

# **THE LIFE OF CHRIST**

**Thirty First Annual  
Truth In Love  
Lectureship**

**Jonathan Burns, Editor**

**Hosted by the  
East Hill Church of Christ**



Visit our website for  
more information:  
**[www.truthinlovelectureship.com](http://www.truthinlovelectureship.com)**

To order more  
*Truth In Love* Books  
call (931) 363-2777



# Introduction

**T**here has never been a time greater than now to share the message of Jesus Christ. Not because we are a smarter, or more advanced society but because the message of Jesus can overshadow the sorrow and sadness of this world. Listen to these words: *“I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture. 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”* (John 10:9-10). Jesus offers an abundant life. This word “abundant” carries the idea “exceeding the number” and being “superior, extraordinary, and uncommon.” In other words, our lives can be something that we never imagined.

The Bible shows Jesus as much more than a man. In Matthew 16:14 some showed a great error in their view of Jesus when they thought He was John, Elias, Jeremiah, or one of the prophets. Jesus is God. Isaiah said He would be virgin-conceived, virgin-born, and God with us (Isaiah 7:14). Peter declared Jesus as Christ, God’s Son (Matthew 16:16). John describes Him as the “only begotten Son” (John 3:16). Paul in his writings about Jesus described Him as the one who became a servant for us (Philippians 2:5-11). Jesus said: “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 10:18). The Father said: “This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him” (Matthew 17:5). It is time that we spread the message of Jesus Christ, around the world, for individuals to “Hear Him.”

Truth In Love has a goal each year: “Help present the Gospel of Christ.” We strive to accomplish this by printed and electronic means. It is our desire that the books (Past, Present, and Future) will have great impact in the lives of Christians and those who are seeking the Truth. May we all pray that Christ can be magnified in this volume.

The 2022 Edition of Truth In Love is very special to this director and editor. On October 31, 2021 I preached my last sermon as the Minister for the East Hill Church of Christ. I was blessed with an opportunity to return back to my home city of Sparta, TN to be closer to family and especially to be near my father who has Parkinson’s disease. The Elders of the East Hill Church of Christ (Joe Christopher, Joe Cooper, and Johnny Jackson) blessed me with the opportunity to work with Truth In Love one more time in 2022. These men have always been a great encouragement and support to me and my family. We will forever be in their debt and are honored to know them and the great members of the East Hill Congregation.

It would not be right if I did not write a note of thank you to my wonderful wife Kelley. She has always stood by my side and is my biggest supporter. She is the one that keeps me going and helps me each day. For this book, she been involved from the beginning to end. She is simply the best wife this husband could ever dream of having.

Robert Taylor, Jr. wrote this: “Warm reader friends, I wonder if you and I have proper appreciation of and sufficient gratitude for the infinite worth of the Christ of Calvary?” (Sermons that Save, 1984). Jesus is worth our time.

Jonathan Burns  
Director and Editor

# Dedication

There are many individuals who are deserving of our love and respect. Over the past 31 years we have dedicated the book to a number of wonderful men, women, and couples in the Lord's Church. In my final time of directing and editing the Truth In Love Lectureship, we will honor Robert and Irene Taylor.



Brother Taylor was born in 1931 and became a Christian in 1944. Sister Taylor was born in 1931 and worked as a bookkeeper. In 1952, Robert and Irene became one in marriage and they had two children: Rebecca and Tim.

Brother Taylor has authored over 35 books and 25 Gospel Tracts. It is estimated that he has preached more than 550 meetings, 700 lectureships, and 6,500 radio and TV lessons. All of this work was made possible by the loving commitment of this wonderful couple. Sister Taylor passed away in 2017 and Brother Taylor has kept her memory alive. Let us decide to be more like them.

Jonathan Burns  
Director and Editor

---

---



---

# Table Of Contents

1	Jesus In The Beginning.....	11
	<i>Bobby Liddell</i>	
2	The Miracles Of Jesus .....	23
	<i>Jason Rollo</i>	
3	The Parables Of Jesus .....	39
	<i>Derrick Coble</i>	
4	The Prayers Of Jesus .....	53
	<i>Tony Lawrence</i>	
5	Jesus And The Government .....	63
	<i>Mike Hixon</i>	
6	Jesus And The Church .....	71
	<i>B.J. Clarke</i>	
7	Jesus And The Home .....	83
	<i>Jason Rollo</i>	
8	Jesus Called His Disciples .....	99
	<i>Larry Acuff</i>	
9	Jesus Loved His Disciples .....	111
	<i>Johnie Scaggs, Jr.</i>	
10	Jesus Stands Before The Cross .....	123
	<i>Michael Clarke</i>	

Table Of Contents

---

11 Jesus Rises After The Cross .....157  
*Joshua Cantrell*

12 Jesus Will Come Again .....175  
*Johnie Scaggs, Jr.*

**Ladies Class**

14 Jesus And Children .....187  
*B.J. Rollo*

**In Honor**

15 The Master Teacher .....193  
*Robert Taylor, Jr.*

16 Women Who Labored In The Gospel .....201  
*Irene Taylor*



Chapter 1  
**JESUS IN THE  
BEGINNING**

*Bobby Liddell*

“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God” (John 1:1-2).

**THE GODHEAD**

The Bible records the reality of the “Godhead,” referring to the divine nature of God, and all that includes. Three verses, in the King James Version, mention the Godhead. In Athens, among the multitude of false gods, made of gold, silver, and stone, Paul declared the truth about the self-existing, eternal Godhead: “Forasmuch 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” (Acts 17:29). Contrary to the errors of Humanism, man did not create God. Paul wrote to the brethren in Rome, affirming the creative power of the eternal Godhead: “For 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: Because that, when they knew God, they glorified

[him] not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened” (Romans 1:20-21).

Paul penned the epistle to the church at Colosse, warning of their being led into captivity by human philosophy, empty of power, bereft of truth, and according to the faulty elements of the “wisdom” of mere, mortal men, “and not after Christ,” the source of all truth, in Whom, incarnate, the very essence of God abides: “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. For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily” (Colossians 2:8-9). Plainly, there is a Godhead (Divine Nature [NKJV], or divine being [ESV]), from Whom man sprang, Who is immeasurably greater than any idol, for He is our Creator, perfectly holy, eternally existent, preeminently powerful, worthy of glory, honor, and praise, and Who is mercifully interested in man’s salvation, as demonstrated by the coming of the Word, Who was “made flesh” (John 1:14).

### **THERE ARE THREE PERSONS IN THE GODHEAD**

There is one true God (Deuteronomy 6:4), omnipotent, omniscient, and omnibenevolent, but there are three Persons in the Godhead, Who are distinct in Their personality, and in Their work. The first indication of this plurality of personalities occurs in Genesis 1:26: “And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness.” Note the use of the plural pronouns “us” and “our.” All three members of the Godhead were involved in Creation. Likewise, all three were involved at Jesus’ baptism. When John baptized Jesus, the Spirit of God descended like a dove, and a voice from Heaven (the Father’s) proclaimed His Son’s deity (Matthew 3:12-17).

Before Jesus ascended to Heaven, He instructed His disciples, saying: “Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching 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” (Matthew 28:19-20). Note, Jesus used the singular, “name,” instead of, “names,” concerning the name of God, “the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost”; thus, indicating the unity of God, but He also enumerated the plurality of Divine Persons Who are God, and Who share in the “divine nature” of the Godhead.

Jesus delineated the three Divine Persons, and also spoke of Their respective works, when He declared to His apostles: “I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. Howbeit 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. He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew [it] unto you. All things that the Father hath are mine: therefore said I, that he shall take of mine, and shall shew [it] unto you” (John 16:12-16). Clearly, there are three Divine Persons in the Godhead, each partaking of that eternal nature that is God’s.

Paul, inspired apostle, enumerated the Godhead members, in his concluding remarks to the brethren at Rome: “Now I beseech you, brethren, for the Lord Jesus Christ’s sake, and for the love of the Spirit, that ye strive together with me in [your] prayers to God for me” (Romans 15:30). To the church at Corinth, Paul began with reference to Christ, God, and the Spirit (2 Corinthians 1:21-22). He concluded that second epistle by writing: “The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy

---

Ghost, [be] with you all. Amen” (2 Corinthians 13:14). To the churches of Galatia, Paul stated: “But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father” (Galatians 4:4-6; cf. Ephesians 3:14-17). Ephesians 4:4-6 shows the three members of the Godhead: “[There is] one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; One Lord, one faith, one baptism, One God and Father of all, who [is] above all, and through all, and in you all.” The last New Testament reference, we shall consider, concerning the three Persons in the Godhead, is Jude 20-21: “But ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost, Keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life.” Obviously, there are three Persons in the Godhead, and Jesus is one of them.

