish son's friends are not actually mentioned in the parable. The fact that any are not mentioned speaks to their absence when he descends into hard times. His desolation was very extreme when compared to the fact that many people today will have some kind of compassion on people no matter how bad off they are. When those who are bad off demonstrate that they are only interested in getting what they want from you so they can support their drugs or alcohol or whatever they abused to ruin their lives, then people are definitely less inclined to help. He ended up going about as low as he could by taking a very un-kosher job feeding pigs and eating pig slop.



**c** The fact that he didn't just reach out for more money could reveal a stubborn pride *or* it could reveal a humility that he knew he had ruined his relationship. Jesus created this parable so it could possibly mean either one.

626. What did the son do when he came hit rock bottom?

- a. He determined to go home, humble himself, and offer to work as a servant to the father**
- b. He went and got an honorable job so he could save his dignity and not have to face defeat before his father
- c. He found a way to survive that further degraded him

Luke 15:17-19 And when he came to himself, he said, How many hired servants of my father's have bread enough and to spare, and I perish with hunger!

18I will arise and go to my father, and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and before thee,

19And am no more worthy to be called thy son: make me as one of thy hired servants.

**b** There was no honorable job available but had he found one he would still have a problem. Rather than mend the relationship to his father, he would have just hardened himself. By avoiding relationships we don't solve any real problems. People use apparent success to cover up and avoid real problems.

**c** C refers to how that when we think we have hit rock bottom, we often find a way to go further.

**a** By repenting, the son did the one thing that could help his situation. His thinking was still a little off in that he sought to offer some kind of works to restore his relationship. He was going to learn a lesson in grace when the father received him back without works.

627. How did the father and son deal with each other?

- a. The son confessed his sin and took a job as a servant to his father because he deserved no better
- b. As the son confessed his sin his father stopped him and graciously received him back**
- c. The father set up conditions to restore his relationship with his son

Luke 15:20-24 And he arose, and came to his father. But when he was yet a great way off, his father saw him, and had compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him.

21And the son said unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and in thy sight, and am no more worthy to be called thy son.

22But the father said to his servants, Bring forth the best robe, and put *it* on him; and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on *his* feet:

23And bring hither the fatted calf, and kill *it*; and let us eat, and be merry:

24For this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found. And they began to be merry.

**a** A reflects the natural logic of offering works to God.

**c** The father did not demand restitution from the son. He certainly could have done this, but that is the whole point of grace.

**b** The whole idea of grace is giving someone favor they have not earned, or merited. The son had determined that he was not hoping for restoration as much as mercy to just be able to survive. The father running to the son reminds us of how God reaches out to us first. For example, God called out to Adam and Eve and didn't wait for them to approach Him.

628. What did the brother's response to the son's reception by the father reveal?

- a. That his steadfastness was because of his loving appreciation of family
- b. Because of his covetousness nature, he was no better than the way his brother had been before he left**
- c. His sense of mercy and compassion

Luke 15:25-31 Now his elder son was in the field: and as he came and drew nigh to the house, he heard musick and dancing.

26And he called one of the servants, and asked what these things meant.

27And he said unto him, Thy brother is come; and thy father hath killed the fatted calf, because he hath received him safe and sound.

28And he was angry, and would not go in: therefore came his father out, and intreated him.

29And he answering said to *his* father, Lo, these many years do I serve thee, neither transgressed I at any time thy commandment: and yet thou never gavest me a kid, that I might make merry with my friends:

30But as soon as this thy son was come, which hath devoured thy living with harlots, thou hast killed for him the fatted calf.

31And he said unto him, Son, thou art ever with me, and all that I have is thine.

**a,b,c** The brother's reaction demonstrates that one does not have to go off and live a self-centered life to demonstrate covetousness. "Good" people who apparently have done everything right can be just as self-centered. He did not have a sense of love that should have cause him to rejoice over his brother also. The compassion he should have had was displaced by his envy.

629. How should we feel about a brother who returns?

- a. We should rejoice**
- b. We should be happy to receive them without caution
- c. We should be happy to punish them until they completely repent

Luke 15:32 It was meet that we should make merry, and be glad: for this thy brother was dead, and is alive again; and was lost, and is found.

**a** A represents the lesson that is intended from this parable. We should not first determine what measures need to be taken before we forgive someone. We should be quick to forgive at the first.

**b** This parable is limited to our basic reaction for one who has repented and returned. We should start with a willingness to receive someone with the theory that repentance is genuine, but this is where the parable stops. The repentant son certainly had not reached the limit of his spiritual growth. He had a major lesson he had learned, but sanctification is an ongoing process. Precautions may be added on after forgiveness in order to encourage their restoration.

**c** C refers to people's natural reaction. When someone comes to them seeking forgiveness people often end up treating this as an opportunity to punish them until they really get what they are asking forgiveness for. Often this turns in to mistrusting their repentance especially because it is hard to come up with new ways to express their apologies. This ends up making the penitent person look like they are trivializing the problem which adds fuel to the fire of their punishment. If you are going to forgive, then truly forgive, don't seek to make someone pay to prove they are worthy of forgiveness. All of this does not preclude the burden the penitent person may place on himself to seek to restore the relationship. This is seen in the life of Zacchaeus.

Luke 19:2-8 And, behold, *there was* a man named Zacchaeus, which was the chief among the publicans, and he was rich.

3And he sought to see Jesus who he was; and could not for the press, because he was little of stature.

4And he ran before, and climbed up into a sycamore tree to see him: for he was to pass that *way*.

5And when Jesus came to the place, he looked up, and saw him, and said unto him, Zacchaeus, make haste, and come down; for to day I must abide at thy house.

6And he made haste, and came down, and received him joyfully.

7And when they saw *it*, they all murmured, saying, That he was gone to be guest with a man that is a sinner.

8And Zacchaeus stood, and said unto the Lord; Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor; and if I have taken any thing from any man by false accusation, I restore *him* fourfold.

## **Parable of the Unjust Steward**

According to Dr. Bean, it was discovered that in the first century, the master (the employer) did not pay the steward (the employee) a wage. Instead, a steward made his money by adding his fees onto the bills of his master's debtors (the customers). When the debtor receives the bill from the steward, he does not know what amount on the bill belongs to the master and what amount belonged to the steward, only the steward would know. When the debtors would pay their bill to the steward, the steward would pocket his portion of the bill and then forward the remaining money to his master.

As this steward is called "unrighteous," we can assume that he was placing an extraordinary high amount on the bills for his fee, in order to make large amounts of

money, at the expense of his master and his master's debtors. However, when he found out he was going to be fired, he took the debtors bills and reduced, or eliminated, the amount owed to him. Thereby currying favor with these debtors in the hopes that one of them may hire him due to his perceived "generosity."

– <https://www.ancient-hebrew.org/teachings/misunderstood-parable-of-the-unjust-steward.htm>

630. As a steward of the mammon (material resources) in our care, what should the effect of our dealings be?
- a. To secure wealth in this life so that we will not need anyone else
  - b. To find ways to outwit everyone we deal with
  - c. To build friendships that will last beyond our ability to sustain ourselves and on in to heaven**

Luke 16:8,9 And the lord commended the unjust steward, because he had done wisely: for the children of this world are in their generation wiser than the children of light.

9And I say unto you, Make to yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness; that, when ye fail, they may receive you into everlasting habitations.

**a** People in some kind of wishful thinking hope that the wealth they create will somehow take care of them. At the same time, they know by observation or experience that wealth can be fleeting, but what else can they do? They might as well commit themselves to working hard enough to take care of the future because not working hard enough will absolutely guarantee that they won't have enough.

**b** In the effort to try to secure the future, it is possible to slip over into the controlling or at the very least uncharitable mentality of winning at others' expense.

**c** Building relationships is more than about being able to survive in this world. We need to see that our lives are interconnected with those around us. We do not have merely working relationships with people. As friends, there is a sense of obligation that we should have toward each other. If someone can so easily walk away from their relationships then they didn't have a real, human relationship to begin with. Churches need to be built on *genuine* relationships where we have a sense of mutual obligation to each other.

631. What did the wasteful steward do for his master?
- a. He helped his master see that social justice demands that the rich give up their wealth for the poor whom they oppress
  - b. He recovered his master's wealth by wise dealings for which he was commended**
  - c. He apologized for his failure and left his master with his losses

Luke 16:5-8 So he called every one of his lord's debtors *unto him*, and said unto the first, How much owest thou unto my lord?

6And he said, An hundred measures of oil. And he said unto him, Take thy bill, and sit down quickly, and write fifty.

7Then said he to another, And how much owest thou? And he said, An hundred measures of wheat. And he said unto him, Take thy bill, and write fourscore.

8And the lord commended the unjust steward, because he had done wisely: for the children of this world are in their generation wiser than the children of light.

**a** Jesus does not frame this problem as oppressor vs. oppressed. It is a concept foreign to the Bible. This situation is in line with Biblical principles of free market responsibility. Jesus did not promote inequality as a measure of morality. Although there are immoral business dealings where unequal outcomes occur, it is wrong to then generalize that all inequality is immoral.

**b,c** The point of this parable is not to teach grace, but responsibility. We need to be careful to remember that although grace is very important to us, we are supposed to exercise wisdom in serving God.

632. How shall we achieve responsibility?

**a. By being faithful in our dealings even though it is at our expense**

b. By having enough money to cover our mistakes

c. By having friends who can cover our mistakes

Luke 16:4-7 I am resolved what to do, that, when I am put out of the stewardship, they may receive me into their houses.

5So he called every one of his lord's debtors *unto him*, and said unto the first, How much owest thou unto my lord?

6And he said, An hundred measures of oil. And he said unto him, Take thy bill, and sit down quickly, and write fifty.

7Then said he to another, And how much owest thou? And he said, An hundred measures of wheat. And he said unto him, Take thy bill, and write fourscore.

**a** The steward was not commended because of how much money he had in reserve to de-emphasize trusting one's wealth.

**c** Nor was he commended for how he had networked to use other people's money which emphasizes *personal* responsibility, not just exercising responsibility in general.

**b** However, we should not over apply this lesson to emphasize the importance of the financial in our evaluation of wisdom. If anything, the steward knew that maximizing financial benefit was not the route to take. Working with people to build relationships will sometimes be costly to us, but the relationships are more important

633. How are we trusted with blessings?

- a. By our cleverness to get ahead in this world
- b. By our faithfulness**
- c. By our power over others

Luke 16:10-12 He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much: and he that is unjust in the least is unjust also in much.

11 If therefore ye have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, who will commit to your trust the true *riches*?

12 And if ye have not been faithful in that which is another man's, who shall give you that which is your own?

**a,c** Typical success is measured by the power we have in the world, whether it be over establishing security in the world or by the power we have over others. True success is measured by our relationship with God.

**b** As part of the steward's faithfulness, we see him maintaining his responsibility to his master *and* to the debtors. In being unjust to himself but faithful to his master and clients he achieved better success.

1 Cor 4:1-5 Let a man so account of us, as of the ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God.

2 Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful.

3 But with me it is a very small thing that I should be judged of you, or of man's judgment: yea, I judge not mine own self.

4 For I know nothing by myself; yet am I not hereby justified: but he that judgeth me is the Lord.

5 Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts: and then shall every man have praise of God.

634. Read James 1:5-12. Why can a believer not be successful by living a life for the world alongside a life for God?

- a. He might not be one of the people who are smart enough to keep track of everything
- b. He might not have enough resources to afford both
- c. No one is able to serve two masters without favoring one over the other**

James 1:5-12 If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all *men* liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him.

6 But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed.

7 For let not that man think that he shall receive any thing of the Lord.

8 A double minded man *is* unstable in all his ways.

9 Let the brother of low degree rejoice in that he is exalted:

10 But the rich, in that he is made low: because as the flower of the grass he shall pass away.

11 For the sun is no sooner risen with a burning heat, but it withereth the grass, and the

flower thereof falleth, and the grace of the fashion of it perisheth: so also shall the rich man fade away in his ways.

12Blessed *is* the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him.

Luke 16:13 No servant can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.

**c** It has been said that money is a wonderful servant, but it is a terrible master. One cannot serve God and money. A double minded man will end up being unstable in more ways than just wealth and spirituality. He will find this to be true when it comes to family matters, personal relationships, personal discipline, work, and such things as mundane as driving, shopping, cleaning, etc.

**a** The more we try to keep track of the harder it gets. Everyone is limited in this way. Even if a person is not necessarily double minded, each person only has so much capacity for attending to business.

**b** Although Jesus recommends making friends by a proper use of money, He also points out that you cannot *serve* mammon, not that mammon serves *no* purpose. The problem with being double minded has nothing to do with how much we can afford. Even if we were to pay someone to take care of business for us, the problem is with competing *values*. Living for the advancement of the spiritual often comes into conflict with living for the advancement of wealth. The problem is with the idea of *living* for something. Spirituality will often come at the expense of gaining wealth. Also, one of the great uses for any wealth is to bless God's work. If wealth is the ultimate goal, which is what living for wealth means, then spirituality will be sacrificed when it is inconvenient. There is nothing wrong with wealth itself, if it is used as a tool and not as objective to attain

## 111 - Divorce and Marriage

There are various issues that the Gospel writers don't record about Jesus' teaching. They primarily wrote about what Jesus taught and preached about man's relationship with God. However, such a major issue as marriage was included by inspiration as we read about it because the Pharisees brought the dispute amongst themselves over divorce to Jesus.

In this teaching, we see Jesus' bottom line about this relationship between a man and a woman. Not taking this relationship seriously is at the root of many failures and judgments throughout the Bible. You cannot read the Bible and not get a clear picture of this...as if we actually needed one. We know intuitively by our God given conscience that the marriage relationship is sacrosanct. If that were not enough, the observation of practical experience in the world reinforces that. For example, those who live together before

marriage are at greater risk for divorce, which runs contrary to the popular assumption that it makes marriage stronger. Also, the marriage act itself affects our brain chemistry for *marital* bonding (not just bonding in general). Having multiple partners wreaks havoc as one bonds and breaks that bond. This is also why those who have repent after being engaged in such a lifestyle are often required to cease for a period of time to gain a better perspective before marrying. Then there is the problem that when someone engages in this kind of behavior they are actually touched by everyone their partner has had and everyone their partner's partners have had. Physical relationships are confounded with an actual relationship and are no substitute. The marriage relationship includes the importance of family and personal growth, not just the pleasure of sin for a season. Issues of physical health, mental health, and societal health are all part of the marriage relationship.

One does not have to look very hard to find that the breakdown of the family has contributed to the failure of many civilizations. One of the things that has hardest hit different communities has been absentee fathers; it has produced marked degradation what has been mistakenly called societal oppression.

The gold standard for marriage is as Jesus described the original plan: one man and one woman bonded for life. This precludes any homosexual relationship and restores marriage to its original design without any accommodations to any other social pressures. This is the effect of grace...grace is *more* demanding because it deals with the heart and not just the outward behavior. It is in this light that we should appreciate the highest reason for marriage as far as Christians are concerned: marriage is a reflection of the relationship that God has with His church and the believers.

Eph 5:22-31 Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord.  
23For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body.  
24Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so *let* the wives *be* to their own husbands in every thing.  
25Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it;  
26That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word,  
27That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.  
28So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself.  
29For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church:  
30For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones.  
31For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh.



635. What did Jesus reveal about the attitude of the Pharisees?
- a. **They were only interested rationalizing the applications of the Law they wanted to believe**
  - b. They were interested in trying to understand the Word of God
  - c. They were so detached from their traditional teachings that they joined others in pressing into the new dispensation

Luke 16:14,15 And the Pharisees also, who were covetous, heard all these things: and they derided him.

15And he said unto them, Ye are they which justify yourselves before men; but God knoweth your hearts: for that which is highly esteemed among men is abomination in the sight of God.

**a** Matthew and Mark reveal the occasion for this teaching, but it is Luke who reveals the attitude of the Pharisees for which they were judged

**b** In their attitude, they were more interested in trying to catch Jesus up rather than sincerely looking for the truth.

**c** The Pharisees, by looking at marriage, were more entrenched in their interpretations of the Law rather than appreciating what the new Dispensation of Grace would teach. Had they any appreciation for what was coming, they would have been seeking the higher requirements of grace rather than some way of twisting the Law to accommodate their permissive views on divorce. We will look at this more in question 639.

636. Read Deut 24:1-4. Adultery would be punishable by death, but some other uncleanness would not. Why did Jesus say there were controls on divorce in the Law?

- a. **To limit the effect and spread of sin due to the hardness of people's hearts**
- b. To make sure that people had a way out of an unhappy marriage
- c. So that people would have a guide for having fairness in a divorce

Deut 24:1-4 When a man hath taken a wife, and married her, and it come to pass that she find no favour in his eyes, because he hath found some uncleanness in her: then let him write her a bill of divorcement, and give *it* in her hand, and send her out of his house.

2And when she is departed out of his house, she may go and be another man's *wife*.

3And *if* the latter husband hate her, and write her a bill of divorcement, and giveth *it* in her hand, and sendeth her out of his house; or if the latter husband die, which took her *to be* his wife;

4Her former husband, which sent her away, may not take her again to be his wife, after that she is defiled; for that *is* abomination before the LORD: and thou shalt not cause the land to sin, which the LORD thy God giveth thee *for* an inheritance.

Matt 19:3 The Pharisees also came unto him, tempting him, and saying unto him, Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife for every cause?

Mark 10:3-5 And he answered and said unto them, What did Moses command you?  
4And they said, Moses suffered to write a bill of divorcement, and to put *her* away.  
5And Jesus answered and said unto them, For the hardness of your heart he wrote you this precept.

**b,c** There is a mistake that people make by associating divorce with happiness. I never recommend that people stay in an unhappy marriage...but that means that you learn to change the quality of your marriage, not the partner in your marriage. B and C both refer to people's sense of happiness.

**a** Jesus points out that in Israel, which was a nation of believers and unbelievers, there were civil accommodations that had been made because the law had to apply to both believers *and* unbelievers. When under grace, we are dealing with believers only and so the higher standard of no divorce is proper.

637. What was the ideal of marriage as God gave it for those who are truly His?
- a. Two or more people who love each other and enter a commitment for a period of time
  - b. A male and female to become one flesh not to be divided**
  - c. A person who enters into a relationship with him/herself, animal, or object if they can't find fulfillment in another person

Matt 19:4-6 And he answered and said unto them, Have ye not read, that he which made *them* at the beginning made them male and female,  
5And said, For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife: and they twain shall be one flesh?  
6Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder.

**a,c** A and C represent the modern view that marriage is a thing of convenience. If it is based on convenience, then when it becomes inconvenient then it is thrown away. Of course, C also includes a reference to how the issue of convenience and happiness ultimately leads to degradation.

**b** B refers to God's standard of a woman and a man joined together for life.

638. When the disciples asked again about the hardness of peoples hearts, how did Jesus respond to allow for divorce for believers?
- a. If adultery occurred at any time then divorce could be permitted
  - b. If people fell out of love then they could be divorced
  - c. If fornication occurred during the betrothal period then one could divorce**

Matt 19:9 And I say unto you, Whosoever shall put away his wife, except *it be* for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery: and whoso marrieth her which is put away doth commit adultery.

There are two problems with understanding what Jesus taught about divorce. One is the fact that He was approached with the Pharisees' dispute over "every cause." The other is the understanding of marriage itself.

The Greek word translated "adultery" (v. 9) refers to the sin of a married individual against his partner. If divorce could dissolve a marriage, a remarriage could not be considered adultery. But since Christ proclaimed it to be adultery, the first marriage must be viewed as still standing in the sight of God. Christ didn't make an exception. He said "except for marital unfaithfulness." The Greek word translated "marital unfaithfulness" is not the word for adultery but is the general word for immorality. Christ was referring to the Jewish marriage customs of his day. Marriage was begun by drawing a legal contract between the father of a man and the father of a woman, pledging them to each other. This marriage contract was called a betrothal. The couple were called husband and wife by virtue of that marriage contract. The marriage itself was not completed until at least 12 months after the betrothal contract was drawn up. But they were still referred to as husband and wife. Such was the relationship between Joseph and Mary when the Angel announced that Mary would conceive a child. The twelve-month waiting period was deemed necessary because of the low estate of morals of that day [that was because of the conflict in two schools of thought, the prevailing thought resulted in the ease of divorce]. That period gave sufficient time to reveal whether the woman was pregnant when the contract was drawn up. The interval also allowed time to see if she would become pregnant by an unfaithful act after being joined by contract to her husband. If the wife proved to be immoral, the marriage need not be completed; the contract could be broken by a divorce. However, so binding was the betrothal contract that it could be broken only by the husband appearing before the judges to accuse the woman of immorality. Thus the contract could be broken. Such was Joseph's decision when he discovered Mary's pregnancy (Matt 1:19). It was in the light of this context that Christ granted the exception (19:9). If one who was betrothed to a wife found in the betrothal period that she was guilty of fornication, that is, that she was an immoral woman, the marriage need not become consummated; but it had to be dissolved by a divorce. Since the marriage had not been completed, the man was free to marry without becoming an adulterer. Thus Christ utterly repudiated the Pharisaic interpretation of Deuteronomy 24:1-4, and he denied the right of divorce. He appealed to God's original law of marriage by which a man and woman were inseparably united until that marriage was dissolved by death. Thus the only possibility of divorce allowed by Christ was a cancellation of a marriage contract during the Jewish betrothal period before the marriage had been completed.

– Pentecost §132

The Mosaic Law permitted divorce when a wife proved faithless; but the Rabbinical interpreters after their wont disputed over this enactment. The school of Shammai, adhering to the letter of the Law, held that a wife should not be divorced except for unfaithfulness; whereas the school of Hillel, with a laxity very agreeable to the general inclination, allowed a husband to put away his wife "for every cause"—if he disliked her, if he fancied another woman more, if her cookery were not to his taste. The doctrine of Hillel was the common practice in our Lord's day, and it operated disastrously. It violated the sanctity of domestic life; and there is a hideous passage in the Talmud which shows what havoc it made of the obligations of morality. It was customary for a Rabbi of the school of Hillel, when he visited a strange town, to make public advertisement for a woman who would serve as his wife during his sojourn

there. It was an inhuman system and inflicted cruel wrong upon womankind. It put the wife at her husband's mercy. She could not divorce him, but for any whim he might divorce her and cast her upon the world.

The school of Hillel said it was lawful "for every cause," even for the most trivial offenses. The Jewish woman could not divorce her husband, as could the Roman and Greek women; but the man could put his wife away for almost any senseless excuse. They took the words: "matter of shame" in Deuteronomy, in the widest possible sense: if "she found no favour in his eyes," or "he found another woman more attractive"—which sounds modern enough—he could put her away. Many specific offenses were enumerated, such as going in public with uncovered head, entering into conversation with other men, speaking disrespectfully of the husband's parents in his presence, burning the bread, being quarrelsome or troublesome, getting a bad reputation or being childless (for ten years). The school of Hillel had prevailed, and there was great general moral laxity now. The Mosaic law really permitted divorce only for the cause of unfaithfulness, but the popular conception among the Jews at the time of Jesus was that of the Rabbinical interpreters of the school of Hillel. Woman had become a mere chattel of man, subject to his inhuman and cruel treatment. The Pharisees understood well that if Jesus took the side of Shammai or the stricter view of divorce, He would alienate a greater part of the multitude.

– Pentecost §132

639. How did Jesus avoid siding with one school that permitted divorce and the other that did not while at the same time not bringing down the ire of Herod who had killed John the Baptist stemming from him taking a wife through divorce?
- a. **He appealed to the original design of God, not the restrictions that Moses recorded**
  - b. He abandoned the Law in favor of following your heart
  - c. He found a way to combine everyone's concerns

Matt 19:5-6 And said, For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife: and they twain shall be one flesh?

6Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder.

- b** B represents the modern problem of putting feelings before facts.
- c** Jesus did not try to find some middle ground to accommodate all views possible.
- a** He pointed out that God's design was perfect from the beginning.

640. How did Jesus respond to the suggestion that it would be better not to even bother with marriage?
- a. Living together is better since the Law would not apply to them: they could separate whenever it was convenient
  - b. If someone is sure he does not have the ability to be faithful he should just date

**c. Only those who are eunuchs would not have to contend with the issue of divorce**

Matt 19:10-12 His disciples say unto him, If the case of the man be so with *his* wife, it is not good to marry.

11But he said unto them, All *men* cannot receive this saying, save *they* to whom it is given.

12For there are some eunuchs, which were so born from *their* mother's womb: and there are some eunuchs, which were made eunuchs of men: and there be eunuchs, which have made themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven's sake. He that is able to receive *it*, let him receive *it*.

**a** A represents the mistaken notions we discussed at the beginning of this section.

**b** B is interesting, but the failure of this possibility is that one is playing around with relationships which seems innocent enough. Paul addresses this problem in 1 Cor.

1Cor 7:7-9 For I would that all men were even as I myself. But every man hath his proper gift of God, one after this manner, and another after that.

8I say therefore to the unmarried and widows, It is good for them if they abide even as I.

9But if they cannot contain, let them marry: for it is better to marry than to burn.

**c** It is widely understood that being a eunuch by choice is a figurative reference.

## **112 - Lazarus and the Rich Man**

641. Why did the rich man go to Hell?

a. Because he was rich

**b. Because he was not saved**

c. Because he oppressed the poor

Luke 16:25,31 But Abraham said, Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented.

31And he said unto him, If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead.

**a,c** Having riches is not the problem that the rich man had. There is nothing inherently wrong with riches. This is obvious from the life of Solomon. God *blessed* Solomon with riches. Today, the modern philosophy is that there is something morally wrong with you if you are rich that you should repent of. The assumption is that in order to be rich you must have been part of a

privileged system that oppresses the poor.

**b** The rich man's spiritual condition was revealed by the fact that he only cared about the things of the world. He was presented as so consumed with pleasure that there is no reference as to even noticing Lazarus. The reason that the rich man was in Hell is revealed at the end of the story: he had not attended to the reading of the Scriptures where we find the answer to the problem of sin.

642. Read Luke 23:39-43, Eph 4:7-10, Rom 3:25,26. Where did saved people go when they died before the crucifixion?
- a. Heaven, because their sins were forgiven
  - b. Purgatory, because their unforgiven sins had to be paid for
  - c. Abraham's bosom, also known as Paradise or Captivity, because although God was righteous for forgiving those sins it was only in light of the cross that was to come**

Luke 23:39-43 And one of the malefactors which were hanged railed on him, saying, If thou be Christ, save thyself and us.

40But the other answering rebuked him, saying, Dost not thou fear God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation?

41And we indeed justly; for we receive the due reward of our deeds: but this man hath done nothing amiss.

42And he said unto Jesus, Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom.

43And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, To day shalt thou be with me in paradise.

Eph 4:7-10 But unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ.

8Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men.

9(Now that he ascended, what is it but that he also descended first into the lower parts of the earth?

10He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that he might fill all things.)

Rom 3:25,26 Whom God hath set forth *to be* a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God;

26To declare, *I say*, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.

**b** Purgatory, according to Roman Catholic theology, is actually only an Eschatological "idea" that is not a literal place. Such teaching existed in pagan religions, but not in the Bible.

**a** People in the Old Testament did not go immediately to heaven, and yet they were saved.

**c** God was justified in saving people, according to Romans 3:25,26, because of the death and resurrection of Christ that was to have come. It was not until Jesus presented His blood at the heavenly mercy seat that the way was made open for them to be received into glory.

Heb 9:11-12 But Christ being come an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building;

12Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption *for us*.

In the mean time, the righteous dead waited in what was called Paradise, Abraham's bosom, or captivity.

643. How was Hell described?

a. We are going through Hell while we are on earth

**b. A place of torment and fire**

c. A place where although we are separated from God we will at least be with our friends who had rejected Jesus

Luke 16:23-24 And in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom.

24And he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame.

**a** A is a common complaint that people think is a clever distraction from the real problem of eternal death in Hell.

**c** C is another way that people think is a clever distraction from the issue of salvation.

**b** Teaching on Hell is regularly diluted to try to not be so offensive. The fact of the matter is that Hell is a place of fire and torment. Even worse is that in the end, death and Hell will be cast into a lake of fire...as if Hell is not bad enough.

Rev 20:14 And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death.

The Jehovah's Witnesses are especially fond of declaring that this is "only" a parable. However, the Gospels generally announce something to be a parable if it is intended as one. Also, parables do not mention real names. Another problem with this is that Jesus would never use a pagan concept to teach Biblical doctrine. Even if it was "only" a parable, parables utilize real things to illustrate principles.

644. How bad is Hell?

- a. **It is so bad we wouldn't anyone to join us there**
- b. It is a place that is not so bad that we couldn't find a little comfort
- c. It is a place where the memory of our rejected opportunity for salvation will not haunt us forever

Luke 16:25-28 But Abraham said, Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented.

26And beside all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed: so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot; neither can they pass to us, that *would come* from thence.

27Then he said, I pray thee therefore, father, that thou wouldest send him to my father's house:

28For I have five brethren; that he may testify unto them, lest they also come into this place of torment.

**b,c** When we preach about Hell, there should be no doubt about how absolute the punishment is and that we will be thoroughly conscious there forever.

**a** People have offered conjecture about why the rich man wouldn't want his brothers there, but the least we can say is that those in Hell do not want anyone to join them there. This has been a significant consideration when someone has passed. If someone's testimony of faith is not known who has passed, then we cannot be bold at the funeral to claim they are in heaven. At the very least, though, we can say that they would not want someone hearing the funeral sermon to end up in Hell. This would be true whether someone was in Hell *or* Heaven. This also is something someone should consider who has a loved one they want to be with even though they might be in Hell. Those who go to Hell will *not be* with that loved one and the loved one would not want them to be in Hell if they truly loved the one who was left behind.

645. Why do people not need someone to come back from the dead to tell us about Hell to be convinced they should repent?

- a. **If they will not believe the Bible which is the foundation of faith then they are disposed against testimony of God in any form**
- b. No one has ever come back from the dead anyway so we could never know if a resurrection would be convincing
- c. People can get along just fine by their conscience so they don't need to worry about Hell

Luke 16:29-31 Abraham saith unto him, They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them.

30And he said, Nay, father Abraham: but if one went unto them from the dead, they will repent.

31And he said unto him, If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead.



**b** People think that they are clever to suggest that the only way to know anything is by experience, but B is simply false because Jesus *did* come back from the dead. Such people reveal their rebellion because they entirely discount the testimony of Christ's report on the afterlife.

**c** People getting along with their conscience roughly means they are just trying to ignore reality.

**a** The way we can know anything for sure is by the testimony of God's Word. It is not only by empirical, physical, evidence but by forensic analysis, which refers to a legal argumentation based on all information possible which comes from whatever source. Forensics often are applied but not limited to empirical evidence. They are belonging to, used in, or suitable to courts of judicature or to public discussion and debate.

### 113 - Normal Faith

646. Why do offenses come?

- a. So God's grace can be multiplied
- b. No one can keep from sinning
- c. We live in a sinful world and offense is going to come from somewhere**

Luke 17:1 Then said he unto the disciples, It is impossible but that offences will come: but woe *unto him*, through whom they come!

Rom 3:8 And not *rather*, (as we be slanderously reported, and as some affirm that we say,) Let us do evil, that good may come? whose damnation is just.

Rom 6:1-2 What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound?  
2God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?

**a** A is a slander that some brought against Paul that represents a common misconception about sin. Often people make the mistake that just because we are forgiven forever for being sinners that this is somehow a license to sin. According to Rom 6:1,2, one cannot leap to the conclusion that if God is glorified by His gracious treatment of our sin then the more we sin the greater glory God gets. And in fact, according to Rom 3:8, Paul was slandered as suggesting that we *should* sin so that God's grace could be applied.

**b** If we should not sin to bring glory to God's grace, then B suggests that we might as well give up because all we can do is sin. When it comes to salvation, no one is able to do good to get saved and all of our efforts might be sinful, but there is a middle option: we can do nothing; we can merely

submit ourselves to God to give in to Him saving us. Then there is the fact that after salvation, we have the ability by the new spirit in us to do good.

**c** Jesus refers to how there will be sin in the world, but does not suggest that this is anything other than an unfortunate reality. Luke 17:1 deals with what some call the "unfairness" of God. God is very fair. He will give Hell to sinners and heaven to believers. He is equal to all. He is very fair to let us have our way. The suffering we get might be because of judgment that God gives, but sometimes the suffering we go through is not because of our sin but just the fact that there are sinners acting as sinners in the world. Some might think that suffering from disease is not the result of someone sinning against us nor because of our own sin, but it nevertheless is the result of sin in the world – namely the sin of Adam and Eve and the curse that was placed on this world. There is never a justification to accuse God of not being good. That we get spared at times is still by the goodness of God. When someone gets saved miraculously in a storm, the atheist might snidely ask who sent the storm. We don't have to be shy in our answer. God sent the storm. Was it that God was trying to punish someone else and we got caught up in the situation? It could be yes or no. However that God sent the storm is at the very least the result of God unleashing judgment in this time from Adam and Eve and the Fall onward.

647. What should our response to offense be?

a. We should hold a grudge

**b. We should be quick to forgive**

c. We should make sure someone pays the consequences of their sin before we forgive them

Luke 17:3,4 Take heed to yourselves: If thy brother trespass against thee, rebuke him; and if he repent, forgive him.

4And if he trespass against thee seven times in a day, and seven times in a day turn again to thee, saying, I repent; thou shalt forgive him.

**b** B represents the attitude that we *should* have toward those who sin against us. We should be quick to forgive.

**a** By constantly dredging up the past and reminding someone of their sin is holding a grudge against them. Holding a grudge means resurrecting someone's failure to make them pay all over again. You can't have forgiven and hold a grudge at the same time.

**c** Making someone pay for their offenses before we forgive them is an oxymoron. The whole idea of forgiveness is not to require someone to pay. We should remember that although we should be quick to forgive that does not mean that we should ignore helping someone grow spiritually out of their failure which *could* require hard work and even restitution.

648. What did Jesus teach in response to their request to increase their faith?

- a. **We don't need to increase our faith so much as to live the Christian life as our normal duty**
- b. Living by faith makes us more valuable to God
- c. Living by works makes faith unnecessary

Luke 17:7-10 But which of you, having a servant plowing or feeding cattle, will say unto him by and by, when he is come from the field, Go and sit down to meat?

8And will not rather say unto him, Make ready wherewith I may sup, and gird thyself, and serve me, till I have eaten and drunken; and afterward thou shalt eat and drink?

9Doth he thank that servant because he did the things that were commanded him? I trow not.

10So likewise ye, when ye shall have done all those things which are commanded you, say, We are unprofitable servants: we have done that which was our duty to do.

**b** By suggesting that all that the servant did was just normal work that is owed to a master suggests that there is no greater application of faith that we can make that would make us more valuable to God. Whatever we do should have been done anyway. What makes us valuable at all to God is the blood of Christ which is applied equally and graciously to all who come to Him.

**c** C is strangely true, but only in theory, not in reality. If we could live according to the Law then we would not need faith. Since no one can do the Law 100% because all have sinned and come short of the glory of God, we have to exercise our faith in God's plan instead.

**a** We should live by simple faith believing God as a matter of course.

Luke 17:5-6 And the apostles said unto the Lord, Increase our faith.

6And the Lord said, If ye had faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye might say unto this sycamine tree, Be thou plucked up by the root, and be thou planted in the sea; and it should obey you.

The concept of "Normal Faith" is that we should just believe because we should and we should live out that faith in our normal everyday lives as we serve God and others.

## 114 - The Raising of Lazarus

649. What was Mary known for?

- a. She was slow to act and respond to Him
- b. She worked hard to serve Him
- c. **She anointed His feet and wiped them with her hair**

John 11:2,28-29 (It was *that* Mary which anointed the Lord with ointment, and wiped his feet with her hair, whose brother Lazarus was sick.)

28And when she had so said, she went her way, and called Mary her sister secretly,

saying, The Master is come, and calleth for thee.

<sup>29</sup>As soon as she heard *that*, she arose quickly, and came unto him.

**a** Mary might have been plagued with grief, but when she found out Jesus had called for her, she quickly responded. In the middle of whatever we are going through, it is inspiring to know that Jesus is personally interested in us.

**c** Mary's devotion was marked by her anointing His feet and wiping them with her hair. That devotion was so strong that John reminded the reader of this.

**b** Martha is the one who was known for serving diligently. Mary had a deep devotion for Christ that He had praised. Her devotion to Him was something that kept drawing her to Him even though she had strong questions to bring to Him.

650. How did Jesus feel about Lazarus?

- a. He loved him**
- b. He didn't really care to hang out with him
- c. He thought he was peculiar

John 11:5 Now Jesus loved Martha, and her sister, and Lazarus.

**a,b** Jesus treated all people equally and it was not based on how much fun someone was.

**c** Jesus had every reason to think that all people are peculiar. We, who are also peculiar and loved by Jesus, ought to always be careful to not be respecter of persons. We should accept all people as those whom Jesus loves.

651. What did Jesus do when He heard that Lazarus was sick?

- a. He rushed to take care of Him because Mary, Martha, and Lazarus were special to Him
- b. He waited two days before going to Him according to His own plan**
- c. He healed him from where He was at

John 11:3,4 Therefore his sisters sent unto him, saying, Lord, behold, he whom thou lovest is sick.

<sup>4</sup>When Jesus heard *that*, he said, This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God might be glorified thereby.

John 11:11 These things said he: and after that he saith unto them, Our friend Lazarus sleepeth; but I go, that I may awake him out of sleep.

**a** It is important to point out that this answer is wrong simply because this is not what Jesus did, not because it is the wrong thing to do. Rushing to someone's side in a time of need is very often the right thing to do. And, in fact, we should be especially mindful of those who very close to us.

Gal 6:9-10 And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not.

<sup>10</sup>As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all *men*, especially unto them who are of the household of faith.

However, Jesus did not do this at this time.

**c** Healing Lazarus from afar is not something that was inappropriate to do. Jesus had done this on other occasions.

**b** Jesus was operating according to His own plan for what He was about to do. It was not time yet for Him to attend to Lazarus and His family. In ministering to others, it is important to point out that sometimes it is important to wait and give people or situations room to develop before they can be addressed. Sometimes people need room to work on things before they can receive further advice. Sometimes situations need to develop before it warrants us getting involved. Jesus' response was thoughtful and deliberate. If we move too quickly to "fix" everything we can look controlling. Even when we go to help, we need to be *inviting* people to use our recommendation instead of being forceful. Yet, there are other times, especially when sin is involved, that we need to be clear in our condemnation. The bottom line is that we need to be cautious in our approach with people.

652. How did Jesus respond to His disciples' fear of going to Judea where people wanted to stone Him?

a. Doing things with His understanding darkened was a risk worth taking

**b. There was no harm that could come while walking in the light of God's will**

c. Jesus didn't have any light to go by so He took their advice and waited till it was safe to go

John 11:7-10 Then after that saith he to *his* disciples, Let us go into Judaea again.

<sup>8</sup>*His* disciples say unto him, Master, the Jews of late sought to stone thee; and goest thou thither again?

<sup>9</sup>Jesus answered, Are there not twelve hours in the day? If any man walk in the day, he stumbleth not, because he seeth the light of this world.

<sup>10</sup>But if a man walk in the night, he stumbleth, because there is no light in him.

**a,c** Jesus understanding was never darkened by sin, doubt, or lack of information. It is understandable, especially when we are darkened by lack of information, to be cautious and take less risks, but Jesus had a good assessment of the situation.

**b** Having no harm obviously does not mean that no harm could *ever* come. However, the key words here are while walking in God's will. Jesus' crucifixion came in the darkness of man's sin, but while it was God's mission for Jesus to walk and work, He was not going to fulfill that mission. This part of Jesus' work was during a window of opportunity where God shined the light on Israel. Even when Jesus went to the cross, He did not stumble in His mission, because He had the light of His Father's will. One might argue that harm *did* come, but not really because He had the victory over that death. Ultimately we will also have that victory and our mission will not be ultimately harmed.

653. How did Jesus describe Lazarus condition?

- a. He said he was dead at first
- b. He said he ceased to exist
- c. He said he was sleeping at first**

John 11:11,12 These things said he: and after that he saith unto them, Our friend Lazarus sleepeth; but I go, that I may awake him out of sleep.  
12Then said his disciples, Lord, if he sleep, he shall do well.

**a,c** Jesus was, in effect, pointing out the true nature of death. The use of the word *sleep* was a figure of speech that refers to death, but we want to distinguish this from any sense that the Christian Science cult applies to death. They use double talk to call death an illusion, while at the same time recognizing that people die. Certainly, we hold to the fact that our life continues on beyond the death of the body. Where the Christian Science cult especially gets into trouble is when they extend that sense of illusion to disease and treat it also as an illusion and rely solely on prayer for healing.

**b** The Jehovah's Witnesses and Seventh Day Adventists teach that the soul goes to sleep and that they in the resurrection they are raised either to life or complete annihilation in an eternal death, ceasing to exist.

654. How did Thomas Didymus demonstrate that the disciples did not understand the opportunity to grow in faith?

- a. He suggested they go and mourn with Mary and Martha
- b. He suggested that life is hopeless and they might as well go and die with him**
- c. He suggested they go and encourage Mary and Martha with the teaching of the resurrection

John 11:16 Then said Thomas, which is called Didymus, unto his fellowdisciples, Let us also go, that we may die with him.

**a,c** A and C are more normal reactions on hearing of someone dying. We should take comfort in each other and the consideration of the resurrection.

**b** Thomas' pessimism represents how people either without the Lord or without sufficient spiritual maturity treat death as hopeless. This was going to turn out to be an opportunity for them to see that there is more to death than dying.

655. What was the difference between Mary and Martha's reaction?

- a. Martha went out to meet Jesus to discuss with Him what He would do**
- b. Mary was more trusting in what Jesus would do
- c. Mary sought affirmation of her faith

John 11:19-29,32 And many of the Jews came to Martha and Mary, to comfort them concerning their brother.

20Then Martha, as soon as she heard that Jesus was coming, went and met him: but Mary sat *still* in the house.

21Then said Martha unto Jesus, Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died.

22But I know, that even now, whatsoever thou wilt ask of God, God will give *it* thee.

23Jesus saith unto her, Thy brother shall rise again.

24Martha saith unto him, I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day.

25Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live:

26And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this?

27She saith unto him, Yea, Lord: I believe that thou art the Christ, the Son of God, which should come into the world.

28And when she had so said, she went her way, and called Mary her sister secretly, saying, The Master is come, and calleth for thee.

29As soon as she heard *that*, she arose quickly, and came unto him.

32Then when Mary was come where Jesus was, and saw him, she fell down at his feet, saying unto him, Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died.

**b** We do not get an indication that Mary was more trusting. She also questioned Jesus about letting Lazarus die.

**c** It was Martha who discussed the resurrection with Christ, not Mary.

**a** Martha, by habit, was given over to action, which served her well in this situation. Her proactivity led her to have a greater encounter with Christ.

656. What did Jesus promise for those who believed in Him?

- a. That He would give those who believe in Him life in the end times
- b. That He would raise up those who believe in Him at the end times
- c. That those who believe in Him will partake of His resurrection and life**

John 11:23-26 Jesus saith unto her, Thy brother shall rise again.

24Martha saith unto him, I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last

day.

25 Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live:

26 And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this?

**a,b** The problem with A and B is the idea that we have to wait until the end times to receive either eternal life or the resurrection. This can lead to the misconception that before we receive life in the end we could lose our salvation in the meantime.

1 John 5:12 He that hath the Son hath life; *and* he that hath not the Son of God hath not life.

**c** We have the resurrection now, in our spirit.

Gal 4:5-7 To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.

6 And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father.

7 Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ.

That adoption that we have now, in our spirit, is the same adoption that we are *going* to receive, the resurrection of the body.

Rom 8:23 And not only *they*, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, *to wit*, the redemption of our body.

657. Jesus knew He was going to raise Lazarus. How did He respond to Mary's sorrow?

a. He told her to cheer up because it is a sin to be sad

b. He told her to be strong

**c. He wept**

John 11:35 Jesus wept.

**a,b** A and B are typical "comfort" we receive from others in times of grief.

**c** It is important to point out that Jesus wept, even though He knew very well what He was about to do. Grief is something we *should* feel as a matter of compassion. It is not just a matter that this was made a verse by itself when it came time to number the verses. This is a very short sentence that stands appropriately by itself. In weeping, there are no words to do justice for our sorrow. In fact, words would ruin the importance of the emotion. Sometimes we need to just weep.



658. What did Jesus do when Martha told Him about how long Lazarus had been in the grave?
- He sought her counsel on what He should do
  - He reminded her what He had said about His power and life**
  - He blessed the grave and comforted Martha and Mary

John 11:39,40 Jesus said, Take ye away the stone. Martha, the sister of him that was dead, saith unto him, Lord, by this time he stinketh: for he hath been *dead* four days. 40Jesus saith unto her, Said I not unto thee, that, if thou wouldest believe, thou shouldest see the glory of God?

**a,c** When Martha pointed out that Lazarus was in the grave four days, Jesus had already discussed the resurrection with her. He didn't say, "Okay, I see your point. Let's discuss this and see what we can come up with." Neither did He just give up and just try to comfort her and her sister.

**b** Jesus reminded her about His power and the glory of God. Sometimes we need to take stock of all that lays before us in glory, too, when we start to lose sight of the goal.

659. What did Jesus do to Larazrus?
- He restored his life**
  - He resurrected him
  - He resuscitated him

John 11:23 Jesus saith unto her, Thy brother shall rise again.

**a,b** B looks like it would be the obvious answer because Lazarus was, after all, raised from the dead and Jesus talked about Himself *being* the resurrection. However, technically, Jesus only said he would *rise* again. When Jesus comforted John the Baptist, He talked about the dead being *raised*, not resurrected, which means coming out of sleep, not the word for resurrection.

Matt 11:5 The blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the gospel preached to them.

**c** Jesus did not resuscitate Lazarus as if he was about to be dead. He made sure that the people would be able to see that He had power over death. This was a testimony about what was about to happen in His own death. He did not "swoon," as the Moslems would like to teach, and then resuscitate in the coolness of the tomb. Jesus truly did have power over death in the resurrection.

## 115 - The Effect of the Raising of Lazarus

We should be very careful to notice that the word to rise is general and *can* refer to the resurrection, but only in the sense that one is coming back from the dead. The word for *resurrection* is *anastasis* and can *only* refer to resurrection. It is the stricter and more explicit word that would apply to when the body is transformed.

660. How did the people respond to Jesus raising Lazarus?

a. They asked Him to raise their dead loved ones

**b. They believed on Him**

c. They covered for Him because they knew the Pharisees wanted to kill Him

John 11:45-46 Then many of the Jews which came to Mary, and had seen the things which Jesus did, believed on him.

46But some of them went their ways to the Pharisees, and told them what things Jesus had done

**a** Asking Jesus to come and do the same thing for *their* relatives would have been understandable, except that they had not been prepared in their hearts the way that Mary and Martha were.

**b** They at least were ready to believe in Christ. It is not as though Jesus purpose was to bring them to the point that they *could* have faith for the raising of their loved ones. In fact, Jesus *had* performed raising from the dead for others. The whole objective of the ministry of Christ was to bring people to faith in Him and the resurrection. Once people get saved, they are often not ready to walk with Christ by faith. Often they need to have room to grow further as they discover more of the Christian life.

**c** Also, though, there were others who did not believe. We don't know explicitly from these verses whether they were taking info back to the Pharisees so they could plot to kill Him. The Pharisees did indeed make plans after this –

John 11:53 Then from that day forth they took counsel together for to put him to death

Their sentiments before this were to "cancel" Jesus, so these people had to have some inkling of how the Pharisees would react. Rebellious resistance is easily accompanied by jealousy and envy. There is no record of them having any qualms about bringing their report to the Pharisees knowing where this would be likely to go.

661. How did the Pharisees and priests respond to the raising of Lazarus?
- a. **The Romans would react and take away their place and nation because Jesus was getting too much power**
  - b. They felt their understanding of the resurrection was justified and believed in Jesus
  - c. They joined with Jesus against the Sadducees because they did not believe in the resurrection

John 11:47,48 Then gathered the chief priests and the Pharisees a council, and said, What do we? for this man doeth many miracles.

48If we let him thus alone, all *men* will believe on him: and the Romans shall come and take away both our place and nation

**b,c** According to Acts 4:6, 5:17 We know that Caiaphas was a Sadducee. According to Josephus, the historian, many priests were Sadducees, also. The Pharisees were ordinarily at odds with the Sadducees, who did not believe in the resurrection. Paul took advantage of this in Acts 23, turning them against each other in his trial before the Sanhedrin. Here, however, the Pharisees did *not* join with *Jesus* as they would later do with *Paul*. This suggests the intensity of their animosity towards Christ that they would rather join their opponents than support Jesus who was actually *practicing* resurrection. As long as the resurrection was only theory, the Pharisees were safe believing it. When it became more of a reality, the Pharisees' hypocrisy was revealed. This is often the case with many people. They are fine to believe in theory but when the stakes are raised they are revealed to be mere dilettantes who dabble in philosophy only for amusement. The Pharisees quickly and unceremoniously joined up with the Sadducees.

**a** With the stakes raised by the threat of the Romans, the Pharisees preferred to join with the Sadducees. Rome did not mind local beliefs as long as they did not interfere with Roman governance. With the rise of the popularity of Christ, the Jews thought this would bring too much attention from the Romans and, stepping in to stop Christ, the Jews would be caught up in the destruction. In fact, though, when Christ *did* appear before Pilate, he was willing to let Jesus go and the Jewish leaders had to *push* Pilate to see Him as a threat to the Roman government.

662. What did Caiaphas unwittingly prophecy?

- a. **The sacrifice of Jesus for the world**
- b. How the Romans would not be satisfied with destroying Jesus alone
- c. How Jesus would restore David's throne over the Romans

John 11:49-52 And one of them, *named* Caiaphas, being the high priest that same year, said unto them, Ye know nothing at all,

50Nor consider that it is expedient for us, that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not.

51And this spake he not of himself: but being high priest that year, he prophesied that Jesus should die for that nation;

52And not for that nation only, but that also he should gather together in one the

children of God that were scattered abroad

**b** Caiaphas did not predict the destruction of Jerusalem because of Christ. This would be done for different reasons 35 years later. As it was, Pilate was going to have to be pressured into sacrificing Christ. That Rome would not be satisfied with destroying Jesus alone was an assumption that, as mentioned in the last question, was wrong.

**c** If Caiaphas *had* been sympathetic to Christ, then he would have been wrong to assume that Jesus was about to exercise His Millennial Messianic mission. Such an assumption would be similar to preachers who believe in new revelation today claiming who will or will not be the next president.

**a** Caiaphas' rationale about Christ (whether the good that *could* have been or the bad things he assumed about Christ) stand in contrast to the fact that God was going to have His way no matter what. Man does not always know why or what God is doing and guesses wrong. However, here we see a principle of the exercise of God's sovereignty. God did not force the Jews to sacrifice Jesus. All that had to be done was to present Jesus before them and they would do what was in their nature to do. Man has his imaginations for why things happen, but many things are just the natural outworking of people either working with or against God. Man in his rebellious state will naturally gravitate towards those things that will lead to the attempted reign of the Antichrist. When men seek the Lord, revival will naturally happen.

663. What did the counsel do now that was different regarding Jesus?

- a. They encouraged His teaching so the people could be revived
- b. They tried to turn the people against Him
- c. They actively plotted His death**

John 11:47-48 Then gathered the chief priests and the Pharisees a council, and said, What do we? for this man doeth many miracles.

48If we let him thus alone, all *men* will believe on him: and the Romans shall come and take away both our place and nation

John 11:53 Then from that day forth they took counsel together for to put him to death

**a** Had the counsel been sincerely interested in the welfare of Israel, they might have taken note about the positive message of revival that Jesus was presenting.

**b** Although they would try to turn the people against Christ, they really did not do so. They knew that He was very popular and that His popularity was growing.

**c** They began to plot for His death which would end up stirring up only a small portion of the people who would be in Jerusalem for the Passover. Oddly, this same spirit is reflected in the idea of *Cancel Culture*. It is only a

very vocal minority in critical places that can so effectively destroy someone's career and personal life.

664. Where did Jesus go to avoid the Jews?

- a. Jerusalem in Judea
- b. The town of Ephraim in Samaria**
- c. To Capernaum by Galilee

John 11:54 Jesus therefore walked no more openly among the Jews; but went thence unto a country near to the wilderness, into a city called Ephraim, and there continued with his disciples.

**c** Jesus was getting too close to the fulfillment of His mission in Jerusalem to go back to Galilee. He had done so much there in preparation for His presentation in Jerusalem and His work there was done. Perhaps going back there might have started a new round of interest that would have been a pressure on Him to have to break.

**a** Jerusalem is just what He had to avoid until it was just the right time, shortly, to present Himself in the Triumphal entry.

**b** It is interesting that of all the places that Jesus should grace was a city that was not sympathetic to the Jews. Those who have a highly developed religious sense and system run the risk of being so organized that Jesus is not welcome there. By going to a nearby Samaritan city, we get the picture that reminds us that Jesus is available to all: the very religious who are rejecting, the apathetic who might not even know what they are missing, and the true believers who walk with Him.

# THE TRIUMPHAL ENTRY TO THE TRIUMPH OVER DEATH

## On the Way to Jerusalem

### 116 - Jesus Leaves for Jerusalem through Samaria and Galilee

There are a lot of great lessons that take place in the last week of Jesus earthly ministry. When considering the questions that have been generated for *this* study, over 33% of the Gospels are dedicated to the last ten days of the earthly ministry of Christ while this time period represents less than 1% of His entire time in ministry. As we go into this portion of the study, we don't want to miss how significant the Passion Week is compared to the rest of His ministry in substance, let alone theological significance.

665. Where did Jesus go on His way to Jerusalem?

- a. **Through Samaria and Galilee**
- b. Through India to consult with other Enlightened Ones
- c. Through England and the Americas where the Ten Lost Tribes were

Luke 17:11 And it came to pass, as he went to Jerusalem, that he passed through the midst of Samaria and Galilee.

**a,b,c** One of the great interests that some people have had is the unrecorded moments of Jesus ministry and travel. Not every step he took or word He spoke was recorded but this is especially because the Gospels are not merely a biography of Jesus' life. He is not presented in such a way to only make Him understandable. The Gospels present an intentional argument for following Him. Because of this, some writers pushing their agenda, whether to be unique and significant or to promote a false teaching, like to use the fact that there are unrecorded events to insert their speculations and fantasies. This is the case with B and C. We have made reference to this in other questions but use this opportunity to point out that there are efforts to water down or corrupt the message of Christ by associating Him with Eastern mysticism or to promote such things as Mormonism which teaches that there was an American civilization that gave rise to Mormonism.

## 117 - Ten Lepers Healed

666. When were the lepers healed?
- a. While they sat and waited patiently for the healing
  - b. On their way to present themselves to the priest according to the Law**
  - c. When they mustered enough faith to receive the healing

Luke 17:14 And when he saw *them*, he said unto them, Go shew yourselves unto the priests. And it came to pass, that, as they went, they were cleansed.

**c** C refers to the way some think that healing is a function of faith. They think that if you can just conjure up enough passion that it will be like mind over matter and heal a person. Most miracles do indeed involve faith, but sometimes it is possible that God might work in spite of people's doubt, like He did when Jesus calmed the waters and upbraided the disciples for being of little faith. However, even when faith is involved, it often took only simple faith, not *great* faith. There are many times where the people believing did not have confidence that God would act. Naaman, the people gathering manna on Friday, the people of Nineveh, Thomas, and even John the Baptist. Being bold is not necessarily having great faith, it could just be great presumption which actually involves taking God's name in vain, attributing something to Him that is not necessarily His work or plan.

**a** Even though there are times we need to sit still and just let God work, most of the time we have to be careful that we do not merely sit and wait and do nothing while we wait for God. Many times we get the answer to our prayer as we are actively engaged in the thing we are praying for, like the servant of Abraham praying while he was *in the way* fetching a wife for Isaac. We know that God is working His ultimate miracles as the plan for the End Times is being carried out, but we are supposed to occupy till He comes.

**b** The lepers went on their way to the Priest to present themselves as they were supposed to do. This is certainly a case of being *in the way* as they were being healed. None of the men made the mistake of doubting and turning away until the healing had been realized. What is also interesting is that we have no reason to think that any of these were Jews, yet they obeyed Christ and went to the Priest as the Jewish Law required.

667. Who found salvation in addition to the healing?
- a. The Jews because they were the elect of God
  - b. The Samaritan because he devoted his life to serving God
  - c. The Samaritan who expressed his faith by thanking Jesus**

Luke 17:15,16 And one of them, when he saw that he was healed, turned back, and with a loud voice glorified God,  
16And fell down on *his* face at his feet, giving him thanks: and he was a Samaritan.

**a** None of these are likely to have been Jewish. Since Jesus was coming through Samaria and the others were traveling with the Samaritan, we assume that they were all Samaritans. The point here is that being Jewish did not confer any special benefit. Jesus was good to all.

**b** The grace of God is demonstrated here in that not only was the man healed a Samaritan, but he is not known for his service to God that he should compensate for his foreign status.

**c** Since salvation is something we cannot work for, it must be received by grace. Jesus suffered enough to cover the sins of the world, but only those who receive it will actually be saved. The only thing we can do is say "Thank you." The Samaritan demonstrated receiving salvation by faith the moment he gave thanks. This is one of the ways that we might think of expressing saving faith.

### **118 - The Kingdom Does Not Come with Observation**

668. How would the Jews be able to tell when the kingdom was come?

- a. By careful interpretation of the prophecies and signs
- b. By the latest arrival of the Messiah pretender to declare himself
- c. By recognizing that the kingdom was already started**

Luke 17:20,21 And when he was demanded of the Pharisees, when the kingdom of God should come, he answered them and said, The kingdom of God cometh not with observation:

21Neither shall they say, Lo here! or, lo there! for, behold, the kingdom of God is within you.

**b** B represents how some people's sentiments can be so strong desiring the return of Christ that they are susceptible to accepting anything someone says about the coming of Christ. One of the problems is that the things that are said in the Bible might seem too fantastic to believe and yet we *are* watching what looks like it could be End Times. This can be confused with other assumptions and imaginations about the End that people have. There have been those who have claimed to be Christ. What is almost as bad are those who claim an expertise whose nature as a false prophet is most frequently demonstrated by setting dates for the Lord's return and interpreting any out of the ordinary occurrence as a fulfillment of Bible prophecy. The best way to describe such things is to point out how they are consistent with the End Times.

**a** We *should* be careful in discerning the times, as long as we remember that the times are open-ended enough to leave plenty of room to keep us in anticipation of Christ coming back at *any* moment.

Luke 17:23,24 And they shall say to you, See here; or, see there: go not after *them*, nor follow *them*.



24For as the lightning, that lighteneth out of the one *part* under heaven, shineth unto the other *part* under heaven; so shall also the Son of man be in his day.

**c** After pointing out that the kingdom does not come with observation, or being able to be scientifically determined, Jesus *does* go on to talk about signs that and ways of anticipating His return. *However*, this does not mean that we should de-emphasize that the kingdom is *now* and is *in us*. We need to be living with a kingdom mentality and that we are part of a kingdom that transcends this world. This reminds us of the doctrine of the transcendence and immanence of God. God is certainly present *in* this world, but He exists apart from it. As God exists, so does His kingdom. It is beyond this world. Even though we do not have His transcendence, His rule in our lives carries us apart from the world.

669. What great event must start the final arrival of the Messiah?

- a. A great revival
- b. The crucifixion
- c. The Rapture**

Luke 17:26-37 And as it was in the days of Noe, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of man.

27They did eat, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, and the flood came, and destroyed them all.

28Likewise also as it was in the days of Lot; they did eat, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they builded;

29But the same day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven, and destroyed *them* all.

30Even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of man is revealed.

31In that day, he which shall be upon the housetop, and his stuff in the house, let him not come down to take it away: and he that is in the field, let him likewise not return back.

32Remember Lot's wife.

33Whosoever shall seek to save his life shall lose it; and whosoever shall lose his life shall preserve it.

34I tell you, in that night there shall be two *men* in one bed; the one shall be taken, and the other shall be left.

35Two *women* shall be grinding together; the one shall be taken, and the other left.

36Two *men* shall be in the field; the one shall be taken, and the other left.

37And they answered and said unto him, Where, Lord? And he said unto them, Wheresoever the body *is*, thither will the eagles be gathered together.

**a** Jesus does not present, here, a picture of a great revival. At best, there will be a great apathy (vs. 26-27).

**b.** The crucifixion was something that was totally out of the picture in the Jewish understanding. It is mentioned here to point out that we have extra eschatological dimension of the suffering Savior, which is something the Jews, in later times, reinterpreted from Isa 53 into a suffering nation.

**c** Especially according to vs. 34-36, the Rapture is the next event we should be anticipating. This is in response to the Pharisees about what they thought

they should be looking for.

670. What will finally precede the arrival of the Messiah?

- a. The Rapture
- b. A great revival
- c. A flood and fire and brimstone**

Luke 17:28-30 Likewise also as it was in the days of Lot; they did eat, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they builded;

29But the same day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven, and destroyed *them* all.

30Even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of man is revealed.

**a** The key word in this question is *finally*. The Rapture will take place at the beginning of the Tribulation.

**b** There are a couple of ways of looking at this, but generally speaking there will be no great revival.

Matt 24:11-12 And many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many.

12And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold.

However, if by revival what is meant that there will be 144,000 Jewish preachers, then that will certainly be different.

**c** The flood, as in Noah's case, and fire, as in Lot's case, are references to what the judgment will be like in the Tribulation preceding the revelation of Christ as He begins the Millennial kingdom. Jesus does not make a distinction of the sequence of events. As in Matt 24, Jesus ends His statement with what *we* should expect to happen next, the Rapture as described in

Luke 17:31-36 In that day, he which shall be upon the housetop, and his stuff in the house, let him not come down to take it away: and he that is in the field, let him likewise not return back.

32Remember Lot's wife.

33Whosoever shall seek to save his life shall lose it; and whosoever shall lose his life shall preserve it.

34I tell you, in that night there shall be two *men* in one bed; the one shall be taken, and the other shall be left.

35Two *women* shall be grinding together; the one shall be taken, and the other left.

36Two *men* shall be in the field; the one shall be taken, and the other left.

In Matthew, Jesus *does* make a reference to the timing of those taken as distinct from the rest of the events of the Tribulation.

Matt 24:32 Now learn a parable of the fig tree; When his branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer *is* nigh:

Here, Jesus uses the word *now*, or *apo de*, but from, indicating that He is departing from His previous discussion to introduce a different consideration, namely the Rapture. Just before the judgment struck in Noah's day and Lot's

day, the saints were removed.

671. Read Rev. 16:12-21, 19:11-21. As Jesus concludes His explanation of the scope of time for the coming of the kingdom, where will the culmination of this take place?

- a. **Around Armageddon in the Jezreel Valley, where many will lie dead**
- b. In Heaven, where God will cast the Devil out of Heaven
- c. In Jerusalem in 70 A.D. when the Roman General Titus came to destroy Jerusalem

Luke 17:37 And they answered and said unto him, Where, Lord? And he said unto them, Wheresoever the body *is*, thither will the eagles be gathered together.

Rev 16:12-21 And the sixth angel poured out his vial upon the great river Euphrates; and water thereof was dried up, that the way of the kings of the east might be prepared.

13And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs *come* out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet.

14For they are the spirits of devils, working miracles, *which* go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty.

15Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed *is* he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame.

16And he gathered them together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon.

17And the seventh angel poured out his vial into the air; and there came a great voice out of the temple of heaven, from the throne, saying, It is done.

18And there were voices, and thunders, and lightnings; and there was a great earthquake, such as was not since men were upon the earth, so mighty an earthquake, *and* so great.

19And the great city was divided into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell: and great Babylon came in remembrance before God, to give unto her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of his wrath.

20And every island fled away, and the mountains were not found.

21And there fell upon men a great hail out of heaven, *every stone* about the weight of a talent: and men blasphemed God because of the plague of the hail; for the plague thereof was exceeding great.

Rev 19:11-21 And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him *was* called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war.

12His eyes *were* as a flame of fire, and on his head *were* many crowns; and he had a name written, that no man knew, but he himself.

13And he *was* clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called The Word of God.

14And the armies *which were* in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean.

15And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God.

16And he hath on *his* vesture and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS.

17And I saw an angel standing in the sun; and he cried with a loud voice, saying to all the fowls that fly in the midst of heaven, Come and gather yourselves together unto

the supper of the great God;

18That ye may eat the flesh of kings, and the flesh of captains, and the flesh of mighty men, and the flesh of horses, and of them that sit on them, and the flesh of all *men*, both free and bond, both small and great.

19And I saw the beast, and the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against him that sat on the horse, and against his army.

20And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast, and them that worshipped his image. These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone.

21And the remnant were slain with the sword of him that sat upon the horse, which *sword* proceeded out of his mouth: and all the fowls were filled with their flesh.

**b,c** Refers to how Preterism, which teaches that the judgment of Christ occurred in 70 A.D. with the destruction of Jerusalem and that Satan and his angels were cast into the Lake of Fire.

**a** According to Joel 2, some interpret the Day of the Lord starting with many cosmological events. However, what they fail to do is understand the scope of the Day of the Lord. The Day of the Lord can refer to specific *parts* of the Day of the Lord or the whole agenda of the Day of the Lord. Those who think that the Day of the Lord starts after the signs in the heavens according to Joel 2 fail to compare this to Joel 3 where the Day of the Lord is described as coming after Armageddon.

Joel 3:14 Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision: for the day of the LORD is near in the valley of decision.

The Day of the Lord can refer to any part from after the Rapture to the Millennium. The idea that the Rapture comes at some time during the Tribulation flies in the face that the kingdom comes with observation. The whole idea of imminent return of Christ does not allow for any kind of observation. When you least expect it, you're resurrected. Any signs in the heaven would make the return of Christ very well timed. The idea that no man knows the day or the hour or the season is a figure of speech that indicates more than not just knowing the calendar day and time. We will repeat some of this later on, also.

## 119 - The Importunate Woman

672. How shall we pray before God according to the example of the widow?
- We should repeat a prayer formula over and over
  - We should resign ourselves to defeat and not trouble God because He is so busy
  - We should be bold and not give up praying right away**

Luke 18:1,5 And he spake a parable unto them *to this end*, that men ought always to pray, and not to faint;

5Yet because this widow troubleth me, I will avenge her, lest by her continual coming she weary me.

**a** We should always pray and continually come to the Lord, but this does not suggest that we have a set formula. In fact we are explicitly told not to do that according to:

Matt 6:7,9 But when ye pray, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen *do*: for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking.

9After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name.

**b** According to vs.1 and 5 we are specifically told *not* to faint, but keep on continuing to come to the Lord.

**c** This all does not suggest that once we start praying we have to just keep on praying forever about a request. The idea is that if something still is a burden on our heart that we should not feel like we have to just walk away from the prayer at any set time.

673. What did Jesus anticipate finding when He would come back to earth?

- a. People living in revival
- b. People living faithless lives**
- c. People living in economic abundance without any needs

Luke 18:7,8 And shall not God avenge his own elect, which cry day and night unto him, though he bear long with them?

8I tell you that he will avenge them speedily. Nevertheless when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?

**c** Today, the world defines governance by social oppression as measured by wealth. This in turn increases the attitude that wealth in this world is our objective. As we have taught before, wealth is okay to have...as long as it is a servant and not a master. When people trust in their wealth for their peace instead of Jesus then they have slipped over into idolatry.

**a,b** We know that in the end people will be turned over to godlessness which the Antichrist will step into. Each dispensation degenerates into judgment. It is natural that there will be faithlessness and no revival, a time known as the Laodicean church age that is lukewarm, or indifferent, to the things of God.

Matt 24:12 And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold.

## 120 - The Pharisee and the Publican

674. Why did Jesus choose to compare the Pharisee and the Publican in their prayers?

- a. They were equally devoted to God though in different ways
- b. The Publican was someone to be excused for his sin because he couldn't help his situation
- c. The Pharisee represented the kind of people everyone thought would be heard by God because of his righteousness**

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Luke 18:9 And he spake this parable unto certain which trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others:

In these answers, there are three wrong assumptions about how people can be acceptable to God. The last one applies to the Pharisee.

**a** A represents the attitude that anyone can come to God his own way as long as he is sincere. Jesus is addressing the distinction between the Pharisee and the Publican. Some try to ignore contradictory beliefs, though, and would like to assume that sincerity is the key rather than the belief someone has.

**b** B represents the assumption that people can't be held accountable if they are uninformed. This flies in the face of the situation that Jesus presents. Those who hold this view would miss the point of this parable in an effort to excuse the Publican. However, everyone *is* accountable according to

Rom 1:18-20 For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness;  
19Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath shewed *it* unto them.  
20For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, *even* his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse:

John 16:7-8 Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you.  
8And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment:

**c** C is yet another assumption that people have of giving account to God by their good works. This is the one the Pharisee is presented with having.

675. Whose prayers were heard by God?

- a. The Pharisee because of how good he was and didn't need to be saved
- b. The Publican because he acknowledged his sin and need for salvation**
- c. They both were because God is going to save everyone in the end

Luke 18:13,14 And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as *his* eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner.  
14I tell you, this man went down to his house justified *rather* than the other: for every one that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.

**c** C is a reference to Universalism which teaches that everyone goes to heaven. There are a variety of reasons that are used such as that a merciful God would never want to see anyone suffering and so He would not send anyone to hell. Of course, if this were true then there would be no suffering now. Another false reason would be that because Jesus died for the world then the whole world has been redeemed. This is false because there *will* be those in hell because people rejected the offer of salvation.

**a** The Pharisee is another example of a good man lost while a bad man is saved. It is often important to point out to people, also, that Nicodemus was a Pharisee and a ruler of the Jews. He was not only "good" but very religious. Jesus told him that he needed to be born again. How religious we are, or in other words how well we *practice* our religion, is not the gauge for being accepted by God.

**b** The Publican acknowledged that his acceptance was entirely dependent on God. This reminds us that there is not just one formula for praying for salvation. There are basic ideas that must be included like acknowledging that we are sinners who are depending on God's plan for salvation. Jesus is only dealing with the attitudes of the men. We would include other concerns about recognizing that Jesus, the Savior, is God, that all sin, past, present, and future, is forgiven, that we are forgiven for *being* a sinner, that it is Christ's sacrifice that pays for our salvation. These things are pointed out for clarity when we are leading someone to Christ, but it is possible that some people in bad Christian churches are saved in spite of the lack of information they are given. Such people might not know exactly how to articulate the theology of salvation (soteriology) but they knew, implicitly, these things as they were throwing themselves on God's mercy for salvation.

## 121 - Blessing of the Children

676. Besides young children, who also was brought to Jesus?

- a. Relics
- b. Statues
- c. Infants**

Luke 18:15,16 And they brought unto him also infants, that he would touch them: but when *his* disciples saw *it*, they rebuked them.

16But Jesus called them *unto him*, and said, Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God.

**a,b** A and B represent the attitude of people that there is some supernatural power that can reside in an object as if in some magical way. Jesus would never use objects as sources of power.

**c** It is important to recognize that although we don't baptize infants, that doesn't mean that we have no spiritual responsibility toward them. This is one of the reasons that we dedicate children as Jesus was and others. One of the great problems today is parents who will neglect their children's spiritual welfare and keep their children *away* from church. When we do a dedication, there is probably more of an emphasis on getting the parents to dedicate *themselves* to the Lord to fulfill their responsibility to bring up their child before the Lord.

677. What kind of person makes up the kingdom of heaven?

- a. **People who come to Christ with a childlike faith**
- b. People who are baptized as infants on the authority of a sponsor
- c. People who do the good works that a child does

Mark 10:15 Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein.

Luke 18:17 Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child shall in no wise enter therein.

**c** Children are sinners too. The implication here is that children behave in innocense. It is true that there is an age when children have not reached the age of accountability, but that is very, very young. If a child is old enough to have faith then they are old enough to be held accountable for their sin.

**b** Because of misunderstanding of baptism people invented the use of a sponsor who speaks on behalf of the child until he is old enough to confirm that the sponsor did so.

John 1:12-13 But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, *even* to them that believe on his name:  
13 Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

Acts 8:36-37 And as they went on *their* way, they came unto a certain water: and the eunuch said, See, *here is* water; what doth hinder me to be baptized?  
37 And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.

**a** We come to the Lord with a non-debating simple trust in the Lord. However, many people are doing more than asking questions to make sure they get it right about going to heaven. They are often more interested in getting rid of you, defeating you so they don't have to respond to God, play games with you, etc.

678. What did Jesus do for the children?

- a. **He blessed them**
- b. He baptized them
- c. He made them into Christians

Mark 10:16 And he took them up in his arms, put *his* hands upon them, and blessed them.

**b** People think that being baptized has something to do with *becoming* a Christian. Jesus did not baptize them, though.

**c** Making them into Christians would be consistent with Calvinistic doctrine that people have no say in receiving Christ.



**a** Jesus only blessed them. This could involve all kinds of things that involve the goodness of God but would not confer salvation on them. Salvation requires the willingness of the recipient.

679. What should be our attitude towards children?

a. They should be seen and not heard

**b. They should be encouraged to come to Christ**

c. They should be discouraged from being saved until they are older and have been properly catechized

Matt 19:14 But Jesus said, Suffer little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me: for of such is the kingdom of heaven.

**a** Children being seen and not heard is an attitude that some people have that goes beyond a child being merely respectful. We should encourage children to learn and participate in the things of the Lord.

**b** Sometimes people think that we should leave children alone and not "force our beliefs on them." They argue that they will teach them nothing about God but let them make their own decision when they get older. This is positively absurd because they then set down rules and teach them anyway...just not about God. The whole idea is that we need to give them information and to act on the information they receive. Children can get saved, too.

**c** C is the opposite of letting children wait till they grow up to be presented with any teaching of God lest they be *forced* into religion. The problem with is *catechizing*, or putting a child through something like a denominational curriculum, is that many things about Christianity cannot be properly understood without being born again first. The doctrines regarding salvation are basic and appeal to things that are part of being a human: knowing that we are sinners and that there is a righteous God who will judge (Rom 1) so that when they hear the Gospel they recognize it as the remedy.

## 122 - The Rich Young Ruler

680. What did the rich young ruler do to appear that he understood exactly who Jesus was?

a. He asked to become a disciple

b. He offered to do fund raisers and advertising for Him

**c. He called Him Good and Master, and kneeled down in worship**

Mark 10:17,18 And when he was gone forth into the way, there came one running, and kneeled to him, and asked him, Good Master, what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?

18And Jesus said unto him, Why callest thou me good? *there is none good but one, that is, God.*

**a** Asking to become a disciple would have been good, but that would not

necessarily mean that he understood *exactly* who Jesus was. Following a popular leader would be a little common. Some Hindus and Moslems claim to be a follower of Christ, looking at Christianity as a behavioral thing.

**b** Some people are just happy to be part of a campaign for the sense of significance, excitement, and feeling of doing something important. Fund raising and advertising would give the sense of being part of a cause, not a way to build a relationship.

**c**

He assumed a posture of respect and even submission. He addressed Jesus by the title "good teacher." One of the titles given God in Jewish writing was: "The Good One of the world." - Pentecost, §134

This would explain Jesus' challenge to him, pointing out that he just used a title for God. As a ruler (of the synagogue), the young man could be expected to know this. The fact that he kneeled before Jesus suggests that he knew that Jesus deserved worship.

681. What did Jesus do to first test the faith of the young ruler?

- a. He quizzed him on his Bible knowledge
- b. He asked him if he really understood what he was saying by calling Him good since only God is good**
- c. He asked him if he was ready to forsake the Law

Matt 19:17 And he said unto him, Why callest thou me good? *there is* none good but one, *that is*, God: but if thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments.

This is directly related to the question before but it goes to the question of Jesus' method of challenging him.

**c** C is a reminder of how some people viewed Jesus as a revolutionary. The only thing that could make Jesus appear this way was the fact that He ran counter to the status quo which was not true worship for God. Doing something extreme and out of the ordinary is certainly devotion, but devotion only counts if it is to someone who deserves devotion. Jesus did not challenge him to do something radically wrong just to prove that he was fanatically devoted to Him.

**a** A represents a mistake that some make when trying to talk to others about spiritual things. Talking about the Bible and religion are easy for anyone to do without being a believer. At some point you have to get direct.

**b** Jesus put the young man on the spot about what he thought about Him. He called for a greater commitment. This is similar to the question I ask when people say they believe in God. I ask them how they spell "God" and they invariably say "g-o-d." Then I ask them whether they used a capital G or a little g. They will say capital G and then I ask them if they mean the God of

the universe Who is all powerful, righteous, wise, and is the Creator of the universe and deserves to be obeyed. A lot of people say capital G and then treat God as if He is only a little g god. I point out that such people make themselves god. Whoever has veto power over the other is that person's god. It is as if Jesus is saying, "If I am good then I am God; are you willing to recognize this?"

682. How did the young ruler respond to Jesus?

- a. **He tried to find out which commandment would get him into heaven**
- b. He declared that Jesus was the Christ who could make him righteous by faith
- c. He left Him because he was satisfied that he was doing all the commandments

Matt 19:16,18 And, behold, one came and said unto him, Good Master, what good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life?

18He saith unto him, Which? Jesus said, Thou shalt do no murder, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness,

**b** B would have been the right thing to do.

**c** The fact that the young man didn't leave but sought clarification indicates that he had some doubt about himself and suggests that he knew that the Law did not have power to save. Of course, as so many do, if he *had* left thinking that he was actually doing all the commandments this would indicate that he was not very smart.

**a** The young ruler possibly sensed that something was missing and wanted to make sure he had that base covered, too. This could also be an indication that he knew that Jesus was from God (at the very least) because someone who was so excellent was a good one to compare yourself to.

683. Jesus had already challenged the young ruler about his relation to God. Which of the commandments dealing with our relation to man did Jesus leave out in His next challenge?

- a. Not to judge
- b. Not to covet**
- c. Not to talk about religion or politics

Exod 20:17 Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that *is* thy neighbour's.

**a** Not judging is a popular notion that people assume is noble and good.

**c** Not talking about religion or politics is another notion that people have of what is not acceptable. People are often more consumed about good manners in a polite and politically correct society. Their social rules trump God's rule.

**b** The young man sort of had the first commandment down. He was willing to worship God. The first commandment is the contrary of the last commandment where self is put first. By recognizing Jesus was God (sort of) and naming all the commandments, Jesus was holding out for the final test and focusing on the true nature of the young man. It would be like a laser focused on his heart.

684. What made the young ruler so accountable for how he responded to the demands of the Law?

- a. He had violated so many of the commandments so regularly
- b. He was ignorant of the Law
- c. A ruler was supposed to have had mastery in his understanding of the Law**

Luke 18:21 And he said, All these have I kept from my youth up.

**a** The young ruler claimed the opposite of A. He suggested that he was *very* familiar with the Law as a practitioner of the Law.

**b** It is widely said that ignorance of the Law is no excuse but this doesn't matter anyway because God *has* revealed His power and righteousness to all according to Romans 1.

**c** As a ruler he should have been familiar with the Law.

685. What indicated that the young ruler was covetous?

- a. He could not bear the thought of parting with any of his great riches in order to follow Christ**
- b. He was only willing to give up any riches if he could use it as a tax deduction
- c. He was only willing to give up any riches if he could direct how they were to be used

Matt 19:22 But when the young man heard that saying, he went away sorrowful: for he had great possessions.

**b** It has been pointed out that believers will give the same amount whether they lose a tax break or not. Others will decrease their giving in the assumption that they are helping others through their taxes and if giving to the church means only giving to charity then they should be excused. They don't take into account that giving to church is giving to the Lord's work of soul winning and bringing people to God – which the state is not going to do. If giving only is good for a tax break then people are more interested in ways to keep more of their money.

**c** Some people actually only will give in church if they are able to tell how the money should be used. There are limited ways in which money can be directed in general, but the more someone wants that control then the more

likely they do not see the money as given to the Lord but as something that still belongs to them.

**a** This young man was confronted with the idea of total surrender, which he just could not do. His wealth and substance was just too important to him rather than wealth in heaven.

These all indicate covetousness, it is just that the way the young ruler manifested covetousness was to not be willing to give up anything at all. We should be aware that there are many ways to be covetous.

686. Why would it be hard for a rich man to get saved?

**a. Because of their trust in their wealth**

b. Because having too much money is a sin

c. Because the wealthy only get rich by corrupt methods

d. Because enjoying the fruits of your labor is sinful when others do not have much

Mark 10:23 And Jesus looked round about, and saith unto his disciples, How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God!

**b** B is wrong for two reasons. First, it suggests that there is such a thing as too much money. One cannot predict how much money is going to be needed for future problems so you can't say there is too much. There might be such a thing as money lying around that will possibly never be used but that is only an inefficient use of money. As Christians, we need to have spiritual wisdom on the use of money. The second problem is that money itself is a sin. God speaks of the wise use of money especially in the book of Proverbs, but does not condemn wealth by itself.

**c** The wealthy sometimes get rich by corrupt methods, but that is only one possibility. You will always have disparities between people, but there are numerous reasons why. Thomas Sowell writes in *Discrimination and Disparities*:

What seems a more tenable conclusion is that..."The world has never been a level playing field." The idea that it would be a level playing field, if it were not for either genes or discrimination, is a preconception in defiance of both logic and facts. Nothing is easier to find than sins among human beings, but to automatically make those sins the sole, or even primary, cause of different outcomes among different peoples is to ignore many other reasons for those disparities. Geographic differences are one among other factors that make for a skewed distribution of outcomes. Coastal peoples have long tended to be more prosperous and more advanced than people of the same race living farther inland, while people living in river valleys have likewise tended to be more prosperous and more advanced than people living up in the mountains.

While Karl Marx's vast three-volume economic treatise was a far greater intellectual achievement, "exploitation" was at no point in its 2,500 pages treated as a testable hypothesis, but was instead the foundation assumption on which an elaborate

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intellectual superstructure was built. And that proved to be a foundation of quicksand. Getting rid of capitalist "exploiters" in Communist countries did not raise the living standards of workers, even to levels common in many capitalist countries, where workers were presumably still being exploited, as Marxists conceived the term.

**d** The poor will always be here for numerous reasons. When asked about this, I have had to explain that there are some who became poor as a result of bad life skills and the *reinforcement* of those bad skills. There are others who prefer a lifestyle of poverty, panhandling instead of doing the work required to get out of poverty. There are those whose time is taken up trying to fulfill all the requirements to be on welfare. There are those who are victims of government systems that make it hard to leave the system. There are those who are just stuck by their physical circumstances. There are yet others who are not wealthy but are not exactly poor either because they value other things like time and relationship more than hyper-achievement. As Christians, we *should* do good to the poor out of the love of God.

Mark 14:7 For ye have the poor with you always, and whensoever ye will ye may do them good: but me ye have not always.

Deut 15:11 For the poor shall never cease out of the land: therefore I command thee, saying, Thou shalt open thine hand wide unto thy brother, to thy poor, and to thy needy, in thy land.

But this does not mean that we should feel guilty for what we have.

Eccl 3:12-13 I know that *there is* no good in them, but for *a man* to rejoice, and to do good in his life.

<sup>13</sup>And also that every man should eat and drink, and enjoy the good of all his labour, *it is* the gift of God.

**a** The problem with wealth is the idea of trusting in it. You can demonstrate this by the assumption that wealth will take care of you when you should be depending on God. When people amass wealth in order to prolong their physical existence or their ties to this world they can miss taking care of the eternal. Some people put off serving God or even doing the things that are important in life until they are sufficiently prepared financially rather than prepare and trust God as they go. When you worry about acceptance because of how you appear rather than for what you are in your character then that is a form of trusting in riches.

687. Why might the disciples think it impossible for people to get saved?

- a. Since all people have at least some money means they are trusting in money then no one could be saved**
- b. If those who were blessed by God with riches couldn't be good enough to be saved then how could anyone get saved
- c. There are some things that are not possible for God to do

Mark 10:24-26 And the disciples were astonished at his words. But Jesus answereth again, and saith unto them, Children, how hard is it for them that trust in riches to

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enter into the kingdom of God!

25 It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God.

26 And they were astonished out of measure, saying among themselves, Who then can be saved?

**b** There was no question about riches being good enough. People are saved by calling on the name of the Lord.

**c** The disciples did not question the ability of God, but the ability of men.

**a** If having money is a sign of trusting money then we all would indeed have a problem.

688. How did Jesus show that even those who have forsaken all are not immune to the possibility of covetousness?

a. The disciples were getting rich off of the sales of their books about how to get rich by speaking the promises of God

b. The disciples were bragging about how humble they were by how little they had

**c. The disciples had great reward in the life to come**

Matt 19:27-29 Then answered Peter and said unto him, Behold, we have forsaken all, and followed thee; what shall we have therefore?

28 And Jesus said unto them, Verily I say unto you, That ye which have followed me, in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.

29 And every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my name's sake, shall receive an hundredfold, and shall inherit everlasting life.

**c** Peter had tried to suggest they were possibly immune to the problem of covetousness since they had left all. Jesus pointed out that there will be rewards ahead of them. It is possible to turn our attention from earthly rewards and still be doing things because of chasing after rewards. We have to be careful to live primarily for the glory of God.

**b** Peter was not necessarily boasting about his humility, but being proud of poverty is also a form of covetousness in that by boasting they are making wealth a primary concern.

**a** A is a reference to how people can still be covetous while being religious but just transferring it to their religious life. You can see this when preachers encourage people to seek wealth as evidence of God's approval, or going first class as a sign of God's approval. We should seek excellence but not at the cost of true spirituality.

689. How does someone have true riches?

- a. **By putting their interests last**
- b. By getting a prestigious title in church
- c. By living a simple life

Matt 19:30 But many *that are* first shall be last; and the last *shall be* first.

**b** People should be able to serve God with or without a title.

**c** Living a simple life makes it easier to have true riches, but people can be so dedicated to the simple life that they miss opportunities to be rich in friends. For example, you might not ever go out to eat, but you also might miss the opportunity to have fellowship with someone. Hospitality is something that we should not scrimp on.

**a** The true way to the riches of relationship is to focus on others.

### 123 - Laborers for the Vineyard

690. Why was the householder at fault for how he paid his workers?

- a. Those who worked longer should have been paid more
- b. He was not at fault, no one should get paid more than anyone else
- c. **He was not at fault, he paid each worker what each one had agreed to work for**

Matt 20:13-15 But he answered one of them, and said, Friend, I do thee no wrong: didst not thou agree with me for a penny?

14Take *that* thine *is*, and go thy way: I will give unto this last, even as unto thee.

15Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with mine own? Is thine eye evil, because I am good?

**c** The householder, who represents God, has the sovereign right to make arrangements to deal with people. The householder is consistent with the rule that he establishes and is not merely being arbitrary. There is no inherent principle of payment at work here. He contracted with each individual according to what he was willing to pay at any time and honored his contract with each one.

**b** The householder chose to pay them the same amount because that was the arrangement he had with them individually. The amount was entirely coincidental, not because there is some universal rule that states no one should get paid more than anyone else, no matter how little or much they worked.

**a** In the same way, there is no universal rule that states that there has to be equal pay for equal work. Generally, this is very practical, but the situation is not general. It was tailored individually, not generally.



691. How is God's grace good?

- a. Entering Heaven is made easier by our labors
- b. Entering Heaven is not based on the degree of our works**
- c. Entering Heaven is free to all whether or not they believe if they have labored hard for the Lord

Matt 20:15 Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with mine own? Is thine eye evil, because I am good?

**a** A is a reflection of how people think that heaven is works based. If it is works based, then grace is irrelevant.

**c** C is the opposite of A. If salvation is not works based that does not mean that salvation is automatic. The idea that salvation is universal ignores the fact that there is a judgment for sin. Man's evil works do get judged as part of their condemnation.

**b** B is the correct formulation that simply states that salvation is not a function of works. It is a function of God's grace. The workers' eye was evil because they were merely setting up a standard that would give them some kind of advantage.

692. How does one become part of the chosen?

- a. By God forcing them to become a laborer without agreeing to it
- b. Everyone is part of the chosen whether they accept the calling to labor
- c. By entering into an agreement to accept the calling to labor**

Matt 20:8,16 So when even was come, the lord of the vineyard saith unto his steward, Call the labourers, and give them *their* hire, beginning from the last unto the first. 16So the last shall be first, and the first last: for many be called, but few chosen.

**a** No one was forced to enter into a relationship with the householder.

**b** B is a reflection of Universalism and is the opposite of A.

**c** They each had that relationship by answering the call. This parable is given on the heels of the rich young ruler who had just left Christ. What is unstated in this parable is how the young ruler had the opportunity to enter into a relationship but did not do so. While many are called, only those who answer the call are chosen.

## **124 - Jesus goes to Jerusalem and Foretells His Passion**

693. What did Jesus do when He saw the fearfulness of the disciples going to Jerusalem?

- a. He told them to be happy, don't worry
- b. He explained to them the fearful things that were coming**
- c. He promised them victory over the opposition

Mark 10:32 And they were in the way going up to Jerusalem; and Jesus went before them: and they were amazed; and as they followed, they were afraid. And he took again the twelve, and began to tell them what things should happen unto him,

**a** A is the way many people end up dodging reality. It is easier to just dismiss the reality and find some way to be happy as if happiness was the goal we should be striving for.

**c** There certainly would be victory to come *ultimately*. Some preach that people will *only* experience victory, but there are going to be losses along the way.

**b** Jesus did not present an idealized world to the disciples. Self-help, positive thinking, and motivational speakers are right to try to help people see what is potential, but they would go too far if they suggested that victory can actually be achieved 100% of the time if people were to only follow their advice.

694. How did the disciples react to the news of Jesus' impending death and resurrection?

- a. They didn't get it even though Jesus was plain spoken**
- b. They fortified themselves for what was to come
- c. They abandoned Him

Luke 18:34 And they understood none of these things: and this saying was hid from them, neither knew they the things which were spoken.

All three of these represent two typical ways that people respond to the hard times we face.

**c** For some people, dropping out is their option. This calls into question their understanding of their commitment to begin with. Which, in turn, calls into question whether they were saved to begin with. This problem was especially notable after the last and greatest persecution before Constantine paved the way for the Roman Catholic Church.

The Persecution by Diocletian was the last and most severe persecution of Christians in the Roman Empire. In 303, the emperors Diocletian, Maximian, Galerius, and Constantius issued a series of edicts rescinding Christians' legal rights and demanding that they comply with traditional religious practices. Later edicts targeted the clergy and demanded universal sacrifice, ordering all inhabitants to sacrifice to the gods. The persecution varied in intensity across the empire—weakest in Gaul and Britain, where only the first edict was applied, and strongest in the Eastern provinces. Persecutory laws were nullified by different emperors (Galerius with the Edict of Serdica in 311) at different times, but Constantine and Licinius' Edict of Milan (313) has traditionally marked the end of the persecution.

The Roman governor of North Africa, lenient to the large Christian minority under his rule throughout the Diocletianic Persecutions, was satisfied when Christians handed over their scriptures as a token repudiation of faith. When the persecution

ended, Christians who did so were called traditores—"those who handed (the holy things) over"—by their critics (who were mainly from the poorer classes).[2]  
...Donatists were rigorists; the church must be a church of "saints" (not "sinners"), and sacraments administered by traditores were invalid.  
– wikipedia

**b** It would be good to be fortified by prayer, Christian service, and study for what is to come, but this does not guarantee being able to stand up against severe problems.

**a** We still remember that the followers of Christ were primarily trained in their Jewish life to look for the Messiah in His second coming. Sometimes it takes a while to be able to understand the Scriptures in the light of our newer studies, but we have to be prepared to make changes as we learn. In this case, it is not surprising that the disciples were not quite ready for what is to come. Sometimes we have to learn by actually going through the hard times to be able to truly understand the depths of our ignorance.

## 125 - The Request of James and John

695. When the mother of James and John requested positions for her sons, what did Jesus promise her?

- a. They would certainly deserve a promotion
- b. They would certainly get to go through the trials Jesus would suffer**
- c. They would be granted a patriarchy they would be able to pass on to others after them

**c** C is a reference to the Catholic notion of papal or patriarchal succession where the apostles transferred their apostleship on to those who took their place on down through the generations. This mirrors the way the world works with dynasties, but there is nothing Biblical about it.

**a** There are certainly rewards that we will get for our service, but it would remain to be seen how James or John would fare in their Christian walk.

**b** James and John would at the very least have the opportunity to go through trials. What they would do with those opportunities would be up to them.

696. How does one achieve greatness?

- a. By serving others' interests and needs**
- b. By promoting themselves
- c. By much preparation and personality

**b,c** Although promoting self is likely to be understood as bragging and boasting, nevertheless, there is a certain amount of initiative one needs to take to advance. Preparation for service is also important. Personality can be a benefit, too. These by themselves don't lie at the foundation of true greatness.

**a** Serving others' interests and needs out of selflessness can replace self-promotion, preparation, and personality to achieve greatness. Paul describes it this way in 1Cor 13:

1Cor 13:1-7 Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become *as* sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal.

2And though I have *the gift of* prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing.

3And though I bestow all my goods to feed *the poor*, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing.

4Charity suffereth long, *and* is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up,

5Doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil;

6Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth;

7Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things.

697. What example did Jesus set for leadership?

a. The working of miracles

**b. The sacrificing of Himself for the redemption of others**

c. Making many bold claims when preaching

**c** Sometimes people compensate for lack of leadership with loud speaking which will certainly help someone roll past problems until they come up with them. Jesus' walk was certainly louder than His talk...and His talk was no small thing!

**a** Jesus' miracles were certainly impressive, but there was something even greater He could do in His example of leadership.

**b** James and John might have aspired to leadership but Jesus pointed out that sacrifice of self was necessary, not accruing all that one could for self and power. In this way, Jesus was the ultimate example of leadership. Leadership means going first into the fight, not directing or bossing others to go into it.

## 126 - Mary Anoints Jesus

Fri night/Saturday, 6 days before passover

698. How did Mary, the sister of Martha, anoint Jesus?

**a. She anointed His head and feet**

b. She anointed His head

c. She anointed His feet

John 12:1-3 Then Jesus six days before the passover came to Bethany, where Lazarus was which had been dead, whom he raised from the dead.

2There they made him a supper; and Martha served: but Lazarus was one of them that sat at the table with him.

3Then took Mary a pound of ointment of spikenard, very costly, and anointed the feet

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of Jesus, and wiped his feet with her hair: and the house was filled with the odour of the ointment.

Matt 26:6-7 Now when Jesus was in Bethany, in the house of Simon the leper,  
7There came unto him a woman having an alabaster box of very precious ointment,  
and poured it on his head, as he sat *at meat*.

**a,b,c** This is an example of how you have to compare all the Gospels to get the full picture of what happened. Mary is not identified in Matthew and Mark where it only mentions that she only anointed His head. John records that it is Mary and that she also anointed His feet.

699. What effect did the complaint of Judas Iscariot have?

- a. He helped the disciples have better stewardship
- b. He shamed Mary for being so wasteful
- c. The other disciples got upset at Mary, too**

John 12:4,5 Then saith one of his disciples, Judas Iscariot, Simon's *son*, which should betray him,  
5Why was not this ointment sold for three hundred pence, and given to the poor?

Matt 26:8,9 But when his disciples saw *it*, they had indignation, saying, To what purpose *is* this waste?  
9For this ointment might have been sold for much, and given to the poor.

Mark 14:5 For it might have been sold for more than three hundred pence, and have been given to the poor. And they murmured against her.

**a,b** John is the writer who records that it was Judas who raised the complaint. Having better stewardship and not being wasteful is a common way to bring a complaint about a church. Whatever decision is made, people who are not happy with the decision will often justify themselves by saying that it could be done better and that there complaint is only a matter of stewardship.

**c** The effect of complaining is to often induce others to join in. Unless something is truly able to be done better (and this can be *very* subjective), we should be looking for ways to celebrate the contribution of each brother or sister and encourage people to express their spirituality and gifts.

700. What was Judas Iscariot's motivation?

- a. He was trying to be a good steward
- b. He was trying to get her money into the treasury so he could steal it**
- c. He was trying to protect Jesus

John 12:6 This he said, not that he cared for the poor; but because he was a thief, and had the bag, and bare what was put therein.

**a,c** This is similar to the previous answers where people will express the noblest of intentions.

**b** Outright stealing is not the only way to take away from the church. Looking to have one's own agenda *at the expense of others* is also a form of robbery.

701. What did Jesus say Mary was doing?

- a. She was anointing Him in advance of His death**
- b. She was showing off
- c. She was being worldly

John 12:7 Then said Jesus, Let her alone: against the day of my burying hath she kept this.

**a,b,c** It is possible to do things just for show, Mary was spiritually in tune with far more than met the eye.

702. How should the poor influence us?

- a. We should use all wealth to comfort and support the poor until poverty is defeated
- b. We should turn and look the other way if it becomes too much to see the poor
- c. We should take care of *all* responsibilities (including our ministry responsibilities) not just helping the poor**

Matt 26:10-12 When Jesus understood *it*, he said unto them, Why trouble ye the woman? for she hath wrought a good work upon me.

11For ye have the poor always with you; but me ye have not always.

12For in that she hath poured this ointment on my body, she did *it* for my burial.

**a** It is popular to suggest that the wealthy have an obligation to divest themselves of their riches to the poor. If this were actually done, there would never be an end to passing on wealth until all are equally miserable. The problem with this also is that one of the things that wealth producers create is jobs.

**b** Although we should be anxious to give people a hand up more than a hand out, this does not mean, either, that we should ignore poverty.

**c** The problem with helping the poor is that there have to be limits. There will always be those who are poor. Some due to their own bad decisions, some to their lack of competence, some to their circumstances, etc. Even the poor should be encouraged to live in a way to overcome their poverty and not depend on an endless supply from those who aren't poor. If habitual poverty were acceptable and put an obligation on the rich, there would be no incentive for people to live responsibly before God. Those who are genuinely suffering from poverty should be encouraged to live within their means without a sense of entitlement to what others have. True joy comes from serving God, not in the abundance of stuff in the world. Even those who cannot maintain a job and have to genuinely depend on welfare can be occupied in serving God and have dignity.

703. What blessing would Mary receive?

- a. **Her testimony of faith would be immortalized in the Word of God**
- b. She would be made rich to make up for her losses
- c. She would be able to brag about what she had done

Mark 14:9 Verily I say unto you, Wheresoever this gospel shall be preached throughout the whole world, *this* also that she hath done shall be spoken of for a memorial of her.

**b** Sometimes our rewards come quickly, sometimes later. Sometimes they are reserved for us in glory. It is a covetous mind that complains if their needs are not immediately taken care.

**c** A truly spiritual person does not look to be able to have bragging rights for what they have done. We should be happy knowing that God has been glorified by our work.

**a** We should desire to have our works turn in to opportunities for God's glory. We might not have had our works written down in God's Word as a testimony forever. That was truly a fantastic blessing that Mary had. However, that does not mean that our works are any less noticed by God. Sometimes our blessings are celebrated together with each other, but sometimes we are blessed that God always notices.

704. Why were many people there to see Jesus?

- a. They were beginning to be convinced that Jesus was the Messiah
- b. They were interested in Jesus because he had raised Lazarus**
- c. They wanted to kill Jesus because He had raised Lazarus

John 12:9-11 Much people of the **Jews** therefore knew that he was there: and they came not for Jesus' sake only, but that they might see Lazarus also, whom he had raised from the dead.

10But the chief priests consulted that they might put Lazarus also to death;

11Because that by reason of him many of the **Jews** went away, and believed on Jesus.

**a** The people were there to see Jesus, but not necessarily because they were being convinced of the Gospel.

**c** Only the chief priests were interested in putting Jesus to death. The people would be turned against Jesus later that week. It should be noted that these are different than the Galileans in that they were more closely identified with Jewish traditional culture as indicated by calling them *Jews*.

**b** Lazarus having been recently raised up drew people to see what was happening. People will often be interested in the fantastic when they should be more interested in their own spiritual condition before God.

## 127 - Blind Bartimaeus

It can sound like the accounts of Mark and Luke are conflicted regarding Jesus entering or coming out of Jericho. There were at that time, two Jerichos. There were the old city and the newer rebuilt city. One would pass through both on the way to Jerusalem.

705. Why might Bartimaeus have pressed to reach Jesus?

- a. Because of his need
- b. Because of his faith
- c. Because of his opposition to those who silenced him**

Mark 10:48 And many charged him that he should hold his peace: but he cried the more a great deal, *Thou* Son of David, have mercy on me.

Luke 18:39 And they which went before rebuked him, that he should hold his peace: but he cried so much the more, *Thou* Son of David, have mercy on me.

**a,b** There is probably an element of truth in all of these, but C is the best answer. Bartimaeus certainly had the sufficient need to be motivated and he evidently had the faith as in A and B.

**c** Bartimaeus specifically reacted against the pressure of the people. He is outstanding because very often people will only rebel in opposition to what is good to remain in or confirm their lost state. People need to rebel against rebellion. This situation, however, is the *opposite* of what we often see when offering a tract to someone, for example, in a group when *one* of them rejects our approach. Typically the rest in the group follow suit, even though there are some who look like they might have ordinarily been receptive. When someone's spiritual need is obvious you hope that will motivate them. Too many people choose to turn a blind eye to their spiritual blindness.

706. What indicated Bartimaeus' faith in Jesus?

- a. His insistence in seeing Him
- b. Everyone who is afflicted is ready to place their faith in Jesus
- c. He recognized Him by one of His Messianic titles, *Son of David***

Mark 10:48 And many charged him that he should hold his peace: but he cried the more a great deal, *Thou* Son of David, have mercy on me.

Luke 18:39 And they which went before rebuked him, that he should hold his peace: but he cried so much the more, *Thou* Son of David, have mercy on me.

**b** You would think that someone so bad off would be ready to relief. This is so intuitive yet so very wrong. This is related to how people are resistant to change. They are so used to the problem they would rather keep it than adapt to the change that would come with the solution. There is no greater tragedy than those who resist spiritual change. Being so afflicted does not necessarily translate into being more spiritually receptive.



**a** Bartimaeus' insistence on seeing Christ does not necessarily indicate his theological perspective that He is the Messiah. By itself, his insistence could possibly only indicate that he wanted to be healed.

**c** That Barimaeus recognized Jesus by one of His Messianic titles indicates that he was really in touch with who Jesus was.

Saturday night, abiding at the house of Zacchaeus

## 128 - Zacchaeus

707. Why were the people shocked that Jesus should desire to eat with Zacchaeus?

- a. As a publican, he was considered to be a sinner because he was a tax collector
- b. As a publican, he was considered to be a sinner in the service of the Romans, one who was outside the Law**
- c. As a publican, he had probably cheated the people in collecting their taxes

Luke 19:7 And when they saw *it*, they all murmured, saying, That he was gone to be guest with a man that is a sinner.

**c** Cheating the people is not what earned Zacchaeus the title of sinner, even though that *is* a sin. The problem of cheating was part of the larger problem of the Roman system.

**a** Tax collectors have always been unpopular. However, this was not sufficient to achieve the title of sinner.

**b** B is the fullest answer as compared to A or C. Being a supporter of the Roman system was downright sacrilegious to the Jews. By supporting a pagan state it was considered that they were supporting paganism itself. See more about this on page 330 where publicanism is described.

708. How did Zacchaeus respond to Jesus?

- a. He demonstrated his repentance by vowing to help people and to repay fourfold anyone he cheated**
- b. He vowed to help people and to repay fourfold anyone he cheated to pay for his sin
- c. He vowed to apologize to anyone he had cheated

Luke 19:6,8 And he made haste, and came down, and received him joyfully.  
8And Zacchaeus stood, and said unto the Lord; Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor; and if I have taken any thing from any man by false accusation, I restore *him* fourfold.

**b** There is no indication Zacchaeus felt this would compensate for his sin.

**c** On the other hand, apologizing was easily understood to be insufficient.

**a** True repentance is associated with restoration. Technically speaking, restoration is not part of faith and repentance, but it should be recognized as a natural outgrowth of repentance. In some groups, suggesting repentance is part of salvation is anathema and condemned. This is probably because they confuse repentance with restoration.

709. What did Jesus declare His mission on earth to be?

- a. To get people to be nice to each other to make a better society
- b. To get people to do good to make up for their sin to make a better society
- c. To seek and to save that which was lost**

Luke 19:10 For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.

**b** B represent the common fruit of amillennialism which taught that the mission of the church is to clean up the world to prepare a kingdom and a throne for Jesus to step into. This is what paved the way for the social Gospel which emphasizes cleaning up society by meeting societal needs of hunger, health, and social acceptance, for example.

**a** A is even worse than B. It represents a secular and sterilized version of the social Gospel that leads to Marxism while ignoring the nature of man. An uninformed, unsophisticated, and naive mindset presumptuously assumes that man can be regulated and coralled into a docile society where everyone abides by a politically approved code of expression. People condemn stereotyping but it is the nature of the human mind to find order. The opposite of stereotyping is chaos, which ignores order, removing any recognition of differences as mind numbed robots. If you don't want to be doomed by a stereotype, then live in such a way that people see you as fitting the *ideal* Christ stereotype. You can say, "I am not equal. I am me. The only thing equal is the right to be." Each of us are unique before God and the only thing we equally hold is the right to be who we are before God.

**c** The deliverance that Jesus came to give is in a totally different category. He didn't come *tame* a sinful world with a new kind of system. He came to help us *escape* the sinful world. This verse is one of the clearest statements of the mission of the church.

## 129 - The Ten Pounds

710. As Jesus approached Jerusalem before the Triumphal Entry, what were people interested in?
- Social benefits they would receive under a new administration
  - Whether Jesus would start a revolution
  - If Jesus was going to establish the kingdom of God of the Millennium**

Luke 19:11 And as they heard these things, he added and spake a parable, because he was nigh to Jerusalem, and because they thought that the kingdom of God should immediately appear.

**a** Social benefits is used sometimes to draw people to a new movement. When Jesus had multiplied the loaves, this was actually a factor in their thinking to make him a kings. This desire is not stated here, but it would not be to far off as they looked for a Messiah who was going to give them deliverance.

**b** Their view of a Messiah was not so revolutionary against their own leaders, but against the powers that were subjugating them.

**c** A and B are not necessarily wrong as much as they are incomplete. The people were so focused on their national pride that they only looked at what the final result of the Messiah would be. Jesus was now going to prepare them for the intervening time when He would return to establish His kingdom by giving them the parable about occupying till He comes.

711. What were the servants of the king to do while they waited for the king to come into his kingdom?
- Set up their own little kingdom
  - Keep busy serving him till he come**
  - Set up a kingdom for the king to step into

Luke 19:13 And he called his ten servants, and delivered them ten pounds, and said unto them, Occupy till I come.

**b** Jesus was concerned about the people staying faithful in their service even in the face of however the kingdom should be delayed. They were to stay busy while they waited.

**a** In the meantime, people in trying to improve on their service made the mistake of turning the work of God into a corporate enterprise with a central authority that finally became vested in the state. Creating a corporate structure with presidents and vice presidents appeared as Popes, Cardinals, Archbishops, and Bishops and then bringing in kings and princes under their control. This also can be attempted on a smaller scale as mega-churches create campuses and a multiplicity of elders to manage the affairs of the

church under a charismatic figure head. And yet on a smaller scale, individual pastors can attempt the same thing by becoming a nationally recognized leader amongst his peers. But it doesn't have to stop there. A small time pastor can make the mistake of ruling his church with the perception that he is bigger than he actually is.

**c** Setting up a kingdom for Jesus to step into sounds a little bit more humble, but this would not be the mission of the church. When Jesus does come back, it will be to receive His believers out of the world first and then He will bring them back seven years later as *He* descends to destroy the Antichrist and establish His throne by His power.

712. How were the first two servants rewarded?

**a. According to the return on their investments**

b. Equally

c. They received no reward, they were to be happy that they got into the kingdom at all

Luke 19:15-19 And it came to pass, that when he was returned, having received the kingdom, then he commanded these servants to be called unto him, to whom he had given the money, that he might know how much every man had gained by trading.

16Then came the first, saying, Lord, thy pound hath gained ten pounds.

17And he said unto him, Well, thou good servant: because thou hast been faithful in a very little, have thou authority over ten cities.

18And the second came, saying, Lord, thy pound hath gained five pounds.

19And he said likewise to him, Be thou also over five cities.

**a** Being rewarded depends on merit. Although merit does not earn one salvation, it certainly does bring reward.

**c** This is in contrast with C which is a reflection of how some people humbly are happy to just enter into glory. There is some sense to that, but we *should* be concerned about rewards because they are tied to our actions. Holding back on our efforts in order to present the appearance of humility is actually not a way to honor the Lord.

**b** B is a reflection about the modern thinking that suffering is not fair and that if one has the power to relieve suffering and they don't it is necessarily evil. Not doing good when it is in the power of our hand to do it *is* wrong, but coming to the rescue of someone who needs to learn and grow is not necessarily good. For example, helping a butterfly fly out of his cocoon seems like a nice idea, but the butterfly actually needs to go through that struggle for his wings to reach their final form.

713. How was the third servant rewarded?
- He got to have a share from the others so that they were all treated fairly
  - Because he did not use what he had, he had even that taken from him**
  - He got a second chance to prove himself

Luke 19:20-26 And another came, saying, Lord, behold, *here is* thy pound, which I have kept laid up in a napkin:

21For I feared thee, because thou art an austere man: thou takest up that thou layedst not down, and reapest that thou didst not sow.

22And he saith unto him, Out of thine own mouth will I judge thee, *thou* wicked servant. Thou knewest that I was an austere man, taking up that I laid not down, and reaping that I did not sow:

23Wherefore then gavest not thou my money into the bank, that at my coming I might have required mine own with usury?

24And he said unto them that stood by, Take from him the pound, and give *it* to him that hath ten pounds.

25(And they said unto him, Lord, he hath ten pounds.)

26For I say unto you, That unto every one which hath shall be given; and from him that hath not, even that he hath shall be taken away from him.

**b** B represents the great principle of "use it or lose it." This can be said of our talents. If they are not exercised and worked, we grow rusty and sloppy. This can also be illustrated by the decay of abandoned buildings. It is fascinating how an abandoned building deteriorates through lack of use and activity.

**c** This story represents what happens *after* life is over. While there can be second and third and millionth chances to serve God while we are alive, there are none after we die. Our opportunity to get saved and serve God to prepare for life in glory is only good while we are here.

**a** Our human nature tempts us to take advantage of the efforts of others. Having plenty at no cost has turned many hearts to self indulgence. This can be seen in churches where there are many who are happy to enjoy the services that are created by others.

714. What happened to the enemies of the kingdom?

- They were destroyed**
- They were allowed to come into the kingdom just as they were
- They were given a second chance to become part of the kingdom

Luke 19:27 But those mine enemies, which would not that I should reign over them, bring hither, and slay *them* before me.

**b** People are not happy with the idea that they could be excluded as if that is the fault of the judge. They are not free to enter just as they are, which is actually *very* fair.

**c** You are either in or out. There is no half way being in the kingdom of God.

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**a** Those who do not want to have God reign over them are free to do so, but then they don't get to be part of the kingdom. There are many people who are surprised at their destroyed lives after they had lived a life of doing things according to their wisdom

## The Triumphal Entry

### 130 - At Bethphage and Mount of Olives, Jesus Calls for the Ass and Colt

Sunday

715. Read Gen 49:10-11, Judg 10:2-4, 12:14, 1Ki 1:43-44. What indicated that Jesus was coming as a king in peace?

- a. **He would be riding on an ass**
- b. He would be riding a war horse to lead the Jews against the Romans
- c. He would be riding on a white horse with a vesture dipped in blood and His name written on His thigh, KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS

Gen 49:10-11 The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him *shall* the gathering of the people *be*.

11Binding his foal unto the vine, and his ass's colt unto the choice vine; he washed his garments in wine, and his clothes in the blood of grapes:

Judg 10:2-4 And he judged Israel twenty and three years, and died, and was buried in Shamir.

3And after him arose Jair, a Gileadite, and judged Israel twenty and two years.

4And he had thirty sons that rode on thirty ass colts, and they had thirty cities, which are called Havothjair unto this day, which *are* in the land of Gilead.

Judg 12:14 And he had forty sons and thirty nephews, that rode on threescore and ten ass colts: and he judged Israel eight years.

1Ki 1:43-44 And Jonathan answered and said to Adonijah, Verily our lord king David hath made Solomon king.

44And the king hath sent with him Zadok the priest, and Nathan the prophet, and Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, and the Cherethites, and the Pelethites, and they have caused him to ride upon the king's mule:

Rev 19:12-16 His eyes *were* as a flame of fire, and on his head *were* many crowns; and he had a name written, that no man knew, but he himself.

13And he *was* clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called The Word of God.

14And the armies *which were* in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean.

15And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God.

16And he hath on *his* vesture and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS.

**b,c** B is wrong because it is shortsighted and only fit the idea of the Messiah according to the conception the Jews of that day might have had. When Jesus comes *in victory* it would be over all the world, as in C.

**a** What is interesting in the figure of Christ arriving on an ass. As the other passages show, an ass was the animal that was used in times of peace.

Matt 21:5 Tell ye the daughter of Sion, Behold, thy King cometh unto thee, meek, and sitting upon an ass, and a colt the foal of an ass.

Matthew quotes from Zech 9:9 and in doing so clarifies the understanding of which animal Jesus rode. With a little bit of thought one should be able to discern the poetic reference to the colt of the ass as the one Jesus rode. Hebrew figures of speech often make a reference and then a qualifying phrase. The Greek grammatical structure specifically indicates that this should be understood as, "an ass, specifically, the foal of an ass," or "an ass, even the foal of an ass." The idea of bringing the colt's mother along indicates that it was unbroken and would be calmed by the presence of its mother.

The idea that is conveyed here is that Jesus is not only coming in peace as would be indicated by riding an ass, but by riding the unbroken colt there was no way that someone would think that there was any other possible way for Jesus to come but in peace. The colt would not possibly be used for anything aggressive.

716. What indicated that people in Jerusalem were probably aware and welcoming of Jesus?
- His arrival had gone viral on social media
  - The owners did not balk at His authority to requisition of the colt**
  - They asked for His autograph and took selfies with Him

Mark 11:4-6 And they went their way, and found the colt tied by the door without in a place where two ways met; and they loose him.

5And certain of them that stood there said unto them, What do ye, loosing the colt?

6And they said unto them even as Jesus had commanded: and they let them go.

Luke 19:34 And they said, The Lord hath need of him.

**a** A is a reflection of the quasi-fame that people have today, thinking they are stars if they can get noticed on social media.

**c** C is a reflection of another form of popularity that comes with the "paparazzi," "fanboys," and "groupies" who derive some sense of vicarious significance by who they have met or "know."

**b** The fact that this was something that the owner of the ass would accept from "The Lord" as normal suggests that He was sympathetic as to the importance of Christ.



## 131 - The Triumphal Entry

Sunday

The word *Triumph* is not used in the Bible but is used in theology to compare Christ's entry into Jerusalem with the military honor processional as a civil ceremony and religious rite in the Roman world. Not every general would be honored with a Triumph. It had to be voted by the Roman Senate to be publicly celebrated and sanctify the success of a military commander who had led Roman forces to victory in the service of the state.

717. Read 2Ki 9:13. What did the people spread before Jesus to welcome Him as King

- a. A red carpet
- b. Rose petals on a white runner
- c. Palm branches and clothing**

2Kgs 9:13 Then they hastened, and took every man his garment, and put *it* under him on the top of the stairs, and blew with trumpets, saying, Jehu is king.

**a,b** A and B are not just strange answers but are sensible in that the rose petals on a white runner is befitting a wedding ceremony which Jesus will have with His bride, the Church, in the Millennium. This even, however, was not a Millennial event. A red carpet might be related to Hollywood, but the idea of some kind of ground covering was not out of order for a king.

**c** It is understandable that clothing might be used as a ground covering but palm branches were associated with celebrating victory. John conveys that the people took palm branches to meet Jesus and Matt, Mark, and Luke indicate that they were then used to pave the way for Christ.

John 12:13 Took branches of palm trees, and went forth to meet him, and cried, Hosanna: Blessed *is* the King of Israel that cometh in the name of the Lord.

718. What did the people *not* recognize about Jesus on this occasion?

- a. He was a prophet
- b. He was a great teacher**
- c. He was the King of Israel

Matt 21:11 And the multitude said, This is Jesus the prophet of Nazareth of Galilee.

**b** People, today, who would like to treat Christ as less than God will often acknowledge He was a great teacher. However, if He was a teacher then what they should learn from Him is that He is God. It is significant that they might have recognized Him as a teacher since He had actually taught Israel so

much, but they clearly knew this was insufficient and that He was way more than a teacher.

**a** They at least acknowledged that He was a prophet, but this is not necessarily detracting from Him. Moses had predicted that Jesus would be a prophet they would hearken to.

Deut 18:15 The LORD thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto him ye shall hearken;

**c** The Gospel writers capture all kinds of phrases that could be used to express the idea that Jesus was King.

Matt 21:9 And the multitudes that went before, and that followed, cried, saying, Hosanna to **the Son of David**: Blessed *is* he that cometh in the name of the Lord; Hosanna in the highest.

Mark 11:10 Blessed *be* **the kingdom of our father David**, that cometh in the name of the Lord: Hosanna in the highest.

Luke 19:38 Saying, Blessed *be* **the King that cometh in the name of the Lord**: peace in heaven, and glory in the highest.

John 12:13 Took branches of palm trees, and went forth to meet him, and cried, Hosanna: Blessed *is* **the King of Israel that cometh in the name of the Lord**.

These Scriptures are an excellent example of how the Gospel writers collectively wrote of *all* the things that were said.

719. Read Ps 118:25. What does Hosanna mean?

- a. Praise God
- b. Save now**
- c. Blessed

Ps 118:25,26 Save now, I beseech thee, O LORD: O LORD, I beseech thee, send now prosperity.

<sup>26</sup>Blessed *be* he that cometh in the name of the LORD: we have blessed you out of the house of the LORD.

**a,c** When people read Hosanna, they might think this is another church word like *Amen*, *Praise God*, or *Hallelujah*.

**b** Hosanna has a very specific meaning and is transliterated from *save now* in Psa 118:25-26. This psalm is usually recognized as a statement about the success of David. Notice that Matthew and Mark report how the people recognized that this Psalm should be applied to Jesus in His entry to Jerusalem. They identify that salvation is come to the kingdom of David by the Son of David. This is reflected in Psa 118:27

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Psa 118:27 God *is* the LORD, which hath shewed us light: bind the sacrifice with cords, *even* unto the horns of the altar.

Just after the Triumphal Entry, Jesus would become the sacrifice for our sins, as John the Baptist prophesied:

John 1:29 The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.

"This is the day the lord hath made" in Psalm 118:24 is a reference to the fulfillment of the prophecy when Jesus entered into Jerusalem. There is something very powerful about Psalm 118, a *hallel* Psalm. *Hallel*, or praise, Psalms were recited at most of the Jewish holidays. Of all the Jewish holidays, the *Full Hallel* made up of Psalms 113-118 in their entirety, was recited on the three main feasts of Passover, Pentecost, and Tabernacles, and also on Chanukah. On the other holidays, *Half Hallel*s, parts of Psalms 113-118, were read. It is fascinating that the *Full Hallel*, ended with Psalm 118 and a prophecy of the Triumphal Entry of Christ. It stops with the entry of Christ in Jerusalem because that *should* have been the end of the story; except for one problem. God knew that they were going to reject their King. Psalm 118:22 points out that the king would be rejected.

Psalm 118:22 The stone *which* the builders refused is become the head *stone* of the corner.

We will look again at this later, but by ending the *Hallel* Psalms with Psalm 118, it was like saying, "That's all you get, there is nothing more beyond this. If you reject Christ, there is nothing more. All that is left is to receive your king, and if you don't do that you will be judged. There's nothing more to praise God for after this. If you miss this, you miss the perfection and completion of Judaism." For hundreds of years, they repeated numerous times this closing Psalm and then when the day that the Lord had made came, they *almost* got it as a nation.

Paul warned the Hebrews there remains nothing more that could be done after the sacrifice of Christ.

Heb 10:26-29 For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins,

27But a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries.

28He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses:

29Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace?

Heb 2:3 How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard *him*;

Every year at Passover, the Jews recited this Psalm as the final word of praise. At the Triumphal Entry, they demonstrated that they got it. They knew that Jesus was fulfilling Psalm 118...and then they "dropped the ball." They missed their opportunity.

720. Where did the people expect salvation to come from?

- a. **In the highest, from heaven**
- b. In the earth, from government
- c. In Israel, from an army

Mark 11:10 Blessed *be* the kingdom of our father David, that cometh in the name of the Lord: Hosanna in the highest.

**b** The Jews at that time knew that our hope is not in human government. In fact, the whole notion that government without God and is only secular is what will play into the hands of the Antichrist. Man *will* be governed, but what *role* government plays is critical. Government can be a *provider* or a *protector*. If government exists to provide for our benefit then it replaces God. The dominion of man will lead only to government control of man. This is what the Antichrist will step into: government which demands conformity without God.

Instead, if the role of government is to protect our rights, then man has at least a chance to live a life before God alongside of others who live according to *their* conscience.

**c** Today, Israel has long ago learned that there is no protection that they can assume from any government. They could make the mistake, though, that their strength comes from their steadfast will to survive by being willing to not tolerate any compromise with the rest of the world.

**a** The Jews, then, were still Millennial minded and knew that salvation is from God above.

721. How did the Pharisees react?

- a. **They thought the people's praise was inappropriate**
- b. They were beginning to be persuaded that Jesus deserved such praise
- c. They wanted Jesus to do more miracles to prove He deserved the praise

Luke 19:39 And some of the Pharisees from among the multitude said unto him, Master, rebuke thy disciples.

**a,b,c** For some people, it never matters what proof you offer in contrast to C. They were neither coming close to being persuaded, as in B, nor were they interested in further proof from Christ. They recognized what the people were doing for what it was: worship. Since they had rejected Him in their hearts,

they thought any praise Jesus was undeserved as in A.

722. What was Jesus' response to the Pharisees?

- a. He agreed that the masses were overly excited and becoming fanatical
- b. He believed that the people should have had a more somber sense of holiness
- c. He pointed out that the praise was in such demand that it could not be contained and had to come out one way or another**

Luke 19:40 And he answered and said unto them, I tell you that, if these should hold their peace, the stones would immediately cry out.

**a** A is a reference to the way people love the fantastic and joining a band wagon.

**b** B refers to how there are others who are very dour and think that religion should be very austere

**c** Jesus pointed out the natural expression of faith and how it comes forth on its own. Especially in this case, of course, because it is Jesus Christ, the Lord of Glory.

Ps 19:1-6 To the chief Musician, A Psalm of David. The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handywork.

2Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge.

3*There is* no speech nor language, *where* their voice is not heard.

4Their line is gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world.

In them hath he set a tabernacle for the sun,

5*Which is* as a bridegroom coming out of his chamber, *and* rejoiceth as a strong man to run a race.

6His going forth *is* from the end of the heaven, and his circuit unto the ends of it: and there is nothing hid from the heat thereof.

The glory of God is another pervasive theme in the Scriptures. To expect anything less than the rocks crying out is unfathomable.

723. Why did Jesus weep over the city when He came to it?

- a. He cried tears of anger because they wouldn't do things His way
- b. He cried tears of sorrow because of the judgment they were bringing on them in their missed opportunity (the time of visitation)**
- c. He cried tears of joy because they were finally going to get a king to deliver them

Luke 19:41-44 And when he was come near, he beheld the city, and wept over it,

42Saying, If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things *which belong* unto thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes.

43For the days shall come upon thee, that thine enemies shall cast a trench about thee, and compass thee round, and keep thee in on every side,

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44And shall lay thee even with the ground, and thy children within thee; and they shall not leave in thee one stone upon another; because thou knewest not the time of thy visitation.

**c** Even though Jesus was going to present Himself as King, there was no cause for rejoicing here because the people could exercise their will to reject Him as will be seen later in Matthew 23. There will come a time when Jesus will impose His reign on the earth, but at this time, His acceptance or rejection was dependent on them.

**a** Jesus would have been justified with tears of anger, but not because He was some petulant child who was not getting His own way. His concern was for Israel and what they were about to miss.

**b** Judgment is something that must be impartial. It is as though Jesus was saying, "You were so close and yet so far." Even though the judgment has to come to pass, God still feels compassion on those who must receive the judgment.

724. What was the greatest reason the people flocked to Jesus in Jerusalem?

- a. His healing
- b. His wisdom
- c. His resurrection of Lazarus**

John 12:17,18 The people therefore that was with him when he called Lazarus out of his grave, and raised him from the dead, bare record.

18For this cause the people also met him, for that they heard that he had done this miracle.

**a** The people could have had a self-serving interest in how Jesus could have benefitted them by looking for healing as in A. Vs. 18 says explicitly that they were more in awe of the resurrection of Lazarus.

**b** They would have done better to trust Christ for the divine wisdom He displayed than the miraculous.

**c** The greatest reason to believe in Christ would be the resurrection. They did not realize they were about to observe an even greater resurrection than that of Lazarus.

725. What impression did the Pharisees have of the Triumphal Entry?

- a. They thought it would fade away
- b. They were afraid Jesus was unstoppable**
- c. They realized that if you can't beat the people in their reaction, you should just join them

John 12:19 The Pharisees therefore said among themselves, Perceive ye how ye prevail nothing? behold, the world is gone after him.

**a** Many times things that seem so major will actually just fade away

Occupy Wall Street

CHAZ - the autonomous zone

Climate change doomsday predictions

Cindy Sheehan was popular in the press as long as she was a mother who lost her son while Bush was president

This was not applicable to Jesus.

**c** "If you can't beat them, join them," might be a popular saying that is not likely in real life. However, in politics, this is very true, especially in the case of the Democrat Party which was founded on sometimes opposite political forces voting for each other's causes so that they can each get what they want. This would never have worked for the Pharisees and Jesus because He would never have cooperated with them.

**b** The Pharisees correctly perceived that Jesus was an unstoppable train. There was no way they could miss the tide of popular opinion.

726. What understanding did the disciples of Christ have about the Triumphal Entry?

**a. They had no understanding of the significance of the Triumphal Entry until after the resurrection**

b. They understood that Jesus was there to offer Himself as a sacrifice for sin

c. They understood that Jesus was offering Israel the opportunity to receive Him as King

John 12:16 These things understood not his disciples at the first: but when Jesus was glorified, then remembered they that these things were written of him, and *that* they had done these things unto him.

**c** It was possible for them to have had the understanding that the rest of the people had about Jesus presenting Himself as King, but John explicitly states that they did not understand the significance of what He was doing.

**b** They might have easily missed the coming crucifixion because the people were so excited about His visit to Jerusalem. In the face of such acceptance *any* rejection, let alone such ultimate rejection, would have been implausible. Consider modern day elections when there can be such excitement only to have all hopes dashed the morning after an election. The rejection of Christ was much more serious than that.

**a** Many times we can see more clearly after something has come to pass. For the disciples, the Triumphal Entry was more clearly understood in the context

of its fulfillment. Sometimes *we* wonder how different theological perspectives are arrived at. Part of what makes Biblical and theological study so interesting is to see *how* different doctrines came to be in their historical settings.

### 132 - Greeks Seek Jesus

727. Why might the Greek proselytes have approached Philip to seek an audience with Jesus?
- He was the first apostle they saw
  - Philip, whose name was Greek, might have had some Hellenic (Greek) connection that they recognized**
  - Philip was the most important apostle

John 12:20,21 And there were certain Greeks among them that came up to worship at the feast:

21The same came therefore to Philip, which was of Bethsaida of Galilee, and desired him, saying, Sir, we would see Jesus.

**a,b,c** Sometimes Jews were known as Greek not because they were actually Greeks, but because they had adopted Greek culture as opposed to the Jews in the area of Jerusalem who were more culturally Jewish.

Sometimes people gravitate to the first person they perceive to be able to help them as in A. Other times they might appeal to someone who they think might *best* be able to help. Although it is possible to read too much into the name *Philip* being a Greek name, if they indeed had noticed this it speaks of how people are often introduced to the Lord through someone with whom they have some familiarity or even an expectation of familiarity. This is most often the case with friends, but it is not limited to friends. When someone comes to church to visit on their own, they are often won over by those who *make* themselves friendly to them.

728. What basis did Jesus give for following Him?
- People had to follow the Law of Moses
  - People had to believe in the resurrected Christ**
  - People had to have a love for their lives

John 12:23-27 And Jesus answered them, saying, The hour is come, that the Son of man should be glorified.

24Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit.

25He that loveth his life shall lose it; and he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal.

26If any man serve me, let him follow me; and where I am, there shall also my servant be: if any man serve me, him will *my* Father honour.

27Now is my soul troubled; and what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour: but for this cause came I unto this hour.



c People are encouraged that they have to love themselves first before they can love others. This is similar in that is borne of the underlying human problem of self-centeredness. Having a zest for life is good, but not if gets in the way of giving one's self to Christ. On the other hand, having a zest for life in service to Christ *is* very fulfilling.

a A is obviously wrong because life is not fulfilled by keeping the Law. It is good to remind us that life in Christ is not a matter of just checking off a list of things to do. We must give our whole heart to Jesus. According to vs. 26, one who has given his life to Christ will have his lifestyle follow after. Perhaps in this way we can actually say, "Follow your heart."

b The resurrection is the perfection, or completion, of the Gospel. The sacrifice of Christ paid for our salvation and the resurrection is the application of that Gospel.

729. What did Jesus say that indicated the Greeks were to be accepted?

a. **If *any* man would serve Him, God would honor him**

b. If anyone was willing to fulfill all the requirements of the Law they could become a Jew and then a member of the church

c. If anyone had a sincere faith they would be recognized as a child of God

John 12:26 If any man serve me, let him follow me; and where I am, there shall also my servant be: if any man serve me, him will *my* Father honour.

b B represents the first controversy in the church, whether someone needed to fulfill the requirements of the Law to be admitted to the church or even salvation. This was something that might have been plausible for the first converts who were Jews. When the Gentiles started to become an issue, it came to a head and was concluded that the requirements of the Law had been fulfilled in Christ.

c C refers to how people try to find a way to include people out of a sense of charity and wishful thinking. They make the first mistake of thinking that if someone didn't get saved by faith they can at least be saved by working hard. Then, they hope that if someone doesn't have that, at least they can still squeeze in to heaven by being sincere. Often times people can get downright offended if you suggest to them they are going to Hell. They equate that with being a *vile* sinner.

a Being honored by God was for those who had given their life to Christ. This was available to "any man," not just those who were Jews according to Hebrew culture, but those Israelites who were influenced by Greek culture. Jesus' answer goes beyond that by saying that *any* one who served God would be honored. Being honored by God starts, of course, by being acceptable to

God through salvation by Christ.

730. What did the Father do to show His endorsement of Christ?

- a. He sent the Spirit in the form of a dove to rest upon Him
- b. He transfigured Him before the peoples' eyes
- c. He gave a thunderous approval saying He had already glorified Him and would do it again**

John 12:28 Father, glorify thy name. Then came there a voice from heaven, *saying*, I have both glorified *it*, and will glorify *it* again.

**a,b,c** These are all ways that the Father had shown approval of Christ. At this time He did it with a thunderous voice.

731. How did the people respond to the voice of God?

- a. In their attempt to rationalize what they heard they attributed the voice to an angel**
- b. They were impressed with the thunderous sound of the voice
- c. They ran away screaming in fear

John 12:29 The people therefore, that stood by, and heard *it*, said that it thundered: others said, An angel spake to him.

**c** Running away screaming in fear is not so far fetched. When God spoke to them in the wilderness they were afraid and asked that Moses go alone to speak with God.

**b** Some said that the voice thundered, but it does not specifically say that they were impressed. We should be reminded that even though some people can tell that the Word of God is important, they fall short of believing many times.

**a** Even though it was clear that the Father was endorsing Christ, by claiming that it was the voice of an angel they were actually diminishing the significance of the Father's endorsement. That kind of downplaying has happened in general with the Word of God so that people end up feeling comfortable in not taking God so seriously.

732. How did Jesus indicate He was to die?

- a. He spoke of how He would be lifted up from the earth**
- b. He made the sign of the cross to them
- c. He told them of how His side was to be pierced

John 12:30-32 Jesus answered and said, This voice came not because of me, but for your sakes.

31Now is the judgment of this world: now shall the prince of this world be cast out.

32And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all *men* unto me.

**a** Remember that this was actually one of a number of times in which He spoke of His death. Even the idea of being lifted up was forecast in John 3:14.

John 3:14 And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up:

**b** The sign of the cross was a superstitious practice that was added on later being copied from ancient pagan religions. The cross was not even a symbol used by the early Christians until later. It was not just going to be some symbolic sign that was significant, but His actual crucifixion.

**c** Jesus would be dead already before He was pierced. The water and blood recorded by Luke flowing from His side was a confirmation of His death by cardiac arrest. This is a reference to the fact that Jesus was going to be definitely dead, but it is not sufficient by itself. The death Jesus would suffer would be on the cross.

733. What warning did Jesus give people as they questioned Him about His death?

- a. They would have to wait until they saw enough miracles in order to believe
- b. They should take advantage of the opportunity to believe while they had such light**
- c. They were going to have to do a lot of works to make up for their unbelief

John 12:34-37 The people answered him, We have heard out of **the law that Christ abideth for ever:** and how sayest thou, The Son of man must be lifted up? who is this Son of man?

35Then Jesus said unto them, Yet a little while is the light with you. Walk while ye have the light, lest darkness come upon you: for he that walketh in darkness knoweth not whither he goeth.

36While ye have light, believe in the light, that ye may be the children of light. These things spake Jesus, and departed, and did hide himself from them.

37But though he had done so many miracles before them, yet they believed not on him:

**a** The opportunity to believe will only be available so long. Those who are anxious to know God will not need more and more miracles but will quickly take God at His Word. Vs. 37 points out that no matter how many miracles are performed, it doesn't guarantee that people will be convinced.

**c** This is another opportunity that Christ could have said that salvation was by works, but that salvation is by faith makes the idea of salvation by works conspicuously absent.

**b** The light of faith is only available for so long. An honest person, one who honestly cares about the things of God, will not put off salvation.

734. What conclusion does John draw from the prophecy of Isaiah?

- a. People would have ample opportunity to believe up until the moment of their death
- b. God does not want some people to be able to come to faith
- c. People would be not be able to believe because they had not repented**

John 12:37-41 But though he had done so many miracles before them, yet they believed not on him:

38That the saying of Esaias the prophet might be fulfilled, which he spake, Lord, who hath believed our report? and to whom hath the arm of the Lord been revealed?

39Therefore they could not believe, because that Esaias said again,

40He hath blinded their eyes, and hardened their heart; that they should not see with *their* eyes, nor understand with *their* heart, and be converted, and I should heal them.

41These things said Esaias, when he saw his glory, and spake of him.

**a** It is only generally true that as long as there is life there is hope. It is possible to enter into reprobation where one no longer has the opportunity. At the very least, people can become so entrenched in their sinful habits and attitude that they will have great pressure to not believe making it less likely that they will end up having a chance to get saved.

**b,c** God does want people to come to faith. See the discussion of Matt 13:15 and Mark 4:12 on page 99 concerning the use of the word *lest*. Matthew and Mark report Jesus' quote of Isaiah 6:10. John is not actually quoting Jesus, but applying Isaiah 6:10 and referring to the end result of them not repenting. His rendition does not use the Greek οὐ μὴ (unless) which is the quotation as reported by Matthew and Mark, but ἰνα μὴ (that not). If people do not repent then the end result will be that they become blinded *that they may not be*, or not able to be, converted. The word *lest* as used by Christ when Matthew and Mark recorded Christ's quotation of Isaiah. There, the English translation *lest* can be understood in one of two ways. If I were to say, "I will give Joe \$5.00 to buy Turkey *lest* he goes and spends his own money," that could be taken in one of two ways. It could mean that I will give Joe \$5.00 so that he can avoid spending his own money. Or, it could mean that I will give Joe \$5.00 unless he beats me to it and spends his money first. John changes the quote of Isaiah indicating that he is not actually quoting Isaiah, but making an application of Isaiah that people will end up blind by their recalcitrance and not accepting Christ by faith.

### 133 - Many Chief Rulers Hide Their Faith

735. How popular was Jesus?

- a. The common people were happy to hear Him
- b. Even the Pharisees couldn't help believing in Him
- c. Many chief rulers believed on Him in spite of the Pharisees who were against Him**

John 12:42 Nevertheless among the chief rulers also many believed on him; but because of the Pharisees they did not confess *him*, lest they should be put out of the synagogue:

**b** There is no record of any Pharisees saved in the Gospels. Nicodemus was only a maybe. Later, in Acts, we see that there were many priests who *did* get saved.

Acts 6:7 And the word of God increased; and the number of the disciples multiplied in Jerusalem greatly; and a great company of the priests were obedient to the faith.

Although it was possible that there were priests who were Pharisees, we only read about Sadduceism associated with the priesthood.

**a** It is true that the common people were happy to hear him, but that was not the extent of Christ's popularity. We are actually faced with a similar situation today where there is a tendency for the faithful to be more conservative than their leadership who were exposed to liberal precepts in seminary.

**c** That many chief rulers believed on Christ makes it possible that there were some Pharisees, but that does not suggest that there was any widespread effect on the Pharisees in general. Many times, opposition can influence and inspire people to give consideration to the truth.

736. Why were some reluctant to make their faith public?

- a. They might lose their status in the synagogue and had respect unto the praise of men**
- b. Peer pressure that would make them feel uncomfortable
- c. It is considered rude to talk about politics or religion

John 12:42-43 Nevertheless among the chief rulers also many believed on him; but because of the Pharisees they did not confess *him*, lest they should be put out of the synagogue:

43For they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God.

**c** People will claim that it is rude to talk about politics or religion and then proceed to criticize religion and politics. This is not what was happening in this situation.

**b** Peer pressure can be used to make someone feel uncomfortable, but that generally occurs as people go about expressing themselves naturally. By reading the popular opinion of others, someone might feel pressure to go along. However, when peer pressure is actively used, especially today, it is used to do more than make someone uncomfortable.

**a** It is a shame that there are those who will hold back on their public profession because of social influence. It is a shame not because we are disappointed because they don't live up to *our* interest in heroes, but because there are souls who will not hear the Gospel because of our fearful silence. The threat of being "canceled" is nothing new. Cancel culture has existed all through the ages.

737. How did Jesus describe the logic of their faith in Him?

- a. To believe in Him was to believe in the Father**
- b. People who believe in God automatically believe in Him
- c. People who believe in Him automatically believe in the Father because the Son is just an earthly manifestation of the father

John 12:44-45 Jesus cried and said, He that believeth on me, believeth not on me, but on him that sent me.

45And he that seeth me seeth him that sent me.

**b** Just because someone believes in God does not automatically mean that their definition of God includes Jesus.

**a** Jesus presents Himself as part of the definition of faith in God. This was backed up especially by His working of miracles. Although God worked His miraculous power through the prophets on occasion, Jesus demonstration of power helped establish confidence in their faith in Him from God. By logic, we mean that Jesus established a new argument for them to consider that was based on a reasonable conclusion they could have come to based on His miraculous power and fulfillment of prophecy.

**c** C is a reference to Modalism which teaches that there is one God who appears in different forms as needed. Jesus' language shows a clear differentiation between Him and the Father because He was sent out *by* the Father

738. Why did Jesus come into the world?

- a. To bring the final judgment
- b. To save the world**
- c. To save the elect in the world

John 12:46-48 I am come a light into the world, that whosoever believeth on me should not abide in darkness.

47And if any man hear my words, and believe not, I judge him not: for I came not to

judge the world, but to save the world.

48He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day.

**c** Jesus did not come to save *only* an elect few. He came as a light into the *whole* world. This is covered also in John 1

John 1:4,9 In him was life; and the life was the light of men.