### **JESUS CHRIST, AS A MEMBER OF THE GODHEAD, IS ETERNAL**

The member of the Godhead, often called “the second member of the Godhead,” now known as Jesus, has the divine nature of deity; thus, He is God, and, as God, He is eternal. He stated His eternal existence, as recorded in John 17:24-25: “Father, 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. O righteous Father, the world hath not known thee: but I have known thee, and these have known that thou hast sent me.” Jesus, as the Word, existed “before the foundation of the world”; that is, before Creation. Peter, by

inspiration, penned: “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; But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot: Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you” (1 Peter 1:18-20). Christ, our Savior, was “foreordained”; that is, “known before” (from *proginosko*), or “foreknown” (ASV), as the sacrificial Lamb, before the establishment (laying down) of the world (*cosmos*), before the world began. The point is that God’s plan for man’s salvation, by the sinless sacrifice of His Son, was not a reaction to man’s sin, but was always in readiness for man’s sin. Regardless of one’s concept of “world,” the message is this: God foreknew that He would send the Savior, to atone for man’s sin, and He foreknew that the Word would be that Savior. The same apostle, Peter, announced on Pentecost Day: “And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved. Ye men of Israel, hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know: Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge (*prognosis*, BL) of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain: Whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death: because it was not possible that he should be holden of it” (Acts 2:21-24). He was “made manifest in these last times for you” (1 Peter 1:20); that is, He was made known, in these “last times,” which refers to the end of the Mosaic Age, and the time of the Christian Age. He was manifest (shown visibly), upon the earth, but He was NOT created, for He always existed.

---

From Heaven, His prior abode, the Father sent Him, and this very point Jesus made time and again, as recorded in the book of John. “Jesus saith unto them, My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work” (John 4:34). “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” (John 5:24). “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” (John 5:30). “But I have greater witness than [that] of John: for the works which the Father hath given me to finish, the same works that I do, bear witness of me, that the Father hath sent me. And the Father himself, which hath sent me, hath borne witness of me. Ye have neither heard his voice at any time, nor seen his shape” (John 5:36-37). “For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. And 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. And 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” (John 6:38-40). “But now I go my way to him that sent me; and none of you asketh me, Whither goest thou?” (John 16:5).

Jesus came down from Heaven, where He was BEFORE the “beginning,” and returned to the Father, ascending back to Heaven. “And no man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, [even] the Son of man which is in heaven” (John 3:13). He said, while upon earth: “For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me” (John 6:38). Jesus

---



declared Himself to be the bread of life, sent from Heaven above: “For the bread of God is he which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world” (John 6:33, cf. 41, 50). He continued: “I am the living bread which came down from heaven” (John 6:51). Conclusively, He told the Jews He was from “above,” not of this world: “And he said unto them, Ye are from beneath; I am from above: ye are of this world; I am not of this world” (John 8:23).

### **IN THE BEGINNING**

John had a very definite purpose, in writing the Gospel account that bears his name, and he succinctly stated that purpose in John 20:30-31: “And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book: But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name.” John gave credible, sufficient, undeniable evidence that Jesus is the Son of God, not just “a son of God,” or just “a god” (as the Jehovah’s Witnesses blasphemously teach), but the only begotten Son, by the virgin birth (Isaiah 7:14). He is, “Emmanuel...God with us” (Matthew 1:23), for He is, “the Son of the Highest” (Luke 1:31-33). Therefore, Peter was correct when he confessed: “Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God” (Matthew 16:16).

So, John began with the beginning: “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God (John 1:1). The One Who “made” the world, “was in the world,” “and the world knew him not” (John 1:3, 10). How did He come into the world: “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” (John

1:14). John presented the indisputable proof of Jesus' deity, and eternal existence, but also of His humanity, and fleshly existence.

John proved Jesus IS the Son of God, and that He WAS with the Father, "before the world was." His Gospel account emphasizes, in the strongest way, the deity of Jesus, not as a mere biographical record, but as a testimony of fact and faith. As proof, John recorded seven great miracles performed by Jesus. He quoted Jesus, Who referred to His glorious prior existence, with the Father, "before the world was," in His prayer to the Father: "I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do. And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was" (John 17:4-5).

Previously, the Jews had claimed Jesus was crazy, when He told them: "Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day: and he saw [it], and was glad" (John 8:56). They said: "Thou art not yet fifty years old, and hast thou seen Abraham?" (John 8:57). In His reply, Jesus, with the tense of a verb, affirmed His existence in eternity, long before Abraham lived, and before time began, when He said, "Before Abraham was I Am" (John 8:58). "I Am" is in the Greek tense that means: "I am now (at the time when He spoke), as a consequence of My having been all along (in eternity)." The One, Whom we know as Jesus, came from somewhere, where He existed before His becoming flesh. He was not created, but is the Creator. He went to somewhere after His earthly life. Therefore, His conception, by the virgin Mary, was not the beginning of His existence, and His death, upon the cross of Calvary, was not the end of His existence, either.

Jesus told the Jews that Abraham saw the day of Christ, in God's prophetic foresight (Hebrews 11:13-14). Abraham

---

lived some nineteen hundred years before Christ, so the Jews asked if Jesus had seen Abraham. “Before Abraham was I Am,” is a solemn and official declaration, preceded by “Verily, verily.” The utterance is a remarkable one. It does not merely assert that He was before Abraham, but, “Before Abraham was, I AM,” identifying with the I AM of the Old Testament (Exodus 3:14). If Jesus said, “I was,” He would simply have been expressing priority, but, “I am,” marks timeless existence. Thus, Jesus drew the contrast between the created and the uncreated, and the temporal and the eternal. Jesus had just made the greatest claim of all—the claim of eternal existence. The Jewish leaders, “took up stones,” supposing He had spoken blasphemy, for they understood, full well, that His claim meant He was God.

Jesus made a corroborating statement, as recorded in Revelation 1:8 (also written by His apostle, John): “I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty.” Note: Jesus stated He “is,” in the present. He “was,” in the past. He “is to come,” in the future, when time will end, and eternity will begin for all. John showed that Christ is the means that God used to reveal Himself to man: “No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him” (John 1:18). Therefore, Christ is the living link between God and man. Likewise, Paul wrote, to the church in Colosse, that Jesus was timeless, existing “before all things”: “And he is before all things, and by him all things consist” (Colossians 1:17). Indeed, He is, in the eternal nature of deity, “Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever” (Hebrews 13:8). He is the (perfect) “image” of the invisible God, and the “firstborn” (only begotten), “of every creature”; that is,

---

over all creation (Colossians 1:15).

“In the beginning,” as placed first in order in the Greek sentence (John 1:1), shows an emphasis upon the element of time. The Word “was” in the beginning, with the Greek tense indicating an action that was taking place in the past. The One, Whom we know as Jesus, already was—before the beginning, and He continues to be. Yet, how can we, in the limited language of humanity, adequately express, or even receive, the concept of eternity? While it is a universal failure, of mankind, to be able to delve very deeply into an understanding of all that could be known about eternity, for we are bounded by time, in our thinking, “the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity” (Isaiah 57:15) has given us all we need to know. What has He revealed to us?

The Word was already existing in the beginning, and Jesus is that Word (logos). All the purposes, plans, and promises of God are summed up in Christ. “The same was in the beginning with God” (John 1:2). The “same” refers to the Word. He was in the beginning, and He was in the beginning with God, as God; thus, He is deity, having the divine nature, as a part of the eternal Godhead. “All things were made by him” (John 1:3). Paul affirmed this foundational fact by stating: “Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature: For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether [they be] thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: And he is before all things, and by him all things consist” (Colossians 1:15-17; cf. Hebrews 1:2). The beginning of ALL things, EXCEPT for God, is God. The Psalmist affirmed: “By the word of the LORD were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth” (Psalm 33:6). “For he spake, and it

was done; he commanded, and it stood fast” (Psalm 33:9).

## CONCLUSION

NASA’s James Webb telescope, a ten billion dollar project, launched on December 25, 2021, has as its purpose to seek to gather evidence in the study of the origins of life. No doubt, the images it sends back to earth will be the subject of much study, conjecture, media attention, and so-called “scientific conclusions.” Just as undoubtedly, the “answers” men supposedly find, from this effort, will continue, as they have been before, to be twisted in an atheistic effort to deny there is a Creator God, and to attack the biblical account of Creation. The truth is: “Without him was not any thing made that was made” (John 1:3). The first part of verse 3 states that all things were made by Him (the positive side), and without Him was not anything made that was made (the negative side), contrary to the false theory of organic evolution. We are blessed that God has revealed to us His eternal, divine nature, and man’s origin of life (Genesis 1-2).

The Bible answered all man’s false theories long before they were contrived by men. God is the “beginner” of “all things.” All things were made (ginomai: meaning to come into existence) by Him. He created all things, and brought them into existence. The Hebrews’ writer recorded: “Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear” (Hebrews 11:3).

Yet, the Word never came into existence. He was not “made”— for there was never a time when He was not. He is God, timeless, and eternal. In the beginning, He already “was.”

To believe that Jesus is the Son of God necessitates

---

believing that He is eternal, as the Word, and that that Word was made flesh, for He was born of a virgin, lived a sinlessly perfect life, worked miracles upon the earth, taught men the way of truth, died, as the sacrificial Lamb, in order to atone for our sins, was triumphantly resurrected on the third day, ascended into Heaven, where He now sits upon the throne as King of kings, and Lord of lords, from whence He will return one day to raise the dead, judge the world, and take the saints with Him to share in eternal life, to abide in Heaven for ever and ever (Matthew 25:46).