9That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.

John 1 and 12 need to be taken into consideration to understand John 6:44.

John 6:44 No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day.

In John 6, Jesus is not making the case that some are drawn and others not, but that no one would come if it hadn't been for the fact that God reached out to man first. This is backed up by what John recorded in John 16:

John 16:7-8 Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you.

8And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment:

**a** Jesus did not come to judge the world in His *first* advent. However, this does not mean that He won't do so in His *second* advent.

**b** Jesus affirms His mission was to bring redemption and salvation.

739. Where did Jesus get the ideas for the things He should say?

a. They came from Himself since He is God

b. They came from His understanding of the Jewish Traditional teachings and from ancient philosophers

**c. They came from the Father**

John 12:49-50 For I have not spoken of myself; but the Father which sent me, he gave me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak.

50And I know that his commandment is life everlasting: whatsoever I speak therefore, even as the Father said unto me, so I speak.

**b** Jesus did not need to resort to the interpretations of the Mishna and other writings. He *especially* did not need to the speculations of Philosophy.

**a,b** Although Jesus *is* God, there is some sense in which the Father was the originator of what Jesus taught. Even though all three Members of the Trinity are co-equal, there is a *logical* order in which They are presented. By logical order we mean that they are presented in a way for the purpose of expressing how They relate to each other. For example, ways to logically express a set

of children in a family could be according to age, alphabetical order of names, height, gender, or some other characteristic. Typically, the order for expressing the Trinity is according to their work where the Father orders and the Son carries out the work by the power of the Spirit.

### **134 - Jesus Returns to Bethany**

Sunday night

740. What did Jesus do before going back to Bethany Sunday night?

- a. He went to observe what was happening in the Temple**
- b. He thanked everyone for making Him King
- c. He blessed the Temple

Mark 11:11 And Jesus entered into Jerusalem, and into the temple: and when he had looked round about upon all things, and now the eventide was come, he went out unto Bethany with the twelve.

**c** Offering a blessing is something spiritually we do in a sociable kind of way. It is spiritually polite to bless someone by doing something like giving thanks to God for a meal, praying for someone who has just shared their troubles with you, or giving a prayer of invocation at an event. This is the ordinary thing to do with day to day events, but this occasion was no ordinary moment.

**b** Thanking everyone for making Him King might be a happily ever after kind of ending you would get in a holiday movie. Real life is a cosmic drama that doesn't tie up so neatly. The cross and resurrection will be the climax of world history and the end will be sewn up not so neatly but yet perfectly to God's glory in the ultimate end.

**a** Mark continues the narrative showing the time line for the Passion week. He marks the end of Sunday and the Triumphal Entry and the preparation for what comes next: The Cleansing of the Temple.

### **135 - Cursing the Fig Tree**

Monday

The entire account of the cursing of the fig tree in Matthew appears to suggest that the entire account of the fig tree and finding it withered both happened after the cleansing of the Temple: Matt 21:12-16 – The Cleansing of the Temple, Matt 21:18-22 – The Cursing and Withering of the Fig Tree. Matthew records that the disciples marveled at how soon the fig tree withered, indicating that a short time had passed since the cursing. Matthew merely puts both parts of the cursing in one place rather than the chronological order of events that Mark recorded. Thus, Matt 21:18-19 is



placed before 21:12-16 and Matt 21:20-22 follows.

The understanding of the timing of the fig tree withering can be further seen at – [www.christiancourier.com/articles/790-fig-tree-incident-a-contradiction-the](http://www.christiancourier.com/articles/790-fig-tree-incident-a-contradiction-the)

741. Even though it was not the high season for having figs, what suggested that the tree might have had fruit on it? There were many leaves on it that made it look like it was advanced in its growth

Mark 11:13 And seeing a fig tree afar off having leaves, he came, if haply he might find any thing thereon: and when he came to it, he found nothing but leaves; for the time of figs was not *yet*.

Fig-trees especially were planted by the roadside, because the dust was thought to facilitate their growth, and their refreshing fruit was common property. At a distance in front of Him Jesus caught sight of a solitary fig-tree, and although the ordinary season at which figs ripened had not yet arrived, yet, as it was clad with verdure, and as the fruit of a fig sets before the leaves unfold, this tree looked more than usually promising. Its rich large leaves seemed to show that it was fruitful, and their unusually early growth that it was not only fruitful but precociously vigorous. There was every chance, therefore, of finding upon it either the late violet-coloured kermouses, or autumn figs, that often remained hanging on the trees all through the winter, and even until the new spring leaves had come; or the delicious bakkooroth, the first ripe on the fig-tree, of which Orientals are particularly fond. The difficulty raised about St. Mark's expression, that "the time of figs was not yet," is wholly needless. On the plains of Gennesareth Jesus must have been accustomed—if we may trust Josephus—to see the figs hanging ripe on the trees every month in the year excepting January and February; and there is to this day, in Palestine, a kind of white or early fig which ripens in spring, and much before the ordinary or black fig. On many grounds, therefore, Jesus might well have expected to find a few figs to satisfy the cravings of hunger on this fair-promising leafy tree, although the ordinary fig-season had not yet arrived.

– Pentecost §140

742. As a type of Israel, what did the abundance of leaves with no fruit suggest?

- a. That at least the old fruit from the previous season showed that Israel had at least some kind of spiritual power left
- b. Israel had the appearance of spiritual maturity and should have had spiritual fruit**
- c. If Israel were given more time it would certainly become fruitful

Mark 11:13 And seeing a fig tree afar off having leaves, he came, if haply he might find any thing thereon: and when he came to it, he found nothing but leaves; for the time of figs was not *yet*.

**c** If the leaves had already formed and there was no fruit then its fruit bearing time had already passed and having more time would not be an improvement.

**a** The destitute nature of Israel is depicted in that not only was there no new fruit coming, but there wasn't anything left even of its old glory. This should be warning to us today of how that any residual effect of past revivals could

end up disappearing. We should be careful to not assume anything of the past but be careful to cultivate for continued blessings of revival.

**b** Israel had endured especially since the return from the Babylonian Captivity. They had all the trappings of people who had studied, yet they were spiritually empty. All through the ages of church history we can see how church movements and denominations were always organizing and getting more powerful only to become political or corporate machines which promise productivity but are spiritually empty.

743. What did Jesus' condemnation of the tree suggest?

- a. That Israel should be pitied and that no one should be judged
- b. That the nation of Israel was going to cease to exist and the prophecies of its restoration were now null and void
- c. That the generation of Israel who was rejecting Him would be judged and set aside**

Mark 11:14 And Jesus answered and said unto it, No man eat fruit of thee hereafter for ever. And his disciples heard *it*.

**a** Being non-judgmental is a modern phenomena. Life will judge us even if we don't want to acknowledge that there are consequences to sin.

**b** Even though Israel was finished as far as its work of the kingdom was concerned, that does not mean that they were no longer God's chosen nation that has no place in prophecy.

**c** Israel was merely going to be sidelined at this time.

## 136 - The Second Cleansing of the Temple

744. How did the Jews slip into sin in the Temple?

- a. They were letting the Gentiles join in so they could get more money for the Temple
- b. They seemed to be trying to be practical to make it easier for people have sacrifices and to have Jewish money to buy sacrifices to make**
- c. They were using unclean animals which were cheaper to buy

Matt 21:12 And Jesus went into the temple of God, and cast out all them that sold and bought in the temple, and overthrew the tables of the moneychangers, and the seats of them that sold doves,

**a,c** Not using unclean animals and compromising their standards of who may participate is not the only way to have carnal attitudes slip into the church.

**b** There was a certain practical appeal for people traveling from far to get their money converted over to the Temple shekel so they could then buy an approved sacrifice. This is the way many practices might slip into church practice today, also. We should not confuse pragmatism with spiritual success. Achieving numbers for high attendance should not be confused with holiness while being empty in devotion to God.

745. How do we know that the Temple practices were corrupted?

- a. Jesus called it a den of thieves**
- b. The Jewish leaders didn't use elaborate prayers
- c. Common people were going there to worship

Mark 11:17 And he taught, saying unto them, Is it not written, My house shall be called of all nations the house of prayer? but ye have made it a den of thieves.

**c** Sometimes people judge the church because there are people who are spiritually immature who attend. We should remember that we are not here to call the righteous to repentance, but sinners. Having common people in attendance is not a sign of corruption in the church, but a sign of outreach. We should welcome the sinful to come and hear the Word of God preached even though we should have practices that protect the church.

**b** The Jewish leaders in all likelihood used elaborate prayers. In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus complained about those who make a show of prayer and so it must have been common to be something worth commenting about. However, elaborate prayers could actually be a sign of corruption since it could make a church look prideful. It is not the style of prayer that makes the difference in worship, but we should be aware that excesses can be a problem.

**a** We can tell that the Temple practices were corrupt because Jesus identified that they were somehow cheating the people in their buying and selling.

746. What distinction did Jesus make about true Temple worship?

- a. The Temple should not be known as a commercial enterprise**
- b. The Temple should be only a place for prayer
- c. The Temple should be known as a place where buying and selling should be done in an honest way

Mark 11:15-17 And they come to Jerusalem: and Jesus went into the temple, and began to cast out them that sold and bought in the temple, and overthrew the tables of the moneychangers, and the seats of them that sold doves;

16And would not suffer that any man should carry *any* vessel through the temple.

17And he taught, saying unto them, Is it not written, My house shall be called of all nations the house of prayer? but ye have made it a den of thieves.

**b** The Temple should be identified as a place for prayer in that it should primarily be a place to meet God, not that that is the only way to worship.

This reminds us that people can be judgmental because they have some limited idea of what a church is supposed to be like and assume that there is something wrong with anything that is different.

**c** It doesn't matter how honest we are in our dealings, some things should be recognized as inappropriate in their appeal. We should not be known for mimicking the world and its commercialism and showmanship, no matter how tasteful we think we are.

**a** We must be careful to avoid looking like a commercial enterprise and make sure to be promoting worship. Over organization can lead to selling tickets, raffles, an emphasis on titles which might not seem so bad when you are in the middle of it, but when you step back a little can come off as being proud of the organization rather than being focused on spirituality.

747. What did Jesus do to counteract the sinful attitudes of the Temple?

- a. He talked to them gently
- b. He set up a different Temple in another location
- c. He taught them daily**

Luke 19:47 And he taught daily in the temple. But the chief priests and the scribes and the chief of the people sought to destroy him,

**c** There might come a time when we must leave a church because of its sinful attitudes, but teaching is the remedy that we should first apply to create a mature spirituality.

**b** In their case, there was no provision for setting up a competing Temple in the Law. However, this would end up being accomplished later as the Temple lost its purpose in the next dispensation where the church would emerge.

**a** There are certainly times when a softer approach is important, but the way Jesus dealt with them indicates that taking a hard approach can also be necessary. An interesting exercise is to look at the over 130 verses in Proverbs that deal with communication that teach that most communications should not be hard on people. Strong language needs to be saved for strong issues and moments.

748. How did the scribes and chief priests react to Jesus' teaching?

- a. They were impressed by the spiritual corrections He was trying to make and joined in with Him
- b. They resented how the people were being impressed and they wanted to destroy Him**
- c. They were happy that the new King was going to be spiritual

Matt 21:15 And when the chief priests and scribes saw the wonderful things that he did, and the children crying in the temple, and saying, Hosanna to the Son of David; they were sore displeased,

Mark 11:18 And the scribes and chief priests heard *it*, and sought how they might destroy him: for they feared him, because all the people was astonished at his doctrine.

**a,b** It is amazing how, in the face of very plainly truthful arguments, people can still be so sold on their bias that they can't receive it.

**c** Since the leaders were so rejecting of Jesus as King, it didn't matter to them how spiritual He was. That can be very much like churches who treat each other as rivals instead of as being on the same team.

Tuesday morning

### 137 - The Fig Tree Perishes

749. As a type of Israel, what does the withering of the fig tree suggest?

- a. How soon their judgment was coming**
- b. How much Jesus hates Israel
- c. How the Jews would be ultimately exterminated

Matt 21:20

**b** Jesus had already wept over Jerusalem and what was going to happen to it, so we know that His judgment that was represented by the withering of the tree was not out of malignant hatred.

**c** We have to be careful not to launch a diatribe based on a symbol or parable. The Jews would not be exterminated.

**a** The timing of the withering of the tree spoke of how quickly judgment can come and was coming on Israel.

750. What admonition did Jesus give the disciples about prayer?

- a. They could have whatever they wanted if they had faith even if it was against God's will
- b. They should not worry about their standing before God in prayer even if they are at odds with their brother
- c. Faith is one of the most important aspects of prayer, which was in contrast to the condition of Israel at that point**

Mark 11:23-26 For verily I say unto you, That whosoever shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; and shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe that those things which he saith shall come to pass; he shall

have whatsoever he saith.

24Therefore I say unto you, What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive *them*, and ye shall have *them*.

25And when ye stand praying, forgive, if ye have ought against any: that your Father also which is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses.

26But if ye do not forgive, neither will your Father which is in heaven forgive your trespasses.

**a** Some people naively exaggerate what they can pray for as they ignore the obvious significance of praying for whatever they desire. This is covered in 1 John:

1John 5:14 And this is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us:

**b** Similarly, there are other qualifications to prayer such as making sure that we are dealing appropriately with and are especially at peace with our brothers.

**c** Since Jesus was judging Israel, by contrast we should make sure to be exercising faith as a key component with all that we do. We might not understand completely what God is doing all the time, but as we learn to see through the eyes of faith we can see the sophisticated ways in which God brings things together sometimes.

## 138 - Preaching in the Temple

### Who gave John Authority?

751. How did the chief priests, scribes, and elders respond to Jesus teaching the people in the Temple?

- a. They wanted to know by what rabbinical or traditional authority He was accredited**
- b. They recognized the power of Jesus' explanations of the Scriptures
- c. They respected His right to speak in competition with them

Mark 11:27,28 And they come again to Jerusalem: and as he was walking in the temple, there come to him the chief priests, and the scribes, and the elders,

28And say unto him, By what authority doest thou these things? and who gave thee this authority to do these things?

**a,b** The obvious teaching of Christ resonated with the people especially because it was coming from God. The leaders were at least smart enough to see that there was something special but had to resist it as evidenced by asking who authorized Jesus.

**c** In typical group think fashion, competition cannot be allowed. This is why freedom is such an issue today. Just because a group comes to a consensus

does not make them right. We need to beware of those who are elevated into positions to impose their views on the rest of society.

1Thess 5:20-21 Despise not prophesyings.  
21Prove all things; hold fast that which is good.

752. How did Jesus respond to the Jewish leaders?

- a. He got bogged down arguing with them about the minutiae of rabbinical teaching to show them how superior He was
- b. He tested their sincerity by getting them to commit to what counts as accreditation**
- c. He called them stupid

Matt 21:24,25 And Jesus answered and said unto them, I also will ask you one thing, which if ye tell me, I in like wise will tell you by what authority I do these things.  
25The baptism of John, whence was it? from heaven, or of men? And they reasoned with themselves, saying, If we shall say, From heaven; he will say unto us, Why did ye not then believe him?

**c** C is a more realistic response, but fortunately for them, Jesus demonstrated His compassion for them by taking them seriously enough to give them a chance to get honest with themselves.

**a** Delving into minute details of any teaching can bog down anyone dealing with intellectually dishonest people. The very nature of language can quickly devolve into subjective interpretations of intentions. One can get lost into vague arguments that lend themselves to disputes.

Prov 10:19 In the multitude of words there wanteth not sin: but he that refraineth his lips *is* wise.

**b** B deals with the issue of the problem of an Appeal to Authority. Alleging that all experts, scientists, doctors, etc., agree is a way to cheat in an argument. For example, one old ad for cigarettes pushed Camel cigarettes as the brand more doctors smoked than any other.

When you hear that there is 97% scientific consensus that climate change is man made you have to dig a little deeper to find out that in the study that reported this statistic threw out 66% of papers dealing with the subject because they didn't even mention man's involvement. Of the 34% papers left, 1% felt that man was not responsible. The end result is the claim that 97% of those who think that man has anything to do with climate change agree that man is responsible. A more realistic report would be that less than half of scientists think that man is responsible for climate change. And then, of those who think that man is involved, they are often critical of the United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change.

(<https://www.fraserinstitute.org/article/putting-the-con-in-consensus-not-only-is-there-no-97-per-cent-consensus-among-climate-scientists-many-misunderstand-core-issues>)

Sometimes, people make the mistake of bad judgment because of an appeal to authority because they trust that those who come from prestigious universities must be superior in wisdom and expertise. The problem here is that such universities are essentially fully credentialed by those they set up to be the credentialing agency.

This is how European theological liberalism infected the seminaries of America. In order to bolster their reputation as professional, the seminaries imported "Doctors" from Europe who majored on skepticism more than Biblical exposition.

Appealing to an authority to back up an argument is not automatically wrong. It all depends on how well known the authority is. Someone who has been proven to be an authority will be more reliable. But here you still have to be careful. Just because someone has demonstrated expertise or success in one area does not necessarily make them an expert in other areas. This is patently obvious in the case of movie stars, but not so very obvious in industry leaders. A success in industry does not translate into wisdom in moral policy matters. Once someone has convincingly demonstrated their expertise he can be more trusted. The emphasis here is on the word *more*; even then he should not just be absolutely trusted.

By challenging the chief priests, scribes, and elders, Jesus deals with the underlying problem of improper dependence on authority. Jesus turns the question onto the only One Who actually *can* be absolutely trusted: God.

753. What did the leaders feel was the basis for authority?

- a. The Word of God
- b. The popularity of the authority whether it be a prophet or the body of rabbinical teaching**
- c. A government that stands for and in place of the will of the people

Mark 11:28,31,32 And say unto him, By what authority doest thou these things? and who gave thee this authority to do these things?

31And they reasoned with themselves, saying, If we shall say, From heaven; he will say, Why then did ye not believe him?

32But if we shall say, Of men; they feared the people: for all *men* counted John, that he was a prophet indeed.

**b** The leaders were looking for some earthly authority such as themselves (vs. 28) or the appeal of popular opinion which today would be determined by polls (vs. 32). What they were *not* willing to recognize was the One Who actually was an authority.

**a** Jesus had already taught that the answer was in the Word of God, which they rejected:



John 5:39 Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me.

**c** The appeal to the authority of God that the common people held stands in contrast to the opposite of God's authority, which is the authority of a secular, non-religious government. Worldly government is dangerous when an elite few claim to be the best interpreters of what is good for its citizens rather than just protect the freedom to live in their conscience before God as their authority.

754. Why did the conversation end?

- a. Jesus stonewalled them
- b. The leaders admitted that Jesus had authority from God
- c. The leaders were unwilling to agree to a standard for authority and accreditation**

**a** The leaders were set in their heart against God and it didn't matter how much sense Jesus made to them. Many times when people argue, they do not do so on an equal basis. They resort to all kinds of fallacious reasoning using special definitions, slander, calling things equal when they are not, changing the standards of what is acceptable in the middle of an argument, falsely characterizing what the argument even is.

**b,c** We don't have to resort to just avoiding and evading someone who is criticizing us, but it is difficult to pin them down to what you are even arguing about. Jesus used the popularity of John the Baptist to bring the focus on *all* the things they needed to consider, not just the one sided and limited sense that served their selfish arguments. They were unwilling to consider an alternative but deprived themselves of an opportunity to discover the truth.

### Parable of the Two Sons

755. What did Jesus challenge the leaders with to reveal whether they were true sons of the kingdom?

- a. Whether one has the proper pedigree as a Jew
- b. Whether one's obedience reveals the truth of their profession**
- c. Whether one is socially acceptable

Matt 21:28-32 But what think ye? A *certain* man had two sons; and he came to the first, and said, Son, go work to day in my vineyard.

29He answered and said, I will not: but afterward he repented, and went.

30And he came to the second, and said likewise. And he answered and said, I *go*, sir: and went not.

31Whether of them twain did the will of *his* father? They say unto him, The first. Jesus saith unto them, Verily I say unto you, That the publicans and the harlots go into the kingdom of God before you.

32For John came unto you in the way of righteousness, and ye believed him not: but the publicans and the harlots believed him: and ye, when ye had seen *it*, repented not

afterward, that ye might believe him.

**a** The Jews from the time of the Babylonian Captivity had been concerned about how their genetic heritage counted as being truly Jewish. In the time of Nehemiah and Ezra, those who were not able to prove themselves were either not allowed to participate in the rebuilding of the Temple or be included in the priesthood. By referring to what it meant to be a true son, Jesus was pointing out to them that pedigree didn't matter. What made someone truly Jewish was not whether they were a son but what *kind* of son they were.

**c** Jesus does not suggest that being accepted in polite society was sufficient to prove that someone was a true son. The second son said he would go, which made him look like he was one of the good sons in society, but he proved otherwise.

**b** Whether someone is true or not is demonstrated by their actual obedience. It should be noted that the obedience that Jesus mentioned was being obedient to the faith. He used the examples of the publicans and the harlots who responded to the message by accepting it.

### **Parable of the Evil Husbandmen**

756. How did God show His grace on Israel?

- a. He sent numerous servants to minister and call them into repentance in spite of how they were abused**
- b. He gave Israel the Law so they could be saved through their obedience which He was under no obligation to do
- c. He decided to keep using them in spite of how they abused His servants

Matt 21:33-36 Hear another parable: There was a certain householder, which planted a vineyard, and hedged it round about, and digged a winepress in it, and built a tower, and let it out to husbandmen, and went into a far country:

34 And when the time of the fruit drew near, he sent his servants to the husbandmen, that they might receive the fruits of it.

35 And the husbandmen took his servants, and beat one, and killed another, and stoned another.

36 Again, he sent other servants more than the first: and they did unto them likewise.

**b** God was under no obligation to even give Israel the Law, but He did that anyway. Of course, the problem here is with giving the Law for the purpose of salvation. God was under no obligation because man is not only sinful by nature but also by his willful exercise of that nature. As such, man only deserves Hell. God's grace is simple, but not *simplistic*. It is dynamic, exercised in many aspects of life. In this case, the Law was given by God's grace for *conviction*.

**c** Grace does not require that one *keep* offering it no matter what. This is a mistake that some people make in matters of crime. If someone is engaged

in crime and they avoid punishment by some fluke, that does not mean that they are obligated to get the same treatment the next time. That appears to be the experience in 2021 where criminals are apprehended and released only to expect the same treatment again as if it has some intrinsic moral value because it has become the popular practice. Grace is not something you can demand. Something that can be demanded is a right. Grace can only be offered. Grace and rights are mutually exclusive.

**a** When God extended grace to Israel, He did abundantly which serves as an example to us.

Rom 5:20-21 Moreover the law entered, that the offence might abound. But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound:

21That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord.

According to Romans 11:5, Israel was graciously chosen to serve Him. Their multitudinous infidelities to God did not cause them to lose their place in God's service because their position was not given them with respect to any works they did. Their position was determined by God's choice and they were sustained in that position by His grace and not their works.

Rom 11:1-6 I say then, Hath God cast away his people? God forbid. For I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, *of the tribe of Benjamin.*

2God hath not cast away his people which he foreknew. Wot ye not what the scripture saith of Elias? how he maketh intercession to God against Israel, saying,

3Lord, they have killed thy prophets, and digged down thine altars; and I am left alone, and they seek my life.

4But what saith the answer of God unto him? I have reserved to myself seven thousand men, who have not bowed the knee to *the image of Baal.*

5Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace.

6And if by grace, then *is it* no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace. But if *it be* of works, then is it no more grace: otherwise work is no more work.

Simply put, God showed His grace on Israel by sustaining them without respect to their works or failures.

757. What would happen to Israel in the end?

- a. They would continue to have more and more chances to get things right
- b. They would be cast aside forever
- c. They would be judged because there could be no greater witness than that of Jesus Christ**

Luke 20:13 Then said the lord of the vineyard, What shall I do? I will send my beloved son: it may be they will reverence *him* when they see him.

Matt 21:43 Therefore say I unto you, The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof.

**a,b,c** There are limitations to how God applies His grace. The ultimate witness would be that of God's beloved Son. The chances to get things right after 1200 years ran its course. Now, the Jews will have to wait until the Tribulation to get to serve God as Israel. In the meantime, they will still be able to serve but only if they are saved and in the context of God's greater glory, the church.

758. Read 1Pet 2:4-10. In what way did Jesus divide people?

- a. He has chosen some for destruction and others for salvation
- b. He divided them along political party lines
- c. He would either be the foundation of our salvation because of faith or our destruction because of rejecting Him**

1Pet 2:4-10 To whom coming, *as unto* a living stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God, *and* precious,

5Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ.

6Wherefore also it is contained in the scripture, Behold, I lay in Sion a chief corner stone, elect, precious: and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded.

7Unto you therefore which believe *he is* precious: but unto them which be disobedient, the stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner,

8And a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence, *even to them* which stumble at the word, being disobedient: whereunto also they were appointed.

9But ye *are* a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light:

10Which in time past *were* not a people, but *are* now the people of God: which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy.

Mark 12:10-11 And have ye not read this scripture; The stone which the builders rejected is become the head of the corner:

11This was the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes?

**a** A is a reference to the Calvinistic doctrine of predestination. This is not the basis for dividing people into the groups of the lost or saved.

**b** Even though political party lines can be clear at times, they are still rather fluid. Even though the great American ideals of liberty leave us responsible before God, governance is exercised by human political interaction. Because of this, we want to remember that we are not of this world but belong to the kingdom of God.

**c** We are *in* the world, but not *of* the world. We might work in the world, but we live for God. We are might have to live within a political system, but we are actually neither Tory or Labor, Libertarian, Liberal, Conservative, Democrat, or Republican. We are Christian and separated by from the world by *that* characteristic. We are differentiated by our saving faith, destined to heaven, while the world is doomed to Hell.

759. How did the chief priests and Pharisees respond to Jesus?
- a. They became fearful and wanted to make sure they were saved
  - b. They became offended and sought to destroy Him**
  - c. They realized that Jesus was inconsequential and ignored Him

Matt 21:45-46 And when the chief priests and Pharisees had heard his parables, they perceived that he spake of them.

46But when they sought to lay hands on him, they feared the multitude, because they took him for a prophet.

**a** Too often, people get defensive and reject any criticism rather than take it as a warning and give honest consideration to the criticism. They did *not* take measures to make sure they were saved. People today look at our concerns for their salvation as some kind of partisan attack. Admittedly, when we encounter someone of a different denomination our differences might get greater attention. In the interest of charity we should be ready to recognize that someone who is "other" might be our brother or sister. The difficulty comes in because someone doesn't have to come from *too* different a denomination before we find that that denomination has a faulty soteriology. However, someone who is just a little different might be *you* and you should be ready to convincingly share your testimony of salvation.

**c** The Pharisees and priests recognized that Jesus was too big to ignore, but many people would like to do just that. Perhaps they think if they don't pay attention to God and don't do anything to draw too much attention to themselves that God will not notice them as they sneak into heaven.

**b** The more common reaction to someone who is different and making a difference to others is not to let them alone, but to destroy them.

760. Why did the leaders not take Jesus immediately?
- a. Political opinion was not on their side yet**
  - b. Their hearts were softening
  - c. They were tired of arguing

Matt 21:45,46 And when the chief priests and Pharisees had heard his parables, they perceived that he spake of them.

46But when they sought to lay hands on him, they feared the multitude, because they took him for a prophet.

**c** You know when someone has really made a difference when their opponents don't just get tired of arguing. Most of the time, when someone gets into a debate, they don't bother to pursue the argument. Instead, they get distracted and caught up by the business of life.

**b** Too many times, argument does not lead to someone softening their stand. An honest person knows when his arguments are weak and will back off some lest when he push his argument he is found out. A dishonest person will

ramp up his emotions hoping that his passion will cause the other person to back down. Passion that is born of reason should be treated differently. This is why you should be careful to not make a strong statement unless you have thorough and convincing arguments to accompany your passion.

**a** The leaders knew their arguments were weak and depended on popular opinion to carry the day for them. Unfortunately, then knew that they didn't have it yet.

761. What did the leaders do to resolve their difference with Jesus?

- a. They set up a debate so the people could decide who was worth following
- b. They sent spies to play "gotcha" so they could drum up charges against Him**
- c. They realized that there had to be some reason why His wisdom and power was so effective so they tried to see if He really did match the requirements for being the Messiah

Luke 20:20 And they watched *him*, and sent forth spies, which should feign themselves just men, that they might take hold of his words, that so they might deliver him unto the power and authority of the governor.

**c** *C* is what they *should* have done. We should be ready to back up any claims we make about Jesus with solid Scriptural study and argumentation.

**a** If they disagreed with Christ and had any sense of integrity, they could have set up a debate and leave it to people to decide. Today, *we* have to be ready to accept people's choice after they consider the Gospel, even if it is their choice to go to Hell. Our job is to be ready to present the best arguments we have for their sake.

1Pet 3:15-16 But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and *be* ready always to *give* an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear:

16Having a good conscience; that, whereas they speak evil of you, as of evildoers, they may be ashamed that falsely accuse your good conversation in Christ.

**b** Although Mark refers to the leaders walking away, they only did so in order to regroup and find some *new* way to attack. Playing "gotcha" is not some new tactic of modern politics.

## Parable of the Wedding Feast

This continues a judgment against the Jewish leaders.

762. What happened to those who rejected the wedding invitation?
- a. **Those who were indifferent going about their personal business were equated with those who abused the servants**
  - b. Their excuses were considered understandable, except for the abusiveness
  - c. They were excused because the king had no right to expect anything from anyone

Matt 22:1-7 And Jesus answered and spake unto them again by parables, and said,  
2The kingdom of heaven is like unto a certain king, which made a marriage for his son,  
3And sent forth his servants to call them that were bidden to the wedding: and they would not come.  
4Again, he sent forth other servants, saying, Tell them which are bidden, Behold, I have prepared my dinner: my oxen and *my* fatlings *are* killed, and all things *are* ready: come unto the marriage.  
5But they made light of *it*, and went their ways, one to his farm, another to his merchandise:  
6And the remnant took his servants, and entreated *them* spitefully, and slew *them*.  
7But when the king heard *thereof*, he was wroth: and he sent forth his armies, and destroyed those murderers, and burned up their city.

**c** The world behaves as if there is no higher power over mankind which is ironic with the way some treat government. When it comes to God, people assume that God will just have to accept the good works *they* think should be acceptable. Also, the world often thinks that God's requirements and expectations are unconscionable and argues against the existence of God because His standards do not match what *they* think should be acceptable. They refuse to believe in God because He does not match *their* morality.

**a,b** The excuses of those who took the invitation lightly, perhaps even with contempt, were not treated the same way as those who beat the servants, but their excuses were not acceptable. The marriage supper is a picture of one's relationship with Christ. The contemptuous might not have earned the degree of judgment the murderers had, but neither did they get to participate in the supper. If we are not forcing the parable too far, this suggests that there will be degrees of punishment in Hell.

763. Who will be accepted at the marriage supper of the lamb?
- a. **All who came dressed in righteousness**
  - b. All, whether they are good or bad
  - c. All who had been chosen to be in Christ

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Matt 22:8-14 Then saith he to his servants, The wedding is ready, but they which were bidden were not worthy.

9Go ye therefore into the highways, and as many as ye shall find, bid to the marriage.

10So those servants went out into the highways, and gathered together all as many as they found, both bad and good: and the wedding was furnished with guests.

11And when the king came in to see the guests, he saw there a man which had not on a wedding garment:

12And he saith unto him, Friend, how camest thou in hither not having a wedding garment? And he was speechless.

13Then said the king to the servants, Bind him hand and foot, and take him away, and cast *him* into outer darkness; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

14For many are called, but few *are* chosen.

**b** There are those who have the opinion that God will just accept everyone. Christ's distinct teaching is that God *does* judge people for not accepting Him on *His* terms.

**a** In vs. 12, it might seem like an unfair expectation for the man to have a wedding garment, except it was common for a wedding host to *provide* one for the guests. The man was invited just as the others and showed up, but he was rejected because he essentially had not allowed the grace of the host to provide for him.

**c** The idea that all are invited to salvation but only those whom *God* had chosen to *be* in Christ is not consistent with the logic of this parable. The ones who had come from the highways and byways of life just as invited as all the others. There is no reference to God choosing any of them. If they showed up and accepted God's grace they were recognized as chosen ones. None were chosen before they came, only some were *after* they accepted the invitation.

We ordinarily would expect that if someone is chosen then their must have been a chooser. However, there is another way of understanding chosen that fits election better – the idea of being a *choice* one. Just as we have different grades of meat or produce, being *choice* speaks of the character of the wedding guests. Once they had accepted the grace of the host and were clothed in righteousness, they were *choice*. How they became choice was determined by their acceptance of the invitation and reception of grace as can be seen in Eph 1.

Eph 1:3-4 Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly *places* in Christ:

4According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love:

Eph 1:11-12 In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will:

12That we should be to the praise of his glory, who first trusted in Christ.



We are not chosen *to be in* Christ, but are chosen because we are *in the chosen one*. How we got to be in Christ was based on the fact that we trusted in Him for salvation.

### Render unto Caesar That Which Is Caesar's

764. Why did the Pharisees come with the Herodians to try to trap Jesus?
- They were hoping He would prove Himself to be a true Jew
  - They wanted to find a way to make peace with the Herodians
  - If Jesus answered in favor of the governmental party, the religious party would have grounds for offense and *vice versa***

Mark 12:13,14 And they send unto him certain of the Pharisees and of the Herodians, to catch him in *his* words.

14And when they were come, they say unto him, Master, we know that thou art true, and carest for no man: for thou regardest not the person of men, but teachest the way of God in truth: Is it lawful to give tribute to Caesar, or not?

**a** The Pharisees, who were at odds with the Herodians, were not looking to find a way that they could finally endorse Jesus. They were not looking for truth. They were only hoping that He would find some way to contradict Himself. Many times, people who argue either come off as or actually are hoping to win, not reconcile with someone they disagree with.

**b,c** The Pharisees and Herodians merely wanted to capture Jesus in a trap. Instead of reconciling with the Herodians, they were merely taking advantage of a common dispute hoping to trap Jesus. This is the reason why it is said that politics makes strange bedfellows. We see this active in politics today where political coalitions will vote together even on things one part might not even agree with just for the sake of solidarity.

765. Read Rom 13:1-7 and Dan 4:28-37. Why would Jesus pay the tribute money?
- Because he was endorsing the wickedness of Caesar
  - Because all power is under the dominion of God's sovereignty and Caesar was exacting that which God had permitted**
  - Because the state will take care of all our responsibilities

Rom 13:1-7 Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God.

2Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation.

3For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same:

4For he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to *execute* wrath upon him that doeth evil.

5Wherefore *ye* must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake.

6For for this cause pay ye tribute also: for they are God's ministers, attending

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continually upon this very thing.

7Render therefore to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute *is due*; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honour to whom honour.

Dan 4:28-37 All this came upon the king Nebuchadnezzar.

29At the end of twelve months he walked in the palace of the kingdom of Babylon.

30The king spake, and said, Is not this great Babylon, that I have built for the house of the kingdom by the might of my power, and for the honour of my majesty?

31While the word *was* in the king's mouth, there fell a voice from heaven, *saying*, O king Nebuchadnezzar, to thee it is spoken; The kingdom is departed from thee.

32And they shall drive thee from men, and thy dwelling *shall be* with the beasts of the field: they shall make thee to eat grass as oxen, and seven times shall pass over thee, until thou know that the most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will.

33The same hour was the thing fulfilled upon Nebuchadnezzar: and he was driven from men, and did eat grass as oxen, and his body was wet with the dew of heaven, till his hairs were grown like eagles' *feathers*, and his nails like birds' *claws*.

34And at the end of the days I Nebuchadnezzar lifted up mine eyes unto heaven, and mine understanding returned unto me, and I blessed the most High, and I praised and honoured him that liveth for ever, whose dominion *is* an everlasting dominion, and his kingdom *is* from generation to generation:

35And all the inhabitants of the earth *are* reputed as nothing: and he doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and *among* the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?

36At the same time my reason returned unto me; and for the glory of my kingdom, mine honour and brightness returned unto me; and my counsellors and my lords sought unto me; and I was established in my kingdom, and excellent majesty was added unto me.

37Now I Nebuchadnezzar praise and extol and honour the King of heaven, all whose works *are* truth, and his ways judgment: and those that walk in pride he is able to abase

**a** A is an argument that some have used to justify tax rebellion today. You have to admit that government is not perfect, but that does not take away that God has instituted human government for those who are do not subject themselves to the kingdom of God. Jesus knew that Caesar was corrupt, and yet He left Caesar's portion to him to dispense for which Caesar will be judged by God.

Matt 22:18-21 But Jesus perceived their wickedness, and said, Why tempt ye me, ye hypocrites?

19Shew me the tribute money. And they brought unto him a penny.

20And he saith unto them, Whose *is* this image and superscription?

21They say unto him, Caesar's. Then saith he unto them, Render therefore unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's; and unto God the things that are God's.

**c** Jesus was not endorsing the proposition that Government exists to guarantee equal provision for its citizens. He is only recognizing that government is ordained by God.

**b** Since government is ordained by God, we submit to it, always keeping in mind that no government can force someone to disobey God.

766. What was the effect of Jesus' resolution to the dilemma they presented?
- a. **They were speechless and left Him**
  - b. They were speechless and knew that they should follow Him
  - c. They were revived and decided to surrender themselves to the Lord

Luke 20:26 And they could not take hold of his words before the people: and they marvelled at his answer, and held their peace.

Matt 22:22 When they had heard *these words*, they marvelled, and left him, and went their way.

**a,b,c** As usual, people when proven wrong were not looking for truth to begin with or they might have not just marveled at Jesus. C is not any less possible than B. Honest people will surrender themselves to the Lord.

### Marriage in the Resurrection

767. Why were the Sadducees insincere in their question to Jesus?
- a. Nobody would want to take their deceased brother's wife
  - b. **The Sadducees didn't believe in the resurrection of the dead**
  - c. Because they used a parable and parables are fables

Matt 22:23 The same day came to him the Sadducees, which say that there is no resurrection, and asked him,

**c,b** The Sadducees did indeed use a parable but their use of a parable demonstrates the power *of* a parable. Their disingenuous attitude is not revealed by the parable, but by the fact that they don't even believe in the resurrection. The only excuse they had for using it would be to challenge Christ. For the Sadducees, parables would only be useful if they describe a real possibility. For example, they used something that Jesus claimed to be real, though they found it to be contradictory: how could the resurrection be real if it led to polygamy? If a parable was like pagan mythology suggesting that after crossing the Styx people would be so content in the Elysian fields that they would marry apple trees then Christ would have dismissed the argument as being irrelevant because it has nothing to do with reality. This kind of thinking actually takes place in the pseudo-science of evolutionary just-so stories. To suggest that DNA changes took place in order to respond to environmental causes can be dismissed since evolution theory is impossible on any grounds and no possible speculation within evolution theory makes the general theory any more plausible. For any parable to be of any use, it must *represent* reality.

**a** A represents a form of false argument where an appeal to emotion is made. Just because someone doesn't like an idea doesn't make it wrong. This is often done to suggest that someone's sensibility is superior to something they don't like about God as a proof that God cannot exist because if God were

real He would certainly not do something that a mere human doesn't agree with. If the Sadducees had taken *this* approach, they would have been at least sincere, though sincerely wrong.

768. How did the doctrine of the resurrection present a problem to the Sadducees if it were true?
- a. There would be at least six unhappy men in heaven
  - b. The woman would have to bear children in heaven
  - c. The woman would have to be married to seven men in heaven**

Mark 12:19-23 Master, Moses wrote unto us, If a man's brother die, and leave *his* wife *behind him*, and leave no children, that his brother should take his wife, and raise up seed unto his brother.

20Now there were seven brethren: and the first took a wife, and dying left no seed.

21And the second took her, and died, neither left he any seed: and the third likewise.

22And the seven had her, and left no seed: last of all the woman died also.

23In the resurrection therefore, when they shall rise, whose wife shall she be of them? for the seven had her to wife.

**b,c** The Sadducees wanting to make sure they had every angle covered suggested that if the woman were childless then none of the men would be able to claim her. They might have, but did not suggest that childbearing would continue in heaven.

The Sadducees were Nationalists and did not believe in angels or any invisible powers, nor in the resurrection. Their main dispute with the Pharisees was to whether the oral tradition was binding. The Pharisees held it of equal value with the written law. The Sadducees said that everything not written might be rejected or was at least open to question. They considered the doctrine of the resurrection a mere matter of pious opinion. They said the doctrine was without authority in the written law, especially since in their opinion the prophets were not of equal value with the Pentateuch.

The current popular idea with reference to the future life was that the resurrection would restore to men their former bodies, appetites, passions, and the usual material conditions and relationships. This low...central conception of the future was the occasion and cause of the Sadducean ridicule and derision.

– Pentecost §145

Their doctrine of the resurrection did not match God's doctrine of the resurrection which is a common problem of communication.

**a** They did not express a concern for the men who would be unmarried in heaven, even though this is implied and anticipated by Jesus' response to them.

Matt 22:30 For in the resurrection they neither marry, nor are given in marriage, but

are as the angels of God in heaven.

769. Read Romans 8. How *would* the power of God be manifested?
- a. By choosing who is married to whom
  - b. By eradicating the Law
  - c. By giving us a new form in the resurrection**

**a** A is a reference to the consideration that there is only one person who could ever be a possible mate for anyone because they are chosen by God. As Jesus answers the Sadducees, He doesn't even touch on this as an issue. It is true that there is a set of ideals that we should seek in marriage, but in marriage there will always be room for growth. The Sadducees wanted to make the matter as in issue of how God would choose but Jesus' answer dismisses the whole issue.

**b** Jesus doesn't eradicate the Law regarding marriage, but points out that there is no comparison to life in heaven where marriage is not even an issue at all.

**c** The power of God as a reference to the resurrection is all over the New Testament. In Romans 8, Paul clearly teaches the sonship of God is a reference to the spiritual body we will have.

Rom 8:19,22,23,29 For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God.

22For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now.

23And not only *they*, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, *to wit*, the redemption of our body.

29For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate *to be* conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren.

While the teaching on marriage is of interest, what is even more significant is the emphasis on what the resurrection will be like.

770. How would the resurrection change the notion of marriage?
- a. There would have to be polyamory
  - b. There is no need for marriage**
  - c. One can start all over again with a new marriage for eternity

Luke 20:35,36 But they which shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world, and the resurrection from the dead, neither marry, nor are given in marriage:

36Neither can they die any more: for they are equal unto the angels; and are the children of God, being the children of the resurrection.

**c,a** C and A are just two of numerous speculations about the marriage relationship.

**b** In a place where there is perfect love and no need for marriage for procreation, marriage becomes irrelevant, even though from our earthly perspective this might be hard to imagine.

771. In what way did Jesus say the Sadducees did not understand the Scriptures regarding the resurrection?

- a. As God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, God is the God of the living**
- b. They were ignorant of Job 19:23-27
- c. They were not imaginative enough in their interpretation of Scripture

Matt 22:31,32 But as touching the resurrection of the dead, have ye not read that which was spoken unto you by God, saying,  
32I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob? God is not the God of the dead, but of the living.

**b** The Sadducees gave more weight to the Pentateuch. They were not necessarily ignorant of Job 19:23-27,

Job 19:23-27 Oh that my words were now written! oh that they were printed in a book!  
24That they were graven with an iron pen and lead in the rock for ever!  
25For I know *that* my redeemer liveth, and *that* he shall stand at the latter *day* upon the earth:  
26And *though* after my skin *worms* destroy this *body*, yet in my flesh shall I see God:  
27Whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another; *though* my reins be consumed within me.

But, because it was not the Pentateuch, they might have discounted the significance of this passage.

**c** The Allegorical Method of Hermeneutics creates all kinds of mischievous interpretations and interpolations of strange doctrine. On the other hand, the Bible is filled with clear types and foreshadowing. The Sadducees missed the significance of the offering of Isaac and the possibility of the resurrection that Abraham adduced, the first born being spared of death in the Passover, Joseph's restoration to Jacob, the Feast of First Fruits, and Jonah.

**a** Since the Sadducees gave more weight to the Pentateuch, Jesus parsed the explicit words of God to challenge their wrong understanding.

772. Why might some of the scribes have been happy with Jesus' answer?

- a. If they were Pharisees they would have been happy that Jesus had silenced the Sadducees**
- b. They were not smart enough to know they had been defeated
- c. They were concerned about being stuck with a wife they didn't like for all eternity

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Matt 22:34 But when the Pharisees had heard that he had put the Sadducees to silence, they were gathered together.

Luke 20:39 Then certain of the scribes answering said, Master, thou hast well said.

**a,b** The Scribes were typically Pharisees who would be happy that the Sadducees had been reprov'd. If any had been Sadducees, then they would only be happy if they were oblivious to having been reprimanded.

**c** C represents a purely selfish mentality that someone might have. Their partisan prejudices overrode their own self interest.

### Which is the Great Commandment?

773. Read Rom 13:8-10. How did Jesus summarize the Law to avoid the Pharisaical bickering over which Law took precedent creating lesser and greater penalties?

a. Every law must be obeyed no matter what

b. The Law is irrelevant, only the grace of God counts

**c. The spirit of the Law is to live out of love to God and man**

Rom 13:8-10 Owe no man any thing, but to love one another: for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law.

<sup>9</sup>For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Thou shalt not covet; and if *there be* any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.

<sup>10</sup>Love worketh no ill to his neighbour: therefore love *is* the fulfilling of the law.

As is implied by the question, there were two dominant schools of thought amongst the Pharisees led by Shammai and Hillel. Just as the Pharisees and Herodians and the Pharisees and Sadducees sought to get Jesus to take sides with their factions, the scribe is doing the same thing here.

This question, on which the schools of Hillel and Shammai were disagreed, the Lawyer put, tempting our Lord (Matthew 22:35), hoping that He would commit Himself as an enemy of the Traditions. The Rabbinical schools taught that there were important distinctions between the Commandments, some being great and others small, some hard and weighty, others easy and of less importance. Great commands were the observance of the Sabbath, circumcision, minute rites of sacrifice and offering, the rules respecting fringes and phylacteries.

The scribe's question was just another attempt to get Jesus to come down on the side of one faction which would have made the other to reject Him. Whether it was the Pharisee/Herodian factions, the Pharisee/Sadducee factions, or the Shammai/Hillel Pharisee factions, the attempt was to disrupt Jesus, making Him to be just another sectarian malcontent rather than the great uniter in the true kingdom of God.

**a** Jesus did not flatly and simplistically say that all the laws should be obeyed in response to the scribe, with which the Pharisees would have been in agreement. The two dominant schools of Shammai and Hillel did not have any problem with saying that *all* the Law should be obeyed. Their questions came from which law would take precedent in case their was a conflict.

"For many," says Beds, "thought that the first commandment in the Law related to offerings and sacrifices, with regard to which so much is said in Leviticus, and that the right worship of God consisted in the due offering of these." (Pulpit Commentary)

This would account for why the scribe would later comment that Christ's perspective was greater than "whole burnt offerings and sacrifices."

**b** Jesus did *not* propose the opposite of obeying every law no matter what, which would be what is called Antinomianism, which comes from the roots *anti*-against, and *nomos*-law. Even though the Law is subsumed under the principle of *love*, as in Rom 8, there have been those who moved to an extreme position of rejecting the Law on the false grounds that grace has completely supplanted the Law. They make the mistake that the Law is irrelevant, contrary at the very least to the teaching of Paul in Romans and Galatians that the Law serves the purpose of defining sin and conviction for sin. The Law not only defined sin but also served the Jewish nation, which was not founded on being born again, to restrict them from excess, recognizing the hardness of their hearts. If anything, grace is *more* strict in that it takes the heart of God revealed through the Law and calls upon us to live out those principles *purely* from a changed heart. We see that same spirit of Antinomianism today in those who call anyone a legalist who promotes standards of decency and propriety that are Biblically based. Legalism is a term that really only applies to those who think they can earn salvation by the works of the Law. Such people promote licentiousness in the name of Christian liberty. We do indeed have liberty but only as that liberty is consistent with the consideration of the holiness of God. Antinomianism has also been related to Christian Anarchism which sought a sense of government that came from above in the hearts of men rather than a society that is under the dominion of earthly government.

**c** Jesus did not give a simplistic answer of merely obeying all Law which led to the disputes among the Pharisees or a complete rejection of the Law in a spirit of Antinomianism. All along, Jesus' emphasis with the Pharisees was that instead of evolving new laws to add burdens to the people, they were to be judged for not attending to the *spirit* of the Law. For example, He called them into question over the Sabbath being made for man, not man for the Sabbath; or, paying the tithe down to the most minute part but not considering the weightier aspect of the Law of judgment and mercy. He demonstrated this even here by adding an interpretive word to Deu 6:5 that we should obey God with all of our *mind* also.



In keeping with an emphasis on the spirit of the Law, Jesus essentially pointed to something that all the Pharisees could agree on, the *Shema* found in Deut 6:4

Deut 6:4 Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God *is* one LORD:

The *Shema* ("Hear") formed the foundation of their daily prayers and was repeated often. He then proceeded to speak to the spirit of the *Shema* by giving its application and interpretation from Deu 6:5 and Lev 19:18. This is most notable by His interjection of the *mind*.

The spirit of the Law can be seen in that the 613 identified statutes of the Law were founded on the 10 "words of the Law," or 10 Commandments, which Jesus here boiled down to two precepts of loving God and its corollary, loving our neighbor, which Paul distills down to one concept: love as the fulfillment of the Law.

774. Why did Jesus say the scribe was not far from the kingdom of God?
- a. He was willing to offer more sacrifices to cover for the sins he was planning to commit
  - b. He showed that he had full understanding of the intent of the Law of inward spiritual sacrifice**
  - c. He showed that he had full understanding of the Law to control society

Mark 12:32-34 And the scribe said unto him, Well, Master, thou hast said the truth: for there is one God; and there is none other but he:

33And to love him with all the heart, and with all the understanding, and with all the soul, and with all the strength, and to love *his* neighbour as himself, is more than all whole burnt offerings and sacrifices.

34And when Jesus saw that he answered discreetly, he said unto him, Thou art not far from the kingdom of God. And no man after that durst ask him *any question*.

**a** Jesus did not speak to any significance the scribe had for the offerings and sacrifices. This answer refers to the way some people might over exaggerate the sacrifices as some easy way to get out of blame and use them, like cheap grace, to have a permissive attitude toward sin.

**c** Neither did the scribe demonstrate any wrong attitude about the Law as a means to control society.

**b** When Jesus gave His interpretation of Deu 6:5, He spoke of the faculty of the *mind*. The scribe repeated it back to Him, but used the word *understanding*, a reference to the thoughtfulness one has when they *use* their mind and then added on an understanding that the debate over whether the sacrifices were more important was irrelevant since even God rejected the sacrifices in the Old Testament when they were done with an improper heart. Jesus then noted that he had answered *discretely*, or with intelligence, demonstrating that he was getting it and affirmed his understanding of the

spirit of the Law. This put the scribe in the position of being close, but not quite there yet. An attitude of readiness to submit oneself is only the precursor to actually committing oneself to Christ in salvation.

### What Think Ye of Christ?

775. Who did the Pharisees recognize the Messiah to be?

- a. Jesus
- b. Menachem Mendel Schneerson
- c. The son of David**

Matt 22:41-42 While the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them, <sup>42</sup>Saying, What think ye of Christ? whose son is he? They say unto him, *The Son of David*.

**b** Menachem Mendel Schneerson was a Lubavitch Orthodox rabbi who some considered to be the possible Messiah. He died in 1994. The reason he is mentioned here is because there are those who think that Jews can't be Christian because Jesus is part of the Christian faith. Jews most certainly *can* be Christian because they are only being asked to recognize Him as their Messiah, just as Schneerson was considered by some to be the Messiah. The only problem that the Jews would have is how to identify the Messiah. This is why the prophecies are so important. Over the years there have been others who have claimed to be the Messiah, but none deal with the clues that God gave in the Bible.

**a** The Pharisees would not mind if Jesus had made no claims for Himself. The same is true for many skeptics today who want to recognize Jesus but not as anything greater than being a historical figure.

**c** One of the names that the Pharisees had for the Messiah was *The Son of David*. As such, they knew that the Messiah was human because He would be descended from David

776. Read Psa 110:1. If the Jews recognized that Psa 110:1 is a Messianic reference, then what would they have to say about the character of the Messiah?

- a. He was wise
- b. He was divine**
- c. He was good

Psa 110:1 The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool.

Matt 22:43-44 He saith unto them, How then doth David in spirit call him Lord, saying,

<sup>44</sup>The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, till I make thine enemies thy footstool?

**a,c** The Pharisees were willing to recognize that the Messiah would be was not just wise or good as might be said of anyone who might be a prominent leader.

**b** In Psalm 110:1, The word LORD (using small caps) is *Jehovah*, while Lord in regular font is *adonai*, both of which are used to refer to God in the Old Testament. However, in Greek translations of Psalm 110:1, the word *kyrios* is used for both. Also in the New Testament, *kyrios* is used for LORD or Lord, except that in Greek, LORD is only implied by context from the Old Testament. By this verse, the term Son of David is identified as a reference to being divine.

777. If Jesus is the son of David, then what would He be able to claim?

- a. As Messiah, He is divine**
- b. As the son of David, He is the forerunner to the Christ
- c. David was wrong

Matt 22:45-46 If David then call him Lord, how is he his son?

46And no man was able to answer him a word, neither durst any *man* from that day forth ask him any more *questions*.

**b,c** If the Messiah was not divine, then one would have to conclude that David was wrong or that son of David is something else, which neither is true. There was never any claim that the son of David would be a forerunner to the Messiah even though some wondered if Jesus was Elijah or John the Baptist, each of which *would* be the forerunner to the Messiah.

**a** Some claim that Jesus never claimed to be divine (which is not even true). In this Scripture, Jesus is forcing the Pharisees into the conclusion that it is not unreasonable or blasphemous for one to make such a claim. If they were willing to call Him the son of David, then they would have to be ready to call Him God also, which they were not willing to do. If Jesus did not want to be identified as God, then He would never have pushed this logic. Someone might say that He does not explicitly say that He is God here, but the only purpose of the logic that His rhetorical question serves is to press the case of His divinity. He wouldn't use this logic to water down any claims to diffuse their ire. It can only be used to make a bold claim. Later, when He is before the Sanhedrin, the high priest skips over any idea of Him being the son of David and accuses Him of blasphemy for identifying Himself as God.

## Beware of the Pharisees

778. As interpreters of the Law, what position did the Pharisees claim to occupy?
- To speak from the throne of David
  - To speak from Moses' seat**
  - To speak *ex cathedra*

Matt 23:1,2 Then spake Jesus to the multitude, and to his disciples,  
2Saying, The scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat:

**a** The Pharisees knew that they were less than the Messiah and it never entered their mind to think so. That doesn't mean that such a thought never comes to anyone.

**c** To speak *ex cathedra* means to speak *from the throne* and is a Roman Catholic term to describe solemn pronouncements by the pope on matters of faith or morals and therefore binding on the laity. It was established in the First Vatican Council in 1870 that any such *ex cathedra* doctrines have the character of infallibility. The throne that they claim to be speaking from is that of Peter as the Vicar, or substitute, for Christ on earth. Only one pope—and only one papal decree—has ever invoked this kind of infallibility since it was first defined. In 1950, Pius XII declared the Assumption of Mary (i.e., the quick passage of her body and soul into heaven) as a dogma of the church. Although the Roman Catholic Church has the most formal and institutionalized statement about speaking infallibly, cults often do the same thing by claiming new revelation from God. Charismatic do this also in effect when they claim to speak by revelation. Other churches are not exempt from this mistake when popular preachers are treated as though they are speaking from the authority of God when at times they are really speaking from their very firm opinion. Any of these things count as taking the Lord's Name in vain.

**b** The Pharisees did what so many others do, try to sound as authoritative as possible. Speaking from Moses' seat is similar, then, to speaking *ex cathedra*.

779. What did Jesus recommend concerning the Pharisees teaching?
- Copy the way they lived out their teaching
  - Observe what was taught**
  - Ignore their teaching and live by grace

Matt 23:3 All therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, *that* observe and do; but do not ye after their works: for they say, and do not.

Matt 23:23 Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin, and have omitted the weightier *matters* of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone.

**a** The Pharisees are like so many in their hypocrisy. Their teaching does not match their lifestyle.

**b,c** Jesus did not have so much trouble with the teaching of the Pharisees, except when it came to the rules they derived from the Law. They were at least to be admired for their desire to understand and apply God's Word, even if they failed at it. This is a problem that people face today. They focus on the failures of Christians and "throw out the baby with the bath water." They are governed by their complaints rather than the obligation to do right. Instead, they claim grace and liberty and do what they want, which they don't realize is just as hypocritical.

780. What was the effect that the Pharisees had on the people?

- a. They were burdened by things the Pharisees would not do themselves**
- b. They were made holy by their efforts to follow the Pharisees teaching
- c. They brought others into the kingdom

Matt 23:4 For they bind heavy burdens and grievous to be borne, and lay *them* on men's shoulders; but they *themselves* will not move them with one of their fingers.

Matt 23:15 Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte, and when he is made, ye make him twofold more the child of hell than yourselves.

**c** They were not known for enlarging the kingdom of God but the kingdom of Satan. We want to always remember that we are not building *our* kingdom, but God's. We should be fearful that we are creating a political party at odds with other parties. Our own kingdom building will come at the expense of souls, either by shutting them out of the kingdom or as Christian casualties.

**a,b** Christ's implication is that the people were getting distracted by the burdens placed upon them rather than the teaching.

781. What trap did the Pharisees fall into?

- a. Being shy and avoiding talking to people about God
- b. Not exercising leadership
- c. Intellectual and religious pride**

Matt 23:7-10 And greetings in the markets, and to be called of men, Rabbi, Rabbi.  
8But be not ye called Rabbi: for one is your Master, *even* Christ; and all ye are brethren.

9And call no *man* your father upon the earth: for one is your Father, which is in heaven.

10Neither be ye called masters: for one is your Master, *even* Christ.

**b** The Pharisees might have thought that they were truly trying to lead others, except true leadership is done by example first. So, B is actually true if what

you are talking about is *true* leadership. They were happy to be *false* leaders who were more interested in controlling others.

**a** They were not shy at all, but vocal as people will be when they try to bully others.

**c** By desiring to be called Rabbi and father, they were guilty of intellectual pride. Often people fall into this trap by seeking to possess knowledge when all they are getting is head knowledge, not heart knowledge. Most learning from books is necessarily insufficient because books are made up of information *distilled* and *extracted* from life. When you actually go to live out doctrines, you find that there are often other factors that impact the *application* of truth. Teaching swimming in a pool vs. the ocean vs. the Dead Sea is very different. The mechanics of swimming are the same, but they are applied differently depending on what setting you are in. All sin proves that we are sinners, but not all sins are dealt with the same way on earth. For example murder and slander both kill, but not in the same way. Also, deception in war, a math error, and false testimony are all untrue, but not all are lies. Truly intelligent and informed people are more aware of what they don't know and will often be more humble.

782. List the things that describe the Pharisees:

They devoured widows' houses

They made a pretense by long prayer

Their proselytes were two times more a child of Hell than themselves

They swore falsely.

They tithed properly, but avoided the weightier matters of the law including judgment, mercy, and faith

They were concerned about outer appearance like a whited sepulchres filled with dead men's bones

They were like their forefathers who hypocritically memorialized the prophets who they had killed

### Christ's Lament for Jerusalem

783. What was God's will for Jerusalem?

- a. To have gathered and protected the Jews**
- b. To reject the Jews
- c. To force the Jews to be saved

Matt 23:37,39 O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, *thou* that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under *her* wings, and ye would not!

<sup>39</sup>For I say unto you, Ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed *is* he that cometh in the name of the Lord

**c** The Jews were certainly God's elect people, but that does not mean that they are all saved or that God will force them to be saved in Calvinistic sense.

**b** God has never and will never reject the Jews. He *has* set them aside until the day comes that they will genuinely say before the Millennium, "Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord."

**a** By God's grace, He had promised the land to Abraham. He confirmed it to Jacob when he was not yet sold out to God at Bethel. Then (see Deu 9), God reminded them of their stiffneckedness and how He was going to stand by them anyway going into the Promised Land to displace the wicked inhabitants of the land. A is a statement about the grace of God.

784. How did the Jews exercise their will?

a. They had no will, they only did what God willed them to do

**b. To resist God's will**

c. To give up their rebellion

Matt 23:37 O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, *thou* that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under *her* wings, and ye would not!

**a** There are those who declare that man has no ability to resist God's will. This is actually true when God is acting to carry out His redemptive plan for the Ages. However, God works in response to and with what we choose to do.

**b,c** We have the ability to choose to stay in rebellion or to surrender to God. We might not be able to save ourselves by an *act* of our will, but we can surrender to God's salvation by the *exercise* of our will.

785. How long would the house of Israel be desolate?

a. Forever, they were irredeemable

b. Until Pentecost

**c. Until the Second Coming when they would say "Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord" genuinely**

**a,b,c** The Jews were neither irredeemable nor would they be ready when God brought His work into the next dispensation. There will come the time when they will finally, at the Second Coming, be able to recognize Jesus as their Messiah when they say "Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord."

### 139 - The Widow's Mite

786. How did the widow give more than the rich? She gave 100%, they gave only a portion

Mark 12:41-44 And Jesus sat over against the treasury, and beheld how the people cast money into the treasury: and many that were rich cast in much.

42And there came a certain poor widow, and she threw in two mites, which make a farthing.

43And he called *unto him* his disciples, and saith unto them, Verily I say unto you, That this poor widow hath cast more in, than all they which have cast into the treasury:

44For all *they* did cast in of their abundance; but she of her want did cast in all that she had, *even* all her living.

We want to remember that although the tithe belongs to God and is a great financial organizing principle, *everything* we have belongs to God. This was demonstrated by the widow in her giving. The larger lesson here is not about our stewardship, but about our attitude. We say we want revival, but the question that we must ask is, "What are we actually willing to do for revival." We expect to be able to count on our pastors to be there for us, but usually only a small portion of the church is mature enough for the pastors to be able to say the same thing. Much time is wasted by pastors chasing people down who are unresponsive and don't *really* care about the things of God.

Prov 20:6 Most men will proclaim every one his own goodness: but a faithful man who can find?

### 140 - Departing from the Temple, Jesus Foretells the Destruction of the Temple

787. Why are the Jews not able to have a sacrifice made today?

- a. **The Temple was destroyed and has not been rebuilt**
- b. Animal sacrifice seems so barbaric
- c. They believe in Jesus as their perfect sacrifice

Matt 24:1,2 And Jesus went out, and departed from the temple: and his disciples came to *him* for to shew him the buildings of the temple.

2And Jesus said unto them, See ye not all these things? verily I say unto you, There shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down.

**c** C represents what they *should* have thought if they had been theologically correct.

**b** People today might accommodate the end of the sacrifices for the wrong reason. They might assume that as society evolved and became more enlightened that the sacrifices were discontinued merely because they offended the new refined sensibilities. However, the sacrifices were not so



barbaric even by modern standards. Some were eaten by all the people as part of a feast. Because of kosher laws regarding blood, Jewish butchers were considered very humane especially by ancient standards.

**a** There were certain practices like ending a vow or observing the Passover that were obviously kept by Paul even though He was saved. These practices were part of the Jewish identity. It would appear that God kept the Jews from continuing with the sacrifices so that there could be no claim of forgiveness through the imperfect sacrifices.

## 141 - The Olivet Discourse

### When Shall These Things Be?

788. Besides knowing when the Temple would be destroyed, what else did the people want to know?

- a. When He was going to be crucified and resurrected
- b. The sign of His coming and the end of the world**
- c. How to have their best life now

Matt 24:3 And as he sat upon the mount of Olives, the disciples came unto him privately, saying, Tell us, when shall these things be? and what *shall be* the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?

**a** Since they were not so focused on the resurrection, they did not make the mistake that the end was coming as part of the first coming of Christ.

**c** Being concerned about having their best life now is a reference to the way often treat religion as a means to get comfortable in *this* world. The Jews were more concerned about the apocalyptic teachings that would accompany the End Times advent of Christ.

**b** The question asked is regarding the destruction of the Temple which will occur in the time described in vs. 4-31. Then, Jesus will moves on to answer the question about the sign that will precede the end of the world.

Everything in the Olivet Discourse has been debated back and forth. The view in this work is that it represents a statement concerning the Rapture. The alternate view is that it represents what precedes the Millennial appearance of Christ in the Second Coming. The main reason for not presenting this latter view is that it presents more problems with the teaching of the imminent return of Christ than the interpretation used here.

## Deception, Rumors of Wars, and Persecution

789. What is the extreme extent that many will resort to in order to deceive people?
- They will preach Christ under false pretenses to get great gain
  - They will accept celebrity status from people
  - They will claim to be the Christ**

Matt 24:5 For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many.

**a,b,c** False preachers often do seek great gain and accept celebrity status, but the problem Jesus points out that they will sometimes do more than preach false doctrines *about* Him they will claim to *be* Him.

790. Name four conditions that will exist in the world as the beginning of sorrows:  
\_\_\_\_\_ and rumors of \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, in diverse places

wars, wars, famines, pestilences, earthquakes

There have always been conditions described like this, however, their intensity during the Tribulation will be even greater. The increase we see during our times is consistent with preparing for what is going to come later. Sometimes people try to discount the significance of what we are observing today, but the question has got to be asked, what *would* you expect to see before the Tribulation strikes in full force?

791. How will the world treat Christians?
- With equal rights
  - With love and tolerance because love trumps hate
  - Hated for Christ's namesake and delivered up for affliction and destruction**

Matt 24:9,10 Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you: and ye shall be hated of all nations for my name's sake.

10And then shall many be offended, and shall betray one another, and shall hate one another.

**a,b** Claiming to be acting out of love and equality are merely used as slogans to make someone appear to be benign. They are used to cover the fact that such people only feel they can achieve this by destroying those who oppose them.

**c** Christians have always been viewed as a threat to the powers of an evil united world.

792. Who will rise up to preach?

- a. 144,000 Jewish preachers
- b. Many false prophets**
- c. Many people who love God

Matt 24:11,12 And many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many.  
12And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold.

**a** A is a reference to righteous preachers who will serve God during the Tribulation

**c** There will be those who respond to the Gospel during the Tribulation, but it won't be many. Instead, many people will harden their hearts rather than yield to the reality that is present around them.

**b** Having many false prophets will be consistent with the spirit of that time.

793. Who will be delivered?

- a. Only certain ones who God has selected
- b. Only those who subscribe to politically correct views
- c. Those who love Christ and endure unto the end**

Matt 24:12,13 And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold.  
13But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved.

**b** B is a reference to how elitists want to be delivered by destroying the opposition.

**a** A is a reference to the notion that God has preselected some for salvation.

**c** Salvation here is a reference not to eternal salvation, but deliverance as salvation from the times of the Tribulation. There will be those who get saved before the end of the Tribulation, but those who last all the way to the end and love Christ will certainly make it through to the Millennium.

794. What will people be able to do to respond to the attacks in those days?

- a. They can perfect unassailable arguments that no one will be able to resist
- b. They can trust the Holy Ghost will give them what to say**
- c. They can find hiding places trusting no one will betray them

Mark 13:11 But when they shall lead *you*, and deliver you up, take no thought beforehand what ye shall speak, neither do ye premeditate: but whatsoever shall be given you in that hour, that speak ye: for it is not ye that speak, but the Holy Ghost.

**a** It is unrealistic to expect to have so many answers as though that is what people are interested in to begin with. People who are open to understanding

will have greater confidence in their decision, but people who don't want to believe are not really interested in logic and evidence, only excuses for believing what they want.

**c** People today make the mistake of thinking that our role is to be peaceable and avoiding trouble. We certainly don't want to have *just* cause for people to complain about making trouble for trouble's sake. On the other hand, we are not called to run away but to confront sin and present the Gospel.

**b** We might not be able to anticipate what we will need to say, but God can. Part of the work of the Holy Spirit is to empower our preaching.

795. What will have to happen before the actual end comes?

**a. The Gospel of the Kingdom will be preached in all the world**

b. The Gospel of salvation will be preached in all the world

c. The whole world will get saved in a great revival

Matt 24:14 And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come.

**a,b** Both a and B are actually correct. The Gospel of the Kingdom is more so because it is what is actually said and refers to Millennial Kingdom of Christ made of those who are saved.

**c** Even though people hear the Gospel, that does not mean that they will all respond. Some have misinterpreted this to suggest that the Gospel will be preached before Jesus comes in His *first* advent. This is a reference to how the Gospel will be heard by all the world during the *Tribulation*.

## The Sign of Abomination

796. Read Dan 12:10-13, Rev 13. How shall the end of days of the Tribulation start?

**a. The image of the beast will be empowered to begin a *great tribulation***

b. The Rapture will occur

c. The world will be enlightened to the point that Jesus will come to take His place at the head of all government

Matt 24:15,21,22 When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, (whoso readeth, let him understand:)

21For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be.

22And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened.

Dan 12:10-13 Many shall be purified, and made white, and tried; but the wicked shall do wickedly: and none of the wicked shall understand; but the wise shall understand.

11And from the time *that* the daily *sacrifice* shall be taken away, and the abomination

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that maketh desolate set up, *there shall be* a thousand two hundred and ninety days.  
12Blessed *is* he that waiteth, and cometh to the thousand three hundred and five and thirty days.

13But go thou thy way till the end *be*: for thou shalt rest, and stand in thy lot at the end of the days.

Rev 13:11-15 And I beheld another beast coming up out of the earth; and he had two horns like a lamb, and he spake as a dragon.

12And he exerciseth all the power of the first beast before him, and causeth the earth and them which dwell therein to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed.

13And he doeth great wonders, so that he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men,

14And deceiveth them that dwell on the earth by *the means of* those miracles which he had power to do in the sight of the beast; saying to them that dwell on the earth, that they should make an image to the beast, which had the wound by a sword, and did live.

15And he had power to give life unto the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak, and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed.

**c** Amillennialism teaches that Christ will take the throne that the church has prepared for Him by overcoming the world. If they spiritualize the Tribulation, then it makes no more sense to suggest a Mid-Tribulation appearance of Christ than a Pre-Tribulation appearance of Christ. It doesn't make the Amillennialist position any stronger to press and squeeze Christ into any other time frame.

**b** Some today teach a modern version of a Mid-Tribulation Rapture position to suggest that Jesus will come in the Rapture after a *great* tribulation occurs and before the wrath of the Lord toward the end of the Tribulation. According to them, the Lord's wrath at the end of the Tribulation is called the Day of the Lord.

**c** There *will* be a marking point at the middle of the Tribulation according to Dan 12:11,12 when the Antichrist will be empowered to be worshiped.

797. What should the people of God do at this point?

a. Hang out and try to cope

b. Renounce their faith

**c. Flee as the Antichrist makes war against them**

Matt 24:16-18 Then let them which be in Judaea flee into the mountains:

17Let him which is on the housetop not come down to take any thing out of his house:

18Neither let him which is in the field return back to take his clothes.

**a,b,c** Renouncing one's faith has occurred throughout Christian history for which there is no excuse. Trying to cope might sound better, but the advice here is that there is no shame in fleeing. There comes a point where escape is the right thing to do.

798. What will happen at the end of the time of abomination?

- a. The triumph of western civilization
- b. The end of the times of the Gentiles**
- c. The success of a communist order

Luke 21:23-24 But woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck, in those days! for there shall be great distress in the land, and wrath upon this people.  
24And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations: and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled.

**c** The order that the Antichrist will not be communism. Communism is only distraction to pave the way for the Antichrist. A communist collective is not able to succeed. It is just another excuse for establishing a totalitarian order.

**a** However, the failure of a communist order is not the triumph of western civilization. Western civilization has fostered the success of pluralism, but it has only been able to stave off the inevitable. The inevitable has been the failure of this dispensation. With the increase of power and responsibility of each dispensation, man demonstrates that he is not able to be faithful to God. In this final dispensation, man will prove himself incapable of building the kingdom of God, which is quite the opposite of the expectation of the non-dispensational Amillennialists. The only way there can be true success dispensationally is when Jesus appears in His Second Coming to usher in the Millennium.

**b** The times of the Gentiles has been described as from the time of Nebuchadnezzar (as seen in Daniel 2) until the end of the Tribulation. It is understood as the domination of the Gentiles over the region.

799. What shall the coming of the Son of Man (Christ) be like?

- a. As lightning that shines from the east to the west**
- b. He could appear anywhere – out in the desert, at the head of a government, as a military leader, etc.
- c. He will come working miracles to prove that he is the Christ

Matt 24:23-28 Then if any man shall say unto you, Lo, here *is* Christ, or there; believe *it* not.

24For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if *it were* possible, they shall deceive the very elect.

25Behold, I have told you before.

26Wherefore if they shall say unto you, Behold, he is in the desert; go not forth: behold, *he is* in the secret chambers; believe *it* not.

27For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.

28For wheresoever the carcase is, there will the eagles be gathered together.

**b** The false Christs arise in all kinds of situations, but Jesus will be coming in a specific way. This reminds us of how different ethnic groups portray Christ as a representation of their ethnicity. This might be borne of the idea that Christ is there for all peoples, but He specifically had to be borne as a Jew to fulfill Scripture.

**c** Jesus doesn't really even need to have done miracles to begin with. In His grace He came proving Himself, but when He comes again it will be in the judgment of the world which it deserves.

**a** God's work in some ways has moved from the east to the west: the growth of Christian civilization, the rising and setting of the sun, Israel's entry into the Promised Land, and, here, the arrival of Christ. What is especially noteworthy here is His arrival compared to lightning. The sudden appearance and effect is a perfect description for how He will come.

### Signs in the Heavens

800. What further description is given to the Tribulation?

- a. The world will experience a spiritual enlightenment
- b. The world will be experience a nuclear winter
- c. The sun, moon, and stars will be darkened**

Luke 21:25-28 And there shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars; and upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring; 26Men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth: for the powers of heaven shall be shaken.

27And then shall they see the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory.

28And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh.

Nuclear winter is a severe and prolonged global climatic cooling effect hypothesized to occur after widespread firestorms following a nuclear war. The hypothesis is based on the fact that such fires can inject soot into the stratosphere, where it can block some direct sunlight from reaching the surface of the Earth. It is speculated that the resulting cooling would lead to widespread crop failure and famine.

– [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nuclear\\_winter](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nuclear_winter)

**b** The world will not end with any of the natural ways the world might be afraid of. It is not going to end in nuclear holocaust, climate change, or a space invasion.

**a** The world will not choose to get closer to God, but will be in *perplexity* over what they are witnessing. This is very true even now. People are troubled by all crime and societal breakdown, but they won't begin to think of the real cause: the loss of faith and responsibility before God.

**c** The effect of God's judgment will be felt all over the world as described by the condition of the sun, moon, and stars.

801. What will accompany Jesus when He arrives in the Second Coming?

- a. Angels with the sound of a trumpet gathering His elect**
- b. The Antichrist and Jesus reaching a compromise to rule the world
- c. The world will happily elect Jesus to take over

Matt 24:31 And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.

**b** Although God has worked in spite of sin in the world, it is not because He has compromised with man or Satan. This time period marks the ultimate failure of Satan to set up Antichrist.

**c** We generally point out that man has nothing to do with creating a kingdom so Jesus can come down to take His throne that we have prepared for Him. Even less than that, the time of man trying to elect a government that can work is over. When Jesus comes it will be to conquer the world after man has proven himself in need of the Savior and completely incapable of salvation whether individually or collectively.

**a** The elect here refers to Israel being gathered at the end of the Tribulation. The kingdom that Jesus is setting up in the Millennium is not only for the purpose of being universal, but to fulfill God's promise of grace to Israel.

### **The Sign of the end of the World: The Blossoming Fig Tree**

802. What sign will indicate that all these things are at the doors?

- a. A great international revival
- b. The blossoming of Israel which is symbolized by a fig tree**
- c. An international treaty with Israel establishing peace

Matt 24:32-33 Now learn a parable of the fig tree; When his branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer *is* nigh:

33 So likewise ye, when ye shall see all these things, know that it is near, *even* at the doors.

**c** There *will* be a treaty with Israel, but this happens after the Rapture when the Antichrist will make a treaty with Israel which he will break 3 ½ years into the Tribulation.

Dan 9:27 And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make *it* desolate, even until the



consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate.

**a** We know that there will be no great international revival, but we are careful to specify *international*. There may be isolated revivals, but no great revival to usher in the return of Christ *for* His saints in the Rapture.

**b** Israel has been understood to be represented by the fig tree. It is not by coincidence that the fig tree is used and not just because it is early in bearing fruit. We know that Israel is going to come into prominence during the Tribulation, but it will have needed to be in place before the Tribulation starts. Christ has already described the times during which the Temple will be destroyed, but it will have to have been rebuilt first. This is consistent with the understanding of the beginning of the restoration of Israel that we have witnessed. Theologians commonly considered it impossible for the state of Israel to be reestablished, but its rebirth is consistent with Matt 24:32-33. The Jews born as part of the *restored* state of Israel, as opposed to the Jews at the time of Christ's first advent, are going to witness the events of the Tribulation. The way we can tell that vs. 32 is referring to Christ answering the question of *when* shall be the sign of His coming, vs. 3 (as opposed to when the Temple would be destroyed) is that Jesus uses a phrase that is used to introduce a new topic. The phrase is made up of ἀπο - from, and δὲ - but (sometimes translated *and*, but demonstrating a difference). This construction is used in Matt 27:45, 28:4, Mark 10:6, Acts 20:17 to show a change in the discussion. Everything that comes in the rest of the chapter speaks of those things that occur concerning the Rapture, not the events of the Tribulation.

803. When exactly will this take place?

a. April 1, 2097

**b. No one knows**

c. 500, 793, 1000, 1260, 1370, 1504, 1524, 1533, 1673, 1694, 1700, 1757, 1795, 1814, 1829, 1836, 1844, 1847, 1861, 1863, 1874, 1890, 1891, 1901, 1914, 1915, 1930, 1939, 1935, 1943, 1972, 1975, 1982, 1988, 1994, 2000, 2011, 2013, 2012, 2015, 2019, 2020, 2021, 2024, 2025, 2029, 2057

(see [en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Predictions\\_and\\_claims\\_for\\_the\\_Second\\_Coming\\_of\\_Christ](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Predictions_and_claims_for_the_Second_Coming_of_Christ))

Matt 24:36 But of that day and hour knoweth no *man*, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only.

**c** You might be aware of times when there were those who named the year Jesus was going to return, but date setting has gone on for centuries. This is actually very interesting because it shows that His return is not just some modern fad for making *Left Behind Movies*. The common understanding is that Jesus is going to return, even though there are some variations on what that entails. Many people erroneously think that people are just going to be born, live, and die without ever knowing whether heaven is real or not while they are on earth until mankind just wipes himself out to extinction. They

think that life on earth and the afterlife are two separate things, not that the kingdom of heaven displaces the kingdoms on earth.

Notable predictions include several that the Seventh Day Adventists made and were copied by the Jehovah's witnesses. They each teach that Jesus *has* returned but to the Heavenly Temple to purge it in an investigative judgment.

**a** The key to understand A is to look at the month and day. Figuratively speaking, anyone who predicts the day of Christ's return will be fooled by Christ.

**b** No one knows.

804. What are we commanded to do as we wait for Christ?

- a. Stock pile guns and supplies in a bunker to be ready to fight the Antichrist
- b. Live our best life
- c. Stand our watch (serve faithfully)**

Matt 24:42 Watch therefore: for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come.

**a** As people witness the times we live in heading in a bad direction, there is a move to be able to prepare to re-fight for our liberty. Such a modern revolution has nothing to do with Christians and the Tribulation because we will not be here for the Tribulation. This does not mean that there is no sense to being prepared for natural disasters and financial depression, it is just that this is not connected with the Tribulation, unless you expect to be left behind because you don't want to get saved!

**b** Others take the opposite approach and don't take the coming Tribulation seriously enough. They are more concerned about living their best life now and becoming more comfortable in *this* world.

**c** We need to make sure to be on our *watch* and alert, looking for Jesus to come and find all things well with our work.

805. What will life be like before the Tribulation?

- a. It will all be a time of great revival
- b. It will be relatively normal, people marrying, drinking, etc.,**
- c. It will be a time of chaos

Matt 24:37-39 ut as the days of Noe *were*, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.

<sup>38</sup>For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark,

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39And knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.

**b** As people were living quite normally before the judgement in the flood came, it will be the same today.

**a** Also, it could be suggested that there will be a lack of faith.

**c** It will *not* be a time of chaos, which suggests that Marxist worldwide confusion will not rule any more than climate change will overtake mankind. Our political concerns are that we try to retain as much liberty as possible, not that we will overcome the world with liberty...although that wouldn't be a bad idea!

806. What will happen quite suddenly?

**a. There will be those taken and those left behind for the judgment to follow**

b. Jesus will come and take His throne and rule the world

c. A nuclear holocaust causing climate change that destroys the world

Matt 24:39-42 And knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.

40Then shall two be in the field; the one shall be taken, and the other left.

41Two *women shall be* grinding at the mill; the one shall be taken, and the other left.

42Watch therefore: for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come.

**a** Just as Noah and his family escaped the judgment, there will be those who will be taken while the others will be left behind to face the judgment. This is connected with being prepared like a good servant, standing watch for His appearing. This does not apply to those who will be here *during* the Tribulation. They are not supposed to be standing watch, but fleeing instead.

**b,c** B and C are repeated from other questions to reinforce the understanding that there is no natural disaster that is coming nor the church crowning Christ on the throne they have prepared.

## 142 - Jesus Teaches by Parables

### The Foolish Virgins

See also Edersheim, p. 1116 *ff*, on the The Parable of the Ten Virgins.

Jesus had used the problem individual responsibility of qualifying for a wedding feast in Matt 22:1-14. Here, there is more of a sense of group responsibility.

According to Jewish authorities, it was the custom in the East to carry in a bridal procession about ten such lamps. We have the less reason to doubt that such was also the case in Palestine, since, according to rubric, ten was the number required to be present at any office or ceremony, such as at the benedictions accompanying the marriage-ceremonies.

Since Jesus had been critiquing Israel as a group, the Parable of the Ten Virgins represents more of a group dynamic. There are two types of groups in this setting, one group who had let their lamps go out and were unprepared, and the other group which was ready for the resurrection. It is not out of reach to suggest that the foolish virgins represent Israel, although it really would apply to any group who lost their distinctives of faithfulness.

807. When the bridegroom returned to receive his guests to the wedding feast, why were half of the virgins not ready to greet him?
- a. They were sleeping
  - b. They were having a party of their own
  - c. They had not prepared ahead of time in case there should be a delay**

Matt 25:1-9 Then shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins, which took their lamps, and went forth to meet the bridegroom.  
2And five of them were wise, and five *were* foolish.  
3They that *were* foolish took their lamps, and took no oil with them:  
4But the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps.  
5While the bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept.  
6And at midnight there was a cry made, Behold, the bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him.  
7Then all those virgins arose, and trimmed their lamps.  
8And the foolish said unto the wise, Give us of your oil; for our lamps are gone out.  
9But the wise answered, saying, *Not so*; lest there be not enough for us and you: but go ye rather to them that sell, and buy for yourselves.

- a** The idea of sleeping does not indicate that one group was irresponsible while the other was not. *Both* groups had been sleeping, which emphasized the fact that normal life goes on while waiting for the Lord which enhances the surprise effect of His coming.
- b** The idea that they could have been at a party would have been interesting and implied that they were of an entirely different religion that they had been tempted by. The limitation here is to two groups that were reasonably held to be responsible and that one had just completely failed that way.
- c** It would be reasonable to expect that they had seen the example of wise virgins. This speaks to the sense that we have today even amongst those who *are* looking for the Lord's coming. Some are so convinced that the Lord *is* coming shortly are not prepared for the long haul in case He should tarry. This does not mean that the ones who are planning and preparing for the

future are necessarily less faithful than them. We should be convinced that Christ *might* be here quickly and both step up on our work to reach whoever we can *as well as* prepare for the times while we must still wait. The immanent return of Christ is not diminished by the idea of planning.

808. Why were the foolish virgins shut out?

- a. The bridegroom was spiteful
- b. The wise virgins were mean and wouldn't sell to them
- c. They should have seen to their preparations and now it was too late**

Matt 25:7-10 Then all those virgins arose, and trimmed their lamps.

8And the foolish said unto the wise, Give us of your oil; for our lamps are gone out.

9But the wise answered, saying, *Not so*; lest there be not enough for us and you: but go ye rather to them that sell, and buy for yourselves.

10And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came; and they that were ready went in with him to the marriage: and the door was shut.

**a** The bridegroom was not being spiteful. It is just that there are consequences to our actions.

**b** The wise virgins were only being responsible. People do not realize that there are many distractions that Satan is happy for people to attend to taking them out of action. By not going to church and being a responsible member, by missing church and responsibilities, by missing church and leaving it to the pastor or other members to assume that they are in genuine need and not just being irresponsible forcing a spiritual-well being call, by not returning calls and other contacts forcing extra discipleship to convince people of what they should be doing (which they pretty much are untouched by), by merely attending church but not participating leaving it to other members to do double duty to make up for them, by going to church but avoiding or ignoring opportunities to serve, the more responsible people have to make up for them and are distracted from the work. It might seem like the wise virgins are being mean, but it is the foolish ones who are being mean. Over the years there have been *numerous* times that people have missed and asked about so-and-so while the so-and-sos not only don't know usually what effect they have had but some have also strongly argued that their being missing shouldn't make a difference. They sometimes even criticize people who care, suggesting that they are gossiping or should mind their own business. There is a point where such people are only slightly regretfully let go.

**c** The fact that the foolish virgins only waited till it was too late to try to be prepared indicates that they could have done that at any time before. They might complain that they couldn't have known that the bridegroom was coming doesn't hold up because the wise ones had managed to be continually prepared. Being prepared is something that must be continually attended to.

809. What is the most important way to be prepared for Jesus when He comes?
- a. Be working hard
  - b. Be saved**
  - c. Be studied up

Matt 25:11-12 Afterward came also the other virgins, saying, Lord, Lord, open to us.  
12But he answered and said, Verily I say unto you, I know you not.

**a,c** Working and studying are important in being prepared to meet the Lord, but we have to be careful as with all parables not to read too much into the customs of the day regarding weddings. The foolish virgins represent a group that had oil, but failed to continue on. If oil can represent the Holy Spirit here, the lack of oil can be understood as a dead, spirit-less church.

**b** The fact that the Lord of the feast declares that he does not know them indicates that they were not saved at all, which bolsters the argument that they represent dead churches.

## Servants and Talents

See the discussion on p. 215 for this section.

## Treating the Stranger, Naked, Sick, and in Prison

810. What will Jesus do when he comes in His glory?
- a. Separate the sheep (true believers) from the goats (unbelievers)**
  - b. Welcome everyone into heaven
  - c. Give the unbelievers a second chance

Matt 25:31-34 When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory:  
32And before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth *his* sheep from the goats:  
33And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left.  
34Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world:

**b,c** We repeat here what has been referred to on other occasions, there will be division between the saved and the lost. Modern romantic sentimentalities are narrowminded and unwilling to acknowledge that there should be a any judgment in the world. The basis of their morality is whether something causes pain or pleasure and so they reject God because *His* righteousness does not correspond to *their* righteousness. Each person has one chance, which is a very long chance at that, to make a decision to surrender to God.

**a** It is not that Jesus had anything against goats, *per se*. This was just a common figure in shepherding. Goats, being more prolific than sheep, would be culled from the herds more often. The image of the goats being removed is that of the sheep being spared while the goats were separated out.

811. What will characterize the true believers?

- a. Their knowledge of the Bible and theology
- b. Their compassionate service**
- c. How much success they have

Matt 25:34-46 Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world:  
35For I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in:

36Naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me.

37Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, and fed *thee*? or thirsty, and gave *thee* drink?

38When saw we thee a stranger, and took *thee* in? or naked, and clothed *thee*?

39Or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee?

40And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done *it* unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done *it* unto me.

41Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels:

42For I was an hungred, and ye gave me no meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink:

43I was a stranger, and ye took me not in: naked, and ye clothed me not: sick, and in prison, and ye visited me not.

44Then shall they also answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto thee?

45Then shall he answer them, saying, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did *it* not to one of the least of these, ye did *it* not to me.

46And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal.

**a** One can have all knowledge and yet lack compassion.

**c** Success in and of itself is not the measure. What one does *with* their success, whether it is great and obvious, or small, is what matters.

**b** Sometimes we don't realize what value our compassion has. We might suspect the value it the time we act, but not realize how it fits in the kingdom of God. This is why it is important that we attend church. If we bless those who are not looking for God, you have to ask how much more significant when we bless those who *are* looking for God. We criticize those who won't reach out to people who are dirty, but someone might justifiably complain that they are treated as if they aren't dirty enough to warrant compassion. Compassion is something we just give because that is what we do. One obvious need is some ragamuffin kid who needs loving attention to teach them how to live for God, rather than screw up our face with disdain for

them. If you see a kid misbehaving in church, lend a hand to a parent and have them sit with you so they can be guided. This doesn't have to be a kid, there are adults who need that guidance as well. Our pleasant demeanor and friendliness in public at the very least will contribute to the culture we live in and influence attitudes to be receptive to the stranger who comes to them with the Gospel.

## 143 - Jesus Continues Teaching at the Temple

Tuesday

Luke 21:37-38 And in the day time he was teaching in the temple; and at night he went out, and abode in the mount that is called *the mount* of Olives.

38And all the people came early in the morning to him in the temple, for to hear him.

812. What did the people do the day before Jesus was to be crucified?

- a. **They anxiously came to hear more from Him**
- b. They started to lose interest in Him
- c. They started to agree with the Pharisees and other leaders

**a,b,c** The people showed no signs of leaning away from Jesus nor losing interest. If anything they showed signs of being won over. This is what makes the situation so ironic. How the people can be so easily won over to reject him at the instigation of the Pharisees and other leaders defies understanding.

## 144 - Consultation with Caiphas

After two days is Passover (Tuesday and Wednesday, Wednesday night is when the Passover was killed and the start of Thursday)

Matt 26:2 Ye know that after two days is *the feast of* the passover, and the Son of man is betrayed to be crucified.

This fits in with the scope of a Wednesday day crucifixion. The construction of time, "after two days," can sometimes be confusing because the context reveals which days are included. For example, there is no 0 A.D. There is 1 B.C. and 1 A.D., but when we refer to something happening in 1 A.D., it is not after a year has passed, it is something that happened after Jan 1, 1 A.D. while the day before would be December 31, 1 B.C. Someone who is 66 years old could be said to be in their 67th year of age in this way. This is a common problem when trying to ascertain timing in the Scriptures.

813. List the leaders who wanted to get rid of Jesus:

Chief priests, Scribes. Elders of the people, The high priest



## THE TRIUMPHAL ENTRY TO THE TRIUMPH OVER DEATH – 558

Matthew 26:3 Then assembled together the chief priests, and the scribes, and the elders of the people, unto the palace of the high priest, who was called Caiaphas,

This demonstrates a wide consensus in the leadership of Israel...which demonstrates that consensus does not necessarily prove something right!

814. In what ways was Jesus not a rival deserving of death:

Matt 5:17-19 He came not to destroy the law

Matt 5:20 He promoted righteousness

Matt 23:3,13 He supported what the Pharisees told people to do, but not their hypocrisy

John 6:15 He rejected being made an earthly king

This question speaks to an aspect of human nature. It presents a common problem that no matter how much evidence you give contrariwise, people will move against you if they have their own agenda.

Even though Jesus had every right to be king, he never actually made a move to actually do so. He never nominated Himself and even rejected the opportunities to do so. When He did enter Jerusalem and presented Himself to the people, He did not mention anything about being king. The people were in a position to accept Him as king, but their change of heart later indicated that it was never going to be sincere. Even now, when Christ becomes King of our heart, it is because of our request to be saved, not because He forced Himself on us.

When Jesus *does* descend as King in His Second Coming, it will not be by popular acclaim. He will simply come in power *as* King, not needing any process at all to make Him so.

815. Besides not being able to catch Jesus in His own words, what other pressure should have been a clue that what they were doing was not right?

- a. The army that Jesus had put together would have protected Him
- b. The masses of people who would reject what they were doing if they worked openly and transparently**
- c. The Roman army was protecting Jesus

Matt 26:5 But they said, Not on the feast *day*, lest there be an uproar among the people.

**a,c** Jesus did not have a lack of standing with the people which required Him to be propped up artificially, in this case by military force. Military force is not the only means to sustain a system that would collapse on itself if it had to stand on its own. In our modern times, it is evident that there is an informal

conspiracy by those who have insinuated themselves into the media and academia. Business might be included in this also, except that business could just be supportive out of a plan to get more profits. Business support of popular causes gives them advertising power.

**b** Convincing the masses is not impossible to do because it is not that the masses always intuitively know what is right. However, the tidal force of the masses was something the leaders knew was against them, forcing to work behind the scenes as conspirators do.

### 145 - Judas Conspires with the Chief Priests

Matt 26:6-13 and Mark 14:3-9 appear right before this conspiracy of Judas to provide context for Judas' conspiracy, but they actually happened, according to John 12:1-11, chronologically *six* days before Passover (see *126 Mary Anoints Jesus*, p. 211). Judas' conspiracy happens about the *second* day before Passover (Mark 14:1-2).

816. Read John 17:12. How was Satan able to so easily influence Judas Iscariot?

**a. He was not saved**

b. He was trying to help Jesus fulfill His mission to be king and wanted to bring the confrontation with the Jewish leadership to a head

c. He had not been attending much time with Jesus

John 17:12 While I was with them in the world, I kept them in thy name: those that thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition; that the scripture might be fulfilled.

Luke 22:3 Then entered Satan into Judas surnamed Iscariot, being of the number of the twelve.

**b** B is an actual argument that has been suggested but is purely speculative.

**c** C highlights how exasperating the betrayal by Judas was because he *had* spent so much intimate time with Christ. It is often pointed out how that there were those from Jesus' home town who knew Him better and yet rejected Him. This reminds us that no matter how much we work with people that we should not feel so much like a failure because Jesus, Himself, was rejected by those who knew Him best. There is no guarantee that anyone will get saved if they just knew more or if we presented the Gospel any better. If that is the case with people from His home town, how much more so in the case of Judas Iscariot. Judas was hand picked by Jesus and had private tutoring with Him. The fact of the matter is that anyone at any time can exercise their free will to reject Christ.

**a** Judas Iscariot was simply not saved. John 17:12 uses the same basic word for *lost* and *perdition* to affirm that Judas was not a believer.

817. How would Judas be a help to the Jewish leaders to bring Jesus down?
- He would identify Him
  - He would betray, or deliver Him, to the Roman authorities, which required him to be a witness against Him**
  - He would deny Jesus when it came time to bear testimony for him

Luke 22:6 And he promised, and sought opportunity to betray him unto them in the absence of the multitude.

**a** Judas did not simply have to identify Jesus for the leaders. They knew Who He was. If that was all that was necessary then Judas' guilt might not have been quite as significant.

**b,c** Denying Jesus is certainly a way to betray Christ. Peter betrayed Him by denying Him three times. In Judas' case, his identifying Jesus to the authorities would not be sufficient: he would also have to be willing to bear testimony *against* Jesus. See Pentecost §154. Judas did not end up giving testimony, which is part of the unjust trial that Jesus had. There was much deliberation that went into Judas' betrayal from being willing to witness against Jesus to the timing of doing this when no one was around.

818. Why did Judas conspire to do this discretely, not out in the open?
- He wanted to surprise everyone
  - He didn't want to embarrass Jesus
  - He was afraid with the leaders of how popular Jesus was and how they would react**

Luke 22:6 And he promised, and sought opportunity to betray him unto them in the absence of the multitude.

Mark 14:11 And when they heard *it*, they were glad, and promised to give him money. And he sought how he might conveniently betray him.

**c** Mark points out how the leaders and Judas were concerned about the convenience of the betrayal recognizing that the multitudes could be a problem.

**a,b** Judas was trying to avoid the surprise this would cause and was not concerned about any embarrassment to Christ, which detracts from any sense that he was concerned about forcing Christ to take action as a king.

## The Last Supper

Over half of the book of John deals with only the one week for the Passion of Christ and yet this represents less than 1% of the ministry of Christ. 18% of the book of John is devoted to just the Last Supper alone.

### 146 - Acquiring the Room for the Last Supper

819. When did Jesus meet with the disciples to begin the Passover celebration?
- a. After the sacrifice of the Paschal lamb
  - b. When leavening was forbidden, which started the evening before the Passover lamb was killed during the day**
  - c. On Thursday

Mark 14:12 And the first day of unleavened bread, when they killed the passover, his disciples said unto him, Where wilt thou that we go and prepare that thou mayest eat the passover?

The timing of the supper that Jesus had with the disciples is significant for understanding the timing of the crucifixion and resurrection. Passover was a seven day event with the eating of the Passover lamb on the first day. However, as Luke points out, Jesus was meeting on a day of unleavened bread which began the night before the lamb was actually killed. This day was not technically part of the seven day Passover celebration which is why Passover is actually observed for eight days. Jesus could not have eaten the Passover lamb with His disciples because He was crucified at the time the Lamb would be killed. Also, He could not have done it on a Thursday evening for there to be a Friday crucifixion because He would not then be able to be in the grave three days and three nights.

**a** The Passover celebration did not begin with the Passover itself. In fact, the leaders made sure to take Christ *before* the *actual* Passover because it would have been unlawful for them to do so once the Passover feast began.

John 18:28 Then led they Jesus from Caiaphas unto the hall of judgment: and it was early; and they themselves went not into the judgment hall, lest they should be defiled; but that they might eat the passover.

**b** John specified that it was the day of *preparation* of the Passover.

John 19:14 And it was the preparation of the passover, and about the sixth hour: and he saith unto the Jews, Behold your King!

Mark and Luke point out that it was on the preparation day was when the Passover was killed.

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Mark 14:12 And the first day of unleavened bread, when they killed the passover, his disciples said unto him, Where wilt thou that we go and prepare that thou mayest eat the passover?

Luke 22:7 Then came the day of unleavened bread, when the passover must be killed.

The day starts the night before, which is when Jesus ate with His disciples, and then the Passover lamb would be slain. The night would mark the beginning of the next day when the Passover Seder would actually occur.

Although Jesus was making *ready* for the Passover, He would not get to celebrate the Seder with the disciples. In Luke 22:15, Jesus refers to eat this Passover, but does so in referring to the general Passover which took place over eight days in the feast of unleavened bread which includes the actual Passover meal which is only on *one* of the days.

Another critical point is that, despite Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread being distinct festivals, they were commonly grouped together and simply called "Passover." Thus, when the gospel writers mention "Passover," it can sometimes refer to the Passover sacrifice itself (Matthew 26:17; Mark 14:12), the day when the sacrifice was made (Mark 14:1), or the whole eight-day period of Abib 14-21 (Passover plus Unleavened Bread; Luke 22:1).

In actuality, then, there were really two Passover observances happening at the time of Jesus: one led by the priests at the Temple and the other observed by the people in their homes. These separate observances were also at different times: The Temple-kept Passover was observed late in the afternoon of Abib 14, while the home-kept Passover was kept at the beginning of Abib 14. As the gospels show, Jesus and His disciples ate the Passover in a home rather than at the Temple, observing it the evening before the priests did at the Temple. In other words, Jesus kept it as Abib 14 began, while the priests kept it as Abib 14 ended.

<https://www.bibletools.org/index.cfm/fuseaction/Topical.show/RTD/cgg/ID/14261/Josiahs-Reforms.htm>

c Thursday is mentioned to point out the timing problem of night/day (which is correct) rather than day/night. If you get this wrong then it might appear that the Passover occurred on Thursday.

### 147 - Jesus Announces the Betrayal

820. Who did the disciples think would betray Jesus?

- a. Judas Iscariot because he always was a little strange
- b. No one is beyond temptation and failure, they each were afraid they might be the one**
- c. An unexpected guest who might show up

Matt 26:22 And they were exceeding sorrowful, and began every one of them to say unto him, Lord, is it I?

**a** Whether or not they had any clues to indicate from Judas' behavior that he could be the one, there is always the risk that we judge someone because they are a little strange. What is in reality meant by being a little strange is nothing more than that someone is different from us. Actually, it can probably be safely said that *everyone* is a little strange. We have to be careful to not let differences in taste, personality, style, or way of management mark them as being against God's work in church. Some things might prove ultimately to be impractical, but having things not be *simply* according to our taste is not a reason to disdain how a church is run.

**c,b** The disciples could have speculated that someone new might infiltrate their company, but they exhibited a proper humility that they were not beyond failure themselves, as implausible as that might seem.

821. Who did Jesus indicate would be the betrayer?

- a. He said it would be one who was an intimate with them, dipping his hand in the dish with Him**
- b. He said it would be Judas
- c. He said it could not be just anyone, but one who God made betray Him

Matt 26:23-24 And he answered and said, He that dippeth *his* hand with me in the dish, the same shall betray me.

24The Son of man goeth as it is written of him: but woe unto that man by whom the Son of man is betrayed! it had been good for that man if he had not been born.

**b** Jesus did not say specifically that it would be Judas. This was an opportunity for Judas to have a way out of his temptation.

**c** God was not forcing Judas to betray Him. In His sovereignty, He actually doesn't make people sin (which is an extreme Calvinistic position that some actually take). There are many situations that He presents for people to respond to knowing *how* they *are* going to respond.

**a** He indicated that it would be one who would dip the sop with Him. However, this was going to be done so much later in the meal that it was able to escape direct notice. This, again, would be an opportunity to give leeway for Judas to repent even though by that time he will have had his heart filled by Satan to betray Christ. Being unnoticed later, it would still be unclear to the other disciples why he would leave the feast.

822. How did Judas become the betrayer?

- a. Judas named himself**
- b. Jesus named him
- c. The disciples voted and named him

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Matt 26:24-25 The Son of man goeth as it is written of him: but woe unto that man by whom the Son of man is betrayed! it had been good for that man if he had not been born.

25Then Judas, which betrayed him, answered and said, Master, is it I? He said unto him, **Thou hast said.**

**c** This was no popularity contest for the one most likely to succeed, or in this case, fail Christ. *We* might struggle on who we vote for not knowing how true or good a candidate is, but this was not a matter of a popular election.

**b,a** All the disciples asked if they might be the one, not just Judas. Jesus indicated that it would certainly be one intimate with Him. But then Jesus leaves it open to one who would regret having done it. He doesn't actually name who it *had* to be, but said, instead, "Woe unto that man by whom the Son of man is betrayed," and that it would have been better if that one had not been born. It didn't *have to* be Judas. It is after this that Judas, possibly from a guilty conscience, revealed that he was more than open to the possibility by asking Jesus if *he* was the one. Jesus does not actually name him to be the one, but allows that Judas is naming himself. What was different about Judas asking was that he knew in his heart he *was* the one. If not, he could have simply committed to not being the one who would betray Christ, but he didn't. The others asked in innocence because since they were not contemplating betraying Jesus, they were genuinely baffled. Judas had more to go on than they did: he had private special knowledge. For him to ask if he were the one was disingenuous. By not denying, it was tantamount to confessing and therefore naming himself. With that, Jesus said specifically, "Thou has said."

### 148 - Washing the Feet of the Disciples

This act is one of the most significant lessons in basic Christian discipleship. We might think of discipleship as a matter of learning doctrine, Bible facts and trivia, and church operation, but discipleship includes a moral and spiritual character. The lesson of servanthood is vitally important not only in our relationship to God and man, but will affect our very joy, spiritual health, and Christian success.

823. How did Jesus love His disciples?

- a. He was very fond of them
- b. He really liked to hang out with them
- c. Completely, to the uttermost, to the end**

John 13:1 Now before the feast of the passover, when Jesus knew that his hour was come that he should depart out of this world unto the Father, having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them unto the end.

**a,b** Jesus was not just fond of the disciples, but had divine love toward them. Like Jesus, the love we have should be more than a casual interest that we might have with people we enjoy hanging out with. We are less likely to go to extreme lengths, let alone die, for people we just go bowling with.

**c** Jesus exhibited what Christian love is supposed to be like. If we could truly appreciate the suffering that people will experience in Hell, then we would take far greater measures to do what we could to help them escape that. This actually requires us to cultivate that understanding to have a proper view of the sinfulness of sin that would require such extreme judgment. Just as there were those in World War II who were moved to heroic efforts when they became aware of the numbers of Jews being exterminated, we can grow beyond a sense of indifference by becoming involved more intimately with those around us. As you witness people ignoring and mocking God and faith, you become both upset at their rebellion and disturbed knowing that they will be haunted for all of eternity by their attitude of rebellion.

824. At what point was Judas truly committed to betraying Jesus?

- a. Earlier, before supper
- b. After supper was over**
- c. When he dipped the sop with Jesus

John 13:2 And supper being ended, the devil having now put into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's *son*, to betray him;

**c** Dipping the sop with Jesus was only the sign by which Judas could be revealed to the others.

**a,b** Even though Judas had entered into a conspiracy with the Jewish leaders to betray Christ, it was only sometime during the meal that he became committed. By the time supper was over, John tells us that Judas was definitely given over to betraying the Lord.

825. Knowing that He had come from God and was about to return to God, what was the last thing He would do for the disciples?

- a. He named Peter to be His successor
- b. He rewarded them for their service
- c. He humbled himself to do the work of a servant for them as an example**

John 13:3-5 Jesus knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he was come from God, and went to God;

<sup>4</sup>He riseth from supper, and laid aside his garments; and took a towel, and girded himself.

<sup>5</sup>After that he poureth water into a bason, and began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe *them* with the towel wherewith he was girded.



**a** Naming a successor would be inappropriate no matter what since there is no successor to Jesus. The very least reason is that Jesus would finish His work of redemption by the cross. The wisdom and ability that Jesus had could not be matched in any person on earth who would have to admit that they are woefully lacking in such management skills.

**b** Rewarding the disciples for their service would serve to promote a pride in themselves and their ability. Jesus was aiming for the opposite effect, humility, which makes up true spirituality.

**c** Jesus service to the disciples served in stark contrast to all their expectations. His example is vital in church service.

826. Presumably, one had washed before coming to the feast. What did Jesus do to speak of maintaining a holy fellowship with Him?

a. He said, "Lo, I am with you to the end of the world."

**b. He washed their feet which would have gotten dirty on the way to the feast**

c. He established the communion service

John 13:6-10 Then cometh he to Simon Peter: and Peter saith unto him, Lord, dost thou wash my feet?

7Jesus answered and said unto him, What I do thou knowest not now; but thou shalt know hereafter.

8Peter saith unto him, Thou shalt never wash my feet. Jesus answered him, If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me.

9Simon Peter saith unto him, Lord, not my feet only, but also *my* hands and *my* head.

10Jesus saith to him, He that is washed needeth not save to wash *his* feet, but is clean every whit: and ye are clean, but not all.

**c** Although communion does speak of our fellowship relationship with Christ, the washing of the feet spoke of walking in holiness with the Lord before we commemorate our holy relationship with Him.

**a** Jesus certainly did say, "Lo, I am with you to the end of the world," but this was done later after the Resurrection. Here, Jesus is only dealing with the issue of sanctification.

**b** If fellowship was based merely on our experience of Christ's presence in our hearts, or even adding on the knowledge we gain through study, then we would miss a vital aspect of fellowship. An essential part of fellowship is not communion, much less coffee, but serving each other in love. This is why the translators in 1 Cor 13 used the word *charity* to translate *agape-love*. It spoke of love in action. This is the essence of the message of James 2:

Jas 2:14-18 What *doth it* profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? can faith save him?

## THE TRIUMPHAL ENTRY TO THE TRIUMPH OVER DEATH – 567

15If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food,  
16And one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled;  
notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body; what  
*doth it profit?*  
17Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone.  
18Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works: shew me thy faith without  
thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works.

### 827. Why did Jesus mention that not all who were there were clean? He was referring to the one who would betray Him

John 13:10,11 Jesus saith to him, He that is washed needeth not save to wash *his* feet,  
but is clean every whit: and ye are clean, but not all.  
11For he knew who should betray him; therefore said he, Ye are not all clean.

This is another example of how Jesus had left open the door for repentance all the way through till even after the actual betrayal. We might not be able to have a relationship with someone who is against us, but the door for repentance must be kept open for all.

### 828. What is an important characteristic of leadership?

- a. You have to be right all the time
- b. You have to see yourself as a servant of others**
- c. You have to have control at all times

John 13:12-16 So after he had washed their feet, and had taken his garments, and was set down again, he said unto them, Know ye what I have done to you?  
13Ye call me Master and Lord: and ye say well; for *so* I am.  
14If I then, *your* Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another's feet.  
15For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you.  
16Verily, verily, I say unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord; neither he that is sent greater than he that sent him.

**a,c** There is a difference between leadership and authoritarianism. Leadership has many aspects. Sometimes leaders will argue not because they are interested in truth, but to just appear that they are always right, as in A. Many times, because of their closeness to the work and experience, they actually *are* right, but that does not mean that input from others is precluded.

**b** Church members do not exist to serve the leader. The leader serves the members by preparing them for, and to do, the work. Jesus exhibited the basest aspect of such service, but He only does so to emphasize the attitude and effect of loving, or wanting the best for others.

Eph 4:11-16 And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers;  
12For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ:

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13Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ:

14That we *henceforth* be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, *and* cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive;

15But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, *even* Christ:

16From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love.

One great thing you can do as a Christian leader is to serve as a servant but then to train someone else by example.

829. What will be the result of serving others?

- a. **You will have joy**
- b. You will become resentful if people don't appreciate your efforts
- c. You will become well paid

John 13:17 If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them.

**b,c,a** At the heart of the servant mentality is the desire for the best for others. If we are *given over* to wanting the best for others, the corollary to that is that you are *not* serving *self*. Self-centeredness manifests itself whenever things don't go the way *we* like which is revealed by our complaining. This is different from saying *ouch* when we get hurt, but at some early point we have to move on to helping create solutions that bring people from being a problem to being and receiving a blessing. You will not be able to be resentful because you are not looking for something for self, as in B. Becoming successful as a result of servant-minded leadership, as in C, is another way of being self-centered. True joy, as in A, will come as we see God glorified and share in the blessings of God's work. Having joy might sound like another way of being self-centered, but it is not if we as servants are not *primarily* looking for joy for self. One is allowed to enjoy blessings, though not seeking them.

830. Why did Jesus need to point out to the disciples that He would be betrayed?

- a. So that they would not be surprised
- b. **So that they would know that His death was planned and He was not a victim of circumstances**
- c. So that they would be ready to take up arms to fight for His ideals

John 13:18,19 I speak not of you all: I know whom I have chosen: but that the scripture may be fulfilled, He that eateth bread with me hath lifted up his heel against me.

19Now I tell you before it come, that, when it is come to pass, ye may believe that I am *he*.

**c** Jesus was not interested in preparing an army at any time. He stopped Peter when he *did* strike out later.

**a,b** Taking the surprise element out of Judas' betrayal was less important than using the fulfillment of the prophecy concerning him to strengthen their confidence in the faith at a time they would greatly need it.

831. How should people respond to those who Jesus sends?

- a. They should be receptive to them**
- b. They should treat them like a celebrity
- c. They should take advantage of them

John 13:20 Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that receiveth whomsoever I send receiveth me; and he that receiveth me receiveth him that sent me.

**b** The fleshly response to good leadership will be to treat them as celebrities.

**c** The fleshly response to people's support will be to use them for one's personal benefit, reinforcing one's celebrity status.

**a** People should be receptive to the leadership that Jesus sends, but always with a view to getting closer to Jesus and *His* leadership.

## 149 - The Bread and the Cup

832. How many cups of the fruit of the vine did Jesus have with the disciples?

- a. One
- b. None
- c. Two**

See Edersheim, p 155 ff, for more discussion on the two cups and their timing.

Luke 22:17-20 And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and said, Take this, and divide *it* among yourselves:

18For I say unto you, I will not drink of the fruit of the vine, until the kingdom of God shall come.

19And he took bread, and gave thanks, and brake *it*, and gave unto them, saying, This is my body which is given for you: this do in remembrance of me.

20Likewise also the cup after supper, saying, This cup *is* the new testament in my blood, which is shed for you.

**a,b,c** There was typically a first cup with its blessing that began the meal, with another cup that was offered later in the meal. In the Passover Seder

today there are four cups that are recognized. Having adopted the view that this feast is part of the Feast of Unleavened Bread and not the Passover Seder itself, we are not constrained to assume one way or another whether there were more cups than two that were offered. This question serves to help us see the importance of examining what exactly is or isn't said in the Scripture.

833. What does the bread represent? The body of Christ

Matt 26:26,27 And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed *it*, and brake *it*, and gave *it* to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body.

27And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave *it* to them, saying, Drink ye all of it;

834. What does the wine represent? The blood of Christ

It is clearer to understand that the wine represents the blood of Christ, which blood paid for our salvation. The significance of the body of Christ being offered is open more for application than interpretation. We can see that the body of Christ was broken for us and might represent the power we now have over the flesh. Perhaps a better application would be to point to the resurrection of the body of Christ which provides for our justification.

Rom 4:24-25 But for us also, to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead;

25Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification.

We hold to the supper being a memorial feast because Luke gives the fuller statement of Christ regarding communion by claiming this was to be done in *remembrance* of Christ (Luke 22:19,20) which Paul quotes in context in 1 Cor where he applies Luke's statement that the cup was offered *likewise*, being implied that it was to be also done in remembrance.

1Cor 11:23-26 For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, That the Lord Jesus the *same* night in which he was betrayed took bread:

24And when he had given thanks, he brake *it*, and said, Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me.

25After the same manner also *he took* the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink *it*, in remembrance of me.

26For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come.

In John 6, Jesus pointed out that there is no actual power in the flesh or the blood.

John 6:63 It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, *they* are spirit, and *they* are life.

835. What does the blood of Christ provide?

- a. Healing of diseases
- b. The remission of sins**
- c. Payment for sins as often as it is offered

Matt 26:28 For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.

**b** Jesus blood provides for the remission of sins which refers to our sins literally being *sent away*, much like the scape goat in Lev 16.

**c** C is wrong, first, Jesus blood is not only offered to cover sins committed, but to pay for the judgment we deserve as sinners and therefore applies to the whole person. Secondly this answer is a confusion with communion, which *is* offered often. Jesus *once* shed His blood for our sin.

Heb 9:24-28 For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, *which are* the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us:

25Nor yet that he should offer himself often, as the high priest entereth into the holy place every year with blood of others;

26For then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world: but now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself.

27And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment:

28So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation.

**a** The healing of diseases is a reference to a misinterpretation of 1 Peter and Isaiah which was being quoted by Peter.

1Pet 2:24 Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed.

Isa 53:5 But he *was* wounded for our transgressions, *he was* bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace *was* upon him; and with his stripes we are healed.

Some teach that Jesus did not only heal us spiritually but also physically. This cannot be a possible interpretation since God actually willed that Paul be left with his affliction for humility's sake in

2Cor 12:7-9 And lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure.

8For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me.

9And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.

836. Read John 6:63. What effect does the wine have?
- a. Once it is turned into His blood, it can be a payment for our sins
  - b. It can make us drunk
  - c. It will remind us of the sacrifice made for our sin**

John 6:63 It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, *they* are spirit, and *they* are life.

**b** The wine spoken of here is not alcoholic. Since leavening is a symbol for sin and death, neither the bread nor the wine was leavened. Leavening, or yeast, would produce both the rising in bread and alcohol. It should be interesting to note that Jesus does not refer to this as wine, but as *the fruit of the vine*. Later, in 1 Corinthians 11:25-27, Paul does not call this wine either.

**a** A is a reference to the Roman Catholic notion that a priest can turn the fruit of the vine into the blood of Christ. The role of the priest is deprecated in the New Testament since Jesus is our High Priest Who is always with us. In Ephesians 4, there is no office of the priest mentioned. In 1 Timothy 3, the office of a bishop is referenced and Paul spoke to the Ephesian elders/bishops (overseers) who were to feed (pastor) the church of God

Acts 20:17,28 And from Miletus he sent to Ephesus, and called the **elders** of the church.

28Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the **flock**, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you **overseers**, to **feed the church of God**, which he hath purchased with his own blood.

Peter uses the same language in 1Pet 5

1Pet 5:1-2 The **elders** which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed:

2**Feed the flock** of God which is among you, taking the **oversight thereof**, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind;

We all, being one with Christ, are a royal priesthood to fulfill the teaching role of the Jewish priests, but the role of the priest for making sacrifice for sin was no longer needed since Jesus was once offered for sin.

**c** The fruit of the vine only serves as a remembrance of how Christ gave us new life in the spirit.

## 150 - The Sop is Dipped

837. Look back in previous sections. How many times did Jesus bring up His betrayer? Three times

We are reminded, again, of how gracious Jesus was to Judas so that he could have repented at any time. However, the fact that Jesus did this three times makes Peter's denial stand out by contrast. Judas had no conscience until later when he had a false remorse over what he had done. Peter's sensitivity was evident in the grief he felt immediately when he betrayed Jesus, especially in light of his commitment to not do so (which Judas had not had). When Christ questioned Peter's love for Him three times later, the sincerity of his remorse stood in contrast to Judas' false remorse.

838. How did the disciples respond to Jesus?
- They tried to figure out who it could possibly be**
  - They kept silent because no one was close enough to approach Him
  - They were pretty sure they had it figured out who it was

Luke 22:21-23 But, behold, the hand of him that betrayeth me *is* with me on the table.  
22And truly the Son of man goeth, as it was determined: but woe unto that man by whom he is betrayed!  
23And they began to enquire among themselves, which of them it was that should do this thing.

John 13:22-25 Then the disciples looked one on another, doubting of whom he spake.  
23Now there was leaning on Jesus' bosom one of his disciples, whom Jesus loved.  
**[John, who in humility declined to name himself, here and other places]**  
24Simon Peter therefore beckoned to him, that he should ask who it should be of whom he spake.  
25He then lying on Jesus' breast saith unto him, Lord, who is it?

**a,b,c** The question of who the betrayer is comes up here a *second* time as we follow the specific unfolding of the supper. The disciples are still in the dark but press to know until they ask John to find out since he was very close to Jesus' heart.

839. What sign did Jesus tell John would indicate who the betrayer was?
- The one who would openly oppose Him
  - The one who received the choice sop from Jesus**
  - The one who had 666 tattooed on his forehead and hand

John 13:26 Jesus answered, He it is, to whom I shall give a sop, when I have dipped *it*. And when he had dipped the sop, he gave *it* to Judas Iscariot, *the son* of Simon.

**a,b,c** It is not always so obvious who the opposition is in a church as in A and C. Judas was very normal looking. It might, or might not, be someone who



openly opposes everything. It could easily be someone who has an intimate relationship in the church as in B. It could be the person who opposes by prayerlessness and non-participation.

840. What last chance did Jesus give to Judas to repent?

- a. He begged him to not betray Him
- b. He asked the other disciples to plead with him
- c. He challenged him to quickly decide what he was going to do**

John 13:27 And after the sop Satan entered into him. Then said Jesus unto him, That thou doest, do quickly.

**a,b,c** Jesus actually *could* have begged or employed the other disciples to talk to him, but there was no actual requirement to do so. It is worth noting that Jesus said this *after* Satan had entered Judas, demonstrating that grace is still available even in extreme cases.

841. Why did Judas leave to carry out the betrayal?

- a. He had opened up his heart to Satan**
- b. He had carefully considered the pros and cons of forcing Christ to react to the Jewish leaders
- c. He thought Jesus was a charlatan

John 13:27 And after the sop Satan entered into him. Then said Jesus unto him, That thou doest, do quickly.

**b,c** B and C represent the unreasonable ways that people will reject Christ. Judas did not give careful consideration. There is no reason to think that Judas considered Christ as a charlatan or not, but people today would have to believe that in order to justify dismissing Him so easily. It has been said that Jesus had to be either a liar, lunatic, or actually the Lord. What He said and how He conducted Himself could not be passed off as lunatic. If He was only a good teacher then you would have to believe what He said about Himself, that He was Lord and not a lying charlatan.

**a** Satan had earlier filled Judas' heart, but now he actually entered him to possess him. This was done as an act of the will of Judas and was not something that Satan did uninvited.

842. What did the disciples think Judas had left for?

- a. He had decided to quit being an apostle
- b. He had company he had to stay home with
- c. He was going to get more stuff to prepare for the Passover feast the next day**

## THE TRIUMPHAL ENTRY TO THE TRIUMPH OVER DEATH – 575

John 13:29 For some *of them* thought, because Judas had the bag, that Jesus had said unto him, Buy *those things* that we have need of against the feast; or, that he should give something to the poor.

**a,b** Going to be with company back home or quitting would have been highly unlikely to the disciples since Judas had been so intimately connected to them. However, these are probably common excuses today for people to cut out on serving God. What *is* surprising today is that even people who appear to be very responsible or hold positions of responsibility can treat their responsibility just as lightly and use these same excuses.

**c** Judas can be very much like others today who look like they are merely carrying out their responsibilities while inwardly they are serving the cause of Satan. He was never a believer.

### 151 - Who Will Be Greatest

843. What did the disciples argue about right after they wondered who would betray Jesus and also had Jesus washing their feet as a servant?
- Who was the most humble
  - Who would be the greatest**
  - Who would get to suffer the most for Jesus' sake

Luke 22:24 And there was also a strife among them, which of them should be accounted the greatest.

**a,b** One does not argue about who is most humble. Humility is humble and does not boast itself. The moment you point out your humility you just lost your humility. What is *really* strange about this is that they were talking about who would be the greatest after Jesus had just washed their feet! Their shallowness doesn't even take into account that they were all going to forsake Jesus very soon that night. In light of that, we should be wary about what *we* are capable of.

**c** Suffering for Jesus actually *is* associated with being the greatest. When people argue about being the greatest they don't tend to think about the down side of greatness and this is certainly not mentioned here as one of their considerations.

844. How should we be occupied while we are on earth?
- Exercising control over people by the use of payoffs
  - Seeking to draw crowds so we can show the power of God
  - Serving one another**

## THE TRIUMPHAL ENTRY TO THE TRIUMPH OVER DEATH – 576

Luke 22:25-27 And he said unto them, The kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them; and they that exercise authority upon them are called benefactors.

26But ye *shall* not *be* so: but he that is greatest among you, let him be as the younger; and he that is chief, as he that doth serve.

27For whether *is* greater, he that sitteth at meat, or he that serveth? *is* not he that sitteth at meat? but I am among you as he that serveth.

**a,b** Lordship is a reference to the way Gentiles would exercise patronage and draw a following after them. Lordship could actually even be a little more like treating those in authority as divine in some way. This also speaks to how leaders can make the mistake of being lords over the church, which is God's heritage, not theirs.

**c** Jesus reminded them how He had just served them, reemphasizing the need for proper leadership. This also suggests how quickly it is possible to lose sight of what true leadership is.

845. Read Matt 19:27-30. What is the benefit of serving others?

a. You can avoid tribulations just like Jesus did

**b. You will end up with your heavenly reward**

c. You will make people beholden to you and owe you favors

Matt 19:27-30 Then answered Peter and said unto him, Behold, we have forsaken all, and followed thee; what shall we have therefore?

28And Jesus said unto them, Verily I say unto you, That ye which have followed me, in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.

29And every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my name's sake, shall receive an hundredfold, and shall inherit everlasting life.

30But many *that are* first shall be last; and the last *shall be* first.

Luke 22:28-30 Ye are they which have continued with me in my temptations.

29And I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me;

30That ye may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom, and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel.

**b** There *will* be reward for our service to God, but we have to remember where that true reward is: in heaven. There might be some blessing along the way as we serve God, but the blessings are not the reward we should be looking forward to.

**a** Serving Christ can be costly. Jesus suffered tribulation here, and there is no reason to think that we should get any better treatment.

**c** People who are looking for a worldly reward on earth might actually get that, but it will be a poor substitute for what they *could* have had in glory. Those who seek to be first on earth will find themselves last, which actually implies that they will miss their inheritance completely. Still the idea of being

last can apply to Christians in that they will not have the first and best blessings.

## 152 - The New Commandment

846. What is the glory that will be shown in Jesus?

- a. **His resurrection with a glorified body**
- b. How powerful He is in vanquishing His enemies
- c. How great He is in His wisdom and teaching

John 13:31-32 Therefore, when he was gone out, Jesus said, Now is the Son of man glorified, and God is glorified in him.

<sup>32</sup>If God be glorified in him, God shall also glorify him in himself, and shall straightway glorify him.

**b,c** Christ's glory was not in how powerful or wise He was, although He was. Christ's glory consists of the glory of the resurrection. God did not send us a general or a philosopher. He sent us what we needed.

If our greatest need had been information, God would have sent us an educator.

If our greatest need had been technology, God would have sent us a scientist.

If our greatest need had been money, God would have sent us an economist.

If our greatest need had been pleasure, God would have sent us an entertainer.

But our greatest need was forgiveness, so God sent us a Savior.

– Charles Sell

**a** The glorification of Christ will be revealed in the resurrection.

847. Read Matt 5:17, Rom 13:8. Why did Jesus give the disciples The New Commandment?

- a. **He was going to depart and wanted them to have the most important teaching to carry them forward**
- b. He was going to depart and wanted to bring an end to the Law
- c. He wanted them to have good feelings about each other

Matt 5:17 Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil.

Rom 13:8 Owe no man any thing, but to love one another: for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law.

John 13:34 A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another.

**b** The Law is actually built on love because the law serves us to keep us in check from hurting ourselves and others. The Law does not need to be done away with. Some confuse this with the *judgment* of the Law that has been removed.

## THE TRIUMPHAL ENTRY TO THE TRIUMPH OVER DEATH – 578

Col 2:13-14 And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses;  
14Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross;

It is only the handwriting of the Law, or the sentence that was passed against us, that was nailed to the cross, not the Law itself.

**c** Feelings will not last. Our relationship is founded on the new nature we have in Christ but it is *built* on true love, wanting the best for others, not mere sentimentality.

**a** This really is the most important principle which we can always fall back on when in doubt about what we should do. This does not mean that we should coddle and appease which only enables people in their sin, but tell people the truth in love.

848. How will people know that we are Jesus' disciples?

- a. By how well we can argue theology
- b. By how well behaved we are
- c. By our love for each other**

John 13:35 By this shall all *men* know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.

**a** We should be able to argue theology, but it has to be done in a loving way. One of the common ways of arguing theology is like any other kind of arguing: it is done merely for the sport of arguing to bolster one's sense of significance. Who has more mastery of Bible trivia, like arguing over baseball player stats, does not exhibit true humility.

**b** Good behavior is important, but can also be done for the wrong reason. It is very easy to have well behaved sinners who appear to be so very polite and yet can be dripping with venom.

**c** People really appreciate when someone is genuinely loving. In order to be confident that one is genuinely loving takes time to see when people are consistently loving in bad times as well as good times. Even though the lost are poised to misinterpret the slightest incongruity as hypocrisy, we must be careful to maintain a loving integrity.

This is done by spending time with people, reflectively listening, getting people to tell *their* story. When we go the extra mile and express appreciation for people it will make a big difference in the love they sense from us. If all our communications with people focus on complaining all we will do is entrench ourselves in a victim mentality. By focusing on others we will also escape that mindset. (Encourage discussion on ways love is shown)

## 153 - Peter's First Protest

849. Which disciple spoke up to find out where Jesus was going?

- a. John, the apostle whom Jesus loved
- b. Peter, the apostle who was quick to react**
- c. James, the apostle whose mother wanted him to be seated with Jesus

John 13:36 Simon Peter said unto him, Lord, whither goest thou? Jesus answered him, Whither I go, thou canst not follow me now; but thou shalt follow me afterwards.

**a,c** You would think that John would be quick to offer to go because of his great love. James might have been a possibility since there was an interest in him being at Jesus' right hand.

**b** Peter was known for being quick to speak up and react. He did this at the Transfiguration, when Jesus asked whom men say that He is, concerning how many times one should forgive, and when people were leaving Christ at the Bread of Life Discourse. Peter doesn't realize all that this will entail. Jesus was certainly going to include Peter in His work, but there was going to be a tough time for Peter to have to go through. We should be anxious to say "Yes" to follow Jesus, but we should also be realistic in what that is going to mean.

850. What assurance did Jesus give Peter?

- a. He would certainly be following Jesus later**
- b. He would be the greatest apostle
- c. He would be faithful to Jesus

John 13:36 Simon Peter said unto him, Lord, whither goest thou? Jesus answered him, Whither I go, thou canst not follow me now; but thou shalt follow me afterwards.

**a,b,c** While B and C were certainly true in some way *after* the Resurrection, that is not what Jesus revealed to Peter. What kind of follower Peter would be would depend on Peter. In a sense, we are *all* followers of Jesus, but the question is what *kind* of follower we will be.

851. Based upon the difference between *you* and *thee*, who did Jesus say Satan was going to sift as wheat?

- a. Peter
- b. John
- c. All the disciples**

Luke 22:31 And the Lord said, Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired *to have* you, that he may sift *you* as wheat:

**a,b,c** This question calls upon us to be careful readers and demonstrates one way the King James Version is advantageous for reading and study. The translators were not trying to be archaic by using *thee, thou, thy, and thine*. This was done for clarity because all the "th" personal pronouns are singular while the "y" pronouns are plural. So Satan was anxious to sift *all* the disciples as wheat as in C. Satan is an equal opportunity destroyer, but was probably scheming to maximize his opportunity.

852. What was Peter going to have to go through in order to strengthen the brethren?

**a. A time of testing after which he would *really* understand being strong in Christ**

b. A vacation time so he could be physically stronger to help others

c. A time of education so he would have the ability to out argue everyone else

Luke 22:32 But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not: and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren.

**a** Peter was going to have to go through a time when his faith will be tested to show what would happen if he faced failure. On the other side of the testing, he would be converted, or fully won over with a greater ability to strengthen the brethren.

2Cor 1:3-6 Blessed *be* God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort;

4Who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God.

5For as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ.

6And whether we be afflicted, *it is* for your consolation and salvation, which is effectual in the enduring of the same sufferings which we also suffer: or whether we be comforted, *it is* for your consolation and salvation.

We should be careful to notice that when Peter had passed through the time of testing and was truly humbled, he didn't claim any victory like the man who was proud of how humble he was. The genuineness of his humility would only allow him to claim to love Jesus as a friend later. The brash Peter would not have missed a beat to profess his strength.

**b** A vacation time is something that we actually *could* use at times. But we don't want to underestimate how much we need testing as well as resting.

**c** Training time is important, but it should not be for the purpose to vanquish people in argument. This answer points out how it is possible to be lifted up in intellectual pride.

853. What did Jesus say to reveal Peter's immature faith?
- Peter was going to have to spend some time in prison to have his faith tried
  - Peter was going to deny Him three times instead of fulfilling his brash claim**
  - Peter's boldness was a sign of immaturity, no one should ever be bold

John 13:37,38 Peter said unto him, Lord, why cannot I follow thee now? I will lay down my life for thy sake.

38Jesus answered him, Wilt thou lay down thy life for my sake? Verily, verily, I say unto thee, The cock shall not crow, till thou hast denied me thrice.

**a** Spending time in prison could serve as a time of testing, but no matter what we imagine as the worst thing that could happen, there is always something that could be worse that might be more important.

1Cor 10:13 There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God *is* faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear *it*.

**c** Boldness is not always a sign of immaturity. In fact, we should pray for boldness so we should not expect Christ to complain about his boldness.

**b** Boldness due to experience is part of maturity, but Peter's boldness *happened to be part of his immaturity* and it would take three denials to bring this out in him. It happens that three is more than just a common number in the Scriptures (Judas' opportunity to repent, Peter's denials, Peter being asked if he loved Christ, Paul asking for healing), but it is also common in rhetoric where three times repeating, describing, or arguing something is effective.

We can point out here the solution to the problem of how many times the cock will crow and when, which some have questioned. When comparing Luke 22:34 and John 13:38 at Peter's first protest with his later protest (see p. 273 in the workbook) in Matt 26:34 and Mark 14:30, and combining all the statements, it will be important to know that there "the cock crow" is also a reference to the time of day, not just to a rooster letting out a crow. In the actual fulfillment all crowings are compatible and take place in one night ending in "the cock crow," without needing another night and "cock crow" for Peter to make all of his denials.

854. Why were the disciples supposed to make provisions for their future ministry?
- Because they were going to have to start a war and needed a lot of swords
  - Because they had been dependent on the provisions from Jesus ministry**
  - Because God was not going to help them anymore



Luke 22:35-37 And he said unto them, When I sent you without purse, and scrip, and shoes, lacked ye any thing? And they said, Nothing.

36Then said he unto them, But now, he that hath a purse, let him take *it*, and likewise *his* scrip: and he that hath no sword, let him sell his garment, and buy one.

37For I say unto you, that this that is written must yet be accomplished in me, And he was reckoned among the transgressors: for the things concerning me have an end.

**a,b,c** Jesus was not advocating going to war as part of a Christian mission to overtake the world. It is just that they were still going to have to be dependent on God, but now in a new way. Our Christianity must also be able to fit into a world in what might be considered normal ways, even though God is still the one who is providing for us.

## 154 - The Upper Room Discourse

### Jesus Assures Them of the Place He Is Going to Prepare

855. What would Jesus prepare for us in heaven? mansions

John 14:1,2 Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me.  
2In my Father's house are many mansions: if *it were* not *so*, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you.

John 14:1,2 have been some of the most oft quoted verses of comfort. Jesus explicitly and succinctly states that there is a place for us when we die. Even though there are many verses to draw confidence from, perhaps the simplicity of "Let not your heart be troubled" is what gives us the greatest assurance and confidence. Heaven is a place and it is filled with mansions, not just a state or mind as some might think. It is popular in modern versions to translate *mansions* as *rooms*, or *dwelling places*. Both the English and Greek words for *mansion* mean dwelling place, so *dwelling place* is not so bad, it is just weak. When looking at other Scripture references where a *room* is mentioned, there is a clear indication of a specific room for reclining or merely a place in a house. *Dwelling place* is weak because the place where we abide is in distinction to a single reclining room where a person would be occupying only one part of a house. The idea of perfection and magnificence in glory lends itself to imagining a spectacular abode, although we have no idea exactly how large each mansion is. There is no cause for diminishing the nature of the mansion in modern translations.

Some say that the mansions refers to how there many different religions will be represented in heaven where some think inclusiveness is celebrated. Heaven is not a place for partisan inclusion, as though the Hindu party, the Jewish party, the Christian party, the Moslem party, the Shinto party, etc, will be included. The next section deals specifically with that reasoning. Hell is not as some think only here on earth.

856. What do we call Jesus' return for us to bring us to heaven? The Rapture

John 14:3 And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, *there* ye may be also.

Again, this verse is very comforting knowing that this current world system is not all that there is to look forward to. This verse is very supportive of the Rapture in several ways. We are going to be *received*, which indicates that we are going somewhere else. Putting this together with the fact that Christ is going to come in a cloud the same way He left, we are going to be received into that cloud.

Acts 1:11 Which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven.

This does not preclude Jesus coming back *with* His saints and the New Jerusalem to earth. The teaching of the Rapture is consistent with both receiving and coming back again.

### **Jesus Is the Way**

857. How can we get to the Father?

**a. Only through Jesus**

b. Through any of the Enlightened holy ones such as Buddha, Mohammed, whom God has sent

c. Through Transcendental Meditation, Primal Scream, or some other mind freeing effort

John 14:5,6 Thomas saith unto him, Lord, we know not whither thou goest; and how can we know the way?

6Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.

**a** Thomas, the doubter, asked the perfect question. Jesus' answer is unequivocal; He is the only way to get to the Father.

**b** Some people wonder about those who are brought up in other faiths and how fair it is that they should not get to go to heaven. The problem is that God in His righteousness was not obligated to do anything else other than condemn man to Hell. It is all of grace that He has sent His Son and Spirit into the world that *anyone* should have a chance. The entire blame for people brought up in another "faith tradition" going to Hell lies squarely on people doing this to other people. We do *not* have a "tradition," we have the truth. If anything, all deserve to go to Hell and some have multiplied their guilt by pushing false doctrine on to others.

Particularly interesting is the Roman Catholic teaching which can be found at the Vatican website, [www.vatican.va/archive/ENG0015/\\_P29.HTM](http://www.vatican.va/archive/ENG0015/_P29.HTM).

### **The Church and non-Christians**

¶839 "Those who have not yet received the Gospel are related to the People of God in various ways."

¶841 The Church's relationship with the Muslims. "The plan of salvation also includes those who acknowledge the Creator, in the first place amongst whom are the Muslims; these profess to hold the faith of Abraham, and together with us they adore the one, merciful God, mankind's judge on the last day."

¶843 The Catholic Church recognizes in other religions that search, among shadows and images, for the God who is unknown yet near since he gives life and breath and all things and wants all men to be saved. Thus, the Church considers all goodness and truth found in these religions as "a preparation for the Gospel and given by him who enlightens all men that they may at length have life."

¶846 ...Hence they could not be saved who, knowing that the Catholic Church was founded as necessary by God through Christ, would refuse either to enter it or to remain in it. [Non-Catholic Christians would be excluded by this standard, although earlier sections seem to make allowance for them]

¶847 This affirmation is not aimed at those who, through no fault of their own, do not know Christ and his Church:

Those who, through no fault of their own, do not know the Gospel of Christ or his Church, but who nevertheless seek God with a sincere heart, and, moved by grace, try in their actions to do his will as they know it through the dictates of their conscience - those too may achieve eternal salvation.

This amounts to so much double-talk which appears to pander to other groups in order to avoid criticism.

**c** Getting to the Father is not by some quasi-psychological mind game. We only get to the Father by Jesus Christ.

858. What is one way the Father was revealed through Jesus?

- a. Through the Mass
- b. Through His works**
- c. Through His college degrees

John 14:8-11 Philip saith unto him, Lord, shew us the Father, and it sufficeth us.  
9Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou *then*, Shew us the Father?

10Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? the words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works.

11Believe me that I *am* in the Father, and the Father in me: or else believe me for the very works' sake.

**a,c** Catholicism and Orthodoxy believe that Jesus is revealed through the Mass by transubstantiation (other ways, too, but this is a major way that is fundamental to Catholicism). A is an appeal to liturgy, as differentiated from an appeal to academia, as in C. This is an issue of accreditation. Man looks for something they can hold as a standard. Our standard is the Word of God as He providentially provided, arranged, and preserved it.

**b** Christ's works don't give Him accreditation, but that is not their purpose. What they *do* is give confidence in our faith in Christ. Even more to the point, according to Rom 1, all mankind has knowledge of God through His creation.

859. What can we look forward to because we know Jesus?

- a. We can become gods, too
- b. We will be able to do whatever we want
- c. We will do greater works through His power**

John 14:12-14 Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater *works* than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father.

13And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son.

14If ye shall ask any thing in my name, I will do *it*.

**a** A is not such a far-fetched innovation. This is a Mormon doctrine that claims the authority of Mormon tradition:

Elder Snow, "While attentively listening to his explanation, the Spirit of the Lord rested mightily upon me—the eyes of my understanding were opened, and I saw as clear as the sun at noonday, with wonder and astonishment, the pathway of God and man. I formed the following couplet which expresses the revelation, as it was shown me, and explains Father Smith's dark saying to me at a blessing meeting in the Kirtland Temple, prior to my baptism. ...

"As man now is, God once was:"

"As God now is, man may be."

The Prophet Joseph Smith himself publicly taught the doctrine the following year, 1844, during a funeral sermon of Elder King Follett: "God himself was once as we are now, and is an exalted man, and sits enthroned in yonder heavens! ... It is the first principle of the Gospel to know for a certainty the Character of God, and to know that we may converse with him as one man converses with another, and that he was once a man like us; yea, that God himself, the Father of us all, dwelt on an earth, the same as Jesus Christ himself did." (Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith, sel. Joseph Fielding Smith, Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1938, pp. 345–46.)