## Chapter 2

# THE MIRACLES OF JESUS

*Jason Rollo*

**T**True Biblical faith is not about sight, but instead it involves trusting—believing, tied to obedient action (2 Corinthians 5:7; Mark 2:5; Hebrews 11:4f). Further, this trusting or believing is NOT something connected with guessing, wishing, following hunches or blind leaps in the dark. Sadly, this denominational “blind-leap-in-the-dark” type faith is what many have falsely based their definition upon. To them, faith is more of a guess, but such is not the case. No, not at all. Rather, true Biblical faith is based on that which is logical and provable (Isaiah 1:18; 1 Thessalonians 5:21). While certainly we do not mean that we always understand “the exact why” (cf., walking around the walls of Jericho in the Old Testament or immersion in water to receive remission of sins through the blood of Christ in the New Testament), it does mean that God has given us amazing “proof” for our faith (cf., Psalm 19:1f; Romans 1:20; Hebrews 11:1f; Romans 10:17). Put another way, God does not expect us to have belief/trust without evidence, rather God has given us solid evidence/proof of His trustworthiness! Yes, thankfully, while we may or may not always understand the “why” involved

when God has said something, we are always able to know that we can fully trust Him and obey Him because of “who” He is! As the Bible says, we are able “to draw near” to God “with a true heart in full assurance of faith” (Hebrews 10:22). Yes, our faith is not based on the mere words of uninspired men, but instead the Word of God—upon which our faith is based, has been confirmed by powerful demonstrations—the miraculous. Yes, various men (who proved themselves authentic through miracles) have penned God’s inspired words for us—in the Bible (Galatians 3:5; Acts 14:3; Romans 15:19; Galatians 1:6f; 1 Corinthians 2:1f). Thus, our faith rests on a solid bedrock of reliable evidence. In this manuscript, we plan to consider just one point within this abundant evidence, namely “miracles”—and especially as they relate to our Lord Jesus Christ. We want to do this by looking at three main points, namely: 1) The Nature of Miracles, 2) The Purpose of Miracles, and 3) The Messiah And Miracles.

### **THE NATURE OF MIRACLES**

Both the Old Testament and the New Testament are filled with abundant miracles. These miracles are of various types and show the power of God and “proof” of Him, including that the words (His Word!) spoken by the prophets, are inspired. From the Old Testament, consider some of these examples: 1) God sent down fire and destroyed wicked Sodom and Gomorrah (Genesis 19:24-25), 2) The ten plagues (Exodus 7:1f), 3) The parting of the Red Sea (Exodus 14:19f), 4) Miraculous sending of quail and manna (Exodus 16:13-15), 5) Water from the rock at Meribah (Exodus 17:6), 6) Nadab and Abihu destroyed by fire (Leviticus 10:1f), 7) Miriam smitten with leprosy (Numbers 12:1f), 8) Korah and company swallowed by the earth (Numbers 16:1f), 9) Clothes sustained



---

for forty years (Deuteronomy 29:5), 10) Parting of Jordan river (Joshua 3:1f), 11) Sun stands still (Joshua 10:13), 12) 50,000 die instantly for looking in the ark (1 Samuel 6:19), 13) Elijah calls down fire to consume bands of fifty (2 Kings 1:10), 14) River Jordan parted with mantles of prophets (2 Kings 2:8f), 15) Naaman healed of leprosy (2 Kings 5:1f). Certainly, we could add much more to this list of Old Testament examples, but these samples should suffice.

What about the New Testament? Do we have numerous examples (types) of miracles in the New Testament, as well? The answer is absolutely! Consider some of the New Testament examples: 1) Jesus heals a centurion soldier's servant without even being present (Matthew 8:13), 2) Jesus instantly heals Peter's wife's mother of a fever (Matthew 8:15), 3) The tempestuous wind/sea instantly obeys the rebuke of Jesus (Matthew 8:26), 4) A man's withered hand is fully restored (Matthew 12:13), 5) Jesus walks on water (Matthew 14:26), 6) Jesus raises dead Lazarus (John 11:39-45), 7) Peter and John heal a man who was lame from his mother's womb (Acts 3:6-10), 8) A couple is struck dead after lying (Acts 5:1f), 9) Peter's shadow instantly heals others (Acts 5:12-16), 10) Philip did great miracles at Samaria (Act 8:6-7), 11) Peter raises Tabitha (Dorcas) from the dead (Acts 9:36-42), 12) Agabus predicts the future (Acts 11:28; 21:10), 13) Peter is miraculously released from prison (Acts 12:7f), 14) Paul casts a demon out of a possessed girl (Acts 16:18), 15) Paul's clothing when touched, cures people (Acts 19:11-12). Again, just as with the Old Testament, more examples could certainly be given with the New Testament, as well. However, these numerous and varied instances clearly prove the point: The Bible is filled with recorded (authentic and witness-based) miracles!

---

Furthermore, if the entire context is studied within these varied Old and New Testament miraculous examples, we will find that the “reactions” of those witnessing these miracles was that of bewilderment, astonishment, and fascination! Put another way, the “effect” of these miracles overwhelmed the audience with amazement. Additionally, these miracles were not done in some isolated fashion, but were publicly demonstrated and often witnessed by vast multitudes! Even though there are literally numerous examples we could show relating to this point, we will reference just a handful. Note: All of these examples are dealing with the context of the work and miracles of Jesus and/or His disciples. Consider: 1) Matthew 8:23-27 – “But the men **marveled**, saying what manner of man is this...,” 2) Matthew 9:1-8 – “But when the multitudes saw it, they **marveled, and glorified God**, which had given such power unto men,” 3) Matthew 12:22-23 – “And all the people were **amazed**...,” 4) Matthew 17:1-8 – “And when the disciples heard it, they fell on their faces, and were sore **afraid**,” 5) Matthew 19:2 – “And **great multitudes followed Him**; and He healed them there,” 6) Mark 1:23-28 – “And they were all **amazed**, insomuch that they questioned among themselves...And immediately **His fame spread abroad throughout all the region** round about Galilee,” 7) Mark 2:1-12 – “And when they could not come nigh unto Him for the press...insomuch that they were all **amazed, and glorified God**, saying, We never saw it on this fashion,” 8) Mark 5:35-42 – “And they were **astonished with a great astonishment**,” 9) Mark 6:51 – “And He went up unto them into the ship; and the wind ceased: and they were sore **amazed in themselves beyond measure, and wondered**,” 10) Mark 16:4-8 – “and they were affrighted...And they went out quickly, and fled from the sepulchre, for they **trembled and were amazed**,”

11) 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,” 12) 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,” 13) Luke 5:26 – “And they were **all amazed, and they glorified God, and were filled with fear**, saying, We have seen strange things today,” 14) Luke 8:56 – “And her parents were **astonished**,” 15) Luke 9:43-44 – “And they were **all amazed at the mighty power of God...they wondered...**,” 16) John 6:2 – “And a **great multitude** followed Him, **because they saw His miracles** which He did on them that were diseased,” 17) Acts 2:43 – “And **fear** came upon every soul: and many wonders and signs were done by the apostles,” 18) Acts 8:13 – “...he continued with Philip, and **wondered, beholding the miracles and signs which were done**,” 19) Acts 9:6 – “And he **trembling and astonished** said Lord, what will thou have me to do?,” 20) Acts 9:41-42 – “...and when he had called the saints and widows he presented her alive. And it was **known throughout** all Joppa: **and many believed in the Lord.**”

While miracles no longer exist, the fact is that they DID exist in great abundance during both the times of the Old and New Testaments. And greatest among the doers of these miracles was none other than our Lord Jesus Christ (John 20:30-31)!

### **THE PURPOSE OF MIRACLES**

God used miracles for a particular purpose, both in the Old and New Testaments. As we have seen, to study the Bible is to find numerous references to these miracles. But these miracles were used to accomplish something. In other words, God had “a purpose” for using the miraculous. Among

---

the various purposes of these miracles consider the following. We find:

### **To Deliver Individuals And Groups**

We can see this specific aspect in historical accounts such as with Daniel or his three brave friends (Daniel 3:1f; 6:1f). We also see it with Peter's miraculous delivery from prison at the hands of an angel (Acts 12:7). Another example would be found in John 8:59 with the deliverance of Jesus from the irate mob.

### **To Bring Judgment On The Wicked**

Perhaps the most famous instance is found in Exodus chapters seven through twelve with the many miracles performed against the hard-hearted Egyptian Pharaoh and the evil nation itself. This would include, of course, the great miraculous overthrow of the Egyptians in the Red Sea (Exodus 14:1f). We can also add to this particular instance, things like: The fall of Jericho in miraculous fashion (Joshua 6), The punishment of Ananias and Sapphira (Acts 5), the blindness thrust upon the rebellious Elymas (Acts 13), and even "the rod" Paul spoke of in 1 Corinthians 4:20-21 (cf., too, 2 Corinthians 13:20-21).

### **To Show God's Choice**

Read Genesis 15:17-20, as well as Genesis 21:1-5. God used miracles to show His approval—His choice, in various matters. Another example is found in Exodus 3:1-14 concerning Moses and the amazing scene that involves a "bush [that] burned with fire, and [yet] the bush was not consumed." Yes, clearly, God used the miraculous to let men and women know of His approval or choice, from time to time. As one

last example, consider the baptism of Jesus, namely: 1) The heavens being opened at that exact moment and the Spirit descending like a dove and lighting upon Jesus, and 2) The voice from Heaven confirming God's love for/choice of Jesus, as the chosen/anointed Messiah (cf., Matthew 3:13-17).

### **To Verify A True Prophet/Apostle**

Another aspect relating to the purpose of miracles concerns how God used such to point-to or verify who was (as opposed to who was not) a true prophet/apostle. While certainly various illustrations could be given from the Old Testament under this point, one will suffice. Read 1 Kings chapter 17. In this chapter we find the miracle of the "barrel of meal" and the "cruse of oil" that replenished themselves (vs. 14). We also read of the tragedy concerning the widow's son who "fell sick; and his sickness was so sore, that there was no breath left in him" (vs. 17), meaning the young man died. Yet, Elijah (by God's power and miraculous means) brought the child back from the dead (vs. 21-23). Now, look particularly at verse 24. This is a key verse. It reads, "And the woman said to Elijah, Now by this I know that thou art a man of God, and that the word of the Lord in thy mouth is truth." Note, she said, "...by this I KNOW..." Yes, in the Old Testament, Jehovah would use the miraculous to verify His true prophet. What about the New Testament? As we could probably guess, we see the same thing. Acts 2:43 says, "And fear came upon every soul: and many wonders and signs were done by the apostles." Acts 5:12 adds, "And by the hands of the apostles were many signs and wonders wrought among the people..." In fact, as the verses following both of these passages shows us the result of such "miraculous verification," was for people to believe and know that these

men were from God! Paul worded it this way in 2 Corinthians 12:12, “Truly the signs of an apostle were wrought among you in all patience, in signs, and wonders, and mighty deeds.” Indeed, there were certainly “false apostles” in those days (2 Corinthians 11:13; Revelation 2:2), but the true prophets/apostles (just like Moses before Pharaoh) could be “verified” by these undeniable demonstrations (cf., Hebrews 2:4; Mark 16:14f).

### **To Fulfill Prophecy**

In addition to what we have studied to this point, we also need to know that the miraculous was also involved in fulfillment of prophecy. Surely, various sections of Holy Writ could be studied and reviewed to this end, but one Scriptural reference will readily prove the point. Matthew 8:16-17, referencing the powerful work of Jesus and quoting from the Old Testament (i.e., from prophecy, cf., Isaiah 53:4) reads, “When the even was come, they brought unto Him many that were possessed with devils: and He cast out the spirits with His word, and healed all that were sick: That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying, Himself took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses.” Thus, another purpose of miracles was to “fulfill prophecy!”

### **To Confirm The Word**

Often the most popular answer (and perhaps the best “overall” description given) to the question, “What was the purpose of miracles?,” is found in the answer, “To confirm the Word!” In other words, the miraculous was to confirm the words of the inspired speakers (and thus by extension their written words, too, cf., John 20:30-31; Ephesians 3:3-5; 2 Timothy 3:16-17) as being “from” God. Put another way,

---

God used the miraculous to confirm HIS WORD. Mark 16:20 speaks to this end. It reads, “And they went forth, and preached everywhere, the Lord working with them, and **confirming the word** with signs following. Amen.” In other words, these apostles (cf., vs. 14) used the signs (i.e., miracles) they were doing to “confirm” the inspired words they were speaking on God’s behalf. Acts 8:6 reads, “And the people with one accord gave heed unto **those things which Philip spake, hearing and seeing the miracles which he did.**” We could add many such Scriptures (cf., Acts 3:6-12; 4:16, 22; 19:10-11; Etc).

### **To Prove That Jesus Was Deity**

Yet, our subject is about “The Miracles of Jesus.” With all of the above in mind, please consider this important point: The many miracles of Jesus forever point to the fact of (and PROVE!) His Deity. Put another way, the miraculous was used by Jesus to let us know that He was not just another man—but was indeed the Messiah (both God and man)! Let us look at this seventh point a bit deeper.

In Matthew 11:1-5, we find Jesus giving a much-needed reminder to the imprisoned John the Immerser. John had sent “two of his disciples” to Jesus with a question, “Art Thou He that should come, or do we look for another?” The answer of Jesus is powerful. He points to his miracles to assure John that He is the long-awaited Messiah. Jesus declares, “Go and shew John again those things which ye do hear and see: 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. And blessed is he, whosoever shall not be offended in Me” (cf., too, Luke 7:16f). Wow! No wonder the apostle John would write these words, “And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of His

disciples which are not written in this book: **But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ**, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through His name” (John 20:30-31). While the Bible does not contain all of the things (including miracles) that Jesus said and did, we do have absolutely everything we need (John 21:24-25; John 12:48; 2 Peter 1:3)! As Jesus said of Himself concerning His miraculous works, “But I have **greater witness** than that of John: for **the works** which the Father hath given Me to finish, **the same works that I do**, bear witness of Me, that the Father hath sent Me” (John 5:36). John 7:31 tells us, “And many of the people believed on Him, and said, When Christ cometh, will He do more **miracles** than these which this man hath done?” Jesus would make it very clear in John 10:37-38, “If I do not **the works** of my Father, believe Me not. But if I do, though ye believe not Me, **believe the works: that ye may know, and believe**, that the Father is in Me, and I in Him.” Jesus used miracles to PROVE that He was the long-awaited Messiah!

### THE MESSIAH AND MIRACLES

As has already been noted, numerous (not all, but certainly more than enough!) miracles of Jesus have been recorded for us. Further, we can absolutely rely upon credible testimony given by reliable witnesses (Deuteronomy 2:25; Joshua 2:10f; John 4:29f), concerning these miracles. In short, the miracles of Jesus, as recorded in the New Testament, were witnessed by many—not a few, but MANY! John the Immerser, Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, Peter, Paul, and on and on we could go. How about the double-digit witnesses referenced in 1 Corinthians 15:5 or the triple-digit witnesses noted in 1 Corinthians 15:6? We are not talking about a few



credible witnesses (which would be enough, actually), nor or we talking about a hundred credible witnesses (which would be overwhelming), but we are talking about hundreds and hundreds of CREDIBLE witnesses. Now that is testimony that one can trust in and count on! Friends, God gave us Jesus and verified Him/proved His authenticity (as being from God, the Father) by: 1) The Father Himself (John 5:37; 8:18), 2) His forerunner—John the Immerser (who was himself a man of prophecy; Malachi 3:1; 4:5-6; Isaiah 40:3; John 1:6f; 5:31f), 3) Jesus and His personal testimony of Himself (John 8:18), 4) The apostles who were with Him from the beginning (and this would include their witness/testimony and verification with their own miracles, too (John 15:27; 21:24; Luke 24:48-49; Acts 1:22; 3:15; 4:20, 33; 5:12; 10:39-42; 13:30-31; 23:11; 26:16; Hebrews 2:4; 1 John 1:1f; Etc.), and 5) The works/miracles He performed (John 5:36; 10:25)—which is the particular subject we are dealing with primarily in this manuscript.

### **The Book Of John**

The book of John (being one of the 27 inspired New Testament books) is incredible, as it relates to Jesus and His mighty miracles. In fact, the inspired God-given book of John in essence covers seven “main” miracles, before the Cross. To this number, two more are added, when we include (which we certainly should) the glorious and miraculous resurrection of our Lord (John 19-20) and the miraculous catch of fish (John 21). The seven main miracles outlined in the book of John (miracles recorded to prove the Deity of Jesus), include: 1) Jesus showing His power over the material world (cf., quality!); John 2:1-11 – Turning water to perfect wine (read, grape juice; the term “wine” is a generic word;

---

cf., winepress), 2) Jesus and His miraculous knowledge; John 4:46-54 – Healing of the nobleman’s son, 3) Jesus and His power over time; John 5:1-9 – Healing of the lame man who had been lame for 38 years, 4) Jesus and His limitless power (cf., quantity!); John 6:1-14 – Feeding of over five-thousand, 5) Jesus and His absolute supremacy over the created order/nature; John 6:16-21 – Jesus walking on water, 6) Jesus and His understanding of and power over the physical senses; John 9:1f – Healing of the blind man, 7) Jesus and his control over the unseen, including life/death (cf., Hebrews 2:14; 1 John 2:8; and especially, Revelation 1:18!); John 11:1f – Raising of Lazarus from the dead. Again, to these seven, we would add: 8) John 19-20 – The glorious resurrection of Jesus from the dead, and 9) John 21 – The miraculous catch of fish. Note: This is JUST the book of John, alone! The examples given in Matthew, Mark and Luke are numerous, as well. Clearly, the Bible testifies over and over about the wonderful miracles of Jesus, thus proving time and time again—His Deity!

### **Matthew, Mark, Luke And John**

Consider Jesus and His miracles of physical healing: 1) A leper (Matthew 8:2-4), 2) A paralytic (Matthew 9:2-8), 3) Fever/Peter’s mother-in-law (Matthew 8:14-17), 4) A withered hand (Matthew 12:9-13), 5) Deafness and Dumbness (Mark 7:31-37), 6) Blindness (John 9:1f), 7) Severed Ear/Malchus (Luke 22:47-51), 8) Hemorrhaging (Matthew 9:20-22).

Consider Jesus and His miracles over the realm of nature: 1) Water to juice (John 2:1-11), 2) Stilling the storm (Matthew 8:23-27), 3) Supernatural catch of fish (Luke 5:1-11), 4) Multiplying food (Matthew 14:15-21; 15:32-39), 5) Walking on water (Matthew 14:22-33), 6) Money from a fish (Matthew 17:24-27), 7) Fig tree dried up (Matthew 21:17f).