Once the Prophet Joseph had taught the doctrine publicly, Elder Snow also felt free to publicly teach it, and it was a common theme of his teachings throughout his life. About ten years before his death, while serving as the President of the Quorum of the

## THE TRIUMPHAL ENTRY TO THE TRIUMPH OVER DEATH – 586

Twelve, President Snow incorporated his original couplet into a longer poem. He addressed the poem to the Apostle Paul, who had written the following to the Philippian Saints:

"Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus:  
"Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God."  
(Philip. 2:5–6.)

Part of the poem reads:

The boy, like to his father grown,  
Has but attained unto his own;  
To grow to sire from state of son,  
Is not 'gainst Nature's course to run.  
A son of God, like God to be,  
Would not be robbing Deity.

[www.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/ensign/1982/02/i-have-a-question/is-president-snows-statement-as-man-now-is-god-once-was-as-god-now-is-man-may-be-accepted-as-official-doctrine](http://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/ensign/1982/02/i-have-a-question/is-president-snows-statement-as-man-now-is-god-once-was-as-god-now-is-man-may-be-accepted-as-official-doctrine)

This is not limited to the Mormons but is common in New Age teaching.

**b** We don't get to do *whatever* we want, but the works that are compatible with God.

**c** It is especially good to know that we get to work with God. The reason why we might do greater works is because we will simply be around longer than the three years that Jesus ministered on the earth. Our works will not be greater in kind or importance, but will specifically be part of the larger expansion of the church across the world.

860. What will be a demonstration of our love for Jesus?

a. We will use a thesaurus to find all kinds of synonyms for the word great to describe Him

**b. We will keep His commandments**

c. We will do many good works to make up for our sin

John 14:15 If ye love me, keep my commandments.

**a** Much of experiential based worship sounds like someone strung together a list of synonyms as if for their much speaking God will hear their praise better. The common saying "talk is cheap" certainly might apply in such a case.

**c** Going to work for God is a good thing to do if it is done with the right perspective. The work might look the same, but if it is being done for the purpose of earning points for salvation then it is not acceptable.

**b** We are reminded that we are saved by faith, but a faith that works, works. That is, the faith that is effective for salvation will produce good works. Obeying Christ is done out of love for Him.

### The Promise of the Comforter

861. Who is the Comforter?

- a. The Holy Ghost**
- b. A power
- c. A spiritual guide

John 14:16,17 And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever;  
17*Even* the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you.

**c** Fortune tellers and psychics claim to have a spiritual guide which is really a demon who guides them.

**b** Jehovah's Witnesses and other cults do not see the Holy Spirit as a person, but merely as a power. A person cannot convict people or be grieved which is true of the Holy Spirit.

**a** The word *paraclete-comforter* means someone who is called alongside. It is often used of a lawyer. One reason that the Holy Spirit would be sent would be to take the place of Jesus' physical presence in guiding the church which began with John the Baptist's baptism.

862. What is the foundation of our relationship and power in Christ?

- a. Working miracles
- b. Love**
- c. Wisdom

John 14:21-24 He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him.  
22Judas saith unto him, not Iscariot, Lord, how is it that thou wilt manifest thyself unto us, and not unto the world?  
23Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.  
24He that loveth me not keepeth not my sayings: and the word which ye hear is not mine, but the Father's which sent me.

**a,b,c** Our relationship with Christ is not founded on head knowledge of facts, figures, and Bible trivia even if we apply them wisely as in C. We do not have a power relationship with Christ which is manifest in the miraculous as in A. Many ministries might have great wisdom and their growth and impact

can only be explained by the miraculous hand of God. As significant as these are, the foundation is based on loving God. It is then that we will keep His words. This is related to 1Cor 13

1Cor 13:1-3,8 Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become *as* sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal.

2And though I have *the gift of* prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing.

3And though I bestow all my goods to feed *the poor*, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing.

...

8 Charity never faileth: but whether *there be* prophecies, they shall fail; whether *there be* tongues, they shall cease; whether *there be* knowledge, it shall vanish away.

Love is under the domain of the will so that we must not only mentally assent to loving others but we must act upon.

863. What will the Holy Ghost do for us?

- a. Teach us all things and bring things to our remembrance that we have learned**
- b. Speak through us with unintelligible sounds
- c. Make us feel comfortable

John 14:26 But the Comforter, *which is* the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.

**c** Making us feel comfortable is an aspect of an experiential based ministry. Comfort can be found in the Spirit, but it will not be based on just a sentimentality.

**b** B is a reference to the assumption that a mimicry of what happened on Pentecost is what having the Spirit of God is all about. In fact, salvation itself and not just having the power of the Spirit is assumed by some to be evidenced by speaking in tongues. Mimicking Pentecost is not just an overly simplified concept of the Holy Spirit, but is downright erroneous. Charismatics wanted to imitate Pentecost but chose the wrong aspect. They should have focused on the power of the Holy Spirit in delivering the Gospel.

**a** There are more things that the Holy Spirit does, but the convicting power of the Holy Spirit and bringing light to the believer is a chief work. In the context of this Scripture, the disciples will be blessed to have their memory of Christ to guide them.

## The Promise of Peace

864. Read Rom 5:1. What kind of peace does Jesus give?

- a. **His peace with God being justified by faith**
- b. Peace on earth with no wars
- c. Peace of mind and freedom from anxiety and fear

John 14:27 Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.

Rom 5:1 Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ:

**a,b,c** Actually, B and C are only possible if we have peace with God by justification through faith. "Know Jesus, know peace. No Jesus, no peace."

865. How should we react when a brother in Christ dies?

- a. We should get upset at God for taking our loved one and stop believing in Him
- b. We should feel sad for all the things he is going to miss
- c. **We should rejoice for him being able to be in glory with God**

John 14:27 Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.

**a,b,c** This question is not so directly answered in the portion of Scripture for this section. This is an application of the general principle for why we can have peace through the hardest of circumstances.

866. Why did Jesus tell the disciples He was going to leave?

- a. So they could start mourning
- b. **So they could have their faith strengthened since Jesus was prepared for it**
- c. So the world would see the judgment of the Father

John 14:29 And now I have told you before it come to pass, that, when it is come to pass, ye might believe.

**a** Even though there was way sufficient cause for mourning, this darkest hour was going to be the brightest day for mankind.

**c** The world would not know it, but they would be witnessing the judgment of the Father come to pass, not on the world, but placed on the Son.

**b** One of the greatest proofs of God's Word is fulfilled prophecy. The disciples were about to witness the absolutely greatest even in the history of



creation. Our narrow field of perception often influences us to miss the greater significance of what is going on around us. We tend to focus on and think about our immediate circumstances. In effect, Jesus is speaking to this so that they will not be overcome, but it won't be until after the resurrection that they will begin to get an inkling of what was happening right in front of their eyes. Similarly, we might be tempted to focus on what is going on around us and to us. We need to try to achieve a cosmic perspective and see all that God is doing and how our lives fit into God's plan for all those around us.

867. When the Jewish leaders and Pilate, who dwelled under the influence of Satan, came to find fault in Christ, why would Jesus have no more to share with the disciples but would go with them?

- a. **To show His obedience to the Father by going to the cross**
- b. To show His willingness to give up
- c. To win His case against them and be free to live

John 14:30,31 Hereafter I will not talk much with you: for the prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me.

31But that the world may know that I love the Father; and as the Father gave me commandment, even so I do. Arise, let us go hence.

**b** When Jesus went to the cross, it would not be to give up. He was surrendering so that a greater work would be done in salvation.

**c** Jesus would not go with the Jewish leaders and Pilate in order to meet with them for one last debate. The only reason Jesus would share anything at all is really to take away people's excuse for not knowing any better.

**a** After having talked and taught so much, Jesus was now going to go to the cross out of obedience to His Father, not as a response to man. Similarly, that is the reason why we cooperate with people and work with them: it is out of obedience to God.

### **The Command to Abide in Christ**

868. How did the disciples maintain being clean in their holy relationship with Jesus?

- a. Through the baptism and communion they received from Jesus
- b. Through the word they received from Jesus**
- c. Through the law they received from Moses

John 15:1-3 I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman.

2Every branch in me that beareth fruit he taketh away: and every *branch* that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit.

3Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you.

**a** A is a reference to the concept that there is power in sacraments. In the first place, Jesus did not actually baptize anyone, though His disciples did so in His name.

Thomas Aquinas boldly defended the doctrine that the sacraments now have virtue *ex opere operato* [by the work worked, or by the performance of the sacrament without respect of the hearts of the people involved], and not, as in Old-Testament times, *ex opere operantis* [by the work of the doer, or made effective because of the character of the person]. And the Council of Trent (sess. 7, canons 7, 8) says: "If any one shall say that grace, as far as concerneth God's part, is not given through the said sacraments, always and to all men, even though they lightly receive them, but [only] sometimes, and to some persons, let him be anathema. If any one shall say that by the said sacraments of the new law grace is not conferred through the act performed, but that faith alone in the divine promise suffices for obtaining grace, let him be anathema."...This doctrine, if carried out, would obviously equalize, in a great measure, the benefits received by the worthy and the unworthy who approach the altar, and would justify the administration of baptism to the heathen, etc., not only on consent, but by the application of physical force.

[www.biblicalcyclopedia.com/O/opus-operatum.html](http://www.biblicalcyclopedia.com/O/opus-operatum.html)

We do not believe that there are any sacraments at all make the work performed (*ex operate*) nor the attitude of the recipient (*ex operantis*) relevant. We hold to baptism and communion as *ordinances*, things that Christ commanded us to do for their symbolic value. Baptism, communion, penance, and other acts as sacraments do not have a mystical effect upon us.

**c** Where A represents some mystical power in church sacraments performed by a priest or agent of God, C suggests that a relationship is maintained by *legalism*, as though there is some power in performing the Law, as the Judaizers in the book of Galatians taught, so that the individual performing them is sanctified. It is not our work that makes the difference, but our attitude.

Gal 3:1-5 O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth, crucified among you?

2This only would I learn of you, Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?

3Are ye so foolish? having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh?

4Have ye suffered so many things in vain? if *it be* yet in vain.

5He therefore that ministereth to you the Spirit, and worketh miracles among you, *doeth he it* by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?

We were not saved by works and we are not kept by works.

**b** It is always by the Word that we are maintained spiritually. 2 Timothy 3:14-17 and Psalm 119:11 are just a sample of the cleansing power of the Word of God.

2Tim 3:14-17 But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned *them*;

15And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.

16All scripture *is* given by inspiration of God, and *is* profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:

17That the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works.

Ps 119:11 Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee.

869. How are we able to bear spiritual fruit?

a. By the church programs we institute

b. By doing many good deeds according to how smart, strong, and talented we are

**c. By our faithful relationship with God through Jesus**

John 15:1-5 I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman.

2Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away: and every *branch* that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit.

3Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you.

4Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me.

5I am the vine, ye *are* the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing.

**a** Although we should plan and work hard in an organized way, we should never lose sight of the fact that it is not by virtue of the brilliance of our programs that people are brought to Christ as if our program can psychologically manipulate them into believing. They may very well use the things we present to them by way of the program, but they may equally fail to utilize our presentation. It is God's working in the heart of the program recipient that is the vitalizing factor. It is possible that there very may well be something about a program that people will use as an excuse to turn them off to the Gospel, but we should not just assume that if they don't choose to believe that it was a program failure. Sometimes, what we deem a failure could just possibly be something that appeals to them for the Gospel!

**b** Even though we might have to work within the scope of our abilities or spiritual gifts, spiritual success does not depend on our good works. Our good works might come in to play, but, like programs, we should not automatically assume that failure, *or* success, is because of the quantity of work we put in.

**c** Our abiding, or maintaining our relationship with Christ, will be fruitful by virtue of the fact that Christ is working through us.

870. What will happen if we don't abide in Christ?

- a. We will be cast into hell
- b. We will have to be successful some other way
- c. We will be set aside as useless and withered**

John 15:6 If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast *them* into the fire, and they are burned.

**a,c** Illustrations should not be taken further than they are intended. Vs. 6 is not talking about loss of salvation, but merely becoming useless. Parabolic references can be pressed in various ways but must be governed by clear doctrinal Scriptures.

**b** For the Christian, taking things into our own hands, as implied here, because Jesus doesn't seem to be working is not a valid option. However, we *should* be open to adjusting and adapting to our circumstances.

871. How will God be glorified through us as Christ's disciples?

- a. By repeating praise God, thank you Jesus, glory, amen, hallelujah as often as possible
- b. By bearing much fruit**
- c. By living a successful and clean life

John 15:8 Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples.

**a** Giving lip service to God is not a substitute for actually serving Him. Sometimes, churches advertise themselves rather than God by trying to attract people by how exciting they are. Unfortunately, all advertising will have that effect to one degree or another, but we should be careful to make our promotion of Jesus Christ and the Word of God just as obvious. One parent who did not know anything about our program encouraged her child to come because it would be fun. The student had to be told that we hope that the time will not be boring, but we were not shooting for fun; it would be interesting and we would help them come to know God.

**c** One can live a successfully stable and clean life without actually serving God. All the moral education we get could be exercised by sitting and doing nothing at all.

**b** God is glorified by those who come to Him and the difference unto life that is made.

## The Command to Love One Another

872. How should we love one another?

- a. **The way the Father loves the Son**
- b. With certain boundaries and limitations
- c. By giving each other whatever we want

John 15:9-13 As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you: continue ye in my love.

10If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love.

11These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and *that* your joy might be full.

12This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you.

13Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.

**b,c** There is actually no boundary with love. There *are*, however, boundaries with *discipleship*. Because we love someone and want the best for them, we might have to work with them within boundaries, not spoiling them with whatever they want to have.

There is no boundary with love. There are, however, boundaries with discipleship. Because we love someone and want the best for them, we might have to work with them within boundaries, not spoiling them with whatever they want to have.

**a** The example we have for love is that of God, the Father, for His Son. When a person is saved, he has a new capacity and kind of love that is divine because he is one with Christ. Lost people *can* love, but it is not the same as the love of God.

873. Why do we obey God's commandments?

- a. **Because we love Him**
- b. Because we fear what He might do if we disobey
- c. Because we want to deserve His forgiveness

John 15:10 If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love.

**c** People at first try to earn salvation by keeping His commandments, but works do not save one.

**b** Next, they try to maintain God's commandments out of fear of punishment or loss of salvation. But, perfect love casts out fear:

1John 4:18 There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love.

**a** Our works are not linked to getting something *from* God such as our salvation or maintaining God's favor. Our works are linked to *giving* something to God as an expression of our love.

1John 2:3-5 And hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments.

4He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him.

5But whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected: hereby know we that we are in him.

874. What is the greatest thing a friend can do for another friend?

- a. He will spare him embarrassment by not telling him his faults
- b. He will help him with anything he wants
- c. He will lay down his life for him**

John 15:13 Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.

A and B are two examples of popular, but false, views of what friendship means. They are both based on merely catering to the desire of pleasing someone else.

**b** Friendship does not mean having no sense of boundaries for what one is willing to do for someone else. It leads to being taken for granted and being taken advantage of. It can lead to an unhealthy sense of self worth being dependent on the approval of others. Friendships know their general limitations in everyday life.

**a** A represents the opposite problem of B in that it is a friendship based on an *unreasonable* boundary. It still involves a fear of what others might think, but now it holds back on something that a friend might need: honesty.

**c** Laying down one's life for others might sound like not being able to set boundaries, but the boundaries we spoke of before have to do with every day life. A true friend will be able to make the ultimate sacrifice. What is interesting is that a friend will be selfless while working within the boundaries of what he can actually do for what his friend actually needs. It is in *that* context that one is able to make the ultimate sacrifice when it is *truly* needed.

875. How does Jesus treat us in the work of the ministry?

- a. As servants who don't need to know what His plans are
- b. As friends who He shares the ministry with**
- c. As a master who will arbitrarily cancel him without notice

## THE TRIUMPHAL ENTRY TO THE TRIUMPH OVER DEATH – 596

John 15:14,15 Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you.  
15Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth:  
but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made  
known unto you.

**a,c** A master is under no obligation to consult with or answer to his servants as in A. He has the right, as in C, to arbitrarily cancel an employee at any time. God involves us more than that with us.

**b** A good master does more than treat even his servants as mere assets for his use. Even though we actually *are* servants for God in that He is still under no obligation to bring us into His work more intimately, as a good master He does so treating us as friends (a good employer will do this also). First, it is good for even servants to be aware of an employer's plans because it will help him make correct judgments for adapting when plans don't go the way they were expected to go. Secondly, a servant is not a mere asset that isn't given any consideration. Thirdly, even servants are given responsibilities and the power to make judgment calls. Because we know what God's plans are we are generally able to do our job even with a servant mentality because servants are typically involved with making a way to carry out the plan. The more a servant is a friend, the better it is for the work. We start off as friends and not as servants who have to earn that consideration.

876. How did the disciples become involved in the ministry?

- a. They forced their way into it
- b. They had to earn their positions
- c. Jesus chose them**

John 15:16 Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and *that* your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you.

**c** Jesus chose them for their work indicating that they didn't have to go looking for Him and applying for the job. He sought *them* out by His grace.

**a** No one can force their way into God's work. Thankfully, God invites us into His work in general. We don't have to wonder *if* we can join in, but just *how* God is going to use us.

**b** Jesus didn't make them earn their positions as if He would deny them if they were not good enough to make the grade. They were definitely *not* good enough. That doesn't mean that our character and the talents we were given at birth are of *no* consideration. It's just that He has plans to definitely use us in *some* way.

877. What did Jesus ordain the disciples to do?
- a. Manage the affairs of the church in His absence
  - b. Love each other and bear much fruit**
  - c. Manage each other's lives

John 15:16,17 Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and *that* your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you.  
17 These things I command you, that ye love one another.

**a** The *very* last command Christ had for the *church* was to fulfill its mission of bringing the Gospel to the world. Although we are to manage the affairs of the church, the key phrase that makes this false is "in His absence." We should notice that our commission is about the church's relation outwardly to the world. Another problem presented here is the suggestion that the church is just all about business. As B will imply, love is at the center of the ministry of the church, not worldly success.

**c** Worse than being busy about the work of the church without respect to love is being *busybodies*. Our job is not to police and punish each other, but to live by love lifting each other up to live for Christ.

**b** Inwardly, *within* the church, Jesus gave another command. It is most interesting that among Christ's last words before going to the cross there is much made about *loving each other*. As we consider the outward effect of the love they had amongst them, there will be much fruit.

John 13:35 By this shall all *men* know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.

## The Hatred of the World

878. Why should we not be surprised that the world would hate us?
- a. Because the world hated Jesus first**
  - b. Because we are so nice
  - c. Because people are basically good and tolerant

John 15:18 If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before *it hated* you.

**c** One popular notion about the nature of man is that he is basically good. The teaching is that the way he is treated by society, family, poverty, and other forces are what corrupt him. However, man is by nature a sinner according to the Bible. Sometimes the most "tolerant" people can be the meanest.

**b** Being nice is generally going to bring nice reactions from people, but that is not necessarily guaranteed even in the world. There actually is a possibility



that resentful, bitter people will react badly to niceness. Christian niceness presents a different problem to the world. Where the world might ordinarily appreciate niceness, it is *why* Christians might be nice is a problem.

**a** Especially when people find that you are a Christian, and the more sincere you are as Christian, the bigger the threat you are to them. When churches have been more closely aligned with the state, true churches that operate independently, as they should do, have been attacked as being anti-state and anti-established church. Centralization of power in the world is the result of elites trying to gather power and eliminate competition. The rebellious nature of man against God is at odds with Christianity which is in competition with worldly power. Therefore the world hates Jesus first and then all that represents Him.

879. Who does the world love?

- a. Those who are not of this world
- b. Their own kind**
- c. Those who help them see their sin

John 15:19 If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you.

**b** The world loves, but probably more correctly *appears* to love, those who are most like them. There is a balance of power that is achieved when people are very similar and they live in a kind of truce.

**a** They do not love those who are not of this world, but this is understood as not being of *their* world. God's domain is a threat to them.

**c** The world does not want someone to point out their sin primarily because they don't want to be challenged to repent, most specifically, before God.

880. Why will the world persecute us?

- a. Because we are hypocrites
- b. Because they do not know Jesus in their hearts**
- c. Because they are tolerant

John 15:20,21 Remember the word that I said unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you; if they have kept my saying, they will keep yours also.

21But all these things will they do unto you for my name's sake, because they know not him that sent me.

**a** The world only *feigns* to not like Christians because they are hypocrites. People secretly like Christian hypocrisy because it makes them feel better about themselves.

**b** The real reason the world will persecute believers is because of their rebellion against God. When someone is a believer in Christ, they will be truly tolerant of others, not forcing them to repent but giving them room to consider their need for God. True Christianity will only seek to influence governance in what really matters, creating only necessary laws against things like murder and theft. Murder and theft are easy to recognize as problems, but at some point it can become difficult to determine what laws are *truly* necessary. Those who know Jesus will need less law because they will be sensitive to the law of God and be convicted when they hear His Word preached.

**c** C is actually kind of a true answer because persecution and tolerance in the world's mind are not opposites. They preach tolerance when what they mean is homogeneity. They want sameness and are jealous of those who get ahead of them. They would rather everyone be equally miserable than permit anyone to do better than them...unless *they* are the ones who are getting ahead, of course! Those who preach tolerance end up being the worst persecutors because the only ones who they will tolerate are those who fit in with what *they* think is the majority view. Everyone else must be eliminated. What they fail to consider is human nature and that there will always be differences of opinion. The only way to get a collective opinion is for some minority to force their opinion on the rest of society.

881. What effect did Jesus have on people by coming into the world?

- a. He revealed how sinful they were by the way their reacted to Him**
- b. He made them feel loved and accepted for who they were
- c. He made them love themselves so they could feel better about themselves

John 15:22-24 If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin: but now they have no cloke for their sin.

23He that hateth me hateth my Father also.

24If I had not done among them the works which none other man did, they had not had sin: but now have they both seen and hated both me and my Father.

**b,c** B and C are directly related to each other. Making people loved and accepted without any need for repentance is what the world thinks is needed. They do not mind leaving someone comfortable in their sin because they avoid calling anything sin so that their particular sin will end up being overlooked. They would rather love themselves just as they are so they don't feel bad. This has also been called *defining deviancy down*, or calling sin normal so that we don't have to judge people. The world does this by using euphemisms to make sin sound better. Instead of sin, people like to think of it as a mistake, flaw, error, problem, indiscretion, oversight, or a shortcoming.

**a** God was not obligated to come into the world as some last proof of His existence. However, by coming into the world as God, people were most directly forced to recognize Him. Even though coming directly into the world was no guarantee that people would *accept* Him as their God, it removed their ability to ignore Him. By their reaction against Him, their sinfulness is revealed.

882. Who can genuinely love God?

- a. Moslems
- b. Hindus
- c. People who love Jesus as their Savior**

John 15:21 But all these things will they do unto you for my name's sake, because they know not him that sent me.

**a,b,c** People who know God will know Him, Jesus, Who God has sent. When people do not recognize Jesus, they cannot be said to truly know and love God. They might *claim* to know and love God, but it cannot be genuine without recognizing Jesus. How an you say you love God and hate His Son?

### **The Convicting Ministry of the Holy Ghost**

883. What would the Holy Spirit do when He came?

- a. He would get everyone excited
- b. He would testify of Jesus**
- c. He would get people to pray to Him (the Holy Spirit)

John 15:26 But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, *even* the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me:

**a,c** Getting everyone excited is so often associated with the Holy Spirit that people often assume that excitement itself is proof of the involvement of the Holy Spirit in meetings. Some go so as to treat the Holy Spirit in the same way they would treat the Father and the Son. This might seem appropriate in the interest of equality in the Godhead, but that is true only in essence and nature. There is a logical order in the Godhead where the Father determined the plan of redemption, the Son executes the plan of redemption, and the Holy Spirit is used to apply the plan of redemption. So there is a *logical* order to the Godhead which is why we are not baptized in the name of the Holy Spirit, the Father, and the Son, or Son/Spirit/Father, or four other permutations.

**b** A chief role of the Holy Spirit is to present Jesus to the heart of man (more to be said in question 887).

884. How will the world react to the disciples testimony?

- a. **They will try to get rid of them**
- b. They will celebrate them
- c. They will ignore them

John 16:1-3 These things have I spoken unto you, that ye should not be offended.  
2They shall put you out of the synagogues: yea, the time cometh, that whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God service.  
3And these things will they do unto you, because they have not known the Father, nor me.

**c** People *cannot* ignore the Gospel. They might try to ignore it. They can decide against it. But, they cannot ignore it. When we think that we are being ineffective we remember that we are not. It is not that *we* are *ever* effective because we cannot make *anything* happen. It is the Gospel that is effective and, as this section teaches, the Holy Spirit.

**b,a** If people only knew, they *would* celebrate the opportunity to hear and receive the Gospel. There certainly would be those who rejoice at getting to hear the Gospel, but Jesus is putting them on notice that there will also be many who won't. This has been proved out even in our own modern times, not just as we might read about during the 250 years of Roman persecution the churches faced after Pentecost, the persecution by the state Roman Catholic Church, or the persecution by the state Protestant churches.

885. Why would Jesus send the Holy Spirit to the disciples?

- a. To empower their praise to God
- b. To empower their testimony to the world**
- c. To empower the success of their plans

John 16:7-11 Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you.  
8And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment:  
9Of sin, because they believe not on me;  
10Of righteousness, because I go to my Father, and ye see me no more;  
11Of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged.

**c** What makes C wrong is the reference to *their* plans. The Holy Spirit does not serve *our* agenda, but the agenda of the Father and Son.

**a** Although the Holy Spirit will also empower our praise to God, that is not why Jesus sent Him. He is not here to serve out our behest to give us a fuller emotional experience.

**b** The work of the Holy Spirit is to empower the testimony of the Gospel.

886. What three things would the Holy Ghost reprove and convict the world of: Sin, righteousness, and judgment

John 16:8-11 And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment:

9Of sin, because they believe not on me;

10Of righteousness, because I go to my Father, and ye see me no more;

11Of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged.

People are without excuse. Because of the work of the Holy Spirit, they know that they are sinners in the face of the righteousness of God and deserving of eternal judgment. Some churches make the mistake of overemphasizing all the excitement that people can have at church. The more acutely people understand sin, righteousness, and judgment the more acute will be their repentance.

887. Who would the Holy Spirit glorify?

- a. **Jesus**
- b. Himself
- c. The Godhead

John 16:12-15 I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now.

13Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, *that* shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come.

14He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew *it* unto you.

15All things that the Father hath are mine: therefore said I, that he shall take of mine, and shall shew *it* unto you.

**a,b,c** Some churches place so much emphasis on the Holy Spirit that they will give equal worship to the Him. This can be seen in the emphasis on the types of things that have been associated with such as speaking in tongues, getting "slain in the Spirit," getting new messages from God, or working miracles. Such emphasis detracts from what the Holy Spirit is doing, which is putting the attention on Jesus.

### **Jesus Consoles the Disciples about His Departure**

888. After the disciples pressed to understand what Jesus meant by departing, how did Jesus respond?

- a. **He gave them assurance there would be joy after the hard experience of His leaving**
- b. He changed His mind about going to the cross
- c. He rebuked them for their unbelief

John 16:19-22 Now Jesus knew that they were desirous to ask him, and said unto them, Do ye enquire among yourselves of that I said, A little while, and ye shall not see me: and again, a little while, and ye shall see me?

## THE TRIUMPHAL ENTRY TO THE TRIUMPH OVER DEATH – 603

20 Verily, verily, I say unto you, That ye shall weep and lament, but the world shall rejoice: and ye shall be sorrowful, but your sorrow shall be turned into joy.

21 A woman when she is in travail hath sorrow, because her hour is come: but as soon as she is delivered of the child, she remembereth no more the anguish, for joy that a man is born into the world.

22 And ye now therefore have sorrow: but I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man taketh from you.

**c** There are times when Jesus did rebuke the disciples for their unbelief, but the fact that He did not do that here demonstrates that He also understands the fact and appropriateness of grief and confusion. Even though we are not to be centered on self, that does not eliminate all passion. The problem of self-centeredness is revealed when we move on to complaining. Feeling bad is not wrong, and even recognizing the source of our pain in someone else is rational. But we enter the self-zone when we don't forgive and or always look for someone to blame. As we focus on what God is teaching us or the opportunity to serve Him through our suffering we work our way out of the self-zone.

**b** Changing His mind about going to the cross was not going to happen. Besides knowing what He was going to do for them, He also knew that they needed to go through this time to be strengthened, not just saved.

**a** Knowing that God will give us joy at the end of our trials should be a great encouragement to us. The problem is that we are victims of our own ignorance. When we can't see what is ahead we naturally get discouraged. This is why it is so important to be in fellowship so that we can be assured as we hear about the blessings that God has given others, but also to hear about how many times the same people go through times of never finding out what God was doing but trusting anyway. If we only hear about the blessings we might wrongly assume that something is wrong with us when we don't seem to get blessed. When we hear about the blessings *and* the wonderings, then we can get the balanced view of how God works in our lives.

### 889. **What new information does Jesus offer to convince the disciples?**

- a. He gave them each a vision of the future
- b. Nothing**
- c. He told them how He would sit on David's throne the next day

John 16:31 Jesus answered them, Do ye now believe?

**a,c** Although Jesus shared about how they would pray in His name to the Father, He really did not give them any real new information in this part where He comforted them. He had already given them teaching about the future and His kingdom.

**b** Jesus' rhetorical question, "Do ye now believe?" suggests the idea that there

is nothing that serves as a real "game changer" as is indicated in the next question. We get the intended answer, C, by process of elimination. The idea here is that Jesus gave them no new information, but neither are the disciples any more convinced.

890. How do we know that the disciples still did not really understand?
- They talked about where they would all be the next week
  - They started joking and fooling around
  - Jesus revealed how they were going to be scattered very shortly**

John 16:32 Behold, the hour cometh, yea, is now come, that ye shall be scattered, every man to his own, and shall leave me alone: and yet I am not alone, because the Father is with me.

**a,b,c** Jesus did not upbraid them for being too casual but assured them that they would indeed suffer the ultimate effect of what was about to happen, even to the point that they were going to be scattered. This suggests that we should never take our weakness for granted and not be surprised in the time of failure.

891. What final assurance did Jesus give the disciples?
- He assured them He had overcome the world**
  - He assured them that nothing bad can happen to a believer
  - He told them to be happy because it is a sin to be sad

John 16:33 These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.

**b,c** B and C are attitudes of people in denial of the reality of life. Bad things do happen because we live in a sinful world and they will cause grief.

**a** Our ultimate assurance is that even though bad things will happen in life, Jesus has ultimately overcome the world. Just as our victories over problems in life are a mixture of defeats and victories till we get to the end, our ultimate victory is preceded by numerous battles of which some we win, and others we also win even though it might look like a loss.

### **Jesus Prays for the Disciples**

892. Read 2Thess 2:13, John 17:2,6,12. Which of the ones given to Jesus by the Father are saved?
- Everyone given to Jesus was chosen by God to be saved
  - God in His mercy saves everyone
  - The ones who come to Jesus by faith**

## THE TRIUMPHAL ENTRY TO THE TRIUMPH OVER DEATH – 605

2Thess 2:13 But we are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth:

John 17:2,6,12 As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him.

6I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world: thine they were, and thou gavest them me; and they have kept thy word.

12While I was with them in the world, I kept them in thy name: those that thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition; that the scripture might be fulfilled.

**a,b** A and B are false alternate views of how someone becomes a child of God. A refers to Calvinistic election where God chooses only a select group to be made saved by God. B is the opposite where God doesn't choose anyone at all but merely lets everyone in to Heaven. These are not the only possible false views. Salvation by works, by passing through incarnations, simple growth becoming a god, reception of sacraments, are other examples.

**c** Coming to Jesus by choosing to accept Christ by faith stands in contrast specifically to A and B. Where A and B remove any sense of choice, C refers to the specific exercise of faith as mentioned in 2Thess 2:13.

893. What is the Lord's Prayer?

a. Matt 6:9-13

**b. John 17:1-26**

c. Luke 11:2-4

**a,b,c** Matthew and Luke include Jesus' instructions *about* prayer, not a prayer that they should repeat. It could be said that John 17 is the Lord's prayer because it is His actual prayer that He prayed.

894. Which of these things did Jesus *not* pray for the believers?

a. Sanctify them through the Word of His truth

b. To send them into the world

**c. To take them out of the world**

John 17:14-18 I have given them thy word; and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.

15I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil.

16They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.

17Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth.

18As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world.

**a,b** Jesus sought for them to increase in their understanding of the Word of God – they had the Old Testament, but Jesus is speaking of something that is equal to the Old Testament, His own Word, because He gave both the Old



Testament and the Words He spoke to them. The Word was given to them for the specific purpose of equipping them and training them for their mission to go out into world with the Gospel.

**c** In a sense of seeking sanctification, we are supposed to avoid being tainted by the world. It might be counter-intuitive, but that does not mean isolating oneself from the world.

1Cor 5:8-11 Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened *bread* of sincerity and truth.

9I wrote unto you in an epistle not to company with fornicators:

10Yet not altogether with the fornicators of this world, or with the covetous, or extortioners, or with idolaters; for then must ye needs go out of the world.

11But now I have written unto you not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such an one no not to eat.

Paul explained it this way: we should not company with fornicators the way we should keep company with a brother. If a fornicator is a brother you have to reject fellowshiping with him as a brother. We can't avoid contact completely with the world but we should not have associations with the world intimately as we would a brother.

895. What relationship did Jesus want the disciples to have with God?
- a. A casual one where they did not feel pressed to show up to worship God when they didn't feel like it
  - b. An intimate one where they would be one with God the way Jesus was**
  - c. A fearful one where they had to always worry about having done enough to earn God's love

John 17:21-26 That they all may be one; as thou, Father, *art* in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me.

22And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one:

23I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me.

24Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world.

25O righteous Father, the world hath not known thee: but I have known thee, and these have known that thou hast sent me.

26And I have declared unto them thy name, and will declare *it*: that the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them, and I in them.

**a** People will say they love God, but when they are encouraged to participate in church or pursue godliness, they present a take-it-or-leave-it attitude. They don't realize the grace they are receiving to have church leaders and workers

even putting time in knowing that the average Christian will waste the opportunity to join in the blessing and success of the ministry. Instead, by consuming precious resources, they end up dragging down the work of the church.

**c** On the other hand, people should not be driven by fear or judgment. It's not that the consideration of God's judgment is irrelevant, it's just that it shouldn't take that. Responding to His love and invitation should be all that is necessary. The judgment that we should worry more about is the judgment we bring upon ourselves as we make stupid decisions and then have to live with the consequences.

**b** Everything about these verses speaks of the intimacy that God wants to have with us. This should speak to the heart of believers.

## 155 - Departure to the Mount of Olives

896. What did Jesus and the disciples do before proceeding to the Mount of Olives?

- a. They sang a hymn**
- b. They had a good cry
- c. They complained to God that it wasn't fair

Matt 26:30 And when they had sung an hymn, they went out into the mount of Olives.

Luke 22:39 And he came out, and went, as he was wont, to the mount of Olives; and his disciples also followed him.

**b,c** They neither focused on mourning, which would not be entirely inappropriate, nor turned inwardly with a victimization mentality.

**a** Singing a hymn was a common thing to do for such a feast as this. The practice of worship and praise that singing provides should be the cultivated and will serve its purpose for times just such as this. We should respond to trying times with singing God's praises not as a reaction to counteract the time we face, but as a matter of second-nature because we are in the habit of praising God. It is easier to attain the attitude of praise if we are regularly engaged in doing so than if we are forced to focus and muster it up on the spot. Paul did this when he was in the Philippian jail.

Acts 16:23-25 And when they had laid many stripes upon them, they cast *them* into prison, charging the jailor to keep them safely:

24Who, having received such a charge, thrust them into the inner prison, and made their feet fast in the stocks.

25And at midnight Paul and Silas prayed, and sang praises unto God: and the prisoners heard them.

Also, we are commanded to:

Col 3:15-16 And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful.

16Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.

This is one of the reasons that hymns are so powerful. While people thoughtlessly assume that because they are old and tired, the opposite is true. Hymns are our old and trusted friends. By virtue of the fact that they are tried and true we will remember them more in the time of need. Perhaps songs written more recently will be added on as they have a chance to age and mature, but don't throw out the old. Instead, let the new hymns and songs age and *also* become the old. A word of caution about more modern creations: if they are popular in spite of their lack of musicality, then you have to wonder about the heart attitude of why people are so devoted to them.

897. When Jesus wanted a place for reflection and prayer, where did He usually go?

- a. **To the Mount of Olives (where the Garden of Gethsemane was)**
- b. To Jerusalem in the Temple which was so pure
- c. To Galilee where He liked to go fishing

Luke 22:39 And he came out, and went, as he was wont, to the mount of Olives; and his disciples also followed him.

**b** Jerusalem and the Temple *should* have been a place where one could go to be comforted in reflection and prayer. This is how David described it in Psalm 84:

Ps 84:1-12 How amiable *are* thy tabernacles, O LORD of hosts!

2My soul longeth, yea, even fainteth for the courts of the LORD: my heart and my flesh crieth out for the living God.

3Yea, the sparrow hath found an house, and the swallow a nest for herself, where she may lay her young, *even* thine altars, O LORD of hosts, my King, and my God.

4Blessed *are* they that dwell in thy house: they will be still praising thee. Selah.

5Blessed *is* the man whose strength *is* in thee; in whose heart *are* the ways *of them*.

6*Who* passing through the valley of Baca make it a well; the rain also filleth the pools.

7They go from strength to strength, *every one of them* in Zion appeareth before God.

8O LORD God of hosts, hear my prayer: give ear, O God of Jacob. Selah.

9Behold, O God our shield, and look upon the face of thine anointed.

10For a day in thy courts *is* better than a thousand. I had rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness.

11For the LORD God *is* a sun and shield: the LORD will give grace and glory: no good *thing* will he withhold from them that walk uprightly.

12O LORD of hosts, blessed *is* the man that trusteth in thee.

**c** Galilee might have been attractive, but not because of fishing, unless it was the fishing for men that went on there. The idea that it was for fishing suggests the idea of physical leisure which would be the opposite of what could be expected in a spiritual setting.

**a** The idea of going to the Mount of Olives and the Garden being a place where He *was wont* to go should make us realize that *we* need places where we regularly go because we can more intimately meet God there.

### **156 - Instruction to Meet in Galilee after the Resurrection and Peter's Second Protest**

898. Who did Jesus insist was going to forsake Him?

- a. Peter
- b. Judas
- c. All the disciples**

Matt 26:31,35 Then saith Jesus unto them, All ye shall be offended because of me this night: for it is written, I will smite the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock shall be scattered abroad.

35Peter said unto him, Though I should die with thee, yet will I not deny thee. Likewise also said all the disciples.

**a,b,c** Peter and Judas are probably so often the subject of denying or betraying Christ that it one might lose sight of the fact that *all* the disciples were going to forsake Him. This was necessarily so because it was prophesied, and necessary because Jesus would go to the cross completely and utterly forsaken. We should get the message that without Christ empowering us, we are statistically just as likely to fail Christ. Statistically because 100% of those who were trained were still proved to be human, not just all those in Israel who would be shouting to crucify Him shortly.

899. Where did Jesus say He would meet with the disciples after the resurrection?

- a. In the upper room
- b. In Galilee**
- c. In Jerusalem

Matt 26:32 But after I am risen again, I will go before you into Galilee.

**a,b,c** Jesus did indeed meet with the disciples in all these places, but evidently during the 40 days before Pentecost, Jesus met with them in Galilee. Perhaps it was there that He was seen of more than 500 brethren (1Cor 15:6).

900. How certain was it that Peter was going to deny Christ?
- a. **Not another day was going to pass (the cock crow would not come twice) before he would deny Christ**
  - b. It was not so sure because now Peter was more aware of the coming temptation
  - c. With the backing of all the disciples, he and they would die first before denying Him

Mark 14:30 And Jesus saith unto him, Verily I say unto thee, That this day, *even* in this night, before the cock crow twice, thou shalt deny me thrice.

**b,c** You would think that with greater warning that Peter would begin to get a clue. Sometimes it is hard to conceive of the possibility that there would be any way we could change our hearts and minds. Before judging Peter or the disciples, we should beware that we don't know 100% for certain how we would react until we are actually faced with a particular trial.

**a** In this second account of Peter's protest, Mark records the extra words of Christ that there would not be a second day pass before he would deny Christ. This emphasis serves to point out that there was no delay possible.

See the discussion on question 853.

## The Garden of Gethsemane

### 157 - Praying in Gethsemane

901. Using a concordance, what ways are Peter and the sons of Zebedee (James and John) prominently featured together?

In the lists of the apostles, at the healing Jairus' daughter, at the Mount of Transfiguration, asking Jesus about the destruction of Jerusalem, praying in the Garden of Gethsamene, and the list of the apostles in the upper room at Pentecost

These three whom Jesus brought with Him to prayer were prominent among the disciples. We should take note that it is very possible for some to be more outstanding in the service of the Lord. Peter would go on as an outstanding preacher in the early church and open the Gospel to the Gentiles. James would be the first apostle martyred (although Stephen was the first actual martyr). John would be the last apostle to die but not before he was used to open up the future to us in the book of the Revelation.

902. How did Jesus demonstrate that He knew there was no other way but the cross for salvation?

- a. **He was submissive to the will of the Father and did not offer the possibility of His own will being different**
- b. He was happy to go to the cross
- c. He knew He was a sinner and had to face judgment

Luke 22:42-43 Saying, Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me: nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done.

43And there appeared an angel unto him from heaven, strengthening him.

**a** Luke's record includes a phrase that Matthew and Mark do not. Matthew and Mark only refer to the issue of the *possibility* of the cup passing. In Luke 22:42, Jesus also said, "If thou be willing." The word for *will*, here, is *boulamai* and is different from the word *will* used later in the verse which is *thelema*. *Boulamai* most often refers to the sense of intent and plan. *Thelema* is used to convey the sense of preference. There is no sense of Jesus having a contrary view as to the perfect plan and will of the Father. What *is* being addressed here is any sense of His preference regarding the suffering to come. Part of the very definition of personality is having a unique will and all three members of the Godhead do. Part of the trouble theologians face in dealing with any difference at all is the nature of the Trinity. This is something that will remain out of reach for us to explain completely. Because of *separate persons* in the Godhead, we should not expect that there is *uniformity* of thought, but we know that there is perfect *harmony* within the Godhead that provides *unanimity*. It is perfectly in order to have a *preference*. For example, Jesus' preferential will was that Jerusalem should be gathered as a hen gathers her chicks even though Israel's will was in opposition. It is not as some might think that if God wills something at all it must come to pass. Because Jesus was perfectly human and perfectly divine, it is certainly possible for their to be a human component in His preference. The Father *did* hear His prayer and sent an angel to strengthen Him to the degree that it is in accord with His perfect will.

**b,c** Because of Jesus' love for sinners, not because He was a sinner, He was *willing* to go to the cross, but that did not make it a happy event for Him.

903. What demonstrated Jesus' deep agony?

- a. He cried
- b. He sweat great drops of blood**
- c. He complained it was not fair

Luke 22:44 And being in an agony he prayed more earnestly: and his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground.

**a** The Scriptures do not refer to Jesus crying tears, but whether He did or not would be an understatement of what He was going through.

## THE TRIUMPHAL ENTRY TO THE TRIUMPH OVER DEATH – 612

**c** What He was going through was actually *not* fair. However, He was not focused on being a victim especially because we know that He *gave* His life, it was not *taken* from Him.

John 10:18 No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father.

John 15:13 Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.

**b** The deep agony of Christ was revealed in the great drops of blood that came out as sweat.

Hematidrosis, is a condition in which capillary blood vessels that feed the sweat glands rupture, causing them to exude blood, occurring under conditions of extreme physical or emotional stress...Acute fear and intense mental contemplation are the most frequent causes, as reported in six cases in men condemned to execution, a case occurring during the London blitz, a case involving fear of being raped, a case of fear of a storm while sailing, etc.

– <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2810702/>

904. Why did Peter, James, and John sleep

a. They didn't care enough about Jesus

**b. They were overcome and worn out with sorrow**

c. Though their flesh was strong, they were weak spiritually

Luke 22:45,46 And when he rose up from prayer, and was come to his disciples, he found them sleeping for sorrow,

46And said unto them, Why sleep ye? rise and pray, lest ye enter into temptation.

Matt 26:40,41 And he cometh unto the disciples, and findeth them asleep, and saith unto Peter, What, could ye not watch with me one hour?

41Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed *is* willing, but the flesh *is* weak.

**a,c** Being tired and drifting off to sleep is not necessarily due to lack of caring. There are limitations to how the body can perform. They might have been very willing to watch with Jesus, but the flesh has its weakness.

**b** Physical exercise is not the only way to become worn down. Mental duress can take its toll on us as well. We need to recognize the effect that trials have on people as they go through hard times and not just say to them, "Don't worry, be happy."

905. How would the disciples overcome temptation?

a. By strengthening the flesh to have more energy

b. By running away

**c. By strengthening the spirit through prayer**

## THE TRIUMPHAL ENTRY TO THE TRIUMPH OVER DEATH – 613

Luke 22:45,46 And when he rose up from prayer, and was come to his disciples, he found them sleeping for sorrow,  
46And said unto them, Why sleep ye? rise and pray, lest ye enter into temptation.

**a,b** Staying on top of our physical condition and knowing when to walk away are two strategies to employ at times when we go through temptation, but there are times when it is not possible to do either one.

**c** Being strengthened through prayer is our first line of defense against temptation.

906. What demonstrated that Jesus was fighting against the weakness of the flesh to bear trials?

a. He started to do exercises

**b. He prayed the same prayer as before**

c. He got James and John to hold up His arms while Peter led the battle against Satan

Matt 26:42-44 He went away again the second time, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if this cup may not pass away from me, except I drink it, thy will be done.

43And he came and found them asleep again: for their eyes were heavy.

44And he left them, and went away again, and prayed the third time, saying the same words.

**a** Exercises to reduce stress might be helpful for day to day life, but at times like this there is much more needed. Soul-anguish should not be trivialized to suggest that all one has to do is use techniques to get rid of it. The pain of trials must sometimes be endured and cannot be eliminated with techniques and drugs.

**c** C is reminiscent of Moses's arms lifted up while Joshua went to battle, but the point here is that this was something that Jesus was going to go through alone.

**b** Jesus prayed a total of three times the same prayer. With His request due to the fact that He had a human nature in union with His divine nature, we get a confirmation that there was a conflict due to the flesh that required more prayer.

907. **How did Jesus show the disciples compassion?**

**a. He recognized the need for as much rest as possible because of the events that were now happening**

**b.** He told the disciples He would see them later and went on by Himself

c. He told them that He changed His mind about submitting Himself to crucifixion and now they could continue sleeping



## THE TRIUMPHAL ENTRY TO THE TRIUMPH OVER DEATH – 614

Mark 14:41,42 And he cometh the third time, and saith unto them, Sleep on now, and take *your* rest: it is enough, the hour is come; behold, the Son of man is betrayed into the hands of sinners.

42 Rise up, let us go; lo, he that betrayeth me is at hand.

**b** Jesus could have gone on by Himself, but it would be important for their sake to go through the trial that God had designed for them to experience.

**c** The idea of Jesus changing His mind is presented here for us to appreciate what it takes to follow through with the deepest commitment. Sometimes we might face an extreme trial that we have no option to walk away from and so going through it does not require such great commitment because the trial is forced upon us whether we are committed or not. Other trials might be great so the commitment we choose to fulfill is more significant. Christ's trial was unavoidable, extreme to the maximum, and at the same time God had no obligation to us that He should have to go through it. These three factors together call for the greatest sense of awe.

**a** Jesus could have been critical of the disciples, but He acknowledged their weakness and the trial that they would have to face over the next days. Because of our sense of the power of God and spiritual ideals, we might tend to be critical of the fact that we all fall short in our efforts to serve God. Even though we do not make excuse for failures and become complacent, we should not act surprised when people don't achieve more than they do.

### 158 - Judas Arrives to Betray Christ

908. How did Judas demonstrate that people know their guilt?

a. He kept arguing

b. He came quietly

**c. He came with a big and biased crowd to back him up**

Matt 26:47 And while he yet spake, lo, Judas, one of the twelve, came, and with him a great multitude with swords and staves, from the chief priests and elders of the people.

John 18:3 Judas then, having received a band *of men* and officers from the chief priests and Pharisees, cometh thither with lanterns and torches and weapons.

**a,b** When people argue seemingly excessively, as in A, they might be demonstrating guilt (protesting too much) or they might actually be just passionate about their argument. When someone comes quietly without overkill, as in B, they are more likely assuming their arguments will carry them because their cause is just *or* just the opposite; they might be quiet because they have a weak argument or cause.

**c** Judas used a different tactic when they feel guilty. They will passionately defend themselves and back themselves up with as many sources and people as they can get to overpower you.

909. How did Judas know where to find Jesus?

- a. Jesus had told him earlier.
- b. Judas had a spy to keep an eye on Jesus.
- c. Judas was such an intimate part of the inner circle of Jesus he knew exactly where he would find Him**

John 18:2 And Judas also, which betrayed him, knew the place: for Jesus oftentimes resorted thither with his disciples.

**a,b,c** Judas did not have to resort to some means that had any chance for failure because he was all too familiar with what Jesus would do. This is what makes it so much more painful when we are betrayed because it usually takes someone who has worked with us to have the opportunity to know us so well in order to betray us.

910. How did Judas point Jesus out?

- a. He brought others who could help identify Him
- b. He gave him a kiss indicating how close he was to Him**
- c. He had given the Jews a description on how to identify Him

Mark 14:44 And he that betrayed him had given them a token, saying, Whomsoever I shall kiss, that same is he; take him, and lead *him* away safely.

Luke 22:48 But Jesus said unto him, Judas, betrayest thou the Son of man with a kiss?

**c** Remember tht Judas had agreed with the Jewish leaders that he would be ready to accuse Jesus which would require that he not just leave the matter in the hands of others.

**a** He did not need others to help identify Jesus but having others along with him certainly put him on the spot to perform.

**b** Judas could have simply pointed at Jesus and declared that He was the one they were to arrest. Using a typical Middle Eastern greeting kiss aggravated the betrayal. It was adding insult to injury. Also, it showed a certain kind of cowardice in that he could technically appear to the other disciples that he was not betraying Jesus. There is a lesson in this for those who betray churches on various levels. They seem like they are one with others and feigning concern for the ministry while they undermine the work by gossiping and, what is worse because it is more common, criticizing. Being critical can be considered as an offer to volunteer oneself. Then there are those who by their unreliability damage the ministry will also claim that they love their

church. Betrayal comes in many loving flavors.

911. When the Jews did not take Jesus right away, what did He do?

- a. **He prodded them by asking who they sought**
- b. He took advantage of the moment and escaped
- c. He tried to hide

John 18:4,7 Jesus therefore, knowing all things that should come upon him, went forth, and said unto them, Whom seek ye?

<sup>7</sup>Then asked he them again, Whom seek ye? And they said, Jesus of Nazareth.

**a,b,c** Jesus did more than permit Himself to be taken. He did not hide or take advantage of their inaction. Instead, He actually assisted them in their mission.

912. When Jesus identified himself, what did the men do?

- a. They made sure He was Who He said He was
- b. **They were overpowered by His presence and fell back**
- c. They presented a show of force and roughly took Him into custody

John 18:6 As soon then as he had said unto them, I am *he*, they went backward, and fell to the ground.

**a,c** The fact that they did not proceed either by trying to confirm who He was or by taking Him into custody should speak of Jesus' further innocence. Their heart was not totally into what they were doing.

**b** Instead, they were really overpowered by the presence of Christ. If He had not been ordained to go to the cross things could have potentially gone differently.

913. How did Jesus protect His disciples?

- a. **He told the Jews to take Him and let the others go**
- b. He told His disciples to take out their swords and fight
- c. He told the Jews that He did not know who the others were so they could escape

John 18:8,9 Jesus answered, I have told you that I am *he*: if therefore ye seek me, let these go their way:

<sup>9</sup>That the saying might be fulfilled, which he spake, Of them which thou gavest me have I lost none.

**b** He had told the disciples to be armed, but it was not his intention that they fight on His behalf.

**c** Although Jesus was going to be denied by the apostles to save themselves, Jesus was not going to deny them to save them.

**a** Instead, Jesus merely put the focus on Himself.

914. What did Jesus do when the disciples tried to fight?

- a. He healed the servant who got hurt and reminded the disciples that he could have 12 legions of angels fight for Him if He really wanted to escape**
- b. He encouraged them to fight and gave them the strength of 12 army legions
- c. He left being dragged away by the Jews while His disciples fled

Matt 26:51-54 And, behold, one of them which were with Jesus stretched out *his* hand, and drew his sword, and struck a servant of the high priest's, and smote off his ear.

52Then said Jesus unto him, Put up again thy sword into his place: for all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword.

53Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels?

54But how then shall the scriptures be fulfilled, that thus it must be?

**a,b,c** Jesus could have put up a fight as in B and C. As the God of the universe, He had numerous legions of angels at His disposal. However, He not only was not aggressive or passive in what was happening, He was proactive in the demonstration of His mission and character in that he healed the servant who had his ear cut off.

915. How did Jesus explain that He was no threat to the Jews?

- a. He pointed out that He was a very weak person
- b. He pointed out that He had told His troops to stand down
- c. He pointed out that He had been a meek person teaching in front of them many days and never presented Himself as a thief who needed swords and staves to take Him**

Matt 26:55 In that same hour said Jesus to the multitudes, Are ye come out as against a thief with swords and staves for to take me? I sat daily with you teaching in the temple, and ye laid no hold on me.

Luke 22:52,53 Then Jesus said unto the chief priests, and captains of the temple, and the elders, which were come to him, Be ye come out, as against a thief, with swords and staves?

53When I was daily with you in the temple, ye stretched forth no hands against me: but this is your hour, and the power of darkness.

**a,b,c** Jesus was not a threat *not* because He was weak who needed an army to protect Him. He had been all along only providing a message that resonated or not with people. His track record was well established. We need

to present ourselves as just people with a message that we are happy to leave in peoples hands to do with as they will. We present no threat but just invite people to come and live in God's grace with us. There is a mistake that Christians have made in the past when they get to the point where they are free to live according to their conscience before God. As Thomas Armitage in *History of the Baptists* quoted from the time when the Puritans first came to the New World, "the Puritans came to this country 'to worship God according to their own consciences, and to prevent other people from worshipping him according to theirs."

916. What did the disciples do after they bound Jesus and took Him away?
- a. They went home to discuss how they could rescue Jesus
  - b. They fled and deserted Him**
  - c. They went with Him to the judgment and the cross

Matt 26:56 But all this was done, that the scriptures of the prophets might be fulfilled. Then all the disciples forsook him, and fled.

Mark 14:50,52 And they all forsook him, and fled.

52And he left the linen cloth, and fled from them naked. [This is a reference to Mark]

**a** Discussing how to rescue Jesus is obviously not what they did, but this is almost exactly what some think they need to do today. The Christian message is actually very direct and can be lived with not many basic principles. Churches that are not effectively using those principles treat the Jesus of their fathers as if He needed to be rescued by new and modern thinking. They do this even to the point where truth is relative and will go so far as to vote on what truth is.

**b,c** They did what they discovered about themselves, they were fallible and weak and capable of deserting Christ.

## The Trial before the High Priests

For a discussion of the impropriety of the trials of Jesus see *The Illegal Trial of Christ*, p. 345. Also see Edersheim, p. 1201. Also see Pentecost ch. 9.

### 159 - Jesus First Appears before Annas

Although Caiaphas was high priest, his father-in-law, according to Acts 4:6 is also listed as the high priest. This was due to the fact that although Annas was not the acting high priest, he still held the power of his former office. It will not be until John 18:24 that Annas sends Jesus on to Caiaphas.

917. Where did Peter go when Jesus was led on His way to Caiaphas?

- a. **He followed afar off and them made himself comfortable with the bystanders**
- b. He strengthened himself through prayer
- c. He searched the Scriptures to confirm that what Jesus had just told them was true

Luke 22:54 Then took they him, and led *him*, and brought him into the high priest's house. And Peter followed afar off.

John 18:16 But Peter stood at the door without. Then went out that other disciple, which was known unto the high priest, and spake unto her that kept the door, and brought in Peter.

**b** Peter did not turn to prayer, which is the same mistake that many of us make when we are faced with trials, especially small ones. This is why we should be more in the habit of prayer so that it is more likely for us to remember to pray when the trials come. If Peter who was in the habit of conversing with Jesus and was faced with such an obvious time of need for prayer did not have it occur to him to pray, how much more should we be concerned about how easy it is for us to forget.

**c** It is not at all reasonable to expect that under the conditions that Peter faced that he should think to go do a Bible study. This points out how important it is for us to be so well versed in the Word of God because in the face of trials we should have so much Scripture internalized to be able to face the trials. We have so much more to go on today through completed Scriptures, hundreds of years of study, and abundance of resources, that we are even more accountable. Knowing what God's Word says will build our spiritual confidence and strength in the time of need.

**a** This is a common way for the believer to backslide. The first step is to put distance between you and God and get comfortable with the worldly crowd.

918. What did Peter do after he arrived at the palace?

- a. He tried to back away from being part of the morbidly interested crowd
- b. He went further in to blend in to the setting**
- c. He tried to bear witness to the innocense of Jesus

John 18:15,16 And Simon Peter followed Jesus, and *so did* another disciple: that disciple was known unto the high priest, and went in with Jesus into the palace of the high priest.

16But Peter stood at the door without. Then went out that other disciple, which was known unto the high priest, and spake unto her that kept the door, and brought in Peter.

Luke 22:55 And when they had kindled a fire in the midst of the hall, and were set down together, Peter sat down among them.

**a,c** Peter had lost sight of Jesus and more identified with those who look on out of morbid curiosity as is indicated in Matt 26:58 "to see the end."

**b** John had gone in to the hall and came back out to bring Peter in, but Peter sat among the servants to warm himself at the fire. He found himself progressing deeper into sin. He first walked amongst the ungodly. Next, he was willing to linger, standing in the way of sinners, until he was found seated in the seat of the scornful. Peter made no obvious attempt to avoid this progression.

Ps 1:1-6 Blessed *is* the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful.

2But his delight *is* in the law of the LORD; and in his law doth he meditate day and night.

3And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper.

4The ungodly *are* not so: but *are* like the chaff which the wind driveth away.

5Therefore the ungodly shall not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous.

6For the LORD knoweth the way of the righteous: but the way of the ungodly shall perish.

## **160 - Peter's First Denial**

The writers look like they might be in disagreement over who is accusing Peter, but there is more than one who is speaking at the same time to challenge him throughout the three denials.

919. How thorough was the denial of Peter?

He denied before them all Matt 26:70

He said neither understand I what thou sayest Mark 14:68

He told the woman, I know him not Luke 22:57

Concerning being a disciple, He said I am not John 18:17

There is nothing left to the imagination that Peter was very given over to his denial. We have to be careful that when we go astray that we don't let the moment carry us further into sin because we are just not willing to admit to ourselves that we were wrong.

## 161 - Jesus Challenges Annas and Is Smitten

920. What did Annas seek to find out?

- a. What charges were made against Jesus
- b. Who were the witnesses that were bringing charges against Jesus
- c. What His teachings and followers were like which would reveal that Jesus was an insurrectionist**

John 18:19 The high priest then asked Jesus of his disciples, and of his doctrine

**a,b** Annas was looking for Jesus to indict Himself, which was actually illegal to do. What he should have done was examine the charges and the witnesses.

**c** One of the reasons Annas did not know much about Jesus would have been because Jesus' ministry had especially been performed outside of Jerusalem in Galilee and other areas. Annas could get Jesus to share His teaching Himself, he might have something to go on to accuse Him. However, regarding who His disciples were, Annas would be able to figure out how powerful Jesus was and/or exercise further persecution against Jesus' followers.

921. How did Jesus respond?

- a. He answered Annas' sincere questions
- b. He pointed out that His teachings were well known and not done in secret**
- c. He begged for mercy

John 18:20-23 Jesus answered him, I spake openly to the world; I ever taught in the synagogue, and in the temple, whither the Jews always resort; and in secret have I said nothing.

21 Why askest thou me? ask them which heard me, what I have said unto them: behold, they know what I said.

22 And when he had thus spoken, one of the officers which stood by struck Jesus with the palm of his hand, saying, Answerest thou the high priest so?

23 Jesus answered him, If I have spoken evil, bear witness of the evil: but if well, why smitest thou me?

**c** Of course, Jesus had no cause to look for mercy. Someone who was innocent, as Jesus certainly was, might have reason to launch into a defense to try to soften the attack, but Jesus was on a totally different track.

**a** Annas, like so many today, do not ask questions so they can have better information to genuinely judge. His questioning was more like an unfriendly media attack with "gotcha" questions.

**b** Jesus was such a public figure that if there was anything that could be known about Him it would not have been able to be hidden. Because of this,



Annas would have been forced to try to squeeze some kind of statement out of Christ in order to twist His words around. We have to remember that the world is not honest. People express interest in the sincerest tones but are only looking to get an advantage over us. Our lives should be so consistent and open that our reputation will precede us.

## 162 - Peter's Second Denial

922. What did Peter do as he stood amongst the spectators?

- a. Try to get warm and comfortable
- b. Shake with anxiety
- c. Pray

John 18:25 And Simon Peter stood and warmed himself. They said therefore unto him, Art not thou also *one* of his disciples? He denied *it*, and said, I am not.

**b,c** Shaking with anxiety would have been appropriate. For all we know Peter might have been *frozen* with anxiety not knowing what to do. He should have taken this time to pray if he had not been so busy trying to figure out what to do in the face of being able to do nothing.

**a** By trying to warm himself at the fire, Peter was very possibly trying to find some way to get himself under control by calming himself and getting comfortable. This could have been a good thing if he was contemplating how to respond in a Godly manner, but continuing to deny Jesus and then what happens next in his third denial is more indicative of him warming up to the world instead. We are faced with much lesser trials than this when we are challenged to fit in with people, but we must guard against trying to find a way to get more comfortable by joining in. We don't have to be condemning of people (although this *is* a perfectly justifiable option) but we can very naturally express our likes and dislikes just as others feel free to do so. For example, we can say things like:

- I don't like the taste of alcohol
- I am an alcoholic
- I don't like my mind being compromised
- I would prefer a soda

A mild statement like these are not better or worse than something stronger, but just a tool that *may* be used. It might very well be that something stronger is actually called for. The point here is that we should not feel that fitting in by joining in is at all appropriate.

So, Peter warming himself was not a bad thing to do, but it was part of a larger picture of him going off in the wrong direction.

923. There are certain habits, body language, speech, and other little things that we pick up by association with others. What identified Peter?

- a. **His Galilean accent**
- b. His Jerusalem accent
- c. His Priestly manner

Mark 14:70 And he denied it again. And a little after, they that stood by said again to Peter, Surely thou art *one* of them: for thou art a Galilaean, and thy speech agreeth *thereto*.

**a,b,c** A denizen is anything adapted to a new place, condition, etc., such as an animal or plant not indigenous to a place but successfully naturalized, or a person who regularly frequents a place. Not being a denizen of Jerusalem, Peter would be recognized as being an outsider, as in this case, from Galilee, by his accent. This marked him as being one of the company of Jesus...although one equally could assume that he was just one of the coarse, rustic Galileans. Stereotyping is not bad or good. It is just a useful tool to start to understand what kind of things a person has possibly experienced. Further information is needed. What Peter was going to do next would clarify where he stood. Just because we might come from a certain place or station in life does not mean we have to fit a certain stereotype.

### 163 - Peter's Third Denial

924. What did Peter do to hide his speech and behavior?

- a. He tried to shrink back from notice and say nothing
- b. He claimed to be Judas
- c. **He cursed and swore**

Matt 26:74 Then began he to curse and to swear, *saying*, I know not the man. And immediately the cock crew.

**a,b,c** Although C is the correct answer, all three of these options are similar in that each one involves being deceptive and avoiding the truth. Shrinking back and saying nothing is certainly as far as you can get from going all out in betraying Christ as Judas did, but either way you are not confessing Christ. Lying by omission can be as bad as telling "a whopper." Peter just chose a way to deceptively pass himself off as just a coarse Galilean by cursing and swearing. People often go the extra mile when they backslide and behave shamefully like their former selves in the effort to fit in. This is not surprising because it is what they are most familiar with.

925. What convicted Peter about his denial?

- a. He was not used to cursing and swearing
- b. **Jesus turned around and looked upon him**
- c. He changed his mind and wanted to identify with Jesus

## THE TRIUMPHAL ENTRY TO THE TRIUMPH OVER DEATH – 624

Luke 22:61 And the Lord turned, and looked upon Peter. And Peter remembered the word of the Lord, how he had said unto him, Before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice.

**a** We should be so used to a new language that reverting back to our old way of communicating should be very uncomfortable. However, this was the least of Peter's problems at this moment.

**c** The greater the pressure on us to do right can lead us in either direction. Peter could have just as easily identified with Christ as deny Him.

**b** The word for *look upon* is a modified form of look and so it carries extra emphasis than to merely look at. What is more significant about Peter's conviction was the electrifying moment when Jesus turned and looked *into* his face. There are some things that don't need to be expressed by words and sometimes the look speaks louder than words.

926. What did Peter do after he faced Jesus?

- a. He stood there and stared
- b. He tried to excuse his sin
- c. He went out and wept bitterly**

Luke 22:62 And Peter went out, and wept bitterly.

**a,b** We are often faced with people in rebellion who don't want to admit that they have done wrong. Being unresponsive or trying to make things seem not so bad by explaining why someone acted so or trying to excuse one's actions are common ways of avoiding guilt.

**c** The opposite of avoiding guilt is owning it. Peter was not at the point of *actively* repenting, but the precursor to genuine repentance is remorse. Peter's bitter tears are a refreshing change in this sequence of events. Tears are often a source of relief.

## 164 - False Witnesses are Suborned

927. What was the witness pool against Jesus like?

- a. There were so many witnesses anxious to come forward
- b. There were so many stories but no two were alike**
- c. There was testimony that made Jesus worthy of death

Matt 26:59-60 Now the chief priests, and elders, and all the council, sought false witness against Jesus, to put him to death;

60But found none: yea, though many false witnesses came, *yet* found they none. At the last came two false witnesses,

**a** The fact that they had to go *seek* witnesses should have been a clue that the heart of the people was not in the trial of Jesus.

**c** Throughout the trial of Jesus, there is never an accusation that they could charge Him with a capital offense.

**b** With Jesus having been such a public figure, it should have been phenomenally easy to find people who could have matching stories. When they were brought forward, they tried to oblige the council, but there was no agreement.

928. When they finally did have two people talking about a similar event, what problem remained?

Mark 14:57-59 And there arose certain, and bare false witness against him, saying,  
58We heard him say, I will destroy this temple that is made with hands, and within three days I will build another made without hands.  
59But neither so did their witness agree together.

### The testimonies were still not in agreement

They were all considered false in their *testimony*, but the fact that these two are specifically called false *witnesses* speaks to how they are *deliberately* lying. Even in this, their details were different. Others described various things about Jesus, but these two spoke of His remarks about the Temple being destroyed. This put Caiaphas into a predicament because without witnesses it would be illegal to proceed. This led to Caiaphas to another illegal procedure which comes next, inducing Jesus to say something incriminating against Himself.

## 165 - Caiaphas Calls on Christ to Confess

929. What did the high priest do to try to get Jesus to testify against Himself?

- a. He tried to impress Him with the quality of his witnesses
- b. He taunted Him to respond to the witnesses**
- c. He offered Him a plea bargain deal

Matt 26:62 And the high priest arose, and said unto him, Answerest thou nothing?  
what *is it which* these witness against thee?

**a,c** A and C are things we might see on TV legal shows, but Caiaphas was out for blood and anything less than Jesus slipping in front of him would not do.

**b** Caiaphas' efforts amounted to trying to trick Jesus into saying something in response to the witnesses. It was like saying, "The witnesses had *something* they were talking about, why don't you straighten this out." The problem with this, in general, that when something is not true anyway, by talking about it you are only providing more words to muddy the waters.

Prov 10:19 In the multitude of words there wanteth not sin: but he that refraineth his lips *is* wise.

930. How did the high priest try to pressure Jesus?
- a. He tried to accuse Him of hypocrisy
  - b. He tried to press Him with God as His witness**
  - c. He tried to argue with Him from Scripture

Matt 26:63 But Jesus held his peace. And the high priest answered and said unto him, I adjure thee by the living God, that thou tell us whether thou be the Christ, the Son of God.

**a,c** People will resort to arguing for argument's sake, as in C, or false arguments, as in A, when they want to merely establish superiority. Caiaphas was looking for more than that.

**b** If Jesus wouldn't respond to the witnesses, Caiaphas turned to Jesus to make a plain confession. Caiaphas resorted to a higher authority to try to impress Jesus to give testimony. This amounts to nothing more than simple bullying and badgering the one they wanted to charge. This was flatly illegal because no one could be compelled to give testimony against himself. Jesus' refusal to testify against himself was in accord with the broader Jewish understanding of Scripture, which based the protection against self-incrimination in Deuteronomy 17:6 and 19:15, the "two witness rule." This protection ensures that no defendant can be convicted for any reason with less than two witnesses. It was held that even if the defendant confessed, his confession would not be held against him as evidence. Jesus had held His peace ostensibly because of the illegal attempt to get him to incriminate Himself.

931. Why was Jesus unwilling to say anything at all to the high priest?
- a. He knew His words would be twisted
  - b. He said the high priest wasn't going to believe anything anyway**
  - c. He said He wanted to get it right since the high priest was an intelligent and discerning man

Luke 22:67-70 Art thou the Christ? tell us. And he said unto them, If I tell you, ye will not believe:

68And if I also ask *you*, ye will not answer me, nor let *me* go.