---

Consider Jesus and the miracle of raising the dead: 1) Daughter of Jairus (Mark 5:20-42), 2) Widow's son (Luke 7:11-17), 3) Lazarus (John 11:1f), and 4) His own resurrection (Luke 24:1f; John 10:17).

Consider various other examples, involving Jesus and the miraculous: 1) His absolute power over Satan and demons/unclean spirits (cf., not just His authority over the seen, but also the "unseen" dimensions; Matthew 4:24; 8:16; 28f; Mark 3:10-11; 5:1f; 7:24f; Luke 4:41; 8:27f; Etc.), 2) His interaction with Nathanael (John 1:43-51), and 3) His fulfillment of Isaiah's prophetic words as found in places like Isaiah 29:18-19; 35:5-6; cf., especially Isaiah 61:1f with Luke 4:16f!

No wonder we find Peter responding as he did in John 6:68, after the twelve are asked, "Will ye also go away?" (vs. 67). Peter responds, "Lord, to whom shall we? Thou hast the words of eternal life." It is also the reason Paul would completely change his life and could gladly write, "...I am not ashamed: **for I know** whom I have believed, and am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him against that day" (2 Timothy 1:12). In fact, this theme of believing or "knowing" is stressed in John throughout (and is clearly connected with the miraculously confirmed Lord). Nicodemus certainly acknowledged such (John 3:1-2)! So did the woman at the well (John 4:29), as did the healed blind man (John 9:37-38). Yes, the accounts found within Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John show us miracle after miracle and should give us great faith—and without faith we cannot know or please God (Hebrews 11:6).

## The Cross

To consider the cross of Christ and the detailed

---

prophecies concerning it (cf., including even “how” they would execute Him, before that form of execution was actually even invented (Zechariah 12:10; Psalm 22:16) - is incredible and beyond measure. Study Psalm 22, Isaiah 52-53, as well as other passages and marvel at God’s Word and the cross of Christ! No wonder the centurion who was “watching Jesus” during the crucifixion, and who “saw the earthquake, and those things that were done” (cf., Matthew 27:50f; Luke 23:44-45 – “...and there was a darkness over all the earth until the ninth hour. And the sun was darkened, and the veil of the temple was rent in the midst”) was one who “feared greatly, saying, Truly this was the Son of God” (Matthew 27:54-55).

### **The Resurrection And Ascension of Christ**

In fantastic fashion, Psalm 16:9-11 foretells the resurrection of Jesus in glorious fashion roughly a thousand years before it occurred. Peter (Acts 2:22-37) and later Paul (Acts 13:14-38) would reference/confirm this prophesied and actual resurrection. Jesus Himself also foretold it (Matthew 16:18, 21; Luke 9:22; 18:33; Etc.)! Perhaps Romans 1:1-4 summarizes it best, “Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, separated unto the gospel of God, (Which He had promised afore by His prophets in the holy scriptures,) Concerning His Son Jesus Christ our Lord, which was made of the seed of David according to the flesh; And declared to be the Son of God **with power**, according to the spirit of holiness, **by the resurrection from the dead**.” This miraculous and powerful resurrection also serves as proof of the coming Judgment Day (Acts 17:31), as well as proof of the resurrection of all people—good and bad (John 5:28-29; Acts 24:15; 1 Corinthians 15:1f).

From the birth of Jesus (i.e., by a virgin) to His work

---

authenticated by His miracle-laced-ministry, to His glorious and triumphant resurrection from the dead, and His fascinating ascension into Heaven, the miraculous was evident.

## CONCLUSION

Although some would lie about the powerful miracles of Jesus (including about His resurrection; Mark 12:22f; Matthew 28:11-15), the truth is this: The miracles of Jesus cannot be denied, just as the empty tomb cannot be denied! Behind the scenes, even the enemies would acknowledge it. John 11:45-47 says it this way: “Then many of the Jews which came to Mary, and had seen the things which Jesus did, believed on Him. But some of them went their ways to the Pharisees and told them what things Jesus had done. Then gathered the chief priests and the Pharisees a council, and said, What do we? **For this man doeth many miracles**” (cf., the same thing happened later with His apostles, Acts 4:16-17).

While it is true that the miraculous has ceased (1 Corinthians 13:1f; Ephesians 4:1f; James 1:25; Jude 3), having filled its purpose, may we never forget that our faith is one that has been miraculous confirmed. The apostles saw these miracles and were guided into “all truth” (John 16:13; Matthew 10:19; 2 Peter 1:16f; Matthew 17:1f). During the time they were working to “write” it down for us (John 17:17f; Ephesians 3:3f), they were working miracles to confirm their message. Others were involved, too (1 Corinthians 12:1f), which involved the “laying on of the apostle’s hands” (Acts 6:6; 8:18; Romans 1:11; 2 Timothy 1:6; 1 Corinthians 9:2; Galatians 3:5), but after these apostles died, and they upon whom they had laid their hands died, the miraculous (of necessity) ceased. This does not mean that God does not answer prayer or work providentially (behind the scenes—

---

for certainly God answers prayer), but it does mean that the miraculous (as seen during the Old and New Testament times) has ceased! But may we never forget that our Lord Jesus Christ—King Jesus—(just as with His prophets/apostles) forever proved Himself to be from God by His miraculous power! Our faith in Jesus is based on proof!



## Chapter 3

# THE PARABLES OF JESUS

*Derrick Coble*

**T**he main goal of Jesus was to change lives! He came “to seek and to save that which was lost” (Luke 19:10). He wanted people to turn from darkness to light—from Satan to God (Acts 26:18). It is seen easily in how He saw Peter and Andrew throwing their fishing net into the sea and He said, “Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men” (Matthew 4:19). They had to change from simply providing for themselves physically to providing for God spiritually. It is seen in how He encouraged a man to change his thoughts and what was important to him as the man said, “Lord suffer me first to go and bury my father. But Jesus said unto him, Follow me; and let the dead bury their dead” (Matthew 8:21,22). Following Jesus involves an entire change in lifestyle, which is seen as Jesus ate with tax collectors and sinners for the very purpose of helping them change. When the Pharisees questioned Him, Jesus said, “They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick . . . I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance” (Matthew 9:12,13). His goal was for people to become disciples and follow Him wherever He would lead,

changing their lives along the way to be more and more like Him (John 8:31; Matthew 10:24,25). One of the main ways that Jesus helped people see the necessity of change was by parables.

### **THE PURPOSE OF PARABLES**

The simplest and perhaps most well-known definition of a parable is, “an earthly story with a heavenly meaning.” The word, parable itself literally means, “a throwing alongside” somewhat like an analogy (Lightfoot 1). Some parables are more like proverbs rather than stories (Luke 4:23; Mark 7:15-17); however, all parables provide a new vision of life and understanding (Jones 1244). Since the parables make up about 35 percent of Jesus’ recorded sayings, He knew how to effectively use them for the purpose of changing the lives of His hearers (Elwell 1606).

When Jesus began using parables in His teaching, the disciples questioned as to why He spoke in such a way (Matthew 13:10). His response was, “Because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given” (Matthew 13:11). In other words, Jesus used these stories to reveal something Divine and to conceal something at the same time. He then quoted from the prophecy of Isaiah 6:9,10 detailing the sad spiritual condition of the Jews. In essence, by speaking in parables, the truth would be hidden (in a sense) from those who did not want it or from those who would abuse it, while it would be revealed to those who were willing and ready to search for it and receive it. By using these stories, Jesus was also fulfilling Messianic prophecy:

“All these things spake Jesus unto the multitude

---



in parables; and without a parable spake he not unto them: That 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” (Matthew 13:34-35).

This helped Matthew’s purpose in showing how Jesus, “in His life and teaching, fulfilled the Old Testament Scriptures” (Matthew 1:22; 2:15,17,23; 4:14) (Rushmore 10).

### **THE POWER OF PARABLES**

The parables of Jesus were so powerful, they often left Jesus’ opponents and disciples alike stunned, confused, or even silent. D. R. Dungan, in his book on Hermeneutics said the nature of parables is fourfold:

(1) To reveal truth: making the people to understand the unknown by a comparison with the known. (2) For the purpose of concealing truth from the minds of those who had no right to it, or who would abuse it if it were given to them. (3) They were made the means of embalming truth. (4) And in the fourth place, for the purpose of causing men to assent to truth before they could know it certainly meant them (226).

With this in mind, the following sample of Jesus’ parables, is sufficient to show the unique and powerful way in which Jesus would help sinners (including us) change their lives.

## **Understanding the Kingdom of Christ**

Many of the parables of Jesus were about the Kingdom and how important it is. This is fitting since it is the only refuge from the powers of darkness (Colossians 1:13), a place of righteousness/peace/joy (Romans 14:17), unshakeable (Hebrews 12:26,27), and destined for eternal glory (Matthew 13:41-43). Matthew records several of these parables in just one chapter (Matthew 13). Here, Jesus begins by showing how the Word of the Kingdom spreads like a seed that is thrown by a sower—as only good ground is profitable for the seed to grow, only good and honest hearts are profitable for the Word of God to grow (Matthew 13:19,23; Luke 8:11). Jesus would also tell of the amazing growth and influence of the Kingdom like a tiny mustard seed, which sprouts into the greatest of herbs and like bread that rises with just a small amount of leaven (Matthew 13:32,33). The world needed to understand the value of the kingdom is like none other—a treasure hid in a field and a pearl of great price (Matthew 13:44-46). These two items were so precious that Jesus showed the finders selling everything else they owned just to buy the field or the pearl. The Kingdom of Heaven is the same as the church that will be in Heaven (Matthew 16:18-19). Since only those who are faithful members of the church will be saved, no wonder Jesus chose to show how influential and amazingly valuable it is (Ephesians 5:23-25; Colossians 1:18).

Of course, when something is valuable, there is always a counterfeit. So, in the midst of these parables, Jesus warns about watching for weeds in the midst of the wheat (Matthew 13:24-30). The story is told of a man who sowed good seed (Christians; 13:38) in his field (the world; 13:38). But, while he slept, the enemy (the Devil; 13:39) came along

---

and sowed weeds (children of the Devil; 13:38) among the wheat. When the servants saw it, they wanted to immediately gather all the weeds (children of the Devil) out of the field (world). This was dangerous because the “weeds are probably darnel, a poisonous plant related to wheat and virtually indistinguishable from it until the ears form” (France 229). In the world, there are people who can resemble God’s children. Paul clearly taught that Satan can be transformed into an “angel of light” and his ministers can also be “transformed as ministers of righteousness” (2 Corinthians 11:14,15). This is why the people of God must be constantly on guard against false teachers, doctrines, and religions. The servants were not allowed to judge by appearance, but all judgment must be based on righteous principles (John 7:24). The master had the answer: both wheat and weeds would grow together until the great harvest (final judgment at the end of the world; 13:39). Time would tell the difference between the wheat and weeds. At the judgment, there will be no mistaking the true children of God. Jesus will come in all of His glory with all the holy angels with Him to separate the obedient from the disobedient (Matthew 25:31,32). Everyone will give an account of himself to God (Romans 14:12) for what is said and done in this life (Matthew 12:36,37; 2 Corinthians 5:10). Even though Christians live among the ungodly now, at the end of time, those “weeds” will be gathered and cast into a “furnace of fire” (everlasting Hell; Mark 9:45,46). Jesus told this story to help everyone understand the most important decision in this life is to choose to be a child of the Kingdom (a Christian; Matthew 13:38) to shine as gold wheat swaying in a field and brought safely into God’s “barn” in Heaven (Matthew 13:43; 25:46).

### **Persisting in Prayer**

Everyone has been faced with difficulties and discouragement in prayer. There are times when it seems that God is not listening or even answering the prayers of the righteous, when deep down every Christian knows He is there ready to answer as a loving Father (Matthew 7:7-11). But, what about those times when patience with prayer is running thin? What about those times when God is answering, “no” consistently? Jesus told a story about a widow in the same situation to help God’s children understand that patience and persistence are two key factors involved in prayer.

The background of the parable begins with Jesus explaining that the Kingdom would not be an earthly one in spite of what the Jews wanted (Luke 17:20,21). He warned His disciples of the hardships they would face when He was taken away from them as they would long for Him to return but would not see it (Luke 17:22,23). His return would not happen until He suffered and was rejected (Luke 17:25; Matthew 21:42). It would be unexpected and they needed to be prepared (Luke 17:26-37). Because these times would prove to be difficult for the disciples with various hardships, Jesus tells them they need to pray and not give up (Luke 18:1), illustrating it with an important parable.

The parable is one of contrast instead of comparison. Jesus tells of a judge who did not care about God nor his fellow man. This man would have been typical of any ungodly local Gentile judge who would be “approached by those who could not bring their cases to the high religious court” (Liefeld 1000). He is approached repeatedly by a widow woman who needs help with some opponent (Luke 18:2,3). She wanted justice to be served in the appropriate way, but the judge would not help her for a while. In fact, it wasn’t until she

kept asking over and over again that the unrighteous judge finally broke down and was willing to help (Luke 18:4,5). The judge's reasoning is that if he doesn't help this woman she will "weary" him or "wear him out." This phrase is interesting because it literally means, "to strike under the eye, give a black eye to." In other words, the judge realized if he didn't help her, it would eventually damage his reputation causing shame like a black eye (Liefeld 1000). The good news is that God is nothing like the unrighteous judge! If a man who doesn't care about God or his fellow man will finally be persuaded to help someone with a difficult problem, how much more will the Father in Heaven respond to help His children. The judge was unrighteous, but there is none as righteous as God (Isaiah 45:21). The widow was a stranger, but Christians are in God's household (1 Timothy 3:15). The judge never agreed to listen to the widow, but God has promised to listen to the prayers of the righteous (1 Peter 3:12). Prayer helps us realize how much we depend on God. We go to Him in prayer with confidence that "if we ask anything according to his will, he heareth us" (1 John 5:14). Jesus was teaching the importance of making our requests known to God (Philippians 4:6) in faith that He will answer (James 1:5), not failing to ask (James 4:2) or asking in the wrong way (James 4:3). We go to Him persistently understanding He knows what we need before we ask Him (Matthew 6:8), but He stands ready to answer with whatever is best for us (James 1:17). That means every prayer is not answered necessarily how we want it to be answered, but how the Father deems right. In the end, Jesus said God answers the cries of His children, "speedily" in His own time and not ours. The ultimate question posed is, "Are we patient enough to wait?" When Jesus comes again will He find that special persistent faith (like that of the widow) of those who

---

are praying throughout worldly hardships and persecutions?

### **Showing Compassion Toward Everyone**

The call to be like Jesus involves a life of sacrifice and service. That is why we are told to take up our cross daily and follow Him (Luke 9:23), let the mind of Christ be in us (Philippians 2:5), and to walk as He walked (1 John 2:6). Jesus would illustrate this with an important story of compassion. It was a story given in response to a lawyer trying to trap Jesus in embarrassment or inconsistency concerning what he should do to have eternal life (Luke 10:25,26). Jesus would not be trapped, but responded by telling of the supreme love one must have for God and his fellow man (Luke 10:27). Because the lawyer wanted to justify himself in his error and asked, “Who is my neighbor?” (Luke 10:29). It is then that Jesus tells the story of the “Good Samaritan” who would have been an unlikely choice as “neighbor” to the lawyer or the Jews because of Jewish prejudice against them.

The story is all too familiar as a “certain man” (most likely a Jew) went down from Jerusalem to Jericho and fell among thieves. The distance was about 17 miles through wild country where robbers could easily prey on their victims (Morris 207). The man in the story was robbed and left in a seemingly hopeless circumstance about to die (Luke 10:30). It was then that two religious men passed by: a priest and Levite. It has been suggested the priest would have been returning home after serving in the temple since Jericho was one of the main places of residence for priests (Marshall 448). Even though his duties were finished, he still did not take the time to help the dying man but made extra effort to pass by on the opposite side. It may be that he feared the robbers were still present in the area, or he didn’t want to

risk ceremonial defilement by touching a seemingly dead body (Lev. 21) (Morris 208). Either way, here is a religious man who showed no compassion to help a man legitimately in need. Next, the Levite comes along in a similar manner, yet he makes an effort to “look” at the man. Levites were like deacons or assistants, the movers, and the repairmen who helped the priests (Barton 280). Literally, he gave enough attention to the man’s situation to learn that he wasn’t dead but needed someone to help (Swanson). His excuses for not helping could have been very similar to the priest—possibly in a hurry and thinking the man would probably die anyway, he did not respond to help. It is here that every Christian must pause and assess himself. It is easy to “go to church” and not let it affect your life. These men had just been serving God formally, but now they refused to do it informally! God wants true worshippers (John 4:23) committed to “pure religion” (James 1:27). It is pure religion that says, “I am here to help” as Jesus helped us sacrificially to save us from death (Hebrews 2:16).

The Samaritan was the unlikely one who actually felt the burden and showed compassion (Luke 10:33). In other words, he had so much affection, pity, and empathy for the dying man, he was moved to do something about it. So, he bound up the man’s wounds (maybe using his own clothes), poured in wine (to wash the wounds), and poured on oil to close them up and ease the pain (Morris 208). He then went the extra mile of taking him to an inn and bought a few weeks lodging for him with two day’s pay and the promise of paying even more if need be (Luke 10:34,35). Jesus made His point clear: mercy is necessary to serve and sacrifice like Jesus (Luke 10:37). God has given us the best of Heaven in the sacrifice of His only begotten Son (Philippians 2:6-8).

---

This was the ultimate expression of love and compassion for a world that was dying (much like the man in the parable) (Romans 5:8). There are no boundaries when it comes to salvation and the care that each one should have for a lost and dying world (Acts 15:7-9; Romans 2:11; James 2:1-4). Compassion is key: “And of some have compassion, making a difference” (Jude 22).

### **Preparing for Eternity**

While Jesus was here, many were in His presence (the presence of a King) without even realizing it. When Pilate asked, “Art thou a king then? Jesus answered, Thou sayest that I am a king. To this end was I born” (John 18:37). Jesus would be glorified but He would be rejected as a whole by the Jews. To help them see their error and the necessity of preparing for eternity, He tells another story concerning a marriage reception for a king’s son (Matthew 22:2).