69Hereafter shall the Son of man sit on the right hand of the power of God.

70Then said they all, Art thou then the Son of God? And he said unto them, Ye say

that I am.

Matt 26:64 Jesus saith unto him, Thou hast said: nevertheless I say unto you, Hereafter shall ye see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven.

**a** There was something going to be twisted, but it was not going to be Jesus' words; it was justice that was going to be twisted. One could not be forced to testify against himself.

**b,c** The high priest's intelligence had nothing to do with Jesus' confession. If Jesus was going to confess it would be in spite of the proceedings of the trial. Jesus specifically knew that Caiaphas was not going to believe. He told him *nevertheless*, indicating that in spite of the priest's unbelieving attitude, Jesus was going to show him the truth anyway. It would make no difference whether Caiaphas were to have the right understanding. Everything up to this point militated against any case against Jesus so this wouldn't make any difference either. The right understanding would be that Jesus actually is the Christ, the Son of God and the Son of the Blessed.

932. What did Jesus confess to?

- a. That He was the Messiah who was going to appear coming in the clouds of heaven**
- b. That He was going to destroy the Temple
- c. That the Temple was going to be destroyed

Matt 26:64 Jesus saith unto him, Thou hast said: nevertheless I say unto you, Hereafter shall ye see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven.

**b** The destruction of the Temple was a non-issue and the high priest knew it which is why he resorted to what was commonly available to anyone who had followed Jesus' ministry. As Christ had done in the past, He spoke directly to what the real issue was.

**a** Jesus used the Messianic term *Son of man* from Daniel which was understood to be claiming divinity. Jesus did not need to resort to some clever way to manipulate them to put Him to death. All He had to do was speak the truth.

933. What was the use of Jesus' statement as a confession of blasphemy?

- a. It was useless because it was beaten out of Him
- b. It was worth a lot since it was corroborated by other witnesses
- c. It was worthless since it is not blasphemy if you really are God**

## THE TRIUMPHAL ENTRY TO THE TRIUMPH OVER DEATH – 628

Matt 26:65,66 Then the high priest rent his clothes, saying, He hath spoken blasphemy; what further need have we of witnesses? behold, now ye have heard his blasphemy.

66What think ye? They answered and said, He is guilty of death.

**a,b,c** There was no confession to sin if it involved confessing the truth that you have done something good. That would be like confessing you are the President of the United States if you are accused of being the President. If anything, Caiaphas and the council were obliged to prove that Jesus *wasn't* the divine Messiah, not whether He *claimed* to be. By acknowledging that there could even *be* a Messiah there was no sin in claiming *to be* the Messiah, only in *falsely* claiming to be the Messiah. By their standard, even if they accepted someone else to be the Messiah they would have to kill him since they turned this into a charge of blasphemy of claiming to be divine.

934. How did Jesus' captors treat Him?

- a. They sincerely wanted to see Him prove Himself if He could
- b. They were sad to see Him sentenced to death
- c. They mocked Him and His claim to be the Christ**

Matt 26:67,68 Then did they spit in his face, and buffeted him; and others smote *him* with the palms of their hands,

68Saying, Prophecy unto us, thou Christ, Who is he that smote thee?

**a,b,c** The council was more clever than the common, coarse men who held Jesus, but their attitude was the same. They were crude, insincere, and made sport of putting Him to death. People are just as disingenuous now when they want to dismiss Christ. When they examine Christianity, they are not interested in genuine proofs and are happy to see Jesus, through His followers, destroyed.

## The Trial Before Pilate

For a discussion of the impropriety of the trials of Jesus see The Illegal Trial of Christ, p. 346 in the student Study Guide. Also see Edersheim, ch. 13. Also see Pentecost ch. 9.

### 166 - Jesus Is Taken to Pilate

Wednesday day

935. Why did the chief priests not go with Jesus to Pilate's judgment hall?

- a. They knew they were wrong
- b. They didn't want to be defiled by being in the Gentile judgment hall and not able to eat the Passover**
- c. They respected Pilate and didn't want to offend him

John 18:28 Then led they Jesus from Caiaphas unto the hall of judgment: and it was early; and they themselves went not into the judgment hall, lest they should be defiled; but that they might eat the passover.

**a** A is probably more the truth, but passion often overrules logic.

**c** There is some truth that they would not want to offend Pilate because he was a power they had to reckon with, but what is not true was that they respected him. It is similar to today how people talk about respect for others but what they really mean is that others are either politically useful or not. For example, The alphabet mob (LGBTXYZ) demands respect for rights that are not found in the Constitution while denying the Constitutional rights of Christians.

**b** The chief priests *had no* respect for Pilate because he was a Gentile. The hyper-religious Jew believed that contact with the Gentiles made them unclean ceremonially. This attitude was so strong that Peter had to be disabused of that notion in order to go to Cornelius, later, in the book of Acts.

936. Why did Pilate try to turn Jesus back over to the Jews to judge Him?

**a. They did not present a charge for a capital offense**

b. They were too specific in their charge

c. He felt strong in his power against the Jews

John 18:29-31 Pilate then went out unto them, and said, What accusation bring ye against this man?

30They answered and said unto him, If he were not a malefactor, we would not have delivered him up unto thee.

31Then said Pilate unto them, Take ye him, and judge him according to your law. The Jews therefore said unto him, It is not lawful for us to put any man to death:

**c** Pilate did not let political power into his consideration, though he did later on. He wanted to leave it in the hands of the Jews. Throughout the trial to come, he would seek to appease the Jews if he could.

**a,b** The Jews did not dare get specific in their charge because that would mean that Pilate would be forced to judge in the matter of their religion which would not be a capital offense. They knew that Pilate would not stand for the true reason if they were specific. They had to cloak their true purpose which was to condemn Jesus for His point of view, not something He had actually done. Christians today are still condemned for their point of view and are not even allowed to keep their mouths shut because the new standard is that "silence is violence." Unless you are actively promoting sin you are deemed to be causing damage by saying nothing and therefore are engaged in violence...which is then used by people to be violent *physically* against you.



937. How did the Jews become bolder in their charge?
- They reminded Pilate of their reputation and that being a malefactor was all Pilate needed to know
  - They suggested that Jesus was guilty of something more than being a malefactor which would require death by Roman crucifixion**
  - They told Pilate about Jesus blasphemy because they knew that would appeal to him

John 18:30-31 They answered and said unto him, If he were not a malefactor, we would not have delivered him up unto thee.

31 Then said Pilate unto them, Take ye him, and judge him according to your law. The Jews therefore said unto him, It is not lawful for us to put any man to death:

**a** They had already presented Jesus as a malefactor by which they were saying, "He must be guilty. Why else would we have brought Him to you?" This is a common mistake that people make today in prejudging someone in court. Just because they are in court does not make them guilty. The court does not exist to only punish the guilty, but to make sure they are guilty in the first place.

**b,c** In avoiding being clear about their true charge of blasphemy, as in C, they were then forced to find some new way to get Pilate to condemn Jesus. This amounted to bringing a different charge before Pilate. The best they had come up with was to accuse Him of being a malefactor. This was not a very good case as evidenced by Pilate seeking to do anything but put Him to death throughout His trial. Somehow Pilate will think to question Jesus about being a king but Jesus never acknowledged this. The Jewish leaders will change their charge from being a malefactor to insurrection as a new king in Israel (section 169). They won't reveal their true charge until John 19:7 which will cause Pilate to really want to release Him until they finally provided a plausible reason for proceeding in John 19:12. They will press Pilate on the basis of having no other king than Caesar for which Pilate will consent to have Him crucified. We will repeat this later in section 172.

John 19:7,12 The Jews answered him, We have a law, and by our law he ought to die, because he made himself the Son of God.

12 And from thenceforth Pilate sought to release him: but the Jews cried out, saying, If thou let this man go, thou art not Caesar's friend: whosoever maketh himself a king speaketh against Caesar.

## 167 - Judas Hangs Himself

938. The word *repent* in Greek is not the usual word. What does this suggest about Judas mindset?
- He had gone crazy
  - He didn't feel appreciated
  - He was regretful, but not unto full repentance**

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Matt 27:3 Then Judas, which had betrayed him, when he saw that he was condemned, repented himself, and brought again the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and elders,

**c** The word for repentance here is *metamelomai* - a change of heart but not to the point of a change of mind which is indicated by *metanoia*. This is more related to a self-centered sadness over what is happening to themselves than *actually* admitting they are wrong. When coupled with his statement about shedding innocent blood it diminishes the significance of his confession. He becomes less deserving of pity. This might not be the most ideal moment for him to speak in terms of acknowledging that he is a sinner in need of forgiveness, but such an attitude is not present here according to the language that is used.

**a** Even if we were mistakenly to think of repentance as a change of mind here, it would not be to suggest that Judas had gone crazy as if his change of mind was an appeal to using an insanity defense plea. One of the criticisms of an insanity defense is how much someone is truly in control of their moral decision even if they are actually insane. There are many questions that can surround a person's mental state that look more like a disposition to treat sin lightly. Judas did not exhibit an *energetic* passionate action against Christ so his premeditation casts the sincerity even of his regret into question.

**b** Not feeling appreciated is another self-centered excuse that someone might try to use to justify sin. Neither Judas' sin nor the sin of people today with a victim mentality can be justified or excused by the treatment they have received. This is true especially in the case of Judas to whom Jesus gave every opportunity. His change of heart was not a question of him being overwhelmed by a sense of victimization.

939. Why should the chief priests have known that what they did was wrong?

- a. They knew the money was defiled because it was the price of blood and Judas had confessed that it was innocent blood**
- b. They had thoroughly examined Jesus and knew He was innocent
- c. They had a revelation from the Holy Spirit that they were wrong

Matt 27:4 Saying, I have sinned in that I have betrayed the innocent blood. And they said, What *is that* to us? see thou *to that*.

**a** They make no attempt to deny that the money was tainted nor did they attempt to justify what they had done. Passionately defending oneself can look like guilt, but so also can looking like you don't care. In this case, their cold hearted avoidance of the subject looks like they have something to hide. Helping Judas to justify what he had done would have been more consistent with someone who thought their cause was so righteous. It would be more likely that they would want to make sure that there could be no question

about their action. Having one of their co-conspirators looking like he was recanting certainly called their actions into question. Their avoidance contributes to a cover up of their guilt.

**b** Their heart had been hardened by pressing forward with their examination and judgment in spite of the fact that so many witnesses were false in front of their own eyes.

**c** Although they did not have a revelation by the Holy Spirit, they were most certainly convicted by Him. In spite of that they were so calloused that they had no sympathy for Judas in his sorrow. With Judas recanting, they still ignored the obvious.

940. What should have been able to convince them that Jesus was the Messiah?

**a. The prophecy that they, themselves, were fulfilling**

b. They had a sign from heaven

c. They had reviewed their accusation of Jesus in the light of Judas recanting

Matt 27:9,10 Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremy the prophet, saying, And they took the thirty pieces of silver, the price of him that was valued, whom they of the children of Israel did value;  
10And gave them for the potter's field, as the Lord appointed me.

**a,b,c** At this point, all the Scripture fulfillment they might have considered during the ministry of Jesus has been disregarded. With this latest fulfillment, which they could have known, was not even considered. If someone is going to ignore Scripture, a sign from heaven, as in B, or all the logical argumentation, as in C, would not be a guarantee that they would have been convinced of Jesus' innocence.

## 168 - Jesus Is Silent before Pilate

941. Pilate could justify condemning Jesus if He had fomented insurrection. How did Jesus respond to the charge of being the king of the Jews that Pilate suggested?

a. He admitted that He was the earthly king of the Jews

**b. He indicated that this charge is something that Pilate was coming up with**

c. He explained that He was actually a heavenly king

Matt 27:11 And Jesus stood before the governor: and the governor asked him, saying, Art thou the King of the Jews? And Jesus said unto him, Thou sayest.

**b** The Jews, so far, had only called Jesus a *malefactor*. Pilate is the first one to make reference to any claim of being a king. By saying "Thou sayest it," a form of saying "you seem to think so," or, "thou *sayest* it, but don't seem to mean it," Jesus put Pilate in the position of looking like he is out of touch. Pilate was challenged to resolve exactly what the accusations are before proceeding.

**a,c** Since Jesus was not accused of claiming to be a king, yet, there was nothing to admit. He had never sought that earthly position, but neither did He *promote* Himself as the heavenly king. There was reason to believe He was the heavenly king, but He only *promoted* His death and resurrection. Since He was not charged with being a king, there was no need to argue about being a heavenly king. Jesus will make reference to His heavenly kingdom in the next section, but it will not figure in to the proceedings.

942. Why did Pilate marvel at Jesus response to the Jews?

- a. Jesus had superior logic to the Jews
- b. Jesus was full of excuses to the Jews accusations
- c. Jesus said nothing while he let the Jews present exaggerated claims**

Matt 27:13,14 Then said Pilate unto him, Hearest thou not how many things they witness against thee?

14And he answered him to never a word; insomuch that the governor marvelled greatly.

**a,b** Arguing or making excuses are typical reactions that someone might have in the face of false accusations. People are not interested in true arguing.

**c** It is very possible that Pilate was not used to this kind of reaction that Jesus was presenting at all. The calmness that Jesus presented *could* have appeared to Pilate to come from one who was very confident and secure in the knowledge of his innocence. But whatever he was thinking, he definitely knew that his job was going to be difficult because the Jews' were so passionately forcing the issue so that Pilate was going to need something very substantial to justify putting Jesus to death. Jesus silence was not making the situation any easier.

## **169 - The Jews Change Their Charges against Jesus**

943. Instead of blasphemy, what was the new charge against Jesus?  
Insurrection

Luke 23:2 And they began to accuse him, saying, We found this *fellow* perverting the nation, and forbidding to give tribute to Caesar, saying that he himself is Christ a King.

Luke 23:5 And they were the more fierce, saying, He stirreth up the people, teaching

throughout all Jewry, beginning from Galilee to this place.

Making a claim to be a king is not significant until there is any real power that goes with it. Of course, their accusation is false but they add on that Jesus was stirring the people up to rebel which would be a true insurrection. Jesus had not even so much as challenged people to rally and protest peacefully. In fact, He had come peacefully on a colt, not a war horse, in the Triumphal entry. Before now, they had only spoken of Jesus as being a malefactor. Their new charge will force Pilate *back* into the judgment hall (John 18:33)

944. How did Jesus point out that the charges against Him were new?

- a. He argued that the Jews had accused Him of blasphemy
- b. He confessed that the charge of insurrection was the charge He should have been answering
- c. He questioned the source of the accusation which pointed out that there was confusion between Pilate and the accusers**

Luke 23:2 And they began to accuse him, saying, We found this *fellow* perverting the nation, and forbidding to give tribute to Caesar, saying that he himself is Christ a King.

John 18:34 Jesus answered him, Sayest thou this thing of thyself, or did others tell it thee of me?

**a** The Jews had not been willing to admit to their true intentions, yet, because they knew that Pilate would not have cared about their religious issues. There had been no *real* charges against Jesus by the Jews other than that He was a bad person. Now they are increasing their complaint, yet without any presentation of evidence.

**b** Since there was no insurrection at Pilate's doors, Pilate had no evidence that he, himself, had seen and so he could not do anything to substantiate their claims.

**c** By questioning the source of the accusation, Jesus pointed out that the whole process was suspect. It is like He is calling on Pilate to get his complaint straight. The charge of blasphemy will finally come out in section 172, which will cause even more confusion at that point.

945. How does Jesus weaken the argument about His claims of insurrection?

- a. He claimed that He was only descended from a king
- b. He points out that if He was insurrectionist there was no army which put up a fight against the Jews who took Him captive**
- c. He pointed out how He had rejected popular efforts to have made Him a king throughout His ministry

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John 18:36 Jesus answered, My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence.

**a,c** A and C refer to how someone might try to downplay a charge in order to weaken the possibility of being charged at all. Either of these are actually true, but Jesus was intent on presenting the truth and not enter into any political argument with Pilate.

**b** What *really* weakened the argument of claiming to be a king was something that Pilate could see for himself: the lack of an army!

946. How did Jesus respond to Pilate pressing Him about being a king?

- a. He claimed only to be a philosopher
- b. He acted crazy
- c. He declared that His purpose on earth was to bear witness to the truth to those who were open to receiving it**

John 18:37 Pilate therefore said unto him, Art thou a king then? Jesus answered, Thou sayest that I am a king. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice.

**a,b** These answers are related to the issue of how one *must* choose to think of Christ. He was either a liar, a lunatic, or Lord. He could not be just a teacher, or philosopher as in A, because He claimed to God. He could have been a lunatic claiming to be God, as in B, but everything about Him was full of grace and did not speak of one who was mentally unbalanced. In fact, it could be pointed out that Jesus had *healed* the lunatic! The only thing left would be to say that He was telling the truth.

**c** So much of what Jesus did was to teach truth. He challenged people regularly from the truth of Scripture. He never presented Himself as king but as the Savior instead. Since His mission was to deliver the truth, it would be up to each one to decide what they would do with it.

947. How did Pilate's response to Jesus compare to modern culture today?

- a. He had doubts about what truth is**
- b. He was given over to careful definition of terms
- c. He was against emotional experiences and didn't want to just go by his feelings about Jesus

John 18:38 Pilate saith unto him, What is truth? And when he had said this, he went out again unto the Jews, and saith unto them, I find in him no fault *at all*.

In Pilate's question, he opens up one of the largest issues mankind has to deal with. Being able to determine truth has warranted a complete area of

philosophy called *epistemology*. There are three Greek words dealing with knowledge.

- *doxa* – common beliefs or popular opinion
- *gnosis* – knowledge gained through personal experience, which was used to describe esoteric knowledge, or secret knowledge, especially known by a mystical experience
- *epistēmē* – knowledge obtained through rational or scientific process

Epistemology is the study of knowledge and how one is able to make truth claims.

Attitudes toward truth have undergone much variation to have come from truth being grounded in God and realism to truth being relative and a matter of idealistic perceptions (idealism).

After the fall of the Roman Empire and the **Dark Ages** that were heavily influenced by the movement of barbaric migration, the world was more united in the **Age of Faith** around 1000-1500s. It was marked by the acknowledgment of supernatural and natural truth. The Word of God and science were compatible. One of the problems that developed was an emphasis on *superstition* and not just the *supernatural* (the spiritual world beyond what we see in nature). As a result of Humanism (which originally was applied to the importance of the human ability to understand God without the mystical proclamations of a clergy), people were encouraged to examine the world and literature for themselves in **Renaissance** thinking. Because of the abuses in the Age of Faith, the world reacted and developed the **Age of Reason** (or the Enlightenment). Especially in the French Revolution, religion was diminished as superstition and rejected. It was supposed to be purely scientific, but the problem was with who determined the science. Man became the measure of all things and the arbiter of truth according to his perceptions. It is not odd that this led to the Reign of Terror in France so that those who started it fell to its guillotine. In reaction, the rise of the **Romantic Age** which sought wisdom through emotion and mystery. It was the age of Thoreau and Whitman, Walden Pond and transcendentalism. **Modernism** and the Industrial Age led to an emphasis on the application of reasoning to and organization of the modern world. **Post-modernism** in response emphasized subjectivity and the inability to have absolute truth.

Without God, the world has trouble with truth.

**b** Represents the *rational* problem of epistemology. Since epistemology deals with how to arrive at the assumptions from which we may draw conclusions, it is very important to define the terms that we use in our assumptions. Pilate asked the right question, "What is truth," but his attitude was reflective of Philosophical Skepticism in that time. There were two schools of thought on

skepticism. The Academic Skeptics claimed that *some* beliefs are *more* reasonable or probable than others, whereas Pyrrhonian skeptics argued that *equally* compelling arguments can be given *for or against* any disputed view. The most radical Skeptical views claimed that knowledge or rational belief is *not possible*. Not pursuing any real discussion of truth indicated that he was sunk in the morass of skepticism and merely *appeared* to be asking the right question. Skepticism was unwilling to come down strongly on truth and is very consistent with modern thinking about truth being relative and not absolute, or even reasonable conclusiveness. Author Alan Bloom complained about the modern mindset of students who are bent on relativism:

Alan Bloom on Relativism and Education

THE CLOSING OF THE AMERICAN MIND (NEW YORK: SIMON & SCHUSTER, 1987)

There is only one thing a professor can be absolutely certain of: almost every student entering the university believes, or says he believes, that truth is relative. If this belief is put to the test, one can count on the student's reaction: they will be uncomprehending. That anyone should regard the proposition as not self-evident astonishes them, as though he were calling into question  $2+2=4$ . These are things you don't think about... That it is a moral issue for students is revealed by the character of their response when challenged — a combination of disbelief and indignation: "Are you an absolutist?," the only alternative they know, uttered in the same tone as... "Do you really believe in witches?" This latter leads into the indignation, for someone who believes in witches might well be a witch-hunter or a Salem judge. The danger they have been taught to fear from absolutism is not error but intolerance. Relativism is necessary to openness; and this is the virtue, the only virtue, which all primary education for more than fifty years has dedicated itself to inculcating. Openness — and the relativism that makes it the only plausible stance in the face of various claims to truth and various ways of life and kinds of human beings — is the great insight of our times... The study of history and of culture teaches that all the world was mad in the past; men always thought they were right, and that led to wars, persecutions, slavery, xenophobia, racism, and chauvinism. The point is not to correct the mistakes and really be right; rather it is not to think you are right at all.

– <https://afterall.net/quotes/alan-bloom-on-relativism-and-education/>

**c** Represents the emotional challenge to epistemology; in general, it is the opposite of epistemology. Also in our modern times, people are more given over to what *feels* right. Truth becomes an entirely different concept defined by what we wish for so that truth adapts to what is convenient for our tastes. The argument over gender is representative of such preposterous thinking. The same people who scream for women's rights are unwilling to define what a woman even is!

**a** Pilate's association with philosophical skepticism put him right in the camp of Post-Modernism which is both irrational and emotional.

948. What was Pilate's finding regarding Jesus? He found no fault in Him

John 18:38 Pilate saith unto him, What is truth? And when he had said this, he went out again unto the Jews, and saith unto them, I find in him no fault *at all*.



There was no evidence that Jesus was a political threat in spite of the altered charge of the Jews. Although Pilate could not be settled on the issue of truth, there was nothing that he could discern was worthy of death.

## 170 - Pilate Sends Christ to Herod

Pilate was happy to not be the only one to bear the burden of the trial. The assumption is that Herod might be more familiar with the customs of the Jews and might be able to make a better argument for his judgment.

Luke 23:6-8 When Pilate heard of Galilee, he asked whether the man were a Galilaean.

7And as soon as he knew that he belonged unto Herod's jurisdiction, he sent him to Herod, who himself also was at Jerusalem at that time.

8And when Herod saw Jesus, he was exceeding glad: for he was desirous to see him of a long *season*, because he had heard many things of him; and he hoped to have seen some miracle done by him.

949. When Pilate passed off Jesus to Herod out of consideration of his local authority, why was Herod anxious to see Him?

- a. **He perceived Jesus to have celebrity status and wanted to see Him perform**
- b. He felt that Jesus was a threat to his reign
- c. He thought Jesus was innocent and wanted to help Him

Luke 23:8 And when Herod saw Jesus, he was exceeding glad: for he was desirous to see him of a long *season*, because he had heard many things of him; and he hoped to have seen some miracle done by him.

**b** Just as Pilate had nothing that *he* had seen, Herod evidently had nothing that rose to the level of being a threat, which says a lot because Herod had been in the position to have seen more about Christ being in Galilee.

**c** C represents the attitude public officials *should* have. Rather than dealing in the sensational, whether it is a threat or celebrity, rulers should be equally interested in the rights of the accused. Today, our courts go the extra mile to make sure of fair trials in spite of those who want to destroy government in the name of fairness.

**a** A refers to the attitude that is common in humanity. True fame is different than just being a celebrity. This article from American Heritage describes this attitude very well:

Many important things tend to get overlooked in New York City, including its historic places. The nation's first President was inaugurated there, and the general who saved the Union is entombed there, yet at the sites of both these events, you will usually find more people outside buying hot dogs than inside experiencing history. Even more neglected than Federal Hall and Grant's Tomb is the Hall of Fame for Great

Americans, a National Historic Landmark that celebrated its one hundredth birthday this spring.

The Hall of Fame for Great Americans was the country's first hall of fame; its success inspired Cooperstown and all the rest. In its early years, induction was the ultimate accolade for an American. Visitors flocked to the uptown campus of New York University (now Bronx Community College) to find inspiration in the noble bronze busts of Presidents, generals, scientists, and scholars. But on a warm and lovely weekday afternoon this spring, the only people present in the hall (which is actually an outdoor colonnade) were a pair of workers repairing light fixtures and a few students smoking cigarettes.

Today, although the hall is well maintained and scrupulously swept, it remains the very embodiment of the old-fashioned great-man view of history, and there is no escaping the contrast between the faces of the inductees and those of the working-class Bronx students outside. The era when history was an assemblage of names and busts now seems as remote as the time when the Bronx was a rural enclave, staring at statues was a popular form of entertainment, and people knew who Sidney Lanier was. (Lanier, a now-forgotten Southern poet, can be found in the authors' section of the hall.)

The Hall of Fame can hardly be called a tourist attraction. It stands in a decidedly middle-class neighborhood, far from the theaters and theme restaurants of Manhattan.

– <https://www.americanheritage.com/original-hall-fame>

950. After questioning Jesus, how did Herod treat Him?

- a. **He mocked Him and arrayed Him in a gorgeous robe**
- b. He became fearful of Him
- c. He became impressed with Him

Luke 23:9-11 Then he questioned with him in many words; but he answered him nothing.

10And the chief priests and scribes stood and vehemently accused him.

11And Herod with his men of war set him at nought, and mocked *him*, and arrayed him in a gorgeous robe, and sent him again to Pilate.

**b,c** Jesus was now at the point where He was beyond preaching and was now only preparing for the crucifixion. Herod had had plenty of time to seek Christ out so that there was no obligation to present anything to influence him one way or the other.

**a** A represents the fickle nature of people. Herod was anxious to meet Jesus as a great personality, but just as quick to turn on Him. This reminds us of the cancel culture of today where someone can be celebrated one day and due to some perceived slip be condemned the next.

It is worth noting, concerning cancel culture, that, especially in the case of historic figures, we celebrate the advancement of society and give credit where credit is due. So many times, historic figures faults are often imagined, misunderstood, and blown out of proportion.

951. How did their examination of Jesus affect Pilate and Herod?
- It divided them because Pilate was persecuting a Jew
  - Since Herod couldn't make a helpful determination, their relationship didn't change
  - Herod's determination of not finding anything He was guilty of supported Pilate's claim which brought them together**

Luke 23:12,15 And the same day Pilate and Herod were made friends together: for before they were at enmity between themselves.

15No, nor yet Herod: for I sent you to him; and, lo, nothing worthy of death is done unto him.

**b,a** There was nothing that either one could find helpful in finding fault with Jesus, as in B, and should have ended in each one not really knowing what to do or to take any action. A represents the old adage that politics makes strange bedfellows. Whereas Herod and Pilate certainly had cause to be at odds based on ethnic division, their causes did not serve to divide them.

**c** What Pilate *does* reference is that he and Herod were in agreement that the Jews' claims were unfounded. They at least had that in common now. Pilate at least didn't have Herod working against him and Herod could have felt respected by Pilate.

952. What was Pilate willing to do? Chastise and release Jesus

Luke 23:13-16 And Pilate, when he had called together the chief priests and the rulers and the people,

14Said unto them, Ye have brought this man unto me, as one that perverteth the people: and, behold, I, having examined *him* before you, have found no fault in this man touching those things whereof ye accuse him:

15No, nor yet Herod: for I sent you to him; and, lo, nothing worthy of death is done unto him.

16I will therefore chastise him, and release *him*.

Pilate appears to have hoped that this token punishment would have satisfied the Jews, especially since this was actually customary. He must have felt that this would be a good political solution, but he grossly underestimated the hatred and fear that the Jewish leaders had for Jesus. If anything, political animus is something that he should have been familiar with. The Jews were not going to be distracted from their cause.

## 171 - Barabbas Is Released

953. What pressure did the Jews put on Pilate?

Mark 15:6-9 Now at *that* feast he released unto them one prisoner, whomsoever they desired.

7And there was *one* named Barabbas, *which lay* bound with them that had made

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insurrection with him, who had committed murder in the insurrection.

8And the multitude crying aloud began to desire *him to do* as he had ever done unto them.

9But Pilate answered them, saying, Will ye that I release unto you the King of the Jews?

### Honor their request for a different prisoner to be release and put Jesus in his place

The request of the Jews was not just done by impulse. This was a custom that they had been used to. Pilate had previously suggested the idea as a way to escape his situation. It is possible that the Jews had this as a backup plan since this had been such a custom, or at the least they were quick to take advantage of the custom. People will often try to find some loophole to take advantage of rather than deal honestly with a situation.

954. John referred to Barabbas as a violent robber. What else was Barabbas known for?

Mark 15:7,10 And there was *one* named Barabbas, *which lay* bound with them that had made insurrection with him, who had committed murder in the insurrection.

10For he knew that the chief priests had delivered him for envy.

### Insurrection and murder

In section 169, John records in John 18:40 that Barabbas was a robber. The stark contrast between Jesus, who continually avoided being made king and was only known to *raise* the dead, and Barabbas, who was known for his sedition as confirmed by murdering someone in his insurrection, made the Jews envy stand out in clear contrast.

There has always been the mentality of a cancel culture that will tolerate the worst offenses of one's own party while being willing to destroy their opposition. While people may argue the merits of their position even if it is wrong-headed, what is truly objectionable is their hypocrisy. Wrong ideas can be discarded, but people's hypocrisy demonstrates that *they* don't even believe their ideas have merit. It is like politicians and teachers unions who try to eliminate school choice while they send their children to private schools. Or, people who want to press for men to enter women's sports and private spaces while calling for women's rights. Here, the Jews would rather accept a manifest insurrectionist rather than someone who can truly revolutionize their life from within.

955. Why might Pilate have expected the Jews to give in to the release of Jesus?
- a. He thought they would rather have Jesus as their king rather than have a murderer
  - b. He thought they might be getting tired of their prosecution of Jesus
  - c. **He probably thought that they would prefer Jesus, of whom they were only jealous, to Barabbas who was a murderer among them**

Mark 15:10 For he knew that the chief priests had delivered him for envy.

**a** A would be the normal expectation. This points out how people will use reasoning only as an excuse for what they really want to do. When superior reasoning is used, they are quick to reject it, demonstrating that reason often has little to do with our decision making.

**b** The Scripture does not say that Pilate hoped they would tire of their efforts, but this certainly does look like it is a possibility because of the number of times he tried to redirect them.

**c** He would have only put the proposition to them in such stark terms for them to consider if it was a realistic possibility. However, you have to wonder how much he thought they would take him up on his offer.

Even though we know that people can be totally unreasonable and act against their own best interest, we still have to be willing to offer them the Gospel.

956. Why else was Pilate reluctant to prosecute Jesus further?
- a. **His wife advised him because of her convictions about Jesus**
  - b. He was not impressed with Him and thought it was much ado about nothing
  - c. He wanted to show the Jews that he was the boss

Matt 27:19 When he was set down on the judgment seat, his wife sent unto him, saying, Have thou nothing to do with that just man: for I have suffered many things this day in a dream because of him.

**b** There is no way that Jesus can be considered without having any effect on someone. There might be many subjects that we can live without pursuing such as art, literature, music science, agriculture, etc. We can live successful lives without one or more of these. However, when it comes to eternity, one is either faced with constantly in a state of limbo waiting for an unavoidable meeting with God, or he is prepared to meet God because he has come into a saving relationship with Christ. A person can consider Christ and walk away, but that does not mean his concerns for eternity are taken care of. Pilate's concerns are obvious in that he kept trying to find a way to handle the situation.

**c** If Pilate was only committed to demonstrating that his power was absolute, then he could have just dismissed the Jews at any time. Pilate demonstrated the very human characteristic of doubt.

**a** Pilate's wife served as a balancing influence to the hype that was overwhelming him. Whether or not she had been explicitly influenced by God, she was certainly affected by Christ counter to the way the Jews had whipped themselves up into a fury. We have forces in our lives that we will wish we had paid more attention to.

957. Why did the people insist on Pilate releasing Barabbas?

- a. They rethought all of His teachings and remembered how wicked He was
- b. The chief priests and elders had whipped them up into a mob**
- c. They were angry that Jesus had not healed enough of them

Mark 15:11-14 But the chief priests moved the people, that he should rather release Barabbas unto them.

12And Pilate answered and said again unto them, What will ye then that I shall do *unto him* whom ye call the King of the Jews?

13And they cried out again, Crucify him.

14Then Pilate said unto them, Why, what evil hath he done? And they cried out the more exceedingly, Crucify him.

**a,b** A points out how that people will not care about someone's teachings especially since Barabbas *had none!* This question shows that there was more than the issue of the difference of character between Jesus and Barabbas. Jesus had a well attested body of teaching, Barabbas had none. Jesus ministry was public, Barabbas' work was secretive. Jesus had subjected Himself to debate, Barabbas merely pressed his case with force. Jesus ministry was intellectual, Barabbas' work was emotional and reactive. The mob's reaction in calling for Barabbas was totally reactionary and not a question of thoughtful judgment. We can see the effect of this same mob mentality today in people being willing to just jump onto a cause without careful examination of the cause.

**c** It is not as though Jesus had not done enough for the people. What He had done didn't even get any consideration at all. Ingratitude is an ugly thing that can turn people against you so easily. After all that Jesus had done to touch people's lives, they did not even consider what He had done for them.

958. What was Pilate's final verdict?

- a. To crucify Jesus
- b. To wash his hands of the matter and turn it back onto the Jews' will**
- c. To chastise Him

## THE TRIUMPHAL ENTRY TO THE TRIUMPH OVER DEATH – 644

Luke 23:24-25 And Pilate gave sentence that it should be as they required.  
25And he released unto them him that for sedition and murder was cast into prison, whom they had desired; but he delivered Jesus to their will

Matt 27:24-25 When Pilate saw that he could prevail nothing, but *that* rather a tumult was made, he took water, and washed *his* hands before the multitude, saying, I am innocent of the blood of this just person: see ye *to it*.  
25Then answered all the people, and said, His blood *be* on us, and on our children.

**a,b,c** Although Pilate would end up *consenting* to Jesus' death, it would be by the *Jews'* hand. Pilate's actual verdict was to wash his hands of the matter. We must remember that there is a difference between a verdict and a sentence. The verdict only refers to the declaration of innocence or guilt. The sentence is the punishment that follows. Although Pilate is not absolved from guilt by *permitting* the Jews to execute Christ, he did not directly execute Him. The matter of scourging him, next, was not part of a verdict, but was just some attempt to appease the Jews in some possible hope that they would cease their persecution of Jesus. In the next section, Pilate will repeat this verdict.

### 172 - Jesus Is Scourged and Mocked as King of the Jews

959. After scourging Jesus, what did Pilate do?
- He declared Him guilty and sent Him to His crucifixion
  - He declared that scourging was enough
  - He declared that he found no guilt in Him, but assented to let the Jews crucify Him**

John 19:4-6 Pilate therefore went forth again, and saith unto them, Behold, I bring him forth to you, that ye may know that I find no fault in him.  
5Then came Jesus forth, wearing the crown of thorns, and the purple robe. And *Pilate* saith unto them, Behold the man!  
6When the chief priests therefore and officers saw him, they cried out, saying, Crucify *him*, crucify *him*. Pilate saith unto them, Take ye him, and crucify *him*: for I find no fault in him.

**a,b** The offer of scourging was not part of any judgment, although scourging was done as part of the process of crucifixion. Pilate did not explicitly state that he hoped the scourging would be sufficient, but the fact that he followed up by declaring that he found no guilt in Him should have interrupted the process. By scourging Jesus, Pilate would have been able to confront them with the fact that action had been taken, even though Jesus should have been dismissed due to lack of guilt.

**c** This is a repetition of his verdict which should have been taken by the Jews as another chance to back off. Of course, by *allowing* the Jews to take Jesus when he could have stopped the proceeding *does* make him responsible. This reminds us of politicians who *say* they take *full* responsibility but then do not

position themselves to take any consequences. Either way, whether by passing the buck or only *saying* you are responsible, there is no dodging responsibility.

960. How did Pilate react to the Jews revealing their original charge of blasphemy?
- He got fearful because only Caesar could claim worship
  - He became fearful of Jesus**
  - He became bold because he hated superstition

John 19:7-8 The Jews answered him, We have a law, and by our law he ought to die, because he made himself the Son of God.

<sup>8</sup>When Pilate therefore heard that saying, he was the more afraid;

**a** Only a *deceased* Caesar could be worshiped, but this gave a sense of honor to the living Caesar. This would not have caused Pilate to be *fearful* of Christ, but, if anything, willing to change his mind and have Christ killed. The fact that he became *fearful* instead lends itself to making a very thoughtful Pilate look like he was feeling some persuasiveness to the truth of Christ. Also, the inscription on the cross might be an affirmation Pilate's verdict of innocence since the inscription should have been descriptive of the victim's offense.

**c** Also, as a thoughtful man, Pilate might not have been subject to superstition. The fact that he did not become emboldened speaks of him not seeing Christ in a superstitious light.

**b** By becoming fearful, Pilate demonstrated a sense of sobriety that since the Jews had been playing with him deceitfully, maybe the opposite of their claims were trustworthy. His reaction to Christ was more appropriate as one who was realistic and could see the possibility that Jesus was actually more than just innocent of the Jews' charges. Scholarship is pretty inconclusive of what became of Pilate with what appears to be equal questions about a possible suicide or even a possible conversion to Christianity later. This reaction would certainly be consistent with a later conversion so that that possibility can't be ruled out altogether.

961. What did Jesus say about Pilate's responsibility?
- Pilate had no power except from God, which would have reminded him of his highest responsibility**
  - Pilate had a responsibility to Caesar to appease the Jews
  - Pilate had no responsibility because God was making him fulfill prophecy

John 19:9-11 And went again into the judgment hall, and saith unto Jesus, Whence art thou? But Jesus gave him no answer.

<sup>10</sup>Then saith Pilate unto him, Speakest thou not unto me? knowest thou not that I have power to crucify thee, and have power to release thee?



## THE TRIUMPHAL ENTRY TO THE TRIUMPH OVER DEATH – 646

<sup>11</sup>Jesus answered, Thou couldest have no power *at all* against me, except it were given thee from above: therefore he that delivered me unto thee hath the greater sin.

**b,c** Jesus did not let Pilate off from any responsibility by excusing him because of Jewish pressure nor some sense of fate because of God being a puppetmaster.

**a** Jesus simply brought Pilate to call before God. Ultimately, it is not people that we answer to nor can we just pretend that God must be behind it because He is letting something happen. Each one must give an account to God.

962. Since Pilate found no guilt in Jesus, it was logical to affirm the claim that Jesus was king. How did the Jews demonstrate their depravity?
- a. They suborned bribed officials to add false witness against Jesus
  - b. They demonstrated a lack of commitment to truth by changing their charges against Jesus
  - c. They pledged their allegiance to pagan Caesar rather than accept Pilate's conclusion of innocence**

John 19:11-15 Jesus answered, Thou couldest have no power *at all* against me, except it were given thee from above: therefore he that delivered me unto thee hath the greater sin.

<sup>12</sup>And from thenceforth Pilate sought to release him: but the Jews cried out, saying, If thou let this man go, thou art not Caesar's friend: whosoever maketh himself a king speaketh against Caesar.

<sup>13</sup>When Pilate therefore heard that saying, he brought Jesus forth, and sat down in the judgment seat in a place that is called the Pavement, but in the Hebrew, Gabbatha.

<sup>14</sup>And it was the preparation of the passover, and about the sixth hour: and he saith unto the Jews, Behold your King!

<sup>15</sup>But they cried out, Away with *him*, away with *him*, crucify him. Pilate saith unto them, Shall I crucify your King? The chief priests answered, We have no king but Caesar.

**a** They were not beyond bribery and had even suborned false witnesses in the trial before the high priest. Bribing officials would actually have been less dastardly than what they *did* do.

**b** They had not changed their charges, actually. What they did was just reveal their *true* charges, so that they were actually being *more* honest.

**c** The ultimate hypocrisy was revealed in that the thing they hated the worst, allegiance to a pagan king, was what they swore to rather than let the innocent Christ go. This is often the case with false ideologues. In their extreme commitments their hypocrisy renders them unbelievable. Extreme commitment is not *necessarily* bad, but the stronger the statement one makes, the stronger their arguments (which include their personal consistency) must be. It is not just their potential statements, but everything about them counts as well.

## The Crucifixion

### 173 - Simon of Cyrene Carries the Cross of Christ

963. Read Rom 16:13 and Acts 19:33. As Mark was careful to point out the sons of Simon, what blessing did Simon the Cyrenian have?

Mark 15:21 And they compel one Simon a Cyrenian, who passed by, coming out of the country, the father of Alexander and Rufus, to bear his cross.

Rom 16:13 Salute Rufus chosen in the Lord, and his mother and mine.

Acts 19:33 And they drew Alexander out of the multitude, the Jews putting him forward. And Alexander beckoned with the hand, and would have made his defence unto the people.

#### He bore the cross of Christ and two servants of Christ

There is no indication or tradition about the faith of Simon of Cyrene. Could his experience have affected him so that he influenced his sons' faith? We don't know, but it is important to consider that for those who come into contact with Christ, they can't help but be touched, one way or another.

### 174 - The Women Following Are Consoled

964. Why should the women weep?

- a. Because of what Jesus was going to do
- b. Because of what is going to happen to them in the times to come**
- c. Because they were never going to see Jesus again

Luke 23:28,29 But Jesus turning unto them said, Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me, but weep for yourselves, and for your children.

29For, behold, the days are coming, in the which they shall say, Blessed *are* the barren, and the wombs that never bare, and the paps which never gave suck.

**a** The women did not have in mind how Jesus was going to die for their sin. They bewailed *Him*, or what was happening *to* Him. If anyone had any idea of the glory of the resurrection and what that was going to mean for the saints of God, they might have still lamented, but that could also include a sense of the awesome mission of Christ.

**c** Jesus could have specifically let them know He was going to see them again, but that still would probably not ease their sorrow over what they were witnessing.

**b** Instead of comforting them over something that would not be able to be truly alleviated, Jesus turned their attention to something that is truly scary and that should cause people to rely even more on God. The future held a lot of danger, but that does not mean that people should give up hope, just that they should steel themselves to face it.

965. What is the reason that Jesus gave for the terrible times ahead?

- a. If the judgment at the beginning of the end times is bad, the judgment at the end will be so much worse**
- b. If Jesus would be hung on a green tree, then what would they hang on?
- c. Children will be a burden in those times so people should abstain from having them as they see the rapture coming

Luke 23:29-31 For, behold, the days are coming, in the which they shall say, Blessed *are* the barren, and the wombs that never bare, and the paps which never gave suck. 30Then shall they begin to say to the mountains, Fall on us; and to the hills, Cover us. 31For if they do these things in a green tree, what shall be done in the dry?

**b,a B** represents a misreading of what Jesus was trying to say. Although His question is framed in the sufferings to come, the focus is not on how bad it will be for people to suffer, but a commentary on the world's rebellion against Christ. If the world's rebellion was so bad at that early point (symbolized by the green tree) where they would crucify Him, what will the sin of the world be like when the times are more fully matured (symbolized by the aged, dried out tree).

**c C** is a *different* misreading of the passage. It is very common for new believers learning about Christian life to wonder if it is wise to have children to raise as the time of the final judgment approaches. Jesus is not outright saying that people should not have children, but that they should be aware of how hard the times are going to be. In various ways, celibacy has been practiced as a higher spiritual state. Roman Catholic priests and nuns are required to be celibate while in Eastern Orthodoxy marriage is permitted. The Shakers are a more modern group that required celibacy as a Millenarian group.

The United Society of Believers in Christ's Second Appearing, more commonly known as the Shakers, are a millenarian restorationist Christian sect founded circa 1747 in England and then organized in the United States in the 1780s. They were initially known as "Shaking Quakers" because of their ecstatic behavior during worship services.

– <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Shakers>

The Shakers did not permit marriage; those who came to the sect married lived celibate and separate lives. Other cults such as the Branch Davidians under David Koresh, or the Peoples Temple under Jim Jones, had strange views of family life.

1Tim 4:1-3 Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils;  
2Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron;  
3Forbidding to marry, *and commanding* to abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth.

We have a responsibility to educating our children in age appropriate ways, but this should be done according to knowledge, love, and not living in fear.

## 175 - Jesus Is Taken to Golgotha and Crucified

966. Read Num 19, Num 5:1-4, Lev 4:1-12, Heb 13:11-12. What is one reason Jesus was crucified at Golgotha/Calvary outside of Jerusalem?
- Because all sacrifices were made outside the camp
  - For the purifying of the nation**
  - So the people didn't have to look at Jesus

Luke 23:32-33 And there were also two other, malefactors, led with him to be put to death.

33And when they were come to the place, which is called Calvary, there they crucified him, and the malefactors, one on the right hand, and the other on the left.

Heb 13:11-12 For the bodies of those beasts, whose blood is brought into the sanctuary by the high priest for sin, are burned without the camp.

12Wherefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate.

**a** For the sacrifices that required burning, this was done outside the camp. Other sacrifices were made not.

**c** As convenient as it might have been to try to distance themselves from the crucifixion, the Jews were practicing a form of execution that was intended to be *very* public.

**b** Making the sacrifice outside the camp most specifically designates the purpose of it was to reckon with the problem of sin. The clear purpose of God was that Jesus was to be a sacrifice for sin for those who would belong to Him.

967. Why did Pilate have King of the Jews written as a title?
- As a testimony against the Jews**
  - As a concession to the Jews
  - As a statement about His guilt

John 19:19-22 And Pilate wrote a title, and put *it* on the cross. And the writing was, JESUS OF NAZARETH THE KING OF THE JEWS.

20This title then read many of the Jews: for the place where Jesus was crucified was nigh to the city: and it was written in Hebrew, *and* Greek, *and* Latin.

## THE TRIUMPHAL ENTRY TO THE TRIUMPH OVER DEATH – 650

21 Then said the chief priests of the Jews to Pilate, Write not, The King of the Jews; but that he said, I am King of the Jews.

22 Pilate answered, What I have written I have written.

**c** In a way, this *could* be a statement about His guilt in that He actually *was* their king.

**b,a** This was the opposite of a concession to the Jews. He might have been conceding to their demands for crucifixion, but that crucifixion was in spite of the innocence that was indicated by the title King of the Jews. It was not a statement about His guilt because the real charge the Jews revealed about Him was that He claimed to be God. Being charged with claims to being a king without insurrection was not worthy of death. By acknowledging His position as king, Pilate was in effect declaring that Jesus didn't really deserve to be on the cross while at the same time placing before the Jews what they were really doing: rejecting their rightful king.

968. What was Jesus' attitude toward His persecutors?

- a. He wanted to forgive them because they really did not know the scope of their actions**
- b. He wanted to destroy them so He contemplated calling down legions of angels
- c. He wanted to beg them for their approval of His calling

Luke 23:34-35 Then said Jesus, Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do. And they parted his raiment, and cast lots.

35 And the people stood beholding. And the rulers also with them derided *him*, saying, He saved others; let him save himself, if he be Christ, the chosen of God.

**c,b** Jesus never sought the approval of men as in C. He delivered His message whether or not people accepted Him. He did not resort to finally giving up His mission and cutting it short which is what would happen by calling down legions of angels on them.

**a** He ended His life staying true to His mission to seek and to save that which was lost. Had they truly known how infinitely innocent Christ was, they would have been infinitely guilty of shedding His blood. His grace was extended to them to the fullest.

969. Why would Jesus not have taken the drugged vinegar?

- a. He just said no to drugs
- b. He didn't realize how great the pain was going to become
- c. He would not have His suffering diminished in any way**

Matt 27:34 They gave him vinegar to drink mingled with gall: and when he had tasted *thereof*, he would not drink.

**a** Jesus refusal to take the drugged wine was not just some statement about a singular social ill.

**b** Jesus was completely aware of the pain that was coming.

**c** It is possible that some human suffering might be greater, but by subjecting Himself to the pain, it could not be said He gave in in any way. As bad as that pain might have been, what Jesus suffered in His soul was even greater as He received the judgment of His Father, and that *was* the greatest pain that someone could receive.

970. Read Ps 22:16. How did they execute Jesus?

- a. They strangled Him
- b. They pierced His hands and His feet**
- c. They stoned Him

Psa 22:16 For dogs have compassed me: the assembly of the wicked have inclosed me: they pierced my hands and my feet.

Luke 23:32 And there were also two other, malefactors, led with him to be put to death.

**a** Strangulation of animals was not permitted for animals for consumption or sacrifice. For the case of consumption, blood pooled in a carcass is unhealthy. In the case of sacrifice, the shedding of blood is related to the idea of giving of a life for a life since the life of the flesh is in the blood. Modern Bible versions, while retaining some references to the blood, removed a number of places where the blood of Christ was mentioned. It had to be the blood at the cross that saved, not just Christ accidentally cutting a finger.

Lev 17:10-14 And whatsoever man *there be* of the house of Israel, or of the strangers that sojourn among you, that eateth any manner of blood; I will even set my face against that soul that eateth blood, and will cut him off from among his people.

11For the life of the flesh *is* in the blood: and I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your souls: for it *is* the blood *that* maketh an atonement for the soul.

12Therefore I said unto the children of Israel, No soul of you shall eat blood, neither shall any stranger that sojourneth among you eat blood.

13And whatsoever man *there be* of the children of Israel, or of the strangers that sojourn among you, which hunteth and catcheth any beast or fowl that may be eaten; he shall even pour out the blood thereof, and cover it with dust.

14For *it is* the life of all flesh; the blood of it *is* for the life thereof: therefore I said unto the children of Israel, Ye shall eat the blood of no manner of flesh: for the life of all flesh *is* the blood thereof: whosoever eateth it shall be cut off.

**c** Stoning was the actual method of capitol punishment that would have been consistent with Jewish law. This is another issue of hypocrisy on the part of the Jewish leaders.

**b** This is perhaps one of the most striking prophecies in the Old Testament. Because crucifixion was not something that the Jews practiced, this prophecy might not have made as much sense which would make it all the more miraculous. It made the fulfillment of the prophecy even more difficult for David to have guessed at what would happen to the Messiah.

971. Read Ps 22:18. Why did the soldiers cast lots for His coat?

- a. The coat had no seams to be able to take it apart**
- b. They had read the prophecy in Ps 22 and wanted to fulfill it
- c. They didn't realize the magical power of having just a piece of the coat

Psa 22:18 They part my garments among them, and cast lots upon my vesture.

John 19:23-24 Then the soldiers, when they had crucified Jesus, took his garments, and made four parts, to every soldier a part; and also *his* coat: now the coat was without seam, woven from the top throughout.

24They said therefore among themselves, Let us not rend it, but cast lots for it, whose it shall be: that the scripture might be fulfilled, which saith, They parted my raiment among them, and for my vesture they did cast lots. These things therefore the soldiers did.

**c** The idea of the coat being divided up as talismans is a reference to the practice of the veneration of relics especially practiced by Roman Catholicism. For example, Rome's Sant Croce in Gerusalemme basilica reportedly contains pieces of the true cross, a crucifixion nail, two thorns from the crown, and the finger which St. Thomas used to touch the rejected Jesus. A piece of the true cross lies at center of a jeweled, silver-gilt Cross of Emperor Justin II. The ruler of Saxony once claimed he had 17,000 relics, including a feather from the wings of the angel Gabriel. Although Romanism does not claim to give worship to the relics that is due to God, this amounts to so much double-talk and superstition.

**a,b** If the soldiers had any sense of Who they were crucifying, they might have been anxious to cut the cloth up instead of trying to get what was then a valuable commodity: whole cloth. They had no sense that it was a fulfillment of prophecy.

## 176 - The Two Malefactors

972. Read Ps 22:7-8. Why did the priests, scribes, and elders mock Jesus?

- a. They had read the prophecy in Ps 22 and wanted to fulfill it
- b. They did not believe He could save Himself**
- c. They were anxious to see Him do just one more miracle so they could believe in Him

## THE TRIUMPHAL ENTRY TO THE TRIUMPH OVER DEATH – 653

Psa 22:7-8 All they that see me laugh me to scorn: they shoot out the lip, they shake the head, *saying*,  
8He trusted on the LORD *that* he would deliver him: let him deliver him, seeing he delighted in him.

Mark 15:27-32 And with him they crucify two thieves; the one on his right hand, and the other on his left.

28And the scripture was fulfilled, which saith, And he was numbered with the transgressors.

29And they that passed by railed on him, wagging their heads, and saying, Ah, thou that destroyest the temple, and buildest *it* in three days,

30Save thyself, and come down from the cross.

31Likewise also the chief priests mocking said among themselves with the scribes, He saved others; himself he cannot save.

32Let Christ the King of Israel descend now from the cross, that we may see and believe. And they that were crucified with him reviled him.

**a** One of the things that has been suggested about Christ and the prophecies is that He set things up to make it look like He was fulfilling prophecy. However, this is another example of the things that were outside of His control. This supports the miraculous nature of prophecy.

**c** In a way, there is no difference between these Jewish leaders tempting God than when they tempted Him in the wilderness. This is the nature of tempting God, throwing something at Him to see what, if anything, He would do. However, when people do such things, they are not sincere and willing to believe if God were to prove Himself.

**b** They did not believe He could save Himself and probably felt very safe and secure in their blasphemy.

973. Who was the only one who repented at the cross?

a. Peter

b. The High Priest

**c. One of the thieves**

Matt 27:44 The thieves also, which were crucified with him, cast the same in his teeth.

Luke 23:39-42 And one of the malefactors which were hanged railed on him, saying, If thou be Christ, save thyself and us.

40But the other answering rebuked him, saying, Dost not thou fear God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation?

41And we indeed justly; for we receive the due reward of our deeds: but this man hath done nothing amiss.

42And he said unto Jesus, Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom.

**a** Peter had great reason to repent, but did not yet do so. He had remorse, which can precede repentance, but in and of itself it is not repentance.



**b** The High Priest had sufficient reason to believe and repent based on all that Jesus had been teaching.

**c** It should be noted here that *both* of the malefactors at first mocked Christ. The thieves might be considered the least likely to repent as they were confirmed in their rebellious nature. They had great *cause* to repent since they were about to pass on to their final judgment. In spite of this, one thief *still* mocked Christ and did not repent. At some point, one of the malefactors quickly changed his mind. You cannot predict who will take the opportunity to repent whether they be very religious like the High Priest, one who was more intimately in tune like Peter, or one in rebellion. Each one had just as much reason to repent as the next because all it takes is a bit of honesty with oneself to give in to God. It could have been anyone but just happened to be one who *had been* in more *obvious* rebellion.

974. How do we know that the thief on the cross was saved?

- a. He got down off the cross and got baptized
- b. He was better than the other malefactor
- c. Jesus said so**

Luke 23:43 And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, To day shalt thou be with me in paradise.

**a,b,c** When we compare these three answers, the underlying question is one of assurance of salvation. People have a natural tendency to seek assurance through something *they* have done to secure it. Our assurance comes from God and what He has decided. Very quickly people turned baptism into a ritual to trust in, as in A. Even though there is no suggestion that anyone said one malefactor was better than the other, B refers to how people will assume that assurance must be based on how good they are. Instead, we have assurance the same way the thief did: God says so. Often, when pressed, people will say that no one can know for sure. It might sound arrogant to say that one *can* know for sure because they are finite and presumptuous (Roman Catholic teaching of *presumptuous sin*). However, our assurance is not based on *our* saying so, but just like the thief's case, it is because *God* says so in Romans 10:13.

Rom 10:13 For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.

975. Where did Jesus say the thief would be that day?

- a. In Purgatory
- b. In Heaven
- c. In Paradise**

Luke 23:43 And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, To day shalt thou be with me in paradise.

a <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Purgatory> describes how notions of a purification stage exist across the spectrum of churches and is sometimes confused with Paradise. Catholic teaching is that it is an "eschatological idea."

b The Scripture does not state that the thief was going to heaven.

c The Bible describes how after the resurrection of Christ, He appeared before God with His atoning blood:

Heb 9:11-14 But Christ being come an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building;

12Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption *for us*.

13For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh:

14How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?

Heb 9:19-24 For when Moses had spoken every precept to all the people according to the law, he took the blood of calves and of goats, with water, and scarlet wool, and hyssop, and sprinkled both the book, and all the people,

20Saying, This *is* the blood of the testament which God hath enjoined unto you.

21Moreover he sprinkled with blood both the tabernacle, and all the vessels of the ministry.

22And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission.

23It *was* therefore necessary that the patterns of things in the heavens should be purified with these; but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these.

24For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, *which are* the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us:

Since that time, we know that the believer goes straight to Heaven after death.

2Cor 5:1-8 For we know that if our earthly house of *this* tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.

2For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven:

3If so be that being clothed we shall not be found naked.

4For we that are in *this* tabernacle do groan, being burdened: not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life.

5Now he that hath wrought us for the selfsame thing *is* God, who also hath given unto us the earnest of the Spirit.

6Therefore *we are* always confident, knowing that, whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord:

7(For we walk by faith, not by sight:)

8We are confident, *I say*, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord.

Before the resurrection of Christ, the Bible describes the abode of the righteous dead in several ways. During the three days that Jesus was in the grave, He is described as emptying out prison, or captivity..

Eph 4:8-9 Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men.

9(Now that he ascended, what is it but that he also descended first into the lower parts of the earth?

1Pet 3:18-19 For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit: 19By which also he went and preached unto the spirits in prison;

Paradise is also described as the "Bosom of Abraham." It is not, as the Jehovah's Witnesses teach, a place on earth.

Luke 16:19-26 There was a certain rich man, which was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day:

20And there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, which was laid at his gate, full of sores,

21And desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table: moreover the dogs came and licked his sores.

22And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom: the rich man also died, and was buried;

23And in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom.

24And he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame.

25But Abraham said, Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented.

26And beside all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed: so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot; neither can they pass to us, that *would come* from thence.

## 177 - Jesus Presents Mary to John

976. Why did Jesus send Mary to be with John?

- a. He wanted her to be his mother since she is the mother of the church
- b. He wanted her to have a home with him**
- c. He wanted John to have someone take care of him

John 19:26-27 When Jesus therefore saw his mother, and the disciple standing by, whom he loved, he saith unto his mother, Woman, behold thy son!

27Then saith he to the disciple, Behold thy mother! And from that hour that disciple took her unto his own *home*.

**a,b** A is a reference to the distortion the Roman Catholic church makes about the significance of Mary. On the times that Jesus dealt with Mary, He did so

with mild rebuke. There is no reason to suggest in that context that He now is elevating her status over all Christianity. He was merely providing for her and doing so with a Christian setting. At that point, His brothers were not yet believers.

**c** It was customary for women to be cared for. Since Mary was not being elevated to some mythic status, the normal practice of care was being provided for.

## 178 - Three Hours of Darkness

977. What was an indication that God had forsaken Jesus?

- a. There was darkness over the earth**
- b. There was terrible lightning and thunder
- c. Jesus was yelling and screaming

Matt 27:45-46 Now from the sixth hour there was darkness over all the land unto the ninth hour.

46And about the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani? that is to say, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?

**b** On other occasions, God's interactions with man were accompanied by thunder and lightning such as

Exod 19:14-16 And Moses went down from the mount unto the people, and sanctified the people; and they washed their clothes.

15And he said unto the people, Be ready against the third day: come not at *your* wives.

16And it came to pass on the third day in the morning, that there were thunders and lightnings, and a thick cloud upon the mount, and the voice of the trumpet exceeding loud; so that all the people that *was* in the camp trembled.

**a** The darkness might suggest to us that the interaction was not with man so much as it was with Jesus on the cross. The darkness speaks of the silence and absence of God that spoke of Jesus being forsaken by His Father. We might not be able to adequately understand and speculate on what Christ was exactly speaking of in being forsaken, but we know that rift in the relationship in the Trinity is probably the ultimate experience of suffering for our sin.

**c** If people knew what was happening at that moment, they would have been doing worse than running and screaming in terror. There will be a time when people *will* be more in touch with the reality of the terror when the Tribulation comes upon them.

Rev 6:15-17 And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bondman, and every free man, hid

themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains;  
16And said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him  
that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb:  
17For the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?

978. Read Ps 22:1-8,12-13 and Mal 4:5. How did the Jews respond to Jesus crying out over the Father forsaking Him?
- a. **They confused Him with calling on Elijah who was supposed to come to present the Messiah**
  - b. They read the prophecy in Ps 22 and wanted to fulfill it
  - c. They got saved when they realized that Jesus was taking on the infinite wrath of God on Himself

Mark 15:34-36 And at the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani? which is, being interpreted, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?  
35And some of them that stood by, when they heard *it*, said, Behold, he calleth Elias.  
36And one ran and filled a sponge full of vinegar, and put *it* on a reed, and gave him to drink, saying, Let alone; let us see whether Elias will come to take him down.

Mal 4:5 Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD:

Ps 22:1-8,12-13 To the chief Musician upon Aijeleth Shahar, A Psalm of David. My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? *why art thou so far from helping me, and from the words of my roaring?*  
2O my God, I cry in the daytime, but thou hearest not; and in the night season, and am not silent.  
3But thou *art* holy, O *thou* that inhabitest the praises of Israel.  
4Our fathers trusted in thee: they trusted, and thou didst deliver them.  
5They cried unto thee, and were delivered: they trusted in thee, and were not confounded.  
6But I *am* a worm, and no man; a reproach of men, and despised of the people.  
7All they that see me laugh me to scorn: they shoot out the lip, they shake the head, *saying*,  
8He trusted on the LORD *that* he would deliver him: let him deliver him, seeing he delighted in him.  
12Many bulls have compassed me: strong *bulls* of Bashan have beset me round.  
13They gaped upon me *with* their mouths, *as* a ravening and a roaring lion.

**a,c** Of course they missed entirely what was happening because they were familiar with the Mal 4:5 even though they were misapplying it here. This demonstrates that they should have been held accountable since they knew the Scriptures.

**b** Psalm 22:1 is what Jesus quoted as a fulfillment of what happened at the cross. There was no way that He had control on the reaction of the people to encompass him and they were certainly missing the application of Psalm 22 to the situation.

979. Read Ps 22:14-15. Why did they give Jesus vinegar to drink?
- Because they read the prophecy in Ps 22 and wanted to fulfill it
  - Because they repented of the evil they had done
  - Because He was evidently dehydrated**

John 19:28-29 After this, Jesus knowing that all things were now accomplished, that the scripture might be fulfilled, saith, I thirst.

29Now there was set a vessel full of vinegar: and they filled a sponge with vinegar, and put *it* upon hyssop, and put *it* to his mouth.

Psa 22:14-15 I am poured out like water, and all my bones are out of joint: my heart is like wax; it is melted in the midst of my bowels.

15My strength is dried up like a potsherd; and my tongue cleaveth to my jaws; and thou hast brought me into the dust of death.

**a** A emphasizes the responsibility of the people because there was such abundance of prophecy for them to see being fulfilled before their eyes. One of the strengths of prophecy is to see it fulfilled in retrospect. For example, in our day there are things that are happening in the world that certainly look like the Day of the Lord is coming quickly. When that Day happens, we will all be able to look back on it and say that, of course, we should have seen the signs. However, the prophecies of Psa 22 should have been just as much in their view as Mal 4:5 had been.

**b** Their offering a drugged concoction was not a sign of their guilt, as much as it might have been a consideration given to a dying man. This might suggest that they had some possible sense of remorse at least.

**c** By rejecting the vinegar earlier (Matt 27:34), Jesus had remained clear headed to have been able to completely experience the torture of the cross for our sake. This would have enabled Him to be able to finally cry out that the sacrifice was now finished.

Matt 27:50 Jesus, when he had cried again with a loud voice, yielded up the ghost.

## 179 - Jesus Yields Up the Ghost

980. What two things did Jesus say as He died?
- I did my part for salvation, now you must do your part
  - The gates of Hell are closed and now the gates of Heaven are opened
  - Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit; It is finished**

Luke 23:46 And when Jesus had cried with a loud voice, he said, Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit: and having said thus, he gave up the ghost.

John 19:30 When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar, he said, It is finished: and he bowed his head, and gave up the ghost.

**b** The gates of Hell were not closed by Christ. However the idea of Christ merely opening the gates of Heaven for us to work at going through is a Roman Catholic notion to accommodate the possibility for one to lose their salvation.

1026 By his death and Resurrection, Jesus Christ has "opened" heaven to us. the life of the blessed consists in the full and perfect possession of the fruits of the redemption accomplished by Christ. He makes partners in his heavenly glorification those who have believed in him and **remained** faithful to his will. Heaven is the blessed community of all who are perfectly incorporated into Christ.

– [https://www.vatican.va/archive/ENG0015/\\_P2M.HTM](https://www.vatican.va/archive/ENG0015/_P2M.HTM)

**a,c** By saying "It is finished," Jesus was referring to the fact that there remains nothing more to be done for our salvation to be secured. The sacrifice of Himself was completed with abiding results. He was never going to have to be suffer again for our salvation. He did not suggest that we had any part left to take care of.

Heb 9:22-28 And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission.

23It was therefore necessary that the patterns of things in the heavens should be purified with these; but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these.

24For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, *which are* the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us:

25Nor yet that he should offer himself often, as the high priest entereth into the holy place every year with blood of others;

26For then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world: but now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself.

27And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment:

28So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation.

981. What effect did the death of Christ have on the Temple?

a. It was destroyed

**b. The veil that hid the Holy of Holies was torn from top to bottom**

c. The cloud of God's glory descended upon it

Mark 15:37-38 And Jesus cried with a loud voice, and gave up the ghost.

38And the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom.

**c** The cloud of God's glory, known as the Shekinah, had led the Israelites in the wilderness, descended on Mt. Sinai at the giving of the Law, and filled the Tabernacle and the Temple. The cloud of glory had also been known to depart as in Ezekiel 10 as Israel went into captivity in Babylon. Although there is no reference to God's glory in the Temple at that time, certainly there should be no expectation of God's glory dwelling there at such a time of darkness.

**a** The Temple would indeed be destroyed, but not until about 40 years later. It was sufficient that the veil be torn at that time.

**b**

Hebrews 9:1-9 tells us that in the temple a veil separated the Holy of Holies—the earthly dwelling place of God's presence—from the rest of the temple where men dwelt. This signified that man was separated from God by sin (Isaiah 59:1-2). Only the high priest was permitted to pass beyond this veil once each year (Exodus 30:10; Hebrews 9:7) to enter into God's presence for all of Israel and make atonement for their sins (Leviticus 16).

The tearing of the veil at the moment of Jesus' death dramatically symbolized that His sacrifice, the shedding of His own blood, was a sufficient atonement for sins. It signified that now the way into the Holy of Holies was open for all people, for all time, both Jew and Gentile.

When Jesus died, the veil was torn, and God moved out of that place never again to dwell in a temple made with human hands (Acts 17:24). God was through with that temple and its religious system, and the temple and Jerusalem were left "desolate" (destroyed by the Romans) in A.D. 70, just as Jesus prophesied in Luke 13:35. As long as the temple stood, it signified the continuation of the Old Covenant. Hebrews 9:8-9 refers to the age that was passing away as the new covenant was being established (Hebrews 8:13).

In a sense, the veil was symbolic of Christ Himself as the only way to the Father (John 14:6). This is indicated by the fact that the high priest had to enter the Holy of Holies through the veil. Now Christ is our superior High Priest, and as believers in His finished work, we partake of His better priesthood. We can now enter the Holy of Holies through Him. Hebrews 10:19-20 says, "we have confidence to enter the Most Holy Place by the blood of Jesus by a new and living way opened for us through the curtain, that is, his body." Here we see the image of Jesus' flesh being torn for us just as He was tearing the veil for us.

The profound significance of the tearing of the veil is explained in glorious detail in Hebrews. The things of the temple were shadows of things to come, and they all ultimately point us to Jesus Christ. He was the veil to the Holy of Holies, and through His death the faithful now have free access to God.

The veil in the temple was a constant reminder that sin renders humanity unfit for the presence of God. The fact that the sin offering was offered annually and countless other sacrifices repeated daily showed graphically that sin could not truly be atoned for or erased by mere animal sacrifices. Jesus Christ, through His death, has removed the barriers between God and man, and now we may approach Him with confidence and boldness (Hebrews 4:14-16).

– <https://www.gotquestions.org/temple-veil-torn.html>

982. What effect did the death of Christ have on the centurion?

- a. He hardened his heart because he didn't want anyone blaming him
- b. He wanted to join the Jews and follow the law so he could get into heaven

**c. He acknowledged that Jesus is the Son of God**

Matt 27:54 Now when the centurion, and they that were with him, watching Jesus,



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saw the earthquake, and those things that were done, they feared greatly, saying, Truly this was the Son of God.

**a,c** Sometimes when people realize they have been wrong or part of something wrong, they will dig in their heels trying to defend themselves. There was evidently too much for the Centurion to take in to do anything other than acknowledge the truth.

**b** The more common *natural* reaction is to seek some way to find a way to make their own way in to heaven, Although we don't know what became of the Centurion, his reaction was consistent with someone who realized the spiritual significance of the moment.

983. What effect did the death of Christ have on the people observing?

- a. They regretted what they had done and turned to Jesus in faith to get saved
- b. They felt some kind of grief, smote their breasts, and went back home**
- c. They held a big party

Luke 23:48 And all the people that came together to that sight, beholding the things which were done, smote their breasts, and returned.

**c** At least the people had enough decency to not throw a party. This might not seem at all possible, but in our modern culture, this is exactly the lengths people will go to to rejoice over the defeat of the Godly.

**a,b** The people felt *some* kind of grief, as in B, but just feeling grief does not necessarily translate into repentance, as in A. Grief is a necessary component of repentance, but it is possible to fall short of true repentance by assuming that grief is sufficient. Judas Iscariot felt grief as well as others. Spurgeon pointed out six men who uttered the doubtful confession, "I have sinned" – Pharaoh with a hardened heart, Balaam the double-minded, Saul the insincere, Achan the doubtful penitent, and Judas the uncommitted. <https://ccel.org/ccel/spurgeon/sermons03/sermons03.vii.html>

In this scene at the cross, these people should have been shaking in terror if they had any realization of what they had done.

984. Read Ps 22:17,34:20. Why did they not break Jesus' legs to hasten His death?

- a. They saw that He was dead already**
- b. They read the prophecy in Ps 34 and wanted to fulfill it
- c. They really wanted Him to suffer

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Ps 22:17 I may tell all my bones: they look *and* stare upon me.  
20He keepeth all his bones: not one of them is broken.

Ps 34:20 He keepeth all his bones: not one of them is broken.

John 19:33-37 But when they came to Jesus, and saw that he was dead already, they brake not his legs:

34But one of the soldiers with a spear pierced his side, and forthwith came there out blood and water.

35And he that saw *it* bare record, and his record is true: and he knoweth that he saith true, that ye might believe.

36For these things were done, that the scripture should be fulfilled, A bone of him shall not be broken.

37And again another scripture saith, They shall look on him whom they pierced.

**b** B points out again that there was no way for Jesus to be able to manipulate His situation to make it look like He was fulfilling prophecy.

**c** Breaking the legs was a means to make sure they died more quickly to get it over with. This is another indication of the callousness of their hearts. They merely wanted to get things over with so they could feel free to move on to their celebration.

**a** In the previous verses there is enough indication that Jesus was dead. Breaking the bones would have been done just in case there was any life left. They shall look on him whom they pierced is a partial fulfillment of Zech 12:10. In the Second Coming, Israel will realize that Jesus was the one whom they had crucified.

Zech 12:10 And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications: and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for *his* only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for *his* firstborn.

Zech 13:2,6 And it shall come to pass in that day, saith the LORD of hosts, *that* I will cut off the names of the idols out of the land, and they shall no more be remembered: and also I will cause the prophets and the unclean spirit to pass out of the land.

6And *one* shall say unto him, What *are* these wounds in thine hands? Then he shall answer, *Those* with which I was wounded *in* the house of my friends.

985. How did they know that Jesus was truly dead?

a. They took Him down from the cross and detected no heartbeat

**b. When they pierced His side, water also came out with the blood**

c. They didn't, they assumed it because He had merely swooned to be restored later in the cool tomb

John 19:34 But one of the soldiers with a spear pierced his side, and forthwith came there out blood and water.

## THE TRIUMPHAL ENTRY TO THE TRIUMPH OVER DEATH – 664

**a** There are enough facts in evidence that they could tell He was dead. Any suggestion that more proof is needed indicates someone's rebellious response to God and for that person there will never be enough proof of anything in the Bible.

**b** The fact that Jesus was dead and proved by the piercing of His side and the water and blood coming out.

The difficulty surrounding exhalation leads to a slow form of suffocation. Carbon dioxide builds up in the blood, resulting in a high level of carbonic acid in the blood. The body responds instinctively, triggering the desire to breathe. At the same time, the heart beats faster to circulate available oxygen. The decreased oxygen (due to the difficulty in exhaling) causes damage to the tissues and the capillaries begin leaking watery fluid from the blood into the tissues. This results in a build-up of fluid around the heart (pericardial effusion) and lungs (pleural effusion). The collapsing lungs, failing heart, dehydration, and the inability to get sufficient oxygen to the tissues essentially suffocate the victim. The decreased oxygen also damages the heart itself (myocardial infarction) which leads to cardiac arrest. In severe cases of cardiac stress, the heart can even burst, a process known as cardiac rupture.

– [www.apu.edu/articles/the-science-of-the-crucifixion](http://www.apu.edu/articles/the-science-of-the-crucifixion)

**c** All of this contradicts what is known as the "swoon theory" that suggests that Jesus did not become resurrected because He had not actually died but only "swooned" and was revived in the coolness of the tomb.

986. Why did they want to make sure Jesus was dead?

a. They didn't want Him to suffer anymore

**b. The high day for the Passover Sabbath was approaching and they were concerned about keeping the law regarding someone being buried**

c. They were tired and wanted to get back to their homes

John 19:31 The Jews therefore, because it was the preparation, that the bodies should not remain upon the cross on the sabbath day, (for that sabbath day was an high day,) besought Pilate that their legs might be broken, and *that* they might be taken away.

**a** They didn't care about hastening Jesus death but were only concerned about themselves.

**b,c** Aggravating their sense of self-centeredness was the fact that they thought themselves righteous by adhering to the Law. They didn't just put self first in an average way of just being tired, they were acting out of a sense of religious pride.

Lev 23 describes how there are seven Holy Days, Passover being one of them, that are also Sabbaths. John pointed out the difference from the weekly Sabbath to make it understandable why the Jewish leaders were anxious in the middle of the week to be concerned about making sure Jesus was dead.

Because of the word Sabbath is used at all, there are those who presume that this must be talking about the weekly Sabbath and place the Crucifixion on a Friday. There are a number of ways people have to stretch to accommodate this assumption including misplacing the year of Christ's death, miscalculating the number of Passovers that were observed during Christ's ministry (there were two, not three), overlooking the very chronology of the events of the days leading up to the Crucifixion.

987. Who was carefully observing all that had happened to Jesus?

- a. **A host of women who had ministered to Him from the time Jesus had been in Galilee**
- b. All the apostles
- c. The elders, chief priests, scribes, Pharisees

Matt 27:55-56 And many women were there beholding afar off, which followed Jesus from Galilee, ministering unto him:

56 Among which was Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James and Joses, and the mother of Zebedee's children.

**c** The elders, chief priests, scribes, and Pharisees could be judged by the fact that they had enough to go on that they *could* have had a concern for Jesus.

**b** All the apostles could be judged because of their close relationship with Him and *should* have had concern for Jesus

**a** We want to remember that although the apostles had been named by Christ for their mission, women played no small part in the ministry of Christ. They have their testimony in the Word of God forever that makes their service memorable and significant. We should be careful to always remember and appreciate the importance of women in ministry.

## **180 - Joseph of Aramathaea Requests the Body of Christ**

988. Why did Joseph of Arimethaea desire the body of Christ?

- a. Because the Passover Sabbath was starting and he wanted to get Him buried so he could get to the Passover
- b. Because He was poor and was happy to give Jesus His grave as a sacrificial offering
- c. **Because He was a disciple of Jesus who looked for the kingdom**

Mark 15:42-43 And now when the even was come, because it was the preparation, that is, the day before the sabbath,

43 Joseph of Arimathaea, an honourable counsellor, which also waited for the kingdom of God, came, and went in boldly unto Pilate, and craved the body of Jesus.

Matt 27:59-60 And when Joseph had taken the body, he wrapped it in a clean linen cloth,

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60And laid it in his own new tomb, which he had hewn out in the rock: and he rolled a great stone to the door of the sepulchre, and departed.

**a,b** Joseph was obviously not like the Jewish leaders but acted out of compassion. He was not poor, which would have been outstanding by itself. His offering is outstanding because we know that it is hard for a rich man to enter into heaven.

**c** *Waited for the kingdom* indicates that Joseph was a believer and might have had more of a grip on the resurrection than the disciples. This also fulfills the prophecy in Isaiah:

Isa 53:9 And he made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death; because he had done no violence, neither *was any* deceit in his mouth.

989. Who else aided in burying Jesus?

- a. Peter
- b. Nicodemus**
- c. The apostles

John 19:39-40 And there came also Nicodemus, which at the first came to Jesus by night, and brought a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about an hundred pound *weight*.  
40Then took they the body of Jesus, and wound it in linen clothes with the spices, as the manner of the Jews is to bury.

**a,c,b** Peter and the apostles showed less boldness than Nicodemus. By his concern, it is possible that this is an indication that Nicodemus was saved. It is worth noting that John is the one who introduced Nicodemus and is now the only Gospel writer who brings a sense of closure of whatever became of him.

990. Who observed the burial of Jesus?

- a. Mary Magdalene and Mary the Mother of Joses**
- b. Mary Magdalene and Mary the Mother of Jesus
- c. Peter

Mark 15:47 And Mary Magdalene and Mary *the mother* of Joses beheld where he was laid.

**c** We point out, again, that Peter was not around. His time will come, though.

**b** Mary, the Mother of Jesus, had been sent on to be with John, the apostle.

**a** It is clear who Mary Magdalene was. Mary, called *the other Mary* by Matthew, was Mary the mother of James the less, the apostle, and Joses. This Mary was the wife of Alpheus (Cleopas). It is interesting to note how the apostles were missing, but that this mother of an apostle was there, exhibiting

more concern than the apostles.

<http://www.livingwithfaith.org/blog/who-was-the-other-mary-at-the-tomb>

## 181 - Chief Priests Request Seal for Tomb

991. Why did the chief priests and Pharisees want the tomb of Jesus sealed?

- a. Because He was due to rise from the grave after 1 ½ days
- b. Because He was due to rise from the grave after 3 days and didn't want the disciples to fake the resurrection**
- c. Because they wanted to make sure Jesus couldn't come back to life

Matt 27:62-64 Now the next day, that followed the day of the preparation, the chief priests and Pharisees came together unto Pilate,

63Saying, Sir, we remember that that deceiver said, while he was yet alive, After three days I will rise again.

64Command therefore that the sepulchre be made sure until the third day, lest his disciples come by night, and steal him away, and say unto the people, He is risen from the dead: so the last error shall be worse than the first.

**a** A is a reference to how those who hold to a Friday crucifixion would have to deny a three day burial of Christ.

**c** There is no indication that they thought there was any possibility Jesus might have been right and that they were willing to oppose the work of God. However, this *is* a reflection on the lengths people *are* willing to go to oppose the truth. They will sometimes even prefer to die than admit they are wrong.

**b** By going to such length to make sure that the cause of Christ would be squashed, the Jewish leaders were also revealing that they implicitly understood that the whole significance of the ministry of Christ was the Resurrection. Truly, without the resurrection there would be no Christianity. Though the leaders demonstrated their understanding, they certainly could not see the extent of the power of the Resurrection.

The resurrection of Jesus Christ is unique to the Christian faith - no other religious figure has ever predicted his own resurrection, and then accomplished it. All of the other world religions are based on a founder who lived in the past and whose religion is his only legacy. Mohammed died at age 61 on June 8, A.D. 632 in Medina. He is still dead. Confucius died and Buddha also died. They also remain dead - Jesus Christ is alive.

The resurrection of Jesus Christ is central to the Christian faith. It is mentioned over one hundred times in the New Testament. It was the main point for each sermon in the Book of Acts. Without it there is no Christian faith. Paul said the resurrection is important to the believer for a number of reasons. He said that Christian preaching is empty if Jesus did not come back from the dead. The faith of the believer is worthless if Christ is not risen because he is the object of the faith. In addition, Christ, is not whom He said He was. He would have been a liar. The apostles are also liars for testifying to a resurrection that did not occur. Furthermore, there is no forgiveness for

anybody's sin. Those who have died believing in Christ have no hope. If hope in Christ is limited to this life, Christians are to be pitied above all people.

The resurrection is also important to the identity and mission of Jesus. First, the resurrection is important to His identity. The resurrection is the demonstration that Jesus indeed is the Son of God. The resurrection is also important to His character. Jesus would not have been a true prophet had He not come back from the dead as He predicted that He would. It is important to Jesus' ministry. If He did not come back from the dead then His ministry would have ended in defeat. Finally, it is important to His message. The centrality of the Christian message is that Jesus died and then came back from the dead. If He did not come back from the dead then there is no Christianity. Consequently we see that the resurrection of Jesus Christ is absolutely crucial to the Christian faith.

– [https://www.blueletterbible.org/faq/don\\_stewart/don\\_stewart\\_811.cfm](https://www.blueletterbible.org/faq/don_stewart/don_stewart_811.cfm)

## The Resurrection

### 182 - The Women Arrive at the Tomb

992. How many days and nights passed before the resurrection?
- a. 4 nights and 3 days
  - b. 1 night and 1 day
  - c. 3 nights and 3 days**

Matt 28:1 In the end of the sabbath, as it began to dawn toward the first *day* of the week, came Mary Magdalene and the other Mary to see the sepulchre.

**b,c** As we saw in Section 179, according to John 19:31, John pointed out the difference from the weekly Sabbath to make it understandable why the Jewish leaders were anxious in the middle of the week to be concerned about making sure Jesus was dead. Lev 23 describes how there are seven Holy Days, Passover being one of them, that are also Sabbaths. Because of the word Sabbath is used at all, there are those who presume that this must be talking about the weekly Sabbath and place the Crucifixion on a Friday. There are a number of ways people have to stretch to accommodate this assumption including misplacing the year of Christ's death, miscalculating the number of Passovers that were observed during Christ's ministry (there were two, not three), overlooking the very chronology of the events of the days leading up to the Crucifixion.

The Passover, as one of the holy feasts, was considered a Sabbath and remarks about the Sabbath before now have been with regards to the Sabbath. Here, in this section, we come to the end of the Sabbath

[The following comments appear in the student study guide]

Those who hold to a Friday crucifixion suggest that according to the Jews, any part of a day counts as a day. By this reckoning Jesus spent Friday night, Saturday day, but only part of night on Saturday (Jesus was risen before sunrise). This flies in the face of the scripture, Matt 12:40, "For as Jonas was

three days and three nights in the whale's belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth."

**a** Since Christ was crucified on Wednesday and buried before the Passover Sabbath started, He spent 3 nights and 3 nights in the grave. The night before Sunday morning does not count as a night spent in the grave because Jesus arose before the night was over. When the women got there at the rising of the day, the stone was already rolled away in the night.

993. How was the stone that sealed the grave rolled away?

- a. An angel rolled away the stone accompanied by an earthquake**
- b. The women rolled away the stone
- c. The apostles came and scared the soldiers to death and rolled away the stone

Matt 28:2-4 And, behold, there was a great earthquake: for the angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat upon it.

<sup>3</sup>His countenance was like lightning, and his raiment white as snow:

<sup>4</sup>And for fear of him the keepers did shake, and became as dead *men*.

**b,c** B and C imply the absurdity of being able to roll away the stone by the disciples. While there are those who might with exceptional planning and skill attempt to execute a criminal plan, the average person just couldn't really accomplish this kind of act.

**a** God engaged an angel to act. Why God would choose to use angels is not given. In creating a working universe, God has many working parts that might appear to us like a great theatrical stage. It reminds us of the Shakespearean soliloquy:

All the world's a stage,  
And all the men and women merely Players;  
They have their exits and their entrances,  
And one man in his time plays many parts,  
His Acts being seven ages.

We have to be careful not to trivialize the glory of God's creation as mere theater, but we should also be careful to notice that we all have our parts and that God does not *need* anything whether it be an angel, a man, or a centipede. We get to participate in God's plan for the ages to His glory and to our blessing.

994. Why was the stone rolled away?

- a. So people could look in and see that Jesus was gone**
- b. So Jesus could escape



- c. To spite the chief priests and Pharisees

There is no Scripture reference needed for this question.

**b** Jesus will later appear to the disciples apparently not needing a door to enter their midst (John 20:19, Section 190)

**c** Jesus is beyond dealing with the chief priests and Pharisees at this point.

**a** The more obvious reason for the stone being rolled away is for our sake so that *we* can see that Jesus did indeed rise from the dead. This is yet another way to realize that we don't have a blind faith but a well attested to faith whether it be the prophecies of the Old Testament, the sublime teaching of Christ, or empirical evidence like the miracles and an empty tomb.

### **183 - Mary Magdalene Runs to Tell Peter and John**

995. What did the disciples find in the tomb?

- a. A shroud that Jesus had been buried in from head to foot with a photographic image of Jesus on it
- b. A face covering and linen pieces of cloth that had been used for Jesus burial**
- c. Jesus

John 20:6-7 Then cometh Simon Peter following him, and went into the sepulchre, and seeth the linen clothes lie,

<sup>7</sup>And the napkin, that was about his head, not lying with the linen clothes, but wrapped together in a place by itself.

**a** A is a reference to the Shroud of Turin, which is supposed to be the burial cloth of Jesus. First mentioned in 1354, the shroud was denounced in 1389 by the local bishop of Troyes as a fake. Currently the Catholic Church neither formally endorses nor rejects the shroud, and in 2013 Pope Francis referred to it as an "icon of a man scourged and crucified". The shroud has been kept in the royal chapel of the Cathedral of Turin, in northern Italy, since 1578. It has been the subject of much sensational writing over the years. Since the early days of the church, people have let superstition play on them and sought some mystical power in relics.

**c** C is obviously wrong, but might have been what the disciples were expecting to find. Their confusion over all the events of the crucifixion and burial was proving difficult to let go.

**b** To dispel any notion of a relic such as the Shroud of Turin, grave cloths would have been strips of cloth used to wrap the body which is why the plural of cloth is used. Also, a napkin, or towel, that had covered Christ's face was

separate and laid on the side contrary to a single shroud.

996. When did John have full realization of what Jesus had been trying to tell them about the resurrection?
- At the start of all the times Jesus tried to tell them about it
  - When he forsook Jesus with all the others
  - When he saw that Jesus was not there**

John 20:8,9 Then went in also that other disciple, which came first to the sepulchre, and he saw, and believed.

<sup>9</sup>For as yet they knew not the scripture, that he must rise again from the dead.

**a,b** A and B speak of the progression of the unbelief that the disciples went through.

**c** Just as the Resurrection is vital to the foundation of Christian faith, it was something that John finally realized for his faith.

997. What did Peter and John do after they saw the empty tomb?
- They went back home**
  - They went back home with Mary Magdalene and the other Mary, mother of James, Joses, and Salome
  - They talked the angels they found there

**a,b,c** The disciples merely went back home. All three of these answers point out that the visits at the tomb are a little hard to follow without carefully following the Gospel accounts. Mary Magdalen and the other Mary remained behind to go to look in the tomb.

## **184 - Mary Talks to Two Angels**

998. When Mary looked into the tomb, what did she?
- Jesus, resurrected
  - Nothing
  - Two angels**

**a,b** Up to this point, the tomb had been merely empty. Mary was about to see the resurrected Jesus, but now there were two angels at the tomb.

**c** Matthew, Mark refer to the angel who spoke to Mary while Luke and John report that there were two angels at the tomb.

999. When both Marys went into the tomb, how did they feel?

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- a. Happy, because they got to see what angels looked like
- b. Frightened and perplexed by the appearance of the angels**
- c. Happy, because they knew the resurrected Jesus was around somewhere

Luke 24:5 And as they were afraid, and bowed down *their* faces to the earth, they said unto them, Why seek ye the living among the dead?

Matt 28:5 And the angel answered and said unto the women, Fear not ye: for I know that ye seek Jesus, which was crucified.

**a** While some may think that seeing an angel would be exciting, anything this fantastically different would be cause for consternation. Seeing an angel was something typically fearful in the Bible.

**b,c** They probably would not have had the presence of mind to jump to the conclusion that Jesus might be around somewhere. The women were understandably frightened and had to be calmed down.

1000. How did the angel first indicate that Jesus was risen?

- a. He reminded them that He had told them about the crucifixion and being raised on the third day
- b. He said He was not there
- c. He asked them why they sought the living among the dead**

Luke 24:5 And as they were afraid, and bowed down *their* faces to the earth, they said unto them, Why seek ye the living among the dead?

**a,b** The angel did end up pointing these things out to the women, but that was not the first thing he mentioned.

**c** Luke records the angel's first challenge to the women that they were seeking the living among the dead. This was consistent with what Jesus pointed out as the foundation for the teaching of the resurrection when the Sadducees challenged Him not long before the crucifixion.

Matt 22:29-32 Jesus answered and said unto them, Ye do err, not knowing the scriptures, nor the power of God.

30For in the resurrection they neither marry, nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels of God in heaven.

31But as touching the resurrection of the dead, have ye not read that which was spoken unto you by God, saying,

32I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob? God is not the God of the dead, but of the living.

## 185 - Jesus Meets the Women

1001. When did Mary Magdalene believe that Jesus was resurrected?

- a. When the gardener told her that he had not taken Jesus anywhere
- b. When Jesus spoke to her**
- c. When the angel reminded her that He had told them He was going to be crucified and raised up

John 20:15,16 Jesus saith unto her, Woman, why weepest thou? whom seekest thou? She, supposing him to be the gardener, saith unto him, Sir, if thou have borne him hence, tell me where thou hast laid him, and I will take him away.  
16Jesus saith unto her, Mary. She turned herself, and saith unto him, Rabboni; which is to say, Master.

**a,c** Even though the angel had reminded the women of what they had been told, when Mary turned around and saw Jesus, she thought Him to be the gardener.

**b** It was when Jesus spoke to Mary that it finally hit her that Jesus was actually risen. Sometimes, the truth can be staring us in the face and even if we had the testimony of an angel, our brains might be hearing something else according to our presuppositions.

1002. Why did Jesus not want Mary to touch Him?

- a. There would be time before He was ascended but right then He wanted her to go tell the brethren to meet Him (which He had said in Matt 28:7)**
- b. He did not want her to defile Him
- c. He could not be touched since He was a spirit

John 20:17 Jesus saith unto her, Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father: but go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and *to* my God, and your God.

**c** Jesus could be touched even though His body was now of spiritual matter. Such matter is beyond our understanding since Jesus was evidently able to enter a locked room yet Jesus also invited Thomas to touch the wounds in His hands to see that He was real. Paul describes this in 1 Cor 15:

1Cor 15:35-44 But some *man* will say, How are the dead raised up? and with what body do they come?

36*Thou* fool, that which thou sowest is not quickened, except it die:

37And that which thou sowest, thou sowest not that body that shall be, but bare grain, it may chance of wheat, or of some other *grain*:

38But God giveth it a body as it hath pleased him, and to every seed his own body.

39All flesh *is* not the same flesh: but *there is* one *kind of* flesh of men, another flesh of beasts, another of fishes, *and* another of birds.

40*There are* also celestial bodies, and bodies terrestrial: but the glory of the celestial *is* one, and the *glory* of the terrestrial *is* another.

41*There is* one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars: for *one* star differeth from *another* star in glory.

42So also *is* the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption; it is raised in

incorruption:

43It is sown in dishonour; it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power:

44It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body.

**b** Defiling Jesus does not seem to be an issue since in a moment they will hold His feet.

**a** The word for *touch* is one of the stronger words and indicates something more than simply making contact. In the sense that it is used here, Christ is letting Mary not to hold Him back because He has yet to appear before the Mercy Seat in Heaven with His blood.

Interestingly, the word for *touch* is the origin for what we call *haptics* today. Meaning more than making contact, *haptics* is associated with a kind of communication. It refers to the feedback that one gets in touching a digital display and might consist of a vibration, or a keyboard that clicks when a key is touched, or a kind of glove that can be worn while engaging in virtual reality displays. *Haptics* can also refer to touching as nonverbal communication. Touches that can be defined as communication include handshakes, holding hands, kissing (cheek, lips, hand), a back slap, "high-five", shoulder pat, brushing arm, etc. Each of these give off nonverbal messages as to the touching person's intentions/feelings.

## 186 - The Women Return to Report to the Apostles

1003. What did Jesus do the second time He met with the women?

- a. He reminded them of how they were supposed to go to the disciples as they worshiped at His feet**
- b. He told them to stop crying
- c. He rebuked them because they had little faith

Matt 28:9,10 And as they went to tell his disciples, behold, Jesus met them, saying, All hail. And they came and held him by the feet, and worshipped him.

10Then said Jesus unto them, Be not afraid: go tell my brethren that they go into Galilee, and there shall they see me.

**a,b,c** The time was past for any crying or rebuke. Jesus had a mission for the women to attend to. Matthew jumps quickly to the next moment where the women worshiped at His feet. The word for *held* is actually stronger than the reference John made to Jesus prohibition to not touch Him. It is understandable that in their joy they would want to hold on longer. However, Jesus urged them on to deliver the news to the disciples.

## 187 - The Soldiers Are Paid to Lie About the Empty Tomb

1004. What was the character of the guards over Jesus tomb?
- They were honorable men who faithfully kept guard
  - They were believers because they witnessed the power of God at the tomb
  - They were greedy enough to lie, willing to risk punishment if it had been true that they let the disciples steal the body**

Matt 28:12-15 And when they were assembled with the elders, and had taken counsel, they gave large money unto the soldiers,  
13Saying, Say ye, His disciples came by night, and stole him *away* while we slept.  
14And if this come to the governor's ears, we will persuade him, and secure you.  
15So they took the money, and did as they were taught: and this saying is commonly reported among the Jews until this day.

- If the soldiers had any honor they would have resisted the bribe but would also have to give account for the missing body of Christ.
- The heavenly reward that they could have had did not motivate them to deny a lie and take whatever punishment might have been given.
- The soldiers greed led them to accept the risk by seeing if their lie would be plausible to the officials of the disciples taking the body.

## 188 - The Women Deliver Their Report, Peter Returns to the Tomb

1005. Why did the women's report seem as idle tales?
- Peter and John reported that the tomb was empty so they thought the body had been stolen
  - They were deep in mourning and weeping**
  - They thought they were just some silly women

Luke 24:11 And their words seemed to them as idle tales, and they believed them not.

- After careful examination of the various visits to the empty tomb, we can see that Peter and John had already been there and gone home when they first heard from Mary. At that time (John 20:2-10), there is no reference to Peter's impression; John was being convinced, though. However, there is no indication that Peter and John had said anything to the other disciples about what they had seen.

**c** The disciples were so far removed from the message of the Resurrection that they were not receptive to what they had to say. This is similar to how people think the things described in the Bible are too fantastic and so they would rather just be dismissive than to take the time to give an honest evaluation of the Bible.

**b** It is interesting that there is no reference to the disciples being in mourning in reaction to the women. People can change their affect so quickly which makes you wonder at their sincerity of suffering. However, what this really points to is how strong the urge is to be right that they can so quickly ignore their suffering to take time to argue. We should especially take note of this because their change is so completely out of context with the general time of mourning.

1006. What did Peter do when he heard the women?

- a. He went to look again and left bewildered**
- b. He rejoiced
- c. He called them crazy fanatics

Luke 24:12 Then arose Peter, and ran unto the sepulchre; and stooping down, he beheld the linen clothes laid by themselves, and departed, wondering in himself at that which was come to pass.

**c** Peter had extra reason to not think that the women were telling wild tales about seeing Jesus because he had been to the tomb already.

**a** With Mary's further report of seeing Jesus, Peter returned to the tomb and wondered at what all this meant.

**b** Peter is not ready for rejoicing. There was going to be some time for him to go through before he is ready to get completely restored in his joy and spiritual engagement. This is something that we should recognize for those who have gone through a time of spiritual suffering whether they bring it on themselves or not.

## 189 - The Disciples on the Road to Emmaus

1007. How did Jesus test the men?

- a. He asked them if they were still believing in Him after what they were told by the women
- b. He asked them to compare what had happened to all that was written in the Old Testament
- c. He held them back from recognizing them and asked them why they were sad**

Luke 24:16,17,22-27 But their eyes were holden that they should not know him.

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17And he said unto them, What manner of communications *are* these that ye have one to another, as ye walk, and are sad?

22Yea, and certain women also of our company made us astonished, which were early at the sepulchre;

23And when they found not his body, they came, saying, that they had also seen a vision of angels, which said that he was alive.

24And certain of them which were with us went to the sepulchre, and found *it* even so as the women had said: but him they saw not.

25Then he said unto them, O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken:

26Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?

27And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself.

**a,b** Although the women had told them that same day about seeing Jesus and He did confront them about what they had heard and seen comparing them to the Scriptures they had been taught by Him, He did not do so immediately.

**c** Jesus gave them, one of whom was married to one of the women who had visited the tomb (Cleopas), an opportunity to express themselves. It is not as though Jesus needed to be informed about what had happened, but this is often very important so that the person you are talking to can be more conscious of just what they need to be told. By not presenting Himself in a way that He was very recognizable, Jesus gave them time to reflect from their hearts about the significance of everything they had been given up to that moment.

1008. How did they react after they realized that they had been talking to Jesus?

- a. They understood why they had such excitement when Jesus had been explaining the Scriptures to them**
- b. They were concerned about how stupid they must have looked and gave up on being disciples
- c. They tried to come up with excuses for why they were not to blame for not realizing they had been talking to Jesus

Luke 24:32 And they said one to another, Did not our heart burn within us, while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the scriptures?

**b** Some people unfairly and selfishly will get offended because they feel they were made to look stupid in front of others when they realize they should have known something or, worse, just because they didn't know something. These disciples were more concerned about the joy of knowing and discovering than they were about how they might have looked to Jesus.

**c** Similar to B, rather than acknowledge that they didn't know something, some people selfishly will try to save face by making excuse, even blaming the person who is trying to explain something to them as if it is their fault for



them not knowing.

**a** A good student will rejoice when they learn something new or deeper. Also, what is noteworthy is that they had good reason to have joy over the experience of having just been with the resurrected Christ, but what they *first* reflected on was the *intellectual*, not the *emotional*. Our joy is founded on the truths and reality of God's Word, which is what Jesus presented to them.

### **190 - Jesus Meets the Disciples, without Thomas**

1009. How did the other disciples respond to the two disciples?

- a. They rejoiced
- b. They didn't believe them either**
- c. They argued that Jesus was not the Messiah

Mark 16:13-14 And they went and told *it* unto the residue: neither believed they them.  
14Afterward he appeared unto the eleven as they sat at meat, and upbraided them with their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they believed not them which had seen him after he was risen.

**a,b,c** Although the disciples were still being slow to figure things out, as in B, and did not turn to rejoicing, as in A, at least they didn't reject all that they had believed as many people do when there is a challenge to their faith they can't deal with.

1010. How did Jesus respond to the disciples in their unbelief?

- a. He argued with them from the Scriptures that He really was resurrected
- b. He upbraided them for their hardness of heart and faithlessness**
- c. He got exasperated and gave up on them

**a** The disciple had had so much Scripture and teaching that there was no need for argumentation; not as though standing in front of them bodily was not sufficient argument in itself.

**c** However, Jesus did not give up on the disciples. In His grace, Jesus is always there to deal with us.

2Tim 2:24,25 And the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all *men*, apt to teach, patient,  
25In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth;

**b** Sometimes, we need more than just extra explanation but a challenge and being held to account for our sloppy thinking.

1011. How did He convince them that He was not a ghost?

He showed them his hands and feet and ate with them

John 20:20 And when he had so said, he shewed unto them *his* hands and his side. Then were the disciples glad, when they saw the Lord.

Luke 24:37-41 But they were terrified and affrighted, and supposed that they had seen a spirit.

38And he said unto them, Why are ye troubled? and why do thoughts arise in your hearts?

39Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself: handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have.

40And when he had thus spoken, he shewed them *his* hands and *his* feet.

41And while they yet believed not for joy, and wondered, he said unto them, Have ye here any meat?

John only speaks of the disciples being glad, but Luke indicates that their gladness was mixed with wonder and a lack of joy. By eating with the disciples, Jesus drove home the reality of His resurrection.

1012. What did Jesus do to charge them to go out and preach?

a. He gave them the Holy Spirit so they could speak in tongues

**b. He reminded them again from the Scriptures how all that had happened was the will of God**

c. He told them they should be ashamed of themselves for not getting to work

Luke 24:44-49 And he said unto them, These *are* the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and *in* the prophets, and *in* the psalms, concerning me.

45Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures,

46And said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day:

47And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.

48And ye are witnesses of these things.

49And, behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high.

John 20:21,22 Then said Jesus to them again, Peace *be* unto you: as *my* Father hath sent me, even so send I you.

22And when he had said this, he breathed on *them*, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost:

**b** Jesus reestablished the work of God on the foundation of the Scriptures and commanded them to go forth with the Gospel.

**c** Jesus did not need to shame them but to merely command them.

**a** Instead Jesus empowered them with the Holy Spirit. The giving of the Spirit at Pentecost was for that specific event, but it was not the first time of

giving the Spirit. God At that moment, at Pentecost, and at other times, God will empower His people for the work they must do when they need it.

## 191 - Thomas Believes

1013. How would Thomas also believe that Jesus was raised?

- a. **He would only believe if he could actually put his hands in Jesus' wounds**
- b. He would only believe if he could see Jesus hands and feet, too
- c. He would never believe because he could always find something else that he would require for faith

John 20:25 The other disciples therefore said unto him, We have seen the Lord. But he said unto them, Except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into his side, I will not believe.

**c** At least Thomas was not as many who will always find something more they demand in order to escape responsibility for what *is* shown to them.

**b** wounds was not something that Thomas thought he would be satisfied with, although in the end he was of a genuine enough heart to acknowledge that that was certainly enough.

**a** A represents the problem of epistemology over what constitutes proof. Those who are strictly evidence based will demand empirical evidence that can be seen and measured. Jesus will address this in the last question.

1014. What convinced Thomas?

- a. The wounds of Jesus
- b. The disciples arguments
- c. **The appearance of Jesus**

John 20:25,29 The other disciples therefore said unto him, We have seen the Lord. But he said unto them, Except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into his side, I will not believe.

29Jesus saith unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed *are* they that have not seen, and *yet* have believed.

**b** Thomas is really no different than the other disciples. They had been slow to believe, too. There arguments were having the same effect on him as the two disciples on the way to Emmaus had had on them.

**a,c** It might seem that seeing Jesus wounds was what convinced Thomas, but Jesus explicitly said that it was because Thomas had seen Him that made the difference. This is to Thomas' credit because anything more than coming face to face with Christ could be considered tempting the Lord.

1015. What is the most blessed way to believe?

- a. Empirical, where you can see Jesus with your own eyes
- b. Deductive, where you start with what seems like a good explanation to how God works
- c. Inductive, where you take the body of prophecy and eye witness testimony and believe**

John 20:29 Jesus saith unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed *are* they that have not seen, and *yet* have believed.

**a,b** These answers represent the three ways in which we arrive at truth. Some are short-sighted, as in A, by only believing what they can see and measure. Others are willing to use logical argumentation but how good that argumentation is depends on *how well grounded* the basics of your argument are. This will depend on what might *seem* like a good idea or whether it is well grounded in sufficient information.

**c** Good reasoning will depend on a body of information from which we may draw the foundation of our arguments. This will include physical, spiritual, experiential evidence, but also needs, most specifically, the information we receive from the body of prophecy and the eye witness testimony found in the Biblical record.

## 192 - Peter's Confession

1016. When Jesus went to Galilee (the Sea of Tiberius), how did the disciples respond to Him?

- a. They rejoiced and were strengthened in their faith
- b. They worshiped Him, but there were some who doubted**
- c. Feeling totally refreshed, they went out to evangelize the world

Matt 28:16-17 Then the eleven disciples went away into Galilee, into a mountain where Jesus had appointed them.

17And when they saw him, they worshipped him: but some doubted.

John 21:1 After these things Jesus shewed himself again to the disciples at the sea of Tiberias; and on this wise shewed he *himself*.

Jesus went to the Sea of Galilee region which was also known as the Sea of Tiberius.

**a,c** What might be interesting about this setting is that this is where Jesus' closest ministry was to His disciples. Judea, on the other hand was always a place of contention. There was probably something refreshing about meeting

at the mountain and then at the beach.

**b** The disciples worshiped Jesus there, but some still had questions. In the totality of this setting, you do not get the idea that the disciples were still quite ready to move forward, although they were getting there.

1017. How did Peter demonstrate his doubt?

- a. He decided to go back to his fishing career**
- b. He decided that Jesus had never really died
- c. He said he was confused

John 21:2,3 There were together Simon Peter, and Thomas called Didymus, and Nathanael of Cana in Galilee, and the *sons* of Zebedee, and two other of his disciples. 3Simon Peter saith unto them, I go a fishing. They say unto him, We also go with thee. They went forth, and entered into a ship immediately; and that night they caught nothing.

**c** Peter did not dwell in confusion. He was a very decisive individual. When Jesus had asked the disciples if any of them were going to leave, Peter answered firmly,

John 6:68-69 Then Simon Peter answered him, Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life.

69And we believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God.

Even in his denial, Peter spoke firmly with conviction with words that he should have gagged on. Peter is being just as decisive here.

**b** At this point, Peter has seen the resurrected Christ. His silence during this time is not a sign of him continuing to deny Christ after his momentary fail at the judgment. It is a sign of him floundering, very much like the time he was sinking in the sea and needed to call out to Jesus.

**a** Peter did not know how to get back to Jesus properly. He made a firm decision to not stand idly by, but to get back to fishing. We might try to find something noble in Peter trying to act responsibly to take charge of his life, but this would ultimately be a mistake. There might be failures in our Christian life but the answer is to get back to serving Jesus responsibly, not quit and pursue something worldly responsibly.

1018. Read Luke 5:4-11. What gave Peter a clue that Jesus was calling from the shore?

- a. He called out and said, "I've come back"
- b. He performed the miracle of the draught of fishes again that He had done when He first called them to forsake all and follow Him**
- c. He became transfigured before his eyes

## THE TRIUMPHAL ENTRY TO THE TRIUMPH OVER DEATH – 683

Luke 5:4-11 Now when he had left speaking, he said unto Simon, Launch out into the deep, and let down your nets for a draught.

5And Simon answering said unto him, Master, we have toiled all the night, and have taken nothing: nevertheless at thy word I will let down the net.

6And when they had this done, they inclosed a great multitude of fishes: and their net brake.

7And they beckoned unto *their* partners, which were in the other ship, that they should come and help them. And they came, and filled both the ships, so that they began to sink.

8When Simon Peter saw *it*, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, Depart from me; for I am a sinful man, O Lord.

9For he was astonished, and all that were with him, at the draught of the fishes which they had taken:

10And so *was* also James, and John, the sons of Zebedee, which were partners with Simon. And Jesus said unto Simon, Fear not; from henceforth thou shalt catch men.

11And when they had brought their ships to land, they forsook all, and followed him.

John 21:5-11 Then Jesus saith unto them, Children, have ye any meat? They answered him, No.

6And he said unto them, Cast the net on the right side of the ship, and ye shall find. They cast therefore, and now they were not able to draw it for the multitude of fishes.

7Therefore that disciple whom Jesus loved saith unto Peter, It is the Lord. Now when Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord, he girt *his* fisher's coat *unto him*, (for he was naked,) and did cast himself into the sea.

8And the other disciples came in a little ship; (for they were not far from land, but as it were two hundred cubits,) dragging the net with fishes.

9As soon then as they were come to land, they saw a fire of coals there, and fish laid thereon, and bread.

10Jesus saith unto them, Bring of the fish which ye have now caught.

11 Simon Peter went up, and drew the net to land full of great fishes, an hundred and fifty and three: and for all there were so many, yet was not the net broken.

**a** This answer is included to make an allusion to the dramatic opportunity Jesus had by reminding us of Gen. Douglas MacArthur when he made his way back to the Philippines in World War II.

Gen. MacArthur's forces in the Philippines were unprepared on Dec. 8th when the Japanese Air Force attacked. They destroyed nearly 50% of the American warplanes at Clark Field, most of which were still on the ground. By January the Japanese had driven the Allied forces onto the Bataan Peninsula and the situation was desperate. Gen. MacArthur was forced to move his headquarters to the island fortress of Corregidor. As the situation deteriorated President Roosevelt ordered the General to leave for his own safety. The General and his family and closest aides were forced to escape in the middle of the night and relocate in Australia. When Gen. MacArthur arrived in Australia he made his famous declaration:

"I came through and I shall return."

On Oct. 20th, 1944 he fulfilled his plans and stepped ashore with the whole world watching. President Roosevelt sent him this telegram congratulating him on his victory.

## THE TRIUMPHAL ENTRY TO THE TRIUMPH OVER DEATH – 684

In fact Gen. MacArthur came ashore while the battle was still raging and against the advice of his senior staff. Always aware of his role as an historic figure, MacArthur delivered his prepared speech with, as Prime Minister Winston Churchill might say, great vigor.

"People of the Philippines: I have returned. By the grace of Almighty God our forces stand again on Philippine soil—soil consecrated in the blood of our two peoples. We have come dedicated and committed to the task of destroying every vestige of enemy control over your daily lives, and of restoring upon a foundation of indestructible strength, the liberties of your people."

**c** Another dramatic way in which Jesus might have presented Himself was the way He appeared at the Transfiguration. In actuality, because of the Resurrection, Jesus *was* in the transfigured state of glory. He was not manifesting Himself in full glory at the moment.

**b** How dramatic it must have been for the disciples as Jesus essentially repeated their calling in much the same way as the first time He had filled their nets.

Luke 5:4-11 Now when he had left speaking, he said unto Simon, Launch out into the deep, and let down your nets for a draught.

5And Simon answering said unto him, Master, we have toiled all the night, and have taken nothing: nevertheless at thy word I will let down the net.

6And when they had this done, they inclosed a great multitude of fishes: and their net brake.

7And they beckoned unto *their* partners, which were in the other ship, that they should come and help them. And they came, and filled both the ships, so that they began to sink.

8When Simon Peter saw *it*, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, Depart from me; for I am a sinful man, O Lord.

9For he was astonished, and all that were with him, at the draught of the fishes which they had taken:

10And so *was* also James, and John, the sons of Zebedee, which were partners with Simon. And Jesus said unto Simon, Fear not; from henceforth thou shalt catch men.

11And when they had brought their ships to land, they forsook all, and followed him.

1019. What did Peter answer when Jesus asked him if he loved (from *agape*) Him?

**a. He said he loved (from *phileo*) with a brotherly love**

b. He said no

c. He said yes, but not as much as fishing or the other disciples

John 21:15 So when they had dined, Jesus saith to Simon Peter, Simon, *son* of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my lambs.

**c** We don't actually know which *these* Jesus was talking about, but it doesn't matter. Peter had committed himself to never forsaking Christ even if all the others would and so Jesus could have been reminding Peter of that. Or, if he loved Him more than going back to fishing. Peter didn't actually say "Yes,"

going to the heart of the matter of his love for Christ.

**b,a** In a way, Peter was actually saying "No" to Jesus. Jesus used one word for love but Peter answered back with another word for love. Peter was being humbled in this moment because He knew that if you are going to say something so boldly you have to be able to back it up. He knew by experience by now that it was possible to fail and that he shouldn't just assume that he was going to be able to succeed just by positive thinking and will-power.

1020. Why did Peter get upset when Jesus asked Him the third time about his love?

- a. **Jesus asked him if he loved Him using the word for brotherly love**
- b. He was getting annoyed that Jesus was badgering him
- c. He was getting upset that Jesus was questioning his love

John 21:17 He saith unto him the third time, Simon, *son* of Jonas, lovest thou me? Peter was grieved because he said unto him the third time, Lovest thou me? And he said unto him, Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee. Jesus saith unto him, Feed my sheep.

**b** It can be irritating to have someone keep asking you about your intentions, but Peter had really failed and needed to really be challenged. If someone can back off under pressure then their intentions were not as firm as they had professed them to be.

**c** Jesus was no longer questioning Peter's love in the sense of *agape* love.

**a** Peter was agitated because he knew that Jesus was calling him on the terms that Peter *was* willing to use. Peter knew that he couldn't claim to love God with *agape*. Peter felt that even though he could not so boldly claim he loved Jesus, he could perhaps be bold enough to love Jesus at least with brotherly love.

1021. What did Jesus want Peter to do because of his love? Feed His lambs and sheep

John 21:15-17 So when they had dined, Jesus saith to Simon Peter, Simon, *son* of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my lambs.

16He saith to him again the second time, Simon, *son* of Jonas, lovest thou me? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my sheep.

17He saith unto him the third time, Simon, *son* of Jonas, lovest thou me? Peter was grieved because he said unto him the third time, Lovest thou me? And he said unto him, Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee. Jesus saith unto him, Feed my sheep.

Because of the experience that Peter had gone through, he is now ready to



feed young and mature believers alike. What is important to notice is that *that* was what was foremost in the mind of Christ for Christian ministry. Jesus did not tell Peter to seclude himself in a monastery so he can contemplate the glory of God, nor to argue theology...although both of these things, except for living in a monastery, are actually important. The idea here is that Christ's heart is for His Gospel and doctrine should be at the heart of ministry. Everything we do should end up in the employ of ministering the Word of God to others.

1022. How was Peter going to die?

- a. In a lion's den
- b. By old age
- c. With his hands stretched out, evidently a crucifixion**

John 21:18-19 Verily, verily, I say unto thee, When thou wast young, thou girdedst thyself, and walkedst whither thou wouldest: but when thou shalt be old, thou shalt stretch forth thy hands, and another shall gird thee, and carry *thee* whither thou wouldest not.

<sup>19</sup>This spake he, signifying by what death he should glorify God. And when he had spoken this, he saith unto him, Follow me.

**a,b,c** Each of us have trials to go through on the way to death. It might be by near death in a lion's den, or plodding through life as we get older, or by martyrdom. Although, as we will see in the next question, Jesus doesn't exactly say what is going to happen to John, but John does make it to old age but not without his own trials.

1023. How did Jesus respond to Peter's concern for what would happen to John?

- a. Don't concern yourself with him, you follow me**
- b. Follow me as long as John does
- c. John will be raptured

John 21:20-23 Then Peter, turning about, seeth the disciple whom Jesus loved following; which also leaned on his breast at supper, and said, Lord, which is he that betrayeth thee?

<sup>21</sup>Peter seeing him saith to Jesus, Lord, and what *shall* this man *do*?

<sup>22</sup>Jesus saith unto him, If I will that he tarry till I come, what *is that* to thee? follow thou me.

<sup>23</sup>Then went this saying abroad among the brethren, that that disciple should not die: yet Jesus said not unto him, He shall not die; but, If I will that he tarry till I come, what *is that* to thee?

**c** Jesus was not committing to what would happen to John though some assumed that he might live till the Rapture. It is interesting that John *did* see the Rapture even though it was only in a heavenly vision.

**a,b** Our commitment to Christ should not depend on what others are doing.

Jesus redirected Peter's attention to focus on just doing what *he* was called to do. Too many people let others' shortcomings derail them. Conversely, they might get sidelined because they feel that others' successes make them look like failures.

1024. How much information do we have from all four Gospels about Jesus?
- Everything He ever did on earth
  - An infinitesimal amount
  - Enough to provide for thousands of books to be written about Jesus**

John 21:25 And there are also many other things which Jesus did, the which, if they should be written every one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written. Amen.

**a** Not everything that Jesus said or did was recorded. Sermons, lessons, and events at best only give the highlights of His life and ministry. That is why it has been necessary to compare all the Gospels to get even just a little more information that will help us make more critical interpretations.

**b** When compared to what has been digested about Jesus, the Gospels contain only an infinitesimal amount of information.

**c** C is assuredly an understatement about what has been written about Christ. Probably even more important to note is that each and every believer has been a testimony about Jesus and His power so that we can safely say that billions of books have been written, some on paper but most on the hearts of men.

## 193 - The Great Commission

Forms of the Great Commission are also contained in Mark 16:15-18, Luke 24:46-49, John 20:21-22 (covered in section 190), and Acts 1:8.

1025. What authority did Jesus have to commission the disciples (look up the definition of power used in Matt 28:18)?
- The power of love
  - The power of strength
  - The power of authority**

Matt 28:18 And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.

**a,b,c** Although we will go out exercising the power of love in the strength of the Holy Spirit, we have a *moral* authority that commands us to go. There is

nothing wrong with the first two senses of power, but Jesus' focus is on the power of going out because it is the *right* thing to do. We might not always feel very loving or very strong. When that happens, we can move forward simply because we should obey the command to go.

1026. What are the three parts of the Great Commission?

Teach all nations (make disciples, which is done by soul winning)

Baptize the new disciples

Teach them what Christ has commanded (teachings from the Bible)

Matt 28:19-20 Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:

20Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, *even* unto the end of the world. Amen.

The commission of Christ is reflected in three functions of the church: Evangelism, Discipleship, and Fellowship. If a church emphasizes one of these to the exclusion of the others it will become unbalanced. A church that overemphasizes evangelism runs the risk of being doctrinally shallow and open to the corruption of doctrinal error. A church that overemphasizes doctrine runs the risk of getting old and dying by not having any new members to replenish it. A church that overemphasizes fellowship runs the risk worshipping God, becoming worldly as a party church. It is interesting that when someone claims they don't need the church to follow Christ that if they obeyed this teaching of Jesus they would end up creating a church.

1027. What is the judgment for not being baptized?

a. Damnation

**b. Nothing**

Mark 16:16 He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.

While this verse tells us something about believers who have been baptized (they are saved), it does not say anything about believers who have not been baptized. In order for this verse to teach that baptism is necessary for salvation, a third statement would be necessary, viz., "He who believes and is not baptized will be condemned" or "He who is not baptized will be condemned." But, of course, neither of these statements is found in the verse.

Consider this example: "Whoever believes and lives in Kansas will be saved, but those that do not believe are condemned." This statement is strictly true; Kansans who believe in Jesus will be saved. However, to say that only those believers who live in Kansas are saved is an illogical and false assumption. The statement does not say a believer must live in Kansas in order to go to heaven. Similarly, Mark 16:16 does not say a believer must be baptized. The verse states a fact about baptized believers (they will be saved), but it says exactly nothing about believers who have not been baptized. There may be believers who do not dwell in Kansas, yet they are still saved;

and there may be believers who have not been baptized, yet they, too, are still saved.

The one specific condition required for salvation is stated in the second part of Mark 16:16: “Whoever does not believe will be condemned.” In essence, Jesus has given both the positive condition of belief (whoever believes will be saved) and the negative condition of unbelief (whoever does not believe will be condemned). Therefore, we can say with absolute certainty that belief is the requirement for salvation. More importantly, we see this condition restated positively and negatively throughout Scripture (John 3:16; John 3:18; John 3:36; John 5:24; John 6:53-54; John 8:24; Acts 16:31).

Jesus mentions a condition related to salvation (baptism) in Mark 16:16. But a related condition should not be confused with a requirement. For example, having a fever is related to being ill, but a fever is not required for illness to be present. Nowhere in the Bible do we find a statement such as “whoever is not baptized will be condemned.” Therefore, we cannot say that baptism is necessary for salvation based on Mark 16:16 or any other verse.

– <https://www.gotquestions.org/baptism-Mark-16-16.html>

1028. What blessing would the apostles have in the early church?

**a. Miracles and tongues**

b. The Rapture

c. The responsibility for creating new doctrines

Mark 16:17-18 And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues;

18They shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover.

**a,c** C is a reference to those in Christianity who claimed that anything they came up with must be true because the church is God's authority on earth. Such churches use circular reasoning. The apostles did not become an authority which they handed down to their successors. They were *under* authority to *apply* Biblical teaching to the church. The signs and wonders they performed were a sign confirmation that God was *using* them, not that they were then given power *over* the church.

**b** Although the apostles expected the Rapture in their time, they were not given a special opportunity ahead of the rest of the church.

## The Ascension

### 194 - The Ascension

1029. How would the disciples start off their ministry?

- a. **With power from the Holy Ghost at Pentecost**
- b. With the ability to talk with the angels in their heavenly language
- c. With the power to set up God's Millennial Kingdom

Acts 1:6-8 When they therefore were come together, they asked of him, saying, Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?

7And he said unto them, It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power.

8But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.

**b** Having the ability to talk with the angels in their heavenly language is a reference to the mistaken notion that having the power of the Holy Ghost, especially in the baptism of the Holy Spirit, results in being able to speak in tongues. Tongues are not a heavenly language, as will be exhibited at Pentecost when the languages are named that the apostles and others used. Being baptized with the Holy Ghost will always be associated with preaching with power.

**c** The apostles wanted to know if the kingdom was going to be set up at this time, but Christ indicated that not only was it *not* being set up at that time, but they weren't even allowed to inquire when it *would* be.

**a** What they *were* promised was the power to move forward in ministry wherever that would lead to.

1030. What might the progression of their witness imply?

- a. They should run all over the world and try to start churches
- b. They should set up a headquarters that all the churches should answer to
- c. **They should go locally first, to nearby areas next, and then to the foreign mission fields**

Acts 1:8 But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.

**a,c** The problem with A is the idea of just going out willy-nilly without a

plan. God's work is something that should be done with passion, but not just passion. There should be a business like sense in starting churches. It might not be possible to operate like a business with projections for growth depending on the psychology of advertising, but nevertheless there should be a sense of planning and intentionality in the Lord's work. God's method for church growth was to move out steadily and geographically throughout the world. There was a side reason for theologically doing this since the Gospel was to go to the Jew first and then the Gentile.

**b** The kind of planning that a business might do is exemplified in B, where a headquarters is set up for all the churches to answer to. This is not the business model for God's work. This has been done in creating denominations and state churches where the problem of centralized governance creates authoritarianism. Loosely speaking, the business model that might be similar for churches is that of an employee controlled franchise (there are problems with this in that God retains actual control).

1031. What assurance did the angels standing by give the disciples?

- a. They would see Jesus the next day
- b. They would see Jesus in heaven
- c. They would see Jesus coming in the clouds back again (which is the Rapture)**

Acts 1:10,11 And while they looked stedfastly toward heaven as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel;

11 Which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven.

**b** The angels did not treat the afterlife like that was all there was to look forward to. This would be a problem because this might lead to the mistake that nothing is going to ever change here on earth and that the only way to tell that there is more to this life is to die.

**a,c** The angels did not respond to what is more normal for people which is to have their immediate concerns met. God's work might seem like it is going on forever, but it is only because of our difference of perception of time.

2Pet 3:8 But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day *is* with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.

We, like them, might be tempted to rush God's work in several ways. We could be impatient and become discouraged with the work we have to do as a church. We could be so Rapture focused that we do not plan properly now. We could be so Rapture focused that we could give up on our responsibilities, even legal, social, and family responsibilities, because it might not seem like they matter since we are going to be out of here soon. We

have to plan to be in the work for the long haul.

1032. What did the disciples do after Jesus left?

- a. **They went back to Jerusalem and worshiped with a new energy**
- b. They went out into the world right away and started churches
- c. They waited around to see if Jesus was going to magically appear again

Mark 16:19,20 So then after the Lord had spoken unto them, he was received up into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God.

20And they went forth, and preached every where, the Lord working with *them*, and confirming the word with signs following. Amen.

Luke 24:52,53 And they worshipped him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy:

53And were continually in the temple, praising and blessing God. Amen.

**b** The disciples had the sense to obey Christ, which was a good thing because they would have missed the empowerment they would need.

**c** Since the Resurrection, Jesus had appeared several times suddenly without explanation. The only way they would have made the mistake to assume that He might grace them with yet another appearance is if they didn't fully appreciate and ignore what He had just told them. This is not so unreasonable to think that people might do this because there are always claims of Christ appearing to people.

**a** What the disciples *did* do was to go back and worship with an invigorated joy for serving God. Worship and glorifying God is always important first in our service to Him.





# APPENDICES

## Miracles of Jesus

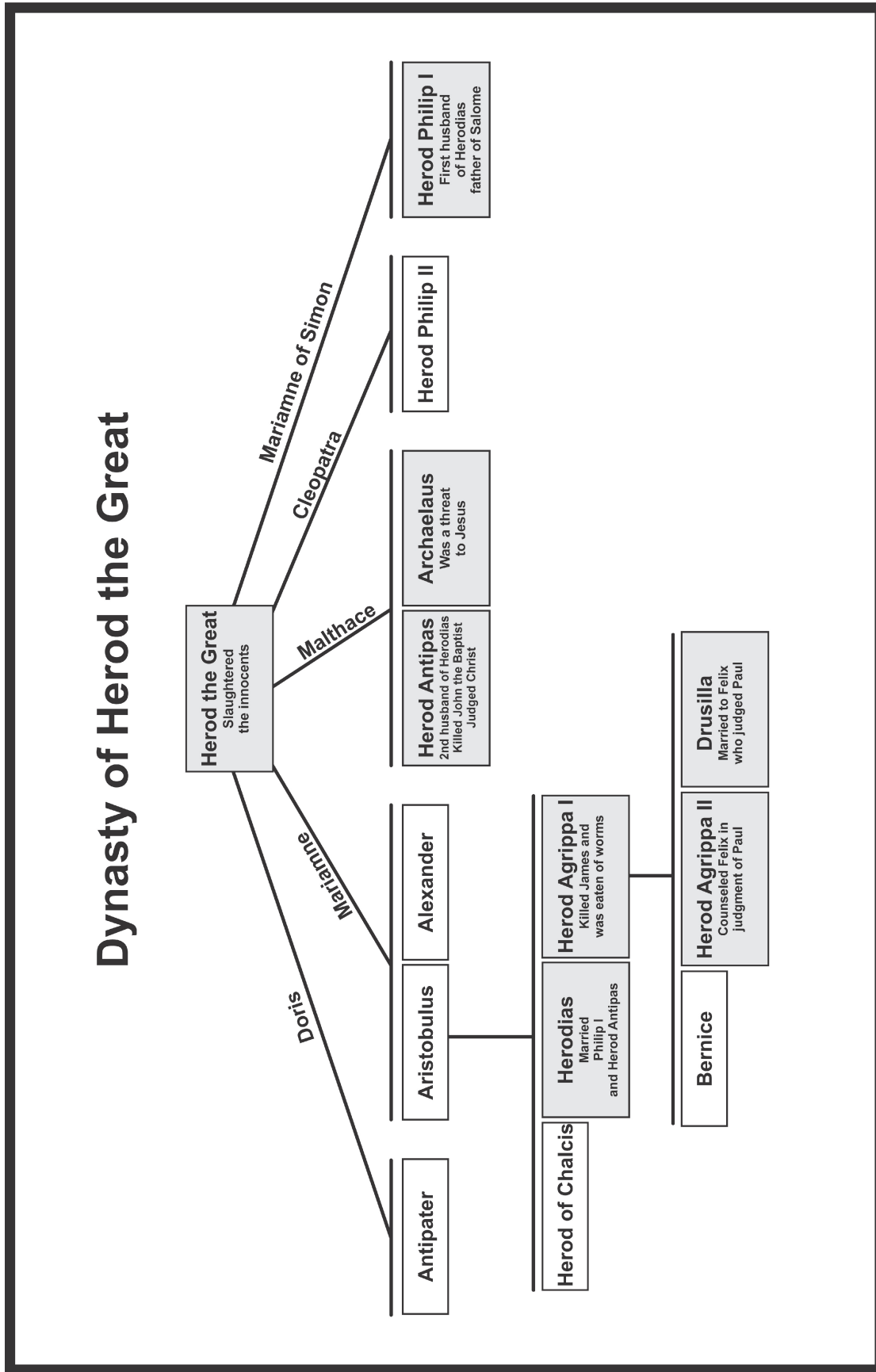
### Miracles of Healing

- Lepers cleansed: Matthew 8:1–4; Mark 1:41–45; Luke 5:12–14; 17:11–19
- Blind receive sight: Matthew 9:27–31; Mark 8:22–26; 10:46–52 Luke 18:35–43 John 9:1–38
- People are healed from a distance: Matthew 8:5–13; Luke 7:2–10; John 4:46–54
- Peter's mother-in-law healed: Matthew 8:5–13; Mark 1:29–31
- Paralyzed man healed: Matthew 9:1–8; Mark 2:1–12; Luke 5:17–26
- People touching Jesus' clothing are healed: Matthew 9:20–23; 14:35–36; Mark 5:25–34; 6:53–56; Luke 8:43–48
- Various healings on the Sabbath: Mark 3:1–6; Luke 6:6–1; 13:10–17; 14:1–6; John 5:1–18
- Deaf and mute man healed: Luke 7:31–37
- Cut-off ear is repaired: Luke 22:47–53
- Demons cast out (and specific physical ailments accompanying the demons healed): Matthew 9:32–33; 17:14–18; Mark 9:14–29; Luke 9:37–42
- Demons cast out (no specific physical ailments mentioned): Matthew 8:28–34; 15:21–28; Mark 1:23–27; 5:1–20; 7:24–30; Luke 4:31–37; 8:26–39
- Multitudes healed: Matthew 9:35; John 7:18–23
- The dead raised to life: Matthew 9:18–26; 15:29–31; Mark 1:32–34; 3:9–12; 5:21–43; Luke 6:17–19; 8:40–56; John 7:11–17; 11:1–45

### Other Miracles

- Multitudes fed (food multiplies): Matthew 14:13–21; 15:32–39; Mark 6:33–44; 8:1–10; Luke 9:12–17; John 6:1–14
- Walks on water: Matthew 14:22–33 (Peter too); Mark 6:45–52; John 6:15–21
- Calms a storm: Matthew 8:22–25; Mark 4:35–41; Luke 8:22–25
- Fills nets with fish: Luke 5:8–11; John 21:1–14
- Peter catches fish with money in its mouth (for the temple tax): Matthew 17:24–27
- Turns water to wine: John 2:1–11
- Cursed tree withers: Matthew 21:18–22; Mark 11:12–25

## Dynasty of Herod the Great



## People, Sects, Factions, and Powers in the Life of Christ

### Jews

Because John referred to the conflict between Jesus and the Jews, it has been suggested that John's Gospel is anti-Semitic. There are a number of references in which John records the importance of the basis of Israel for the Gospel message. The use of the word *Jews* does not refer to all Jews, but merely to the *Judeans* as compared to the *Galileans* or the *Samaritans*. Some of the social and religious difference between the southern province of Judea and the Galilee region can be characterized by the article below. *PZ*

Racially the area of the former Northern Kingdom of Israel had had, ever since the Assyrian conquest in the eighth century B.C., a more mixed population, within which more conservative Jewish areas (like Nazareth and Capernaum) stood in close proximity to largely pagan cities, of which in the first century the new Hellenistic centers of Tiberias and Sepphoris were the chief examples.

Geographically Galilee was separated from Judea by the non-Jewish territory of Samaria, and from Perea in the southeast by the Hellenistic settlements of Decapolis.

Politically Galilee had been under separate administration from Judea during almost all its history since the tenth century B.C. (apart from a period of "reunification" under the Maccabees), and in the time of Jesus it was under a (supposedly) native Herodian prince, while Judea and Samaria had since A.D. 6 been under the direct rule of a Roman prefect.

Economically Galilee offered better agricultural and fishing resources than the more mountainous territory of Judea, making the wealth of some Galileans the envy of their southern neighbors.

Culturally Judeans despised their northern neighbors as country cousins, their lack of Jewish sophistication being compounded by their greater openness to Hellenistic influence.

Linguistically Galileans spoke a distinctive form of Aramaic whose slovenly consonants (they dropped their aitches!) were the butt of Judean humor.

Religiously the Judean opinion was that Galileans were lax in their observance of proper ritual, and the problem was exacerbated by the distance of Galilee from the temple and the theological leadership, which was focused in Jerusalem.

The result, he says, is that even an impeccably Jewish Galilean in first-century Jerusalem was not among his own people; he was as much a foreigner as an Irishman in London or a Texan in New York. His accent would immediately mark him out as "not one of us," and all the communal prejudice of the supposedly superior culture of the capital city would stand against his claim to be heard even as a prophet, let alone as the "Messiah," a title which, as everyone knew, belonged to Judea (cf. John 7:40-42).

– [www.thegospelcoalition.org/blogs/justin-taylor/7-differences-between-galilee-and-judea-in-the-time-of-jesus/](http://www.thegospelcoalition.org/blogs/justin-taylor/7-differences-between-galilee-and-judea-in-the-time-of-jesus/)

The following entries are from *Who's Who in the New Testament*. This book is available as an Acrobat download from:

– <https://b-ok.cc/book/896437/ffdf0a>

## Galileans

(Gk. from the Heb. 'circuit') The mixed population of the Roman-ruled district between the Mediterranean and the Lake of Galilee, ruled successively by Herod Antipas (4 BC–AD 39) from Sepphoris and then Tiberias, by Agrippa I (39–44) and, after a short time within the Roman province of Syria, by Agrippa II (48–53).

The name Galilee, from the Hebrew *galil* meaning 'circuit', is applied to any welldefined region. Galilee of the Gentiles, *Galil ha-Goim*, the 'Region of the Gentiles', was the name given to the northern province of Israel, because it was surrounded on three sides by foreigners. Following the return from Babylon, the district remained largely Gentile, but by the 1st century BC was thoroughly Judaized. The words 'of the Gentiles' were dropped from the title of the district, which then became proudly known as 'The Region'.

The most striking feature of Galilee, in the time of Jesus, was the system of roads crossing the district in all directions, from the Levant to Damascus and the East, from Jerusalem to Antioch, from the Nile to the Euphrates. The fertility and the good communications of the district resulted in the growth of a considerable population, engaged in local industry and commerce, concentrated largely upon the lakeside. Unlike Judea, whose desert borders exerted an austere influence on that province, Galilee was surrounded by pagan and colonial townships, which poured upon Galilee the full influence of Greek life and leisure.

All these features—the wealth of water, the extreme fertility, the great highways, the considerable population, the Greek influences—were crowded into the Rift Valley, in tropical heat, round a blue and lovely lake. These were the conditions in which Jesus taught and worked—and under which Christianity began to grow. It takes very little imagination today, as one looks down on the rather sleepy and deserted lakeside, to picture the nine cities round the lake, each of not less than 15,000 inhabitants. Of these cities, Tiberias and Magdala were on the western shore, Gadara and Hippos on the eastern hills, Bethsaida, Capernaum, and Chorazin to the north, but the remaining two are unlocated.

The catalogue of towns around the lake conjures up for us an almost unbroken line of buildings. Little remains of the city walls, houses, synagogues, wharves, and factories; of the castle, temples, and theatres of Tiberias, the bath-houses at Hammath, the hippodrome of Tarichae, the amphitheatre and the Greek villas at Gadara. All this was once imposed on the simple open-air life of fields, roads, and boats that we see in the Gospels.

Jesus drew his disciples from the hardy fisherfolk of Galilee. He called them out of a highly temperamental and turbulent population, concentrated within the deep trench and intense heat of the Rift Valley, which further served to inflame the spirit of nationalism and revolt among the Galileans. Jesus, however, went to a trade which had no private wrongs and which was content to work from day to day, whose members had the time and opportunity to escape from the crowds to the fishing-grounds out on the lake in peace. So it is not the jargon of the fanatics or brigands, or of the Zealots hiding in the highlands of Galilee, but the speech of the fishermen and their simple craft that have become the language and symbolism of Christianity. Even the Gospels reflect a Judean disrespect for the rugged rustics and strangers of Galilee, referring to Peter's Galilean patois, which betrayed him at the trial of Jesus. Pilate's mingling of Galilean blood with their sacrifices was a foretaste of the frightful suppression of the Zealot revolt in 66, when the lake ran red with the blood of Galileans.

At Bethphage on the Mount of Olives there was a Galilean settlement, indicated by the discovery of a 1st-century ossuary with the name 'Galileans', in 1923. The inhabitants of Bethany were also mostly Galileans, therefore Jesus when visiting Mary, Martha and Lazarus stayed with his compatriots. This fact may also explain the ease with which the disciples were able to procure the donkey for the triumphal entry of Jesus into Jerusalem, on Palm Sunday. The men at the crossroads were probably fellow-Galileans.

## **Herodians**

The political party so named for its support of the Herod family is described by Josephus, the Jewish historian, as wanting to put Herod on the throne instead of the Maccabean Antigonus in 40 BC. The Herodians are mentioned on two occasions in the Gospels; on both they are linked with the Pharisees in opposing Jesus. Evidently the religious leaders wanted to be rid of a popular leader who was challenging the whole system of Jewish religious and social control. Therefore they were willing to join hands with the political forces which wished to maintain the Herodian dynasty and the Pax Romana.

On the first occasion that the Herodians are mentioned, Jesus had cured a man with a withered hand, on the Sabbath and within the synagogue at Capernaum. This incident aroused the anger of the Pharisees, for healing was classified as work and Jesus had technically defiled the Sabbath. Mark says that the Pharisees at once began to plot with the Herodians to destroy Jesus. On the second occasion, within the Temple at Jerusalem, Jesus had just told the provocative and transparently clear parable of the 'Wicked Husbandmen'. This parable was an allegory accusing the leaders of the Jews down the centuries of persecuting the prophets and finally of planning to reject and kill the Messiah himself. In order to trap Jesus into convicting himself of treason, the Herodians and Pharisees again combined, this time to ask his opinion of paying taxes to Caesar. The tax in question was a tribute collected from each inhabitant of Judea, Samaria, and Idumea and much resented by the Jewish population. Its payment would be supported by the Herodians, who were careful to cultivate the Roman favour upon which the Herodian dynasty depended. The tax was paid with a silver denarius which, in contrast to the copper coins put out by the procurator of Judea, bore the name or head of the emperor. Anyone who recommended the payment of so unpopular a tax would have been rejected by the crowds, but to repudiate payment was tantamount to treason, for which Jesus could have been immediately arrested. His answer, however, took the Pharisees and Herodians completely by surprise. "Why put me to the test, you hypocrites? Show me the money for the tax." And they brought him a coin. And Jesus said to them, "Whose likeness and inscription is this?" They said, "Caesar's." Then he said to them, "Render therefore to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's."

## **Pharisees**

(Gk. 'separated ones') At the time of Jesus, the Pharisees were the most powerful religious group among the Jews and his constant opponents. Jesus continually denounced their external observance of the Law, their multitude of petty traditions, and particularly their self-righteousness.

The Pharisees were the successors of the 'Holy Ones' who had fought for religious freedom during the Greek occupation of Palestine from 332 BC. Like the 'Holy Ones' the Pharisees had 'separated' themselves by their pious efforts to maintain the Law. Though they were themselves mostly middle-class, they had become essentially the people's party, very different from the Sadducees, the party of the chief priests, who held aloof from the passionate enthusiasm of the Pharisees for righteousness. Unlike the Sadducees, they believed in angels and spirits as intermediaries between God and man, in resurrection after death, and in retribution in the world to come. Also unlike the Sadducees, the Pharisees held that the Tradition of the Elders was an authoritative interpretation of the Old Testament Law of Moses. They would not revolt against Gentile rule; if God was in charge of history, they held, it was not man's place to force his hand. Whereas the Zealot party burned to establish a national kingdom by force of arms, the Pharisees waited for God's intervention through the Messiah.