Invitations to weddings are usually given a few months in advance with the request to respond with the number of attendees. This was the same situation in Jewish culture. When the invitation was accepted, the attendees were committing themselves to be there and a final reminder would be sent just before the event (Carson 456). In this instance, those who responded to the invitation, now will not attend (Matthew 22:4). Jesus is picturing the Jews in response to the blessings of the Gospel age (the marriage supper) (Jackson 106). God had prepared them for this feast well in advance for over a thousand years through many Old Testament prophets (Deuteronomy 18:15,19; Daniel 2:44; Malachi 1:11) and when Jesus finally arrived in their midst, God sent more servants (John and the apostles) to tell them it was finally time (Mark 1:1-4; Matthew 10:5-7). Unfortunately, they were not



concerned about the marriage supper and they persecuted and killed the King's messengers (Matthew 22:5,6).

Upon learning this tragedy, the king (God) was enraged so much that he destroyed them and burned their city (Matthew 22:7). This was a prophetic depiction of the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70. "When the Jews rejected God's final offer to enter the kingdom, He rejected them and raised up the Roman general Titus to bring devastation upon them" (Crain 248). Because of this rejection, the servants were told to invite those who would gladly attend the feast (good and bad)—the Gentiles (Matthew 22:8-10). It was then that the king came to see the guests and found a man dressed inappropriately. Attending a wedding fit for a king's son, required attention to every detail! In fact, in some situations kings would issue special clothes for weddings, which could be the situation here due to the fact that the crowd was mostly poor (Crain 249). The man was immediately questioned, bound, and thrown into outer darkness to suffer the torture of separation from all the joy associated with the great marriage supper.

The point is clear for every person today. God has provided the blessings of Gospel salvation for all men through His grace (Titus 2:11). He has invited all to come to Him through His Son Jesus (John 14:6). However, the invitation must be received and obeyed by denying ungodliness and worldly lusts to enjoy the blessings of an eternity with the Father (Titus 2:12; Revelation 19:6-10). Remember that at the wedding supper there were both good and bad, and the same is true in the church. The right wedding clothes are worn when Christ is put on through the waters of baptism (Galatians 3:26,27). We are then "dressed" in white robes through the cleansing blood of Christ (Revelation 1:5; 7:14).

---

What happens if Jesus is “put off” through unfaithfulness or the robe we wear becomes spotted again? We will be thrust away from the benefits of the marriage supper and into the fires of eternal Hell (Matthew 8:12; 22:13; 24:51; 25:30; Luke 13:28). Jesus did “give his life a ransom for many” (Matthew 20:28), calling all to obey Him, but only few will actually respond (Matthew 22:14; 7:13,14).

### **CONCLUSION**

Jesus was the master teacher and loving Savior. As deity, He wants all men to be saved and have a working knowledge of the Truth (1 Timothy 2:4). Sometimes, it takes a story to truly understand something and see how it applies personally. Our goal is to have “Christ formed in us” (Galatians 4:19). To do this, it takes truly understanding His Truth and acting upon it in humble and submissive obedience (Matthew 7:24-27; 2 Thessalonians 1:8,9). If we do not understand, it may be that we do not want to understand (John 8:43). “If any man have ears to hear, let him hear” (Mark 4:23).

## WORKS CITED

- Barton, Bruce B., Dave Veerman, Linda K. Taylor. *Life Application Bible Commentary*. Wheaton: Tyndale House Publishers, Inc., 1997. Print.
- Carson, D. A. "Matthew." *The Expositor's Bible Commentary: Matthew, Mark, Luke*. Ed. Frank E. Gaebelein. Vol. 8. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1984. Print. n.d.
- Crain, Sellers S. Jr. *Truth for Today Commentary on Matthew 14-28*. Searcy: Resource Publications, 2011. Print.
- Dungan, D. R. *Hermeneutics. Delight: Gospel Light Publishing*, n.d. Print.
- Elwell, Walter A., and Barry J. Beitzel. "Parable." *Baker encyclopedia of the Bible 1988* : 1606–1614. Print. n.d.
- France, R. T. *Matthew: An Introduction and Commentary*. Vol. 1. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1985. Print. *Tyndale New Testament Commentaries*. n.d.
- Jackson, Wayne. *The Parables in Profile*. Stockton: Courier Publications, 1998. Print.
- Jones, Peter Rhea. "Parables." Ed. Chad Brand et al. *Holman Illustrated Bible Dictionary 2003* : n. pag. Print. n.d.
- Liefeld, Walter L. "Luke." *The Expositor's Bible Commentary: Matthew, Mark, Luke*. Ed. Frank E. Gaebelein. Vol. 8. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1984. Print. n.d.
-

Lightfoot, Neil R. *The Parables of Jesus*  
Volume 1. Abilene: ACU Press, 1986. Print.

Marshall, I. Howard. *The Gospel of Luke: A Commentary  
on the Greek Text*. Exeter: Paternoster Press, 1978. Print.  
New International Greek Testament Commentary. n.d.

Morris, Leon. *Luke: An Introduction and Commentary*.  
Vol. 3. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1988.  
Print. Tyndale New Testament Commentaries. n.d.

Rushmore, Louis. *The Parables of Our Lord* Volume  
1. Winona: Choate Publications, 2009. Print.

Swanson, James. *Dictionary of Biblical Languages with Semantic  
Domains: Greek (New Testament)* 1997 : n. pag. Print. n.d.



## Chapter 4

# THE PRAYERS OF JESUS

*Tony Lawrence*

Jesus was a praying man. He prayed often and taught others how to pray. An exhaustive study of this subject would take volumes if one were to explore every aspect of the prayers of Jesus. As rich and interesting that study is, it exceeds the scope of this lesson. Studying each of the prayers individually and examining the context is valuable. Likewise, a comprehensive consideration carefully comparing and contrasting the contents of those prayers would provide a view into the patterns in the Lord's prayers. That, too, would be edifying. This study, however, is limited to considering just three aspects of the Lord's prayers, namely (1) persistence of Jesus' prayers, (2) the passion of Jesus' prayers, and (3) the personal nature of Jesus' prayers. Even these do not exhaust all of the ways one may approach them but hopefully provides an incentive to explore them further.

### THE PERSISTENCE OF JESUS' PRAYERS

Persistence is defined as the "continuance in a course of action in spite of difficulty or opposition" (New Oxford American Dictionary, Second Edition). Jesus prayed regularly

and often. While He prayed frequently the recorded prayers suggest many times there were challenging situations. Our Lord considered it necessary to speak with the Father while facing difficulty. Jesus taught that one should be persistent in prayer. In the parable of the persistent widow in Luke 18, He explained the parable of a woman seeking justice from a judge that did not care. It was her persistence that persuaded the judge to avenge her of her adversary. Jesus argued that if an unjust judge who cared nothing for the woman could be persuaded by her persistent petition, how much more could a kind and compassionate Creator care for the needs of His followers? But Jesus not only taught persistence in prayer, but also He practiced it as well. In the Garden of Gethsemane, Jesus poured out His heart to the Father to “let this cup pass” (Matthew 26:39). Matthew records a second (Matthew 26:42) and even third prayer using the same words (Matthew 26:44). Interestingly, the Apostle Paul sought to imitate the Lord (1 Corinthians 11:1) and prayed three times that his “thorn in the flesh” would be removed (2 Corinthians 12:8). The Lord showed it is proper and even desirable to pray for the same thing more than once.

We should not compare Jesus’ persistence in prayer with the “vain repetitions” used by the heathen (Matthew 6:7). It reflects one expressing desires before the Almighty with a confidence that God can do anything while accepting the fact that such may not be within His will. Yet, God’s will can be moved by the petitions of man or else prayer is useless. James wrote that an “effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.” (James 5:16).

Proper prayer expresses confidence in God’s plan while also expressing one’s wish. Jesus prayed that God’s will be done rather than His own. An excellent illustration of this

---

principle is found in the life of Jeremiah. God commanded Jeremiah to purchase a field in Anathoth (Jeremiah 32:7) but such seemed foolish since the area was in the process of falling to the Babylonians (Jeremiah 32:25). However, Jeremiah responded with full confidence in God's ability, "Ah Lord God! Behold, thou hast made the heaven and the earth by thy great power and stretched out arm, and there is nothing too hard for thee:" (Jeremiah 32:17). Approaching God with humility recognizes that God's will is always far above our own. "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts." (Isaiah 55:8-9). John expressed this confidence when he wrote, "And this is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us: And if we know that he hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of him." (1 John 5:14-15). Hence, Jesus submitted to the Father's will while at the same time expressed His own desire for relief from the struggles of this life (John 16:33). It should be obvious to anyone that since life is full of struggles from day to day, prayer should be a daily part of one's life.

### **THE PASSION OF JESUS' PRAYERS**

The writer of the book of Hebrews captured the passion of Jesus in prayer when he wrote,

"Who in the days of his flesh, when he had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him from death, and was heard

in that he feared; Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered; And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him;” (Hebrews 5:7–9).

Observe some of the key terms used in this passage: “strong crying and tears” and “heard in that he feared.” The author of the hymn “I Stand Amazed,” Charles H. Gabriel, erred when in the second verse he wrote, “He had no tears for His own griefs.” Jesus faced all the travails that are a part of the human experience. Again, the writer of Hebrews wrote, “For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.” (Hebrews 4:15). And also,

“Wherefore 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. For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted.” (Hebrews 2:17–18).