Though probably few in number—perhaps 6,000 at the time of Jesus—the Pharisees were much admired by the man in the street for their austerity, both for their hatred of pagan rule and for their challenge to the rule of the chief priests. They fostered synagogue life and worship, calling people back to a study of the Law and its application to their own time. They consisted mainly of businessmen, shopkeepers, and teachers—but with some priests also.

Their 'fellowships' held regular meetings and prescribed rules for the admission of new members. These rules included the observance of seven 'hours of prayer', the Pharisaic interpretation of a tithe of one-tenth of all possessions to the Temple, fasting twice a week on the days when traditionally Moses ascended and came down from Mount Sinai, and performing scores of ritual washings and offerings, besides the complicated code of food laws and Sabbath regulations. All these were, of course, additions to the Mosaic commandments of the Law. The Pharisees regarded with scorn all those who did not come up to their own rigorous standards. Such people the Pharisees relegated to the depressed class of 'sinners', contact with whom rendered the Pharisee himself 'unclean'.

#### OPPOSITION-GROUP TO JESUS

In the Gospel narratives the Pharisees are often linked with the Scribes, through whom they exerted their influence upon the minds of the people, for the Scribes presided in the local courts and taught in the local schools. It was inevitable that many Pharisees were bitterly opposed to Jesus, and constantly denounced by him. They rejected his claims to Messiahship. (John 9:16, 22) He condemned their ostentation, their hypocrisy, their doctrine of salvation by works, their impenitence and their lovelessness, which were so far from his own life and his teaching of the free forgiveness and love of God, culminating as it did in his death on the cross.

In the Gospels, the picture of the Pharisee is painted almost completely black and reflects the bitterness which later developed between the Christian Church and Rabbinic Judaism. This is particularly the case with Matthew's Gospel, where the denunciations of Scribes and Pharisees are especially virulent. But it is unlikely that these fierce and wholesale criticisms were directed by Jesus himself against the whole party, rather than against unworthy members of it. Indeed, some Pharisees played vital roles in the early Christian Church, including Nicodemus (John 3:1; 7:50, 51; 19:39), Gamaliel, who publicly defended the Apostles before the Sanhedrin (Acts 5:34–40), Joseph of Arimathea (Matt. 27:57; Mark 15:43; Luke 23:50; John 19:38), and certainly the Apostle Paul. (Phil. 3:5) Paul uses the title 'Pharisee' of himself, as a name of honour and respect: 'As to the law [I am] a Pharisee.'

The conflict between Jesus and the Pharisees occurred mainly in Galilee. During the passion of Jesus in Jerusalem, they remained in the background, the lead in the attack upon Jesus being taken by the Sadducees, although they combined with the Herodians to ask him a question about the payment of taxes to Rome. Luke records three occasions when Jesus was invited to meals in the houses of Pharisees. His conversation in the house of Simon the Pharisee (Luke 7:36) sums up the difference between his philosophy and that of those Pharisees who were scandalized at the company he kept.

On this occasion a woman with a bad reputation came in and, sitting behind Jesus anointed his feet, thereby according Jesus the treatment which Simon, his host, had neglected to offer his guest. When Simon criticized Jesus, thinking that surely he should have recognized the kind of woman she was and driven her away, Jesus replied with this parable: "A certain creditor had two debtors; one owed five hundred denarii, and the other fifty. When they could not pay, he forgave them both. Now which of them will love him more?" Simon answered, "The one, I suppose, to whom he forgave more." Then Jesus compared Simon's own lack of courtesy with the almost embarrassing attentions of the woman, explaining: 'Her sins, which are many, are forgiven, for she loved much; but he who is forgiven little, loves little.'

#### **Publicans**

Publicans, so called from the Latin *publicani*, referring to people employed in collecting the state, or public, revenue. The collection of taxes within the provinces of the Roman Empire was auctioned in Rome to financial companies. The highest bid was accepted, and the companies sold their rights to collect in different areas of the province to smaller speculators. The result was often an exorbitant rate of taxation, far exceeding the original bid to the imperial colonial administration.

Consequently the publicans were highly unpopular members of society, particularly as they could call upon the support of the Roman colonial governor and his military forces. Those Jews who were willing to earn a living by extorting high rates from their fellow compatriots, in order to pay their Roman masters, were doubly despised and disliked. Moreover, as their business transactions brought them into close and constant touch with Gentiles and they were deemed to be dishonest anyway, publicans were regarded as sinners and outside the Law.

The chief source of taxation tended to be the frontier customs, which were usually collected in the towns astride the main roads leading to the frontiers. Thus Capernaum and Jericho were both towns in which Jesus was likely to meet publicans, besides in Jerusalem and the provincial towns.

The Jordan River formed the natural frontier between the territory of Herod Antipas in Galilee and that of Herod Philip in Gaulanitis. Capernaum, the nearest lakeside town west of the frontier, was the natural frontier customs-post astride the main road to Damascus. Jericho was the town nearest the river and on the main trade route to Gerasa, Philadelphia, and the southern towns of the Decapolis. It was here that Jesus met the tax superintendent Zacchaeus. Indeed, it has been recently suggested that the present name of the site of Capernaum, 'Tel-Hum', may be a corruption of the Greek word for 'custom house', telonium.

Certainly there must have been a busy harbour with boats from neighbouring ports loading and off-loading the dried fish and local wares of Galilee, the silks and spices of Damascus, the fruit and produce of the plain of Gennesaret. It was here perhaps by the quayside or the roadside that the shadow of Jesus fell across the customs ledger of Matthew, the publican. In the words of Matthew's Gospel: 'He said to him, "Follow me." And he rose and followed him.'

### **Sadducees**

From 'followers of Zadok' [Solomon's High Priest], the Sadducees were a politico-religious party, holding the highest offices in church and state. They were prepared to compromise, for the sake of peace, with the Roman occupation forces, and consequently they frowned on the passive resistance of the Pharisees and on the aggressive nationalism of the Zealot freedom fighters. In return, they were allowed by the Romans to retain their power in the Temple and in the supreme Council, the Sanhedrin, and they guarded their position zealously. Indeed, the office of high priest was the appointment of Rome—much to the shame of the Jews—but Annas the Sadducee had so exerted his influence that six high priests in succession had been members of his own family, and Caiaphas, the seventh, was his own son-in-law. The importance of Caiaphas in the trial of Jesus gives some indication of the intrigue, the prestige, and the privileges of the Sadducees.

The high priests held the monopoly of the sale of animals for sacrifice, for which payment had to be made in Temple currency and on which they levied a rate of exchange. They also levied a tithe, or one-tenth of all their possessions, for the upkeep of the Temple, paid by every Jewish member of the population. The 'cleansing of the Temple' by Jesus represented a dangerous threat to both their authority and to their vested interests. This was the one occasion when Jesus accompanied his teaching with a violent demonstration to support his words: 'It is written, "My house shall be a house of prayer"; but you make it a den of robbers.' This undoubtedly took place within the eastern arcade of the Temple area, called Solomon's Porch, which was used at that time for limited public commerce.

### **WORLDLY SELF-INTEREST**

The worldly interests of the Sadducees led them in the same direction as the principles of their religion. Their very conservatism did not allow them to appreciate new doctrines such as resurrection. As wealthy aristocrats enjoying a privileged position in both church and state, they were indifferent to any hopes of a delivering Messiah. They were satisfied with their security under Roman patronage, and were very material in their pleasures. They did not believe in any after-life, except among the shades of Sheol, and so they set out to enjoy this

life. For them there was no prospect of rewards or punishment in any future existence, nor was there time for troublesome traditions on earth. The Law was enough for them; there was no need to accept the new ideals of angels and spirits mediating between God and man. Scripture was the only authority for them, the 'hardhearted rich', even if the 'pious poor' Pharisees preferred to saddle themselves with both scripture and tradition—even if, too, the masses of the people followed the Pharisees. They, the Sadducees, advocated a solid common-sense morality and political reality: for them any form of enthusiasm was unnecessary.

Jesus had few dealings with the Sadducees; they were not as influential in Galilee as they were in Jerusalem. John does not mention the Sadducees at all, but Matthew, Mark, and Luke all relate the question of the Sadducees to Jesus, on the day following his Palm Sunday triumphal entry into Jerusalem. Following the Pharisees' question about the tribute money, and before the Scribes' question about the primary commandment, the Sadducees put their question about the resurrection. They probably hoped to ridicule both Jesus and the Pharisees by this story, for they did not believe in any resurrection.

'Teacher,' they asked, 'Moses wrote for us that if a man's brother dies, having a wife but no children, the man must take the wife and raise up children for his brother. Now there were seven brothers; the first took a wife, and died without children; and the second and the third took her, and likewise all seven left no children and died. Afterward the woman also died. In the resurrection, therefore, whose wife will the woman be? For the seven had her as wife.' Perhaps this was a stock question of the Sadducees; Jesus answered it in God's words to Moses himself: 'But that the dead are raised, even Moses showed, in the passage about the bush, where he calls the Lord the God of Abraham and the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob. Now he is not God of the dead, but of the living; for all live to him.' (Luke 20:28–38)

#### AGENTS OF JESUS'S DEATH

Although the Sadducees are not often mentioned by name in the story of the passion, they are always included in references to the high priests. Caiaphas, as a matter of historical fact, was the architect of Jesus's crucifixion, and it is probable that it was the action of the Sadducees in the Sanhedrin that secured the conviction. It had been the Pharisees and high priests who had asked in the Council, when confronted by Jesus's progress in preaching, despite their efforts to trip him up, 'What are we to do? For this man performs many signs. If we let him go on thus, every one will believe in him, and the Romans will come and destroy both our holy place and our nation.' It had been Caiaphas the Sadducee who replied, 'It is expedient for you that one man should die for the people.' (John 11:47–50)

That meant, of course, let him be handed over to the Roman authority, for in any case the Jews could not execute him. So in one act the Sadducees would destroy Jesus, put the blame on Rome, and pretend their own loyalty to Roman law and order. And from the day of that plot, 'they took counsel how to put him to death'. (John 11:53)

### **Samaritans**

The capital of the northern kingdom of Israel, built by Omri, father of Ahab, stands on a hill 'bought from Shemer for two talents of silver' (hence the name Samaria), and is still to be seen a few miles north of the modern city of Nablus. The name Samaria came to be used for the district occupied by the ten northern tribes, bounded by Galilee, Jordan, and Judea.

During the lifetime of Jesus, Samaria was ruled until 4 BC by Herod the Great; he left it to Archelaus, who was deposed in AD 6 by the Romans, and they in turn appointed a series of procurators, answerable to the governor of the Roman province of Syria.

The history of Samaria is that of five distinct occupations: 1) Israelite, 2) Assyrian, 3) Persian, 4) Greek, 5) Roman. The Israelite city and royal capital of the northern kingdom was destroyed in 721 BC. The Assyrian colonial and administrative centre of Sargon for the next 400 years left little trace but for some crude walling on the acropolis. The Assyrian conquerors deported the leading inhabitants of the city, but imported settlers from



Mesopotamia, who intermarried with the surviving population. These settlers practiced their own religion, but were later instructed by an Israelite priest sent from Babylon. When, some two centuries later, the Jewish exiles were allowed to return and re-occupy Jerusalem, they found Judah under the administration of the governor of Samaria, appointed by the Persian Empire. They found their lack of political independence hard to bear, particularly as their religious scruples were offended by what they considered a debased form of Judaism, diluted with Assyrian customs, practiced among the Samaritans. Nehemiah gained independence for Judah with its newly built Temple in Jerusalem.

The Samaritans built their own sanctuary on Mount Gerizim in about 400 BC, overlooking the ancient sanctuary at Shechem, Jacob's Well, and the traditional tomb of Joseph, from whom they claimed descent. By the 1st century, this sanctuary was in ruins. When the Jewish community accepted within their scriptures the Prophets and other writings of the Old Testament, the Samaritans did not do so, but confirmed their loyalty to the Five Books of Moses alone.

### Sanhedrin

This supreme assembly of post-exilic Judaism was an aristocratic senate, composed of representatives of the priesthood and laity who from the 4th century BC, in the Persian and Greek occupations, came to the forefront of the Jewish people. The Sanhedrin at Jerusalem was in origin and effect the first authority in the land, and the highest court of law to which the provincial courts turned for decisions in particularly difficult cases. The Sanhedrin's competence and reputation extended throughout world Jewry, though its greatest influence was in Judea. They held court at Jerusalem, within the Temple area, on the south of the priests' court in the 'Chamber of Hewn Stone'. The Temple police were at their disposal and probably effected the arrests of Jesus in Gethsemane and of the Apostle Paul within the Temple courts. The Sanhedrin also examined candidates for ordination to the priesthood, checking the purity of their priestly descent and their bodily fitness—as well as their other qualifications.

When Judea became a Roman province in AD 6, the Sanhedrin became the chief political agency, controlling the affairs of the eleven districts into which the Romans divided the land, and linking every town and village administratively to Jerusalem. The presidency of the Sanhedrin, as a matter of privilege, belonged to the high priest. The Council consisted of 71 members, falling into three main groups: the chief priests (sometimes called the 'rulers', Acts 4:5, 6), the elders (sometimes called the 'principal men of the people', Luke 19:47), and the scribes. These three groups or grades correspond with those who questioned the authority of Jesus for cleansing the Temple. (Mark 11:27) The first group—the chief priests—included those who held the most important offices in the Temple: the anointed high priest and retired high priests, the Captain of the Temple, often the high priest's deputy, the leaders of the 24 weekly courses, the Temple overseers, and the Temple treasurers.

The hierarchy tended to fill all the chief positions from their own families as a matter of course. The ruling house of Annas held perhaps all the chief-priestly positions within its control, besides operating a flourishing trade in sacrificial victims within the court of the Gentiles, in the Temple. No less than eight members of this family held the supreme office of high priest: Annas himself, five sons, Caiaphas his son-in-law, and his grandson Matthias, from the year 65. Such a family virtually established the political as well as religious leadership of the nation.

Among the ruling priests, within the Sanhedrin and present at the trial of Peter and John in the early 305, were Annas the elderly and influential former high priest, his son-in-law Caiaphas, the ruling high priest, Jonathan, probably a captain of the Temple, a son of Annas, who succeeded Caiaphas, an unknown priest called Alexander, and others who held high-priestly office in Jerusalem. The family that ruled the Sanhedrin clearly held the leadership of the whole people.

The second group—the elders—were descended from those ancient ruling families who had held the leadership within the tribes and after the settlement in Canaan. The heads of these dominant families had directed the settlement and administration of the exiles in

Babylon. After their return, the heads of such families had acted as representatives of the people, negotiating with the provincial governors, and directing the reconstruction of the Temple in the time of Ezra. The Sanhedrin grew out of the union of this secular nobility with the priestly aristocracy of those times.

Within the lifetime of Jesus one representative of this group was Joseph of Arimathea, a rich landowner, in whose tomb at Jerusalem the body of Jesus was buried. Josephus, the Jewish historian writing in the 1st century, describes the elders variously as 'notables', 'most eminent citizens', and 'leading men'. He describes the three groups within the Sanhedrin as the 'principal citizens, the chief priests, and the most notable Pharisees'.

These elders were usually the heads of patrician families whose precedence was based on centuries-old privilege. They were usually men of great wealth; the Roman procurator was careful to choose such as his tax officials, for their office might involve them in considerable financial sacrifice. These were charged with assessing citizens for taxation and guaranteeing the correct payment from their own resources. These first two groups within the Sanhedrin, the chief priests and the patricians, combined to hold the highest offices in church and state. In politics and religion, too, they combined from the 2nd century BC to form the politico-religious party called the 'Sadducees'. In the reign of the Hasmonean Queen Alexandra, beginning in 76 BC, the Pharisees gained a foothold in the Sanhedrin and gradually won the confidence and support of the people. In the century after Jesus, the political power of the high priests came to an abrupt end in the year 70, and the new class of Pharisaic Scribes overtook the more ancient class of priestly and lay nobility, founded on the privilege of birth.

The rise of this new upper class of Scribes, the third group within the Sanhedrin, was largely due to their knowledge of scripture and administrative capacity. Jewish communities usually chose Scribes rather than laymen for the office of judge or synagogue-ruler, simply because of their expertise in scriptural exegesis and tradition, as well as in civil and criminal jurisdiction. Thus many important appointments previously held by priests and laymen passed into the hands of the Scribes. Among such were Nicodemus (John 3:1; 7:50), Gamaliel (Acts 5:34), and, of course, the Apostle Paul (Acts 26:10, 11).

### **Scribes and Lawyers**

The Scribes were the expert lawyers, who interpreted and extemporized the written Law by a mass of their own traditions. They were the acknowledged and respected teachers of the Law, both in the schools and in the courts.

Before the exile of the Jews to Babylon, the Scribes had been the public writers and secretaries. They had copied the Law and other manuscripts; in doing so they had become the leading authorities and interpreters of the Law. Ezra the Scribe, in the post-exilic period, had instructed the returned exiles in the study of the Law. So it was that the Scribes developed gradually into a professional class, devoted to the copying, exposition, and application of the Law. Then, during the Hellenistic period, when the Law and its observance were threatened by pagan and Greek influence, it was the Scribes, together with the Pharisees, who became the defenders and teachers of the Law to the common people, and even the magistrates.

By the time of Jesus, the Scribes had developed a complicated system of traditions to ensure the correct application of the Law. They had come to demand and to receive the Who's who in the new testament 296 deep respect of the people. The very title 'Rabbi', meaning 'My Teacher', by which some were known indicates the honour in which they were held. In the Gospels they are often linked with the Pharisees, whose convictions some Scribes shared as Pharisees. There were, however, Scribes within the Sanhedrin, the supreme Council, both Pharisaic and apparently Sadducean Scribes. These are mentioned among the members of the court which convicted Jesus of blasphemy in Jerusalem.

In Galilee, too, the Scribes were highly critical of Jesus's activities, particularly at Capernaum, where the synagogue congregation compared Jesus's authoritative preaching with the less inspired efforts of their Scribes. The Scribes objected strongly to Jesus's words

of forgiveness to the paralytic, saying, 'Who can forgive sins but God alone?' Again, they complained at his eating with Matthew the publican and his colleagues. In the Gospel of Luke, Jesus replies to them with the parables of the lost and the found: the Lost Sheep, the Lost Coin, and the Prodigal Son—implying that he, Jesus, was sent to seek and to save those who were lost.

In Jerusalem, the Scribes were among the delegation that questioned Jesus's authority to drive the merchants out of the Temple. On at least two occasions an individual Scribe spoke to Jesus; when he was in the Temple, a Scribe asked which was the first commandment. Receiving and approving of Jesus's answer, he said: 'You are right, Teacher; you have truly said that he is one, and there is no other but he; and to love him with all the heart, and with all the understanding, and with all the strength, and to love one's neighbour as oneself, is much more than...sacrifice.' To which Jesus replied, 'You are not far from the kingdom of God.' Again, it was another Scribe who asked, 'Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?' then having partly answered his own question, the Scribe asked, 'And who is my neighbour?' It was in answer to this question that Jesus told him the story of the Good Samaritan and added, 'Go and do likewise.' For the most part, however, the Gospels (and particularly that of Matthew) show Jesus in outspoken condemnation of the Scribes, together with the Pharisees. He saw that their mass of petty traditions often contradicted the spirit of the Law, however much they preserved the letter of the Law. He felt that the Scribes, by their systematic codification, robbed the common people of any freedom of interpretation, according to their own conscience. The Scribes, he felt, 'set a fence around the law'. It is perhaps not surprising that many Scribes became his most bitter opponents and called forth from him a devastating denunciation—for their hypocrisy, their blindness, and their neglect of justice, mercy, and good faith. They sought to win for men the kingdom of Heaven by the meticulous observance of a written code. Jesus, in his Sermon on the Mount, set forward the two principles of self-sacrifice and service.

### **Sinners**

Sinners is a reference to those who are not practicing the Law. A Pharisee or Scribe would acknowledge his sin, but that would not earn him the title of Sinner.

### **Zealots**

The name given to those Jews who, from Maccabean times in the 1st and 2nd centuries BC to the fall of the fortress of Masada in the spring of AD 73, were impelled by a fanatical nationalism. Considering themselves the agents of God to deliver their nation from the foreign oppressors, under a banner of 'No rule but the Law—No King but God', they became increasingly violent in their resistance both to the Roman occupation forces and to their own people who sympathized with Hellenism. Following the example of the Maccabean resistance to the efforts of the Seleucid king, Antiochus Epiphanes, to force Greek customs and religion upon the Jews, Judas the Galilean of Gamala led a considerable revolt in protest at the introduction of a Roman census on the incorporation of Judea in AD 6. Theudas led another uprising in about the year 42. Both these were quoted by the Pharisee Gamaliel as unsuccessful if patriotic attempts at a national deliverance impelled by religious motives.

The Gospels (Luke 6:15) give only one specific reference to the name Zealot but include many incidents involving the probable activities of the Zealot party. Among these is the report of certain Galileans 'whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices'. Galilee, its climate and people, was fertile soil for discontent and revolt, There is a similar comment on some eighteen men who were killed when a tower in Siloam fell on them, perhaps while they were undermining some Roman fortification. Jesus said of the Galileans: 'Do you think that these Galileans were worse sinners than all of the other Galileans, because they suffered thus? I tell you, No; but unless you repent you will all likewise perish.' (Luke 13:2, 3) And of the other victims he said, 'Of those eighteen upon whom the tower in Siloam fell and

killed them, do you think that they were worse offenders than all the others who dwelt in Jerusalem? I tell you, No; but unless you repent you will all likewise perish.' (Luke 13:4, 5)

Perhaps Barabbas, who was released by Pilate instead of Jesus, was a Zealot leader, a mistaken claimant for the Messiahship who left his followers to suffer, while accepting his own release. The remark of one of the bandits crucified with Jesus implies a possible comparison between Barabbas and Jesus on his cross: 'Are you not the Christ? Save yourself and us!' Perhaps Judas Iscariot also was a Zealot, whose impatient aspirations for his master as Messiah led him in desperation to betray him in order to force Jesus's hand. For neither theory is there material evidence, but it would have been surprising if the Zealots had not at least considered exploiting Jesus for their cause. John clearly says that the people wanted to make Jesus king in Galilee, and that his movements were restricted by the threat of such demonstrations.

The Jews who conspired to assassinate Paul at Jerusalem were perhaps Zealots, acting in defence of the Law. 'When it was day, the Jews made a plot and bound themselves by an oath neither to eat nor drink till they had killed Paul. There were more than forty who made this conspiracy. And they went to the chief priests and elders, and said, "We have strictly bound ourselves by an oath to taste no food till we have killed Paul.'" (Acts 23:12-14)

In the years that followed, partly as a result of the Hellenistic policies of the Emperor Nero, partly from the corrupt and harsh administration of the Roman procurators, the persistent troublemaking of the Zealots reached a climax. Open hostility broke out in the year 66, when Gessius Florus, the governor, demanded funds from the Temple treasury. The Jews refused and suspended the daily sacrifice for the emperor; from then onwards the Zealots led the people in open revolt, resulting in the cruel suppression of Galilee and the disastrous siege of Jerusalem. There, with the Zealots divided into two opposing factions, the aristocrats on the west hill, the commoners on the east of the city under John of Gischala, with the Romans under Titus along the Mount of Olives, the Antonia Fortress was taken, the Temple burnt and the city sacked. Of the remaining Zealot fortresses, Herodium (near Bethlehem) and Machaerus (beyond Jordan) rapidly fell, but Masada survived until the spring of 73. The ruins of Masada and the suicidal story of this last stronghold bear witness to all that was best and all that was worst in the character of the Zealots.

### Prophecies Fulfilled by Christ

1	Gen. 3:15a	He would be human, born of a woman	Gal. 4:4-5, Matt. 1:18
2	Gen. 3:15b	He will reconcile people to God	Heb. 2:14, 1 John 3:8
3	Gen. 3:15c	He would crush evil at his own expense	Matt. 27:35, Luke 24:39-40
4	Gen. 22:18	He would be a descendant of Abraham	Matt. 11:27 & Luke 3:36
5	Gen. 26:1-5	He would be a descendant of Abraham's son Isaac	Rom. 9:7, Heb. 11:18, Matt. 1:2
6	Gen. 28:13,14	He would be a descendant of Isaac's son Jacob	Luke 3:34
7	Gen. 49:10	He would be a descendant of Jacob's son Judah	Matt. 1:2-3
8	Isa. 11:1-10	He would be a descendant of Jesse, a descendant of Judah	Matt. 1:2-3
9	Isa. 11:1	He would be a descendant of Jesse's son King David	Matt. 1:1

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10	Gen. 49:10	He would appear after a succession of rulers from the Tribe of Judah	History: Josephus writes that King Herod's son was dethroned in 6 A.D. and replaced by a Roman Procurator.
11	Dan. 9:25	He would appear after the rebuilding of Jerusalem	History: Jerusalem had been rebuilt by the time of Jesus, after recovering from the Babylonian destruction.
12	Dan. 9:26	He would appear before the (Roman) destruction of Jerusalem	History: The Rom. destroyed Jerusalem in 70 A.D.
13	Mic. 5:2	He would be born in Bethlehem	Matt. 2:1-5
14	Isa. 7:13,14	Isaiah foreshadowed the virgin birth of Jesus	Luke 1:35
15	Isa. 7:14	He would be called Immanuel (God with us)	Matt. 1:23
16	Isa. 40:3-4	He would be preceded by a forerunner	Matt. 3:1-4
17	Mal. 3:1	A messenger would prepare the way for the Lord	Matt. 7:10
18	Isa. 61:1,2a	The ministry of Jesus is foreshadowed by Isaiah	Matt. 3:16-17, Luke 4:18, John 8:31-32, Luke 4:19
19	Isa. 9:1,2	He would appear in Galilee, be a light to Gentiles	Matt. 4:12-17, Luke 2:28-32
20	Isa. 35:4-6	He would perform miracles	Mark 10:51-52, Mark 7:32-35, Matt. 11:4-5, Matt. 12:10-13, Matt. 9:32-33
21	Ps. 78:1-2	He would teach in parables	Matt. 13:3, 13-15
22	Deut. 18:15-18	God promised another prophet like Moses	John 6:14, John 5:45-47, John 8:28-29, Acts 3:23, Heb. 6:4-6
23	Isa. 42:2-3	He would be humble, meek	Matt. 11:28-30
24	Ps. 2:1-12	He would be called God's son	Acts 4:25-28
25	Isa. 9:6,7	Isaiah spoke of a son who would be called God	John 10:30, John 20:27-29
26	Zech. 9:9	He would enter Jerusalem while riding on a donkey	Matt. 21:6-9
27	Ps. 41	Psalm 41 foreshadowed the betrayal of Jesus	John 13:18
28	Isa. 53:1-4	He would be rejected	Matt. 27:21-23
29	Dan. 9:24-26	Daniel predicted when he would be rejected	Matt. 16:21; 21:38-39
30	Ps. 22:6	Messiah would be despised	Luke 23:21-23
31	Isa. 53:7	He would be oppressed	Matt. 27:27-31
32	Isa. 53:7	He would be silent before his accusers	Matt. 27:12-14
33	Ps. 22:7	Messiah would be mocked by people shaking their heads	Matt. 27:39

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34	Isa. 50:6,7	He would be beaten and spat upon	Matt. 26:67
35	Isa. 50:6,7	He would be spat upon	Matt. 27:30
36	Ps. 35:19	He would be hated without reason	John 15:25
37	Ps. 69:4	He would be hated without cause	John 15:25
38	Ps. 69:8	He would become a stranger to his own brothers	Luke 8:20-21
39	Isa. 53:12	He would be 'numbered with the transgressors'	Luke 23:32
40	Ps. 22:16	His hands and feet would be pierced	John 19:37, 20:27
41	Ps. 22:15	His suffering would include thirst	John 19:28
42	Isa. 53:12	He would intercede for sinners	Luke 23:34
43	Ps. 22:1	He would be forsaken	Matt. 27:46
44	Ps. 22:1	He would cry out to God	Matt. 27:46
45	Ps. 22:8	His faith in God would be mocked	Matt. 27:43
46	Ps. 22:17-18	He would be stripped of his clothing	Luke 23:34-35
47	Ps. 22:18	They would cast lots for his clothing	Matt. 27:35, John 19:23
48	Isa. 53:4-6	He would suffer for the sins of others	2 Cor. 5:21
49	Isa. 53:8,9	He would die	Matt. 27:45-56
50	Ps. 22:14	His death described	John 19:34
51	Zech. 12:10	Zechariah foreshadowed the piercing of Jesus	John 19:34-37
52	Dan. 9:24	He would bring an end to sin	Gal. 1:3-5
53	Isa. 53:9	He would be buried in a wealthy man's tomb	Matt. 27:57-61
54	Ps. 16:9-11	God's anointed one would not see decay	Acts 2:31
55	Zech. 10:4	He would be the cornerstone	Eph. 2:20
56	Ps. 118:22-24	The rejected stone would become the cornerstone	Matt. 21:42,43
57	Ps. 16:8-11	King David prophesied about resurrection	John 20:9
58	Job 19:25-27	Job foreshadows details of resurrection	John 5:24-29
59	2 Sam. 7:12-13	King David's offspring would have an eternal kingdom	Luke 1:32, Rev. 22:16
60	2 Sam. 7:16	King David's throne would be established forever	Luke 3:31; Rev. 22:16
61	Ps. 89	Another prophetic promise about the permanence of David's throne	Luke 1:32,33

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62	Dan. 7:13-14	Son of Man would have everlasting throne	Luke 1:31-33
63	Isa. 11:10	He would be a banner to Gentiles	John 12:18-21
64	Isa. 42:1-4	He would affect people throughout the world	Matt. 28:19,20
65	Isa. 42:6	He would be a light to people around the world	Luke 2:32
66	Mic. 5:4	He would have a worldwide impact	History: Christianity has spread to people all over the world.
67	Isa. 49:6	He would bring salvation to the ends of the earth	History: Christianity has spread to people all over the world.

**Parables of Jesus**

1	The Growing Seed		Mark 4:26–29	
2	The Two Debtors			Luke 7:41–43
3	The Lamp under a Bushel	Matthew 5:14–15	Mark 4:21–25	Luke 8:16–18
4	Parable of the Good Samaritan			Luke 10:25–37
5	The Friend at Night			Luke 11:5–8
6	The Rich Fool			Luke 12:16–21
7	The Wise and the Foolish Builders	Matthew 7:24–27		Luke 6:46–49
8	New Wine into Old Wineskins	Matthew 9:16–17	Mark 2:21–22	Luke 5:37–39
9	Parable of the strong man	Matthew 12:29–29	Mark 3:27–27	Luke 11:21–22
10	Parable of the Sower	Matthew 13:3–9	Mark 4:3–9	Luke 8:5–8
11	The Tares	Matthew 13:24–30		
12	The Barren Fig Tree			Luke 13:6–9
13	Parable of the Mustard Seed	Matthew 13:31–32	Mark 4:30–32	Luke 13:18–19
14	The Leaven	Matthew 13:33–33		Luke 13:20–21
15	Parable of the Pearl	Matthew 13:45–46		
16	Drawing in the Net	Matthew 13:47–50		
17	The Hidden Treasure	Matthew 13:44		
18	Counting the Cost			Luke 14:28–33
19	The Lost Sheep	Matthew 18:10–14		Luke 15:4–6
20	The Unforgiving Servant	Matthew 18:23–35		
21	The Lost Coin			Luke 15:8–9



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22	Parable of the Prodigal Son			Luke 15:11–32
23	The Unjust Steward			Luke 16:1–13
24	Rich man and Lazarus			Luke 16:19–31
25	The Master and Servant			Luke 17:7–10
26	The Unjust Judge			Luke 18:1–8
27	Pharisees and the Publican			Luke 18:9–14
28	The Workers in the Vineyard	Matthew 20:1–16		
29	The Two Sons	Matthew 21:28–32		
30	The Wicked Husbandmen	Matthew 21:33–41	Mark 12:1–9	Luke 20:9–16
31	The Great Banquet	Matthew 22:1–14		Luke 14:15–24
32	The Budding Fig Tree	Matthew 24:32–35	Mark 13:28–31	Luke 21:29–33
33	The Faithful Servant	Matthew 24:42–51	Mark 13:34–37	Luke 12:35–48
34	The Ten Virgins	Matthew 25:1–13		
35	The Talents or Minas	Matthew 25:14–30		Luke 19:12–27
36	The Sheep and the Goats	Matthew 25:31–46		
37	Parable of the Wedding Feast			Luke 14:7–14

### Good Wednesday or Good Friday?

According to Luke 3:1, John the Baptist began ministering in the 15th year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar, which began on September 7, 14 AD. Thus, the ministry of John began sometime after September 7, 28 AD. Since Christ celebrated two Passovers (John 2:13, 6:4) and was crucified on the third Passover (John 11:55), He would be crucified in 31 AD, when Passover began on Wednesday.

Year	Vernal Equinox: The first full moon after this marks the start of the Passover	New Moon: The moon does not appear	First Crescent: The night after the first crescent is Nisan 1	Nisan 1 (Beginning sundown of the evening before)	14th day of Nisan (Beginning at sundown the evening before)
26 A.D.	Fri. Mar. 22, Midnight	Sat. Apr. 6, 7 a.m.	Sun. Apr. 7	Mon. Apr. 8	Sun. Apr. 21
27 A.D.	Sun. Mar. 23, 6 a.m.	Wed. Mar. 26, 7 p.m.**	Fri. Mar. 28	Sat. Mar. 29	Fri. Apr. 11
28 A.D.	Mon. Mar. 22, noon	Tues. Apr. 13, 2 p.m.	Wed. Apr. 14	Thurs. Apr. 15	Wed. Apr. 28
29 A.D.	Tues. Mar. 22, 6 p.m.	Sat. Apr. 2, 7 p.m.**	Mon. Apr. 4	Tues. Apr. 5	Mon. Apr. 18
30 A.D.	Wed. Mar. 22, Midnight	Wed. Mar. 22, 8 p.m.	Fri. Mar. 24	Sat. Mar. 25	Fri. Apr. 7
<b>31 A.D.</b>	<b>Fri. Mar. 23, 5 a.m.</b>	<b>Tues. Apr. 10, 2 p.m.</b>	<b>Wed. Apr. 11</b>	<b>Thurs. Apr. 12</b>	<b>Wed. Apr. 25</b>
32 A.D.	Sat. Mar. 22, 11 a.m.	Sat. Mar. 29, 10 p.m.**	Mon. Mar. 31	Tues. Apr. 1	Mon. Apr. 14
33 A.D.	Sun. Mar. 22, 5 p.m.	Fri. Mar. 20, 9 a.m.	Sat. Mar. 21	Sun. Mar. 22	Sat. Apr. 4
34 A.D.	Mon. Mar. 22, 11 p.m.	Wed. Apr. 7, 2 p.m.	Thurs. Apr. 8	Fri. Apr. 9	Thurs. Apr. 22

\*\* The New Moon occurs too late in the day to be observed, forcing the 1st of the month into the next day

[http://www.judaismvschristianity.com/Passover\\_dates.htm](http://www.judaismvschristianity.com/Passover_dates.htm)

<https://aa.usno.navy.mil/faq/docs/SpringPhenom.php>

The timing of the supper that Jesus had with the disciples is significant for understanding the timing of the crucifixion and resurrection. Passover was a seven day event with the eating of the Passover lamb on the first day. However, as Luke points out, Jesus was meeting on the day of unleavened bread which began the night before the lamb was actually killed. This day

was not technically part of the seven day Passover celebration which is why Passover is actually observed for eight days. Jesus could not have eaten the Passover lamb with His disciples because He was crucified at the time the Lamb would be killed. Also, He could not have done it on a Thursday evening for there to be a Friday crucifixion because He would not then be able to be in the grave three days and three nights.

Part of the problem with counting the days is that though it might say *after* so many days, this is a reference to an *interval* of days so that the days are inclusive. Otherwise, Jesus dining in Bethany would occur on Sunday, the day of the Triumphal entry. Below is a time frame for the events of the Passion Week.

Friday night, Six days before Passover

Dines in Bethany

126 - Mary Anoints Jesus

Saturday

Enters Jericho

127 - Blind Bartimaeus

128 - Zacchaeus

129 - The Ten Pounds

Sunday

130 - At Bethphage and Mount of Olives, Jesus Calls for the Ass and Colt

131 - The Triumphal Entry

132 - Greeks Seek Jesus

133 - Many Chief Rulers Hide Their Faith

Sunday Night

134 - Jesus Returns to Bethany

Monday

135 - Cursing the Fig Tree

136 - The Second Cleansing of the Temple

Tuesday, Two days before Passover

137 - The Fig Tree Perishes

139 - The Widow's Mite

140 - Departing from the Temple, Jesus Foretells the Destruction of the Temple

141 - The Olivet Discourse

143 - Jesus Continues Teaching at the Temple

144 - Consultation with Caiphas

145 - Judas Conspires with the Chief Priests

146 - Acquiring the Room for the Last Supper

Tuesday Night

The Last Supper

147 - Jesus Announces the Betrayal

148 - Washing the Feet of the Disciples

149 - The Bread and the Cup

150 - The Sop is Dipped

151 - Who Will Be Greatest/The New Commandment

152 - The New Commandment

153 - Peter's First Protest

154 - The Upper Room Discourse

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155 - Departure to the Mount of Olives

156 - Instruction to Meet in Galilee after the Resurrection and Peter's Second Protest

### The Garden of Gethsemane

157 - Praying in Gethsemane

158 - Judas Arrives to Betray Christ

### The Trial before the High Priests

159 - Jesus First Appears before Annas

160 - Peter's First Denial

161 - Jesus Challenges Annas and Is Smitten

162 - Peter's Second Denial

163 - Peter's Third Denial

164 - False Witnesses are Suborned

165 - Caiaphas Calls on Christ to Confess

### Wednesday

#### The Trial Before Pilate

166 - Jesus Is Taken to Pilate

167 - Judas Hangs Himself

168 - Jesus Is Silent before Pilate

169 - The Jews Change Their Charges against Jesus

170 - Pilate Sends Christ to Herod

171 - Barabbas Is Released

172 - Jesus Is Scourged and Mocked as King of the Jews

### The Crucifixion

173 - Simon of Cyrene Carries the Cross of Christ

174 - Women Following Are Consoled

175 - Jesus Is Taken to Golgotha and Crucified

176 - The Two Malefactors

177 - Jesus Presents Mary to John

178 - Three Hours of Darkness

179 - Jesus Yields Up the Ghost

180 - Joseph of Aramathaea Requests the Body of Christ

181 - Chief Priests Request Seal for Tomb

### Saturday night before the Dawn into Sunday

#### The Resurrection

182 - The Women Arrive at the Tomb

183 - Mary Magdalene Runs to Tell Peter and John

184 - Mary Talks to Two Angels

185 - Jesus Meets the Women

186 - The Women Return to Report to the Apostles

187 - The Soldiers Are Paid to Lie About the Empty Tomb

188 - The Women Deliver Their Report, Peter Returns to the Tomb

## **The Illegal Trial of Christ**

This subject is of special interest, not only on account of its inherent importance, but more particularly on account of its immediately preceding, and leading directly up to what is the greatest tragedy in human history, the crucifixion of our Lord. It has also the added interest of being the only proceeding on record in which the two great legal systems of antiquity, the Jewish and the Roman, which have most largely influenced modern legislation and jurisprudence, each played a most important part.

### 1. Jewish and Roman Law:

The coexistence of these two systems in Judea, and their joint action in bringing about the tremendous results in question, were made possible by the generous policy pursued by Rome in allowing conquered nations to retain their ancient laws, institutions and usages, in so far as they were compatible with Roman sovereignty and supremacy. Not only so, but, in a large degree, they permitted these laws to be administered by the officials of the subject peoples. This privilege was not granted absolutely, but was permitted only so long as it was not abused. It might be withdrawn at any time, and the instances in which this was, done were by no means rare.

Of the matters considered in this article, the arrest of Jesus and the proceedings before Annas, Caiaphas and the Sanhedrin took place professedly under Jewish law; the proceedings before Pilate and the reference to Herod, under Roman law.

### 2. Difficulties of the Subject:

It is very difficult to construct from the materials in the four Gospels a satisfactory continuous record of the arrest, and of what may be called the twofold trial of Jesus. The Gospels were written from different viewpoints, and for different purposes, each of the writers selecting such particulars as seemed to him to be of special importance for the particular object he had in view. Their reports are all very brief, and the proper chronological order of the various events recorded in different Gospels must, in many cases, be largely a matter of conjecture. The difficulty is increased by the great irregularities and the tumultuous character of the proceedings; by our imperfect knowledge of the topography of Jerusalem at this time (29 AD); also by the fact that the reports are given mainly in popular and not in technical language; and when the latter form is used, the technical terms have had to be translated into Greek, either from the Hebrew or from the Latin.

### 3. Illustrations of Difficulties:

For instance, opinions are divided as to where Pilate resided when in Jerusalem, whether in the magnificent palace built by Herod the Great, or in the castle of Antonia; as to where was the palace occupied by Herod Antipas during the Passover; whether Annas and Caiaphas occupied different portions of the same palace, or whether they lived in adjoining or different residences; whether the preliminary examination of Jesus, recorded by John, was before Annas or Caiaphas, and as to other similar matters. It is very satisfactory, however, to know that, although it is sometimes difficult to decide exactly as to the best way of harmonizing the different accounts, yet there is nothing irreconcilable or contradictory in them, and that there is no material point in the history of the very important proceedings falling within the scope of this article which is seriously affected by any of these debatable matters.

For a clear historical statement of the events of the concluding day in the life of our Lord before His crucifixion, see the article on JESUS CHRIST. The present article will endeavor to consider the matters relating to His arrest and trial from a legal and constitutional point of view.

## **I. The Arrest.**

During the last year of the ministry of Jesus, the hostility of the Jews to Him had greatly increased, and some six months before they finally succeeded in accomplishing their purpose, they had definitely resolved to make away with Him. At the Feast of Tabernacles they sent

officers (the temple-guards) to take Him while He was teaching in the temple (John 7:32); but these, after listening to His words, returned without having made the attempt, giving as a reason that "never man so spake" (John 7:46).

After His raising of Lazarus, their determination to kill Him was greatly intensified. A special meeting of the council was held to consider the matter. There Caiaphas, the high priest, strongly advocated such a step on national grounds, and on the ground of expediency, quoting in support of his advice, in a cold-blooded and cynical manner, the Jewish adage that it was expedient that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not. Their plans to this end were frustrated, for the time being, by Jesus withdrawing Himself to the border of the wilderness, where He remained with His disciples (John 11:47-54).

On His return to Bethany and Jerusalem, six days before the Passover, they were deterred from carrying out their design on account of His manifest popularity with the people, as evidenced by His triumphal entry into Jerusalem on the first day of the Passover week (Palm Sunday), and by the crowds who thronged around Him, and listened to His teachings in the temple, and who enjoyed the discomfiture of the Pharisees, Sadducees and Herodians, as they successively sought to entangle Him in His talk.

Two days before the Passover, at a council meeting held in the palace of Caiaphas, they planned to accomplish their purpose by subtlety, but "not during the feast, lest a tumult arise among the people" (Matthew 26:3-5; Mark 14:1,2). While they were in this state of perplexity, to their great relief Judas came to them and agreed to betray his Master for money (Matthew 26:14-16; Mark 14:10,11).

#### 1. Preparatory Steps:

This time they determined not to rely solely upon their own temple-guards or officers to execute their warrant or order of arrest, fearing that these officials, being Jews, might again be fascinated by the strange influence which Jesus exercised over His countrymen, or that His followers might offer resistance. They therefore applied to Pilate, the Roman procurator (governor), for the assistance of a band of Roman soldiers. He granted them a cohort (Greek: *speira*, 400 to 600 men) from the legion then quartered in the castle of Antonia, which adjoined and overlooked the temple-area. The final arrangements as to these would probably be completed while Judas was at the supper room. It has been suggested that the whole cohort would not go, but only a selection from them. However, it is said that Judas "received the band (cohort) of soldiers" (John 18:3), and that they were under the command of a chief captain (Greek: *chiliarch*, Latin *tribune*, John 18:12). If there had not been more than 100 soldiers, they would not have been under the command of a captain, but the chief officer would have been a centurion. The amazing popularity of Jesus, as shown by His triumphal entry into the city, may have led the authorities to make such ample provision against any possible attempt at rescue.

The Garden of Gethsemane, in which Judas knew that Jesus would be found that night, was well known to him (John 18:2); and he also knew the time he would be likely to find his Master there. Thither at the proper hour he led the band of soldiers, the temple officers and others, and also some of the chief priests and elders themselves; the whole being described as "a great multitude with swords and staves" (Matthew 26:47). Although the Easter full moon would be shining brightly, they also carried "lanterns and torches" (John 18:3), in order to make certain that Jesus should not escape or fail to be recognized in the deep shade of the olive trees in the garden.

#### 2. The Arrest in the Garden:

On their arrival at the garden, Jesus came forward to meet them, and the traitor Judas gave them the appointed signal by kissing Him. As the order or warrant was a Jewish one, the temple officers would probably be in front, the soldiers supporting them as reserves. On Jesus announcing to the leaders that He was the one they sought, what the chief priests had feared actually occurred. There was something in the words or bearing of Jesus which awed the temple officers; they were panic-stricken, went backward, and fell to the ground. On their rallying, the impetuous Peter drew his sword, and cut off the ear of one of them, Malchus, the servant of the high priest (John 18:6-10).

On this evidence of resistance the Roman captain and soldiers came forward, and with the assistance of the Jewish officers bound Jesus. Under the Jewish law this was not lawful before condemnation, save in exceptional cases where resistance was either offered or apprehended.

Even in this trying hour the concern of Jesus was more for others than for Himself, as witness His miracle in healing the ear of Malchus, and His request that His disciples might be allowed their liberty (John 18:8). Notwithstanding His efforts, His followers were panic-stricken, probably on account of the vigorous action of the officers and soldiers after the assault by Peter, "and they all left him and fled" (Mark 14:50).

It is worthy of note that Jesus had no word of blame or censure for the Roman officers or soldiers who were only doing their sworn duty in supporting the civil authorities; but His pungent words of reproach for not having attempted His arrest while He was teaching openly in the temple were reserved for "the chief priests, and captains of the temple, and elders" (Luke 22:52), who had shown their inordinate zeal and hostility by taking the unusual, and for those who were to sit as judges on the case, the improper and illegal course of accompanying the officers, and themselves taking part in the arrest.

### 3. Taken to the City:

The whole body departed with their prisoner for the city. From the first three Gospels one might infer that they went directly to the palace of Caiaphas, the high priest. In the Fourth Gospel, however, we are told that they took him first to Annas (John 18:13).

Why they did so we are not informed, the only statement made being that he was the father-in-law of Caiaphas (John 18:13). He had been the high priest from 7 AD to 15 AD, when he was deposed by Valerius Gratus, the Roman procurator. He was still the most influential member of the Sanhedrin, and, being of an aggressive disposition, it may be that it was he who had given instructions as to the arrest, and that they thought it their duty to report first to him.

Annas, however, sent Jesus bound to Caiaphas (John 18:24). Having delivered over their prisoner, the Roman soldiers would proceed to their quarters in the castle, the temple officials retaining Jesus in their charge.

Meanwhile, the members of the Sanhedrin were assembling at the palace of the high priest, and the preliminary steps toward the first or Jewish trial were being taken.

## II. The Jewish Trial.

### 1. The Jewish Law:

It is the just boast of those countries whose jurisprudence had its origin in the common law of England, that their system of criminal law is rounded upon the humane maxims that everyone is presumed to be innocent until he is proved to be guilty, and that no one is bound to criminate himself. But the Jewish law went even farther in the safeguards which it placed around an accused person. In the Pentateuch it is provided that one witness shall not be sufficient to convict any man of even a minor offense. "One witness shall not rise up against a man for any iniquity, or for any sin, in any sin that he sinneth: at the mouth of two witnesses, or at the mouth of three witnesses, shall a matter be established" (Deuteronomy 19:15).

### 2. The Mishna:

These principles of the Mosaic law were elaborated and extended in the system which grew up after the return from Babylon. It was begun by the men of the Great Synagogue, and was afterward completed by the Sanhedrin which succeeded them. Up to the time of our Lord, and for the first two centuries of the Christian era, their rules remained largely in an oral or unwritten form, until they were compiled or codified in the Mishna by Rabbi Judah and his associates and successors in the early part of the 3rd century. It is generally conceded by both Jewish and Christian writers that the main provisions, therein found for the protection of accused persons, had been long incorporated in the oral law and were recognized as a part of it in the time of Annas and Caiaphas.

### 3. Criminal Trials:

The provisions relating to criminal trials, and especially to those in which the offense was punishable by death, were very stringent and were all framed in the interest of the accused. Among them were the following:

The trial must be begun by day, and if not completed before night it must be adjourned and resumed by day; the quorum of judges in capital cases was 23, that being the quorum of the Grand Council; a verdict of acquittal, which required only a majority of one, might be rendered on the same day as the trial was completed; any other verdict could only be rendered on a subsequent day and required a majority of at least two; no prisoner could be convicted on his own evidence; it was the duty of a judge to see that the interests of the accused were fully protected.

The modern practice of an information or complaint and a preliminary investigation before a magistrate was wholly unknown to the Jewish law and foreign to its genius. The examination of the witnesses in open court was in reality the beginning of a Jewish trial, and the crime for which the accused was tried, and the sole charge he had to meet, was that which was disclosed by the evidence of the witnesses.

### 4. The Trial of Jesus:

Let us see how far the foregoing principles and rules were followed and observed in the proceedings before the high priest in the present instance. The first step taken in the trial was the private examination of Jesus by the high priest, which is recorded only in John 18:19-23. Opinions differ as to whether this examination was conducted by Annas at his residence before he sent Jesus to Caiaphas (John 18:24), or by the latter after Jesus had been delivered up to him.

Caiaphas was actually the high priest at the time, and had been for some years. Annas had been deposed from the office about 14 years previously by the Roman procurator; but he was still accorded the title (Acts 4:6). Many of the Jews did not concede the right of the procurator to depose him, and looked upon him as still the rightful high priest. He is also said to have been at this time the vice-president of the Sanhedrin. The arguments as to which of them is called the high priest by John in this passage are based largely upon two different renderings of John 18:24. In the King James Version the verse reads "Now Annas had sent him bound unto Caiaphas the high priest," a reading based upon the Textus Receptus of the New Testament which implies that Jesus had been sent to Caiaphas before the examination. On the other hand, the Revised Version (British and American), following the Greek text adopted by Nestle and others, reads, "Annas therefore sent him bound unto Caiaphas the high priest," implying that Annas sent him to Caiaphas on account of what had taken place in the examination.

However, it is not material which of these two leading members of the Sanhedrin conducted the examination. The same may also be said as to the controversy regarding the residence of Annas at the time, whether it was in some part of the official palace of the high priest or elsewhere. The important matters are the fact, the time, and the manner of the examination by one or other of these leading members of the council, not the precise place where, or the particular person by whom, it was conducted.

### 5. The Preliminary Examination:

The high priest (whether Annas or Caiaphas) proceeded to interrogate Jesus concerning His disciples and His doctrine (John 18:19). Such a proceeding formed no part of a regular Jewish trial, and was, moreover, not taken in good faith; but with a view to entrapping Jesus into admissions that might be used against Him at the approaching trial before the council. It appears to have been in the nature of a private examination, conducted probably while the members of the council were assembling. The dignified and appropriate answer of Jesus pointedly brought before the judge the irregularity he was committing, and was a reminder that His trial should begin with the examination of the witnesses:

"I spake openly to the world; I ever taught in the synagogue, and in the temple, whither the Jews always resort; and in secret have I said nothing. Why askest thou me? Ask them which heard me, what I have said unto them: behold, they know what I said" (John 18:20,21)



the King James Version). The reply to this was a blow from one of the officers, an outrageous proceeding which appears to have passed unrebuked by the judge, and it was left to Jesus Himself to make the appropriate protest.

#### 6. The Night Trial:

The next proceeding was the trial before the council in the palace of Caiaphas, attended at least by the quorum of 23. This was an illegal meeting, since a capital trial, as we have seen, could not either be begun or proceeded with at night. Some of the chief priests and elders, as previously stated, had been guilty of the highly improper act for judges, of taking part in and directing the arrest of Jesus. Now, "the chief priests and the whole council" spent the time intervening between the arrest and the commencement of the trial in something even worse: they "sought false witness against Jesus, that they might put him to death" (Matthew 26:59). This, no doubt, only means that they then collected their false witnesses and instructed them as to the testimony they should give. For weeks, ever since the raising of Lazarus, they had been preparing for such a trial, as we read: "So from that day forth they took counsel that they might put him to death" (John 11:53).

Caiaphas, as high priest and president of the Sanhedrin, presided at the meeting of the council. The oath administered to witnesses in a Jewish court was an extremely solemn invocation, and it makes one shudder to think of the high priest pronouncing these words to perjured witnesses, known by him to have been procured by the judges before him in the manner stated.

#### 7. False Witnesses:

But even this did not avail. Although "many bare false witness against him," yet on account of their having been imperfectly tutored by their instructors, or for other cause, "their witness agreed not together" (Mark 14:56), and even these prejudiced and partial judges could not find the concurring testimony of two witnesses required by their law (Deuteronomy 19:15).

The nearest approach to the necessary concurrence came at last from two witnesses, who gave a distorted report of a figurative and enigmatic statement made by Jesus in the temple during His early ministry:

"Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up" (John 2:19). The explanation is given: "He spake of the temple of his body" (John 2:21). The testimony of the two witnesses is reported with but slight variations in the two first Gospels as follows: "This man said, I am able to destroy the temple of God, and to build it in three days" (Matthew 26:61); and "We heard him say, I will destroy this temple that is made with hands, and in three days I will build another made without hands" (Mark 14:58). Whether these slightly different statements represent the discrepancies in their testimony, or on account of some other variations or contradictions, the judges reluctantly decided that "not even so did their witness agree together" (Mark 14:59).

#### 8. A Browbeating Judge:

Caiaphas, having exhausted his list of witnesses, and seeing the prosecution on which he had set his heart in danger of breaking down for the lack of legal evidence, adopted a blustering tone, and said to Jesus, "Answerest thou nothing? what is it which these witness against thee? But Jesus held his peace" (Matthew 26:62,63), relying on the fact that the prosecution had utterly failed on account of the lack of agreement of two witnesses on any of the charges. As a final and desperate resort, Caiaphas had recourse to a bold strategic move to draw from Jesus an admission or confession on which he might base a condemnation, similar to the attempt which failed at the preliminary examination; but this time fortifying his appeal by a solemn adjuration in the name of the Deity. He said to Jesus:

"I adjure thee by the living God, that thou tell us whether thou art the Christ, the Son of God. Jesus saith unto him, Thou hast said: nevertheless I say unto you, Henceforth ye shall see the Son of man sitting at the right hand of Power, and coming on the clouds of heaven" (Matthew 26:63,64). Caiaphas, although knowing that under the law Jesus could not be convicted on His own answers or admissions, thereupon in a tragic manner "rent his

garments, saying, He hath spoken blasphemy: what further need have we of witnesses? behold, now ye have heard the blasphemy: what think ye? They answered and said, He is worthy of death (Matthew 26:65,66).

The night session then broke up to meet again after daybreak in order to ratify the decision just come to, and to give a semblance of legality to the trial and verdict. The closing scene was one of disorder, in which they spat in their prisoner's face and buffeted him (Matthew 26:67,68; Luke 22:63-65).

#### 9. The Morning Session:

The following morning, "as soon as it was day," the council reassembled in the same place, and Jesus was led into their presence (Luke 22:66). There were probably a number of the council present who had not attended the night session. For the benefit of these, and perhaps to give an appearance of legality to the proceeding, the high priest began the trial anew, but not with the examination of witnesses which had proved such a failure at the night session. He proceeded at once to ask substantially the same questions as had finally brought out from Jesus the night before the answer which he had declared to be blasphemy, and upon which the council had "condemned him to be worthy of death" (Mark 14:64). The meeting is mentioned in all the Gospels, the details of the examination are related by Luke alone. When asked whether He was the Christ, He replied, "If I tell you, ye will not believe: and if I ask you, ye will not answer. But from henceforth shall the Son of man be seated at the right hand of the power of God" (Luke 22:67-69). This answer not being sufficient to found a verdict of blasphemy upon, they all cried out, "Art thou then the Son of God?" To this He gave an affirmative answer, "Ye say that I am. And they said, What further need have we of witness? for we ourselves have heard from his own mouth" (Luke 22:70,71).

#### 10. Powers of the Sanhedrin:

It will be observed that neither at the night nor at the morning session was there any sentence pronounced upon Jesus by the high priest. There was on each occasion only what would be equivalent to a verdict of guilty found by a jury under our modern criminal practice, but no sentence passed upon the prisoner by the presiding judge. When Judea lost the last vestige of its independence and became a Roman province (6 AD), the Sanhedrin ceased to have the right to inflict Capital punishment or to administer the law of life and death. This jurisdiction was thenceforth transferred to the Roman procurator. The Sanhedrin submitted very reluctantly to this curtailment of its powers. A few years later it exercised it illegally and in a very riotous manner in the case of Stephen (Acts 7:58). Annas, however, of all men, had good reason not to violate this law, as his having done so during the absence of the procurator was the cause of his being deposed from the office of high priest by Valerius Gratus (15 AD).

The proceedings may have been taken before the high priest in the hope that Pilate might be induced to accept the verdict of the Sanhedrin as conclusive that Jesus had been guilty of an offense punishable by death under the Jewish law.

#### 11. Condemnation for Blasphemy:

Now what was the precise crime or crimes for which Jesus was tried at these two sittings of the council? The first impression would probably be that there was no connection between the charge of destroying the temple and building another in three days, and His claiming to be the Son of God. And yet they were closely allied in the Jewish mind. The Jewish nation being a pure theocracy, the overthrow of the temple, the abode of the Divine Sovereign, would mean the overthrow of Divine institutions, and be an act of treason against the Deity. The profession of ability to build another temple in three days would be construed as a claim to the possession of supernatural power and, consequently, blasphemy. As to the other claim which He Himself made and confessed to the council, namely, that He was the Christ, the Son of God, none of them would have any hesitation in concurring in the verdict of the high priest that it was rank blasphemy, when made by one whom they regarded simply as a Galilean peasant.

## 12. Summary:

To sum up:

The Jewish trial of our Lord was absolutely illegal, the court which condemned Him being without jurisdiction to try a capital offense, which blasphemy was under the Jewish law. Even if there had been jurisdiction, it would have been irregular, as the judges had rendered themselves incompetent to try the case, having been guilty of the violation of the spirit of the law that required judges to be unprejudiced and impartial, and carefully to guard the interests of the accused. Even the letter of the law had been violated in a number of important respects. Among these may be mentioned:

- (1) some of the judges taking part in and directing the arrest;
- (2) the examination before the trial and the attempt to obtain admissions;
- (3) endeavors of the judges to procure the testimony of false witnesses;
- (4) commencing and continuing the trial at night;
- (5) examining and adjuring the accused in order to extort admissions from Him;
- (6) rendering a verdict of guilty at the close of the night session, without allowing a day to intervene;
- (7) holding the morning session on a feast day, and rendering a verdict at its close; and
- (8) rendering both verdicts without any legal evidence.

### III. The Roman Trial.

Early on the morning of Friday of the Passover week, as we have already seen, "the chief priests with the elders and scribes, and the whole council" held a consultation (Mark), in the palace of the high priest; and after the examination of Jesus and their verdict that He was guilty of blasphemy, they took counsel against Him "to put him to death" (Mt), this being, in their judgment, the proper punishment for the offense of which they had pronounced Him guilty.

## 1. Taken before Pilate:

For the reasons already mentioned, they came to the conclusion that it would be necessary to invoke the aid of the Roman power in carrying out this sentence. They thereupon bound Jesus, and led Him away and delivered Him up to Pilate, who at this time probably occupied, while in Jerusalem, the magnificent palace built by Herod the Great. Jesus was taken into the judgment hall of the palace or Pretorium; His accusers, unwilling to defile themselves by entering into a heathen house and thereby rendering themselves unfit to eat the Passover, remained outside upon the marble pavement.

## 2. Roman Law and Procedure:

The proceedings thus begun were conducted under a system entirely different from that which we have thus far been considering, both in its nature and its administration. The Jewish law was apart of the religion, and in its growth and development was administered in important cases by a large body of trained men, who were obliged to follow strictly a well-defined procedure. The Roman law, on the other hand, had its origin and growth under the stern and manly virtues and the love of justice which characterized republican Rome, and it still jealously guarded the rights and privileges of Roman citizens, even in a conquered province. Striking illustrations of this truth are found in the life of Paul (see Acts 16:35-39; 22:24-29; 25:10-12). The lives and fortunes of the natives in an imperial province like Judea may be said to have been almost completely at the mercy of the Roman procurator or governor, who was responsible to his imperial master alone, and not even to the Roman senate. Pilate therefore was well within the mark when, at a later stage of the trial, being irritated at Jesus remaining silent when questioned by him, he petulantly exclaimed:

"Speakest thou not unto me? knowest thou not that I have power to release thee, and have power to crucify thee?" (John 19:10). While, however, the procurator was not compelled in such cases to adhere strictly to the prescribed procedure, and had a wide discretion, he was

not allowed to violate or depart from the established principles of the law.

On this occasion, Pilate, respecting the scruples of the chief priests about entering the palace, went outside at their request, apparently leaving Jesus in the Pretorium. He asked them the usual formal question, put at the opening of a Roman trial:

"What accusation bring ye against this man?"

### 3. Full Trial Not Desired:

They answered and said unto him, If he were not an evil-doer, we should not have delivered him up unto thee" (John 18:29 the King James Version). Pilate could see at once that this was a mere attempt to evade the direct question he had asked, and was not such an accusation as disclosed any offense known to the Roman law. Affecting to treat it with disdain, and as something known only to their own law, he said, "Take him yourselves, and judge him according to your law. The Jews said unto him, It is not lawful for us to put any man to death" (John 18:31).

### 4. Final Accusation:

Perceiving that Pilate would not gratify their desire to have Jesus condemned on the verdict which they had rendered, or for an offense against their own law only, "they began to accuse him, saying, We found this man perverting our nation, and forbidding to give tribute to Caesar, and saying that he himself is Christ a king" (Luke 23:2). This was an accusation containing three charges, much like a modern indictment containing three counts. Pilate appears to have been satisfied that there was nothing in the first two of these charges; but the third was too serious to be ignored, especially as it was a direct charge of majestas or treason, the greatest crime known to the Roman law, and as to which the reigning emperor, Tiberius, and his then favorite, Sejanus, were particularly sensitive and jealous. The charges in this case were merely oral, but it would appear to have been in the discretion of the procurator to receive them in this form in the case of one who was not a Roman citizen.

### 5. Examination, Defence and Acquittal:

The accusers having been heard, Pilate returned to the Pretorium to examine Jesus regarding the last and serious accusation. The Four Gospels give in the same words the question put to him by Pilate, "Art thou the King of the Jews?" The first three record only the final affirmative answer, "Thou sayest," which if it stood alone might have been taken as a plea of guilty; but John gives the intervening discussion which explains the matter fully. He tells us that Jesus did not answer the question directly, but asked Pilate, "Sayest thou this of thyself, or did others tell it thee concerning me?" (John 18:34) (apparently not having been outside when the charges were made). On being told that it came from the chief priests, He went on to explain that His kingdom was not of this world, but was a spiritual kingdom. Being again asked if He was a king, He replied in effect, that He was a king in that sense, and that His subjects were those who were of the truth and heard His voice (John 18:35-37). Pilate, being satisfied with His explanation, "went out again unto the Jews," and apparently having taken Jesus with him, he mounted his judgment seat or movable tribunal, which had been placed upon the tessellated pavement, and pronounced his verdict, "I find in him no fault at all" (John 18:38 the King James Version, the Revised Version (British and American) "I find no crime in him").

### 6. Fresh Accusations:

According to the Roman law, this verdict of acquittal should have ended the trial and at once secured the discharge of Jesus; but instead it brought a volley of fresh accusations to which Jesus made no reply. Pilate hesitated, and hearing a charge that Jesus had begun His treasonable teaching in Galilee, the thought occurred to him that he might escape from his dilemma by sending Jesus for trial to Herod Antipas, the tetrarch of Galilee, who was then in Jerusalem for the feast, which he accordingly did (Luke 23:7).

### 7. Reference to Herod:

Herod had long been desirous to see Jesus—"hoped to see some miracle done by him," and "questioned him in many words; but he answered him nothing." The chief priests and scribes, who had followed him from the Pretorium to the Maccabean palace, which Herod was then occupying, "stood, vehemently accusing" Jesus (Luke 23:8-10). "That fox," however, as Jesus had called him (Luke 13:32), was too astute to intermeddle in a trial for treason, which was a dangerous proceeding, and possibly he was aware that Pilate had already acquitted Him; in which case a retrial by him would be illegal. He and his soldiers, probably irritated at the refusal of Jesus to give him any answer, mocked Him, and arraying Him in a gorgeous robe, no doubt in ridicule of His claim to be a king, sent Him back to Pilate. This reference to Herod in reality formed no effective part of the trial of Jesus, as Herod declined the jurisdiction, although Pilate sought to make use of it in his subsequent discussion with the chief priests. The only result was that Herod was flattered by the courtesy of Pilate, the enmity between them ceased, and they were made friends (Luke 23:11,12,15).

#### 8. Jesus or Barabbas:

On their return, Pilate resumed his place on the judgment seat outside. What followed, however, properly formed no part of the legal trial, as it was a mere travesty upon law as well as upon justice. Pilate resolved to make another attempt to secure the consent of the Jews to the release of Jesus. To this end he summoned not only the chief priests and the rulers, but "the people" as well (Luke 23:13), and after mentioning the failure to prove any of the charges made against Jesus, he reminded them of the custom of releasing at the feast a prisoner selected by them, and offering as a compromise to chastise or scourge Jesus before releasing Him. At this point Pilate's anxiety to release Jesus was still further increased by the message he received from his wife concerning her disturbing dream about Jesus and warning him to "have .... nothing to do with that righteous man" (Matthew 27:19). Meanwhile, the chief priests and elders were busily engaged in canvassing the multitude to ask for the release of Barabbas, the notable robber, and destroy Jesus (Matthew 27:20). When Pilate urged them to release Jesus, they cried out all together, "Away with this man, and release unto us Barabbas"; and upon a further appeal on behalf of Jesus they cried, "Crucify, crucify him." A third attempt on his part met with no better result (Luke 23:18-23).

#### 9. Behold the Man!:

The Fourth Gospel alone records a final attempt on the part of Pilate to save Jesus. He scourged Him, it has been suggested, with a view to satisfying their desire for His punishment, and afterward appealing to their pity. He allowed his soldiers to repeat what they had seen done at Herod's palace, and place a crown of thorns upon His head, array Him in a purple robe, and render mock homage to Him as king of the Jews. Pilate went out to the Jews with Jesus thus arrayed and bleeding. Again declaring that he found no fault in Him, he presented Him, saying, "Behold, the man!" This was met by the former cry, "Crucify him, crucify him." Pilate replied, "Take him yourselves .... for I find no crime in him." The Jews referred him to their law by which He deserved death because He made Himself the Son of God. This alarmed Pilate's superstitious fears, who by this time appears to have wholly lost control of himself. He took Jesus into the palace and said to Him, "Whence art thou? But Jesus gave him no answer." Irritated at His silence, Pilate reminded Him of his absolute power over Him. The mysterious answer of Jesus as to the source of power still further alarmed him, and he made new efforts to secure His discharge (John 19:1-9).

#### 10. Pilate Succumbs to Threats:

The Jews were well aware that Pilate was arbitrary and cruel, but they had also found that he was very sensitive as to anything that might injuriously affect his official position or his standing with his master, the emperor. As a last resort they shouted to him, "If thou release this man, thou art not Caesar's friend: every one that maketh himself a king speaketh against Caesar" (John 19:12). The prospect of a charge of his aiding and abetting such a crime as treason, in addition to the other charges that a guilty conscience told him might be brought against him, proved too much for the vacillating procurator. He brought Jesus out, and sat down again upon the judgment seat placed upon the pavement. He made one more appeal,

"Shall I crucify your King?" The chief priests gave the hypocritical answer, "We have no king but Caesar" (John 19:15). Pilate finally succumbed to their threats and clamor; but took his revenge by placing upon the cross the superscription that was so galling to them, "THE KING OF THE JEWS."

11. Pilate Washes His Hands:

Then occurred the closing scene of the tragedy, recorded only in the First Gospel, when Pilate washed his hands before the multitude (a Jewish custom), saying to them, "I am innocent of the blood of this righteous man; see ye to it." The reply was that dreadful imprecation, "His blood be on us, and on our children" (Matthew 27:24,25).

12. The Sentence:

Pilate resumes his place upon the judgment seat, the fatal sentence at last falls from his lips, and Jesus is delivered up to be crucified.

Now, how far were these proceedings in accordance with the Roman law under which they purported to have been taken and conducted? In the first place, Pilate, as procurator, was the proper officer to try the charges brought against Jesus.

13. Review:

In the next place he acted quite properly in declining to entertain a charge which disclosed no offense known to the Roman law, or to pass a sentence based on the verdict of the Sanhedrin for an alleged violation of the Jewish law. He appears to have acted in accordance with the law, and indeed in a judicial and praiseworthy manner in the trial and disposition of the threefold indictment for treason (unless it be a fact that Jesus was not present when these accusations were brought against Him outside the Pretorium, which would be merely an irregularity, as they were made known to him later inside). Pilate's initial mistake, which led to all the others, was in not discharging Jesus at once, when he had pronounced the verdict of acquittal.

All the subsequent proceedings were contrary to both the letter and the spirit of the law. Although Pilate took his place upon the judgment seat, his acts, properly speaking, were not those of a judge, and had no legal force or value; but were rather the futile attempts of a weak and vacillating politician to appease an angry mob thirsting for the blood of an innocent countryman. The carrying out of a sentence imposed in such circumstances, and under such conditions, may not inaptly be described as a judicial murder.

– John James Maclaren

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