Our Lord knew both physical and mental pain while anticipating the passion of the cross and weighed heavily in His mind and, thus in His prayers.

Luke, the beloved physician (Colossians 4:14), detailed the depth of His passion and captured in the physical strain the Lord endured in the praying in the Garden of Gethsemane. “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.” (Luke 22:44). The Lord’s profuse sweating with the intensity of His passion resulted in His literally sweating blood, a condition defined as, “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.” (Jerajani, online). The agony of Jesus brought about a more “earnest” prayer. The word translated “earnestly” is from the Greek word *ektenésteron* and means “without ceasing, fervent.” (Zodhiates). The Lord was a passionate man experiencing all the emotions of any normal person. John records, “Now is my soul troubled; and what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour: but for this cause came I unto this hour.” (John 12:27). Who can forget the cry from the cross, “And 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?” (Matthew 27:46).

Jesus’ great emotion is visible at the grave of Lazarus. “When Jesus therefore saw her weeping, and the Jews also weeping which came with her, he groaned in the spirit, and was troubled,” (John 11:33). “Jesus therefore again groaning in himself cometh to the grave. It was a cave, and a stone lay upon it.” (John 11:38). Jesus also prayed on this occasion (John 11:41-42). One can only imagine the many other occasions when Jesus prayed because of some difficulty or momentous event arising during His personal ministry. He prayed before choosing the Apostles (Luke 6:12-16), the confession of Peter (Luke 9:18-20), and His transfiguration (Luke 9:28-36).

### **PERSONAL NATURE OF JESUS’ PRAYERS**

It is not uncommon for one to hear in a public prayer generic statements being made for the “sick,” “rulers,” and

---

“all those for whom it is our duty and privilege to pray...” Without judging anyone’s heart praying these prayers, these “blanket” references come off distant. In contrast, many have chosen to name the ones for whom they are praying by name and their specific needs. Anyone who has been the object of such prayers appreciates the personal nature of such. Jesus prayed personal prayers too. One such instance was recorded by Luke in a conversation between Peter and Jesus. “But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not: and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren.” (Luke 22:32). Just consider what this verse teaches: first, Jesus prayed for Peter individually and personally. Second, Jesus prayed that Peter’s faith would not fail knowing the tremendous challenge that was before him. Third, Jesus knew Peter was going to fail that test. It should not escape our attention that in this case the Lord’s prayer was not answered in the affirmative. The Lord loved Peter and wanted him to remain faithful and true, but sadly Peter succumbed to the temptation and denied the Lord (Matthew 26:34, 69–75). Jesus also knew the heart of Peter and that following he would be “converted” (returned-NKJV) and strengthened the brethren.

But this is not the only instance where one finds Jesus praying for others. John 17, records one of Jesus’ most intimate prayers. In that prayer, He prayed personally for His Apostles. These twelve men occupied such an important part in the Lord’s ministry. All of them would betray Him that night (Mark 14:27), but Judas in particular. He prayed that the Father would “keep them” (vs. 11), give them joy (vs. 13), keep them from the evil one (vs 15), and sanctify them (vs. 17). He knew the difficulty they were going to face in His absence and prayed for their provision and protection. The Lord also prayed for the ones who would believe as a result

of the Apostles' work. His prayer specifically addressed the need for the believers to be "one." The unity of the believers would be a testament to the world that they were followers of Jesus. Anyone with a knowledge of church history can truly appreciate the Lord's inclusion of this in His prayer. It wasn't long after the church started that some wanted to draw away disciples after themselves (Acts 20:28-30) and that divisions began to arise within congregations (1 Corinthians 1:10-13). This fractured nature most certainly detracts from the kind of unity enjoyed between the Father and the Son. It should also be noticed that the Lord continued to pray that these believers be with Him where He was going (vs. 24; cf. John 14:1-6).

One cannot help but think of the Lord's precious statement regarding His sheep in John 10. "...the sheep hear his voice: and he calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out." (vs. 3). "I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture. 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." (vss. 9-10). Can anyone think of a more personal and precious thing than to be known personally by the Lord, to be called by name, and to have Him pray for one to have an abundant life?

There remains another group for whom the Lord prayed specifically, and it was for those responsible for putting Him on the cross. He prayed, "Then said Jesus, Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do..." (Luke 23:34). As Peter told those responsible, "And now, brethren, I wot that through ignorance ye did it, as did also your rulers." (Acts 3:17). The Lord's prayer was fulfilled when those same people came to understand the gravity of their actions and responded in obedience. Luke recorded,

---

“Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ. Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do? Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.” (Acts 2:36–38).

Likewise, Jesus prayed for those who were crucified on the crosses with Him (Isaiah 53:12). Before leaving the idea of the Lord’s personal prayers for His followers, one must consider the High Priestly role, or Intercessor that He provides. Having established that the Lord prayed for people personally it is implied that He prays for us as well. His role as our High Priest is to intercede on our behalf. Paul reflected this in his letter to the Romans, “Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.” (Romans 8:34). The human penman of the book of Hebrews likewise observed the same when he wrote, “Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them.” (Hebrews 7:25).

### **CONCLUSION:**

The prayers of Jesus reflect an intimate relationship with the Father, but they capture His genuine care for the creatures as well. The more one studies and comprehends

---

the great depth of these prayers the better his own prayer life will be. Those prayers will express an appreciation to the Father for all the blessings enjoyed and the promises extended. In addition, those prayers will be focused on the needs and cares of others. We will end up saying as the disciples did, “Lord, teach us to pray.” (Luke 11:1).

**WORK CITED**

Gabriel, Charles H. "I Stand Amazed." Praise for the Lord, edited by John P Wiegand, Praise Press, Nashville, TN, 1997, p. 299.

Jerajani, H R et al. "Hematohidrosis - a rare clinical phenomenon." Indian Journal of Dermatology vol. 54,3 (2009): 290-2. doi:10.4103/0019-5154.55645

Jeremias, Joachim, and Joachim Jeremias. The Prayers of Jesus. Fortress, 1978.

Stevenson, Angus, and Christine A. Lindeberg. The New Oxford American Dictionary: Third Edition. Oxford University Press, 2010.

Woodson, William, and Dowell Flatt. "Christ and Prayer." Jesus Christ the Son of God: 1973 Freed-Hardeman College Lectureship, Freed-Hardeman College, Henderson, TN, 1973, pp. 259–268.

Woodson, William, and Dowell Flatt. "Prayers of Jesus in John." Freedom: Heritage, Accomplishments, and Prospects in Christ, Freed Hardeman College, Henderson, TN, 1976, pp. 125–133.

Zodhiates, Spiros, ed. The Complete Word Study Dictionary: New Testament. Revised, Accordance electronic ed., version 1.3. Chattanooga: AMG Publishers, 1993.



## Chapter 5

# JESUS AND GOVERNMENT

*Mike Hixson*

There are three divine institutions ordained by God, namely, the home (Genesis 2:21-24), the civil government (Romans 13:1-7), and the church (Ephesians 3:9-11). The civil government was designed by God for the welfare of the human family. God is the sovereign ruler of the universe, and that includes the nations or kingdoms of mankind. David, the illustrious king of Israel, spoke of the sovereign power of the Lord when he declared, “Yours, O LORD, is the greatness, the power and the glory, the victory and the majesty; for all that is in heaven and in earth is Yours; Yours is the kingdom, O LORD, and You are exalted as head over all” (1 Chronicles 29:11). The prophet Daniel also acknowledged God’s sovereignty when he said the Lord “removes kings and raises up kings” (Daniel 2:21). He further stated, “the Most High rules in the kingdom of men, and gives it to whomever He chooses” (Daniel 4:32). Nations or kingdoms rise and fall at the behest of the Almighty.

Our nation traces her genesis to the year 1776. For the most part, the Founding Fathers of America believed in God and His divine word. Legislation was crafted with God

at the forefront. The early pioneers believed the perpetuity of our nation was dependent on a continued respect for God and His inspired word. In view of the state of our nation, it is imperative we examine the assigned subject, “Jesus and Government.”

### **THE ORIGINATION OF CIVIL GOVERNMENT**

God, in His infinite wisdom, originated the civil government for the purpose of providing a template for law and order in society. The apostle Paul wrote, “Let every soul be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and the authorities that exist are appointed by God” (Romans 13:1). In view of this divine statement, we are to be submissive to the laws of the land, unless those civil laws violate divine law. Paul went on to say, “Therefore whoever resists the authority resists the ordinance of God, and those who resist will bring judgment on themselves” (Romans 13:2). Bear in mind no one is above the law, and that includes government leaders, whether, local, state, or national. Ultimately, all citizens are subject to governmental law, but more importantly, to the law of God (James 2:12; 4:12).

It is important to remember the serious responsibility resting on local, state, and national lawmakers. They should be desirous of implementing laws that lead to the betterment of society, and the moral health of the nation overall. Sadly, what many of our nation’s leaders fail to understand is that when civil law conflicts with divine law, our future as a nation is jeopardized. For example, on January 22, 1973, the Supreme Court sanctioned the legalization of abortion in America. Since that infamous verdict, millions of innocent children have been slaughtered in America. In a nation that advocates “equal rights,” this decision is the height of



hypocrisy. The sanctioning of abortion in America has been rightly characterized as “the silent holocaust.” While many Americans are repulsed by the evil regime of Adolf Hitler and Nazi Germany when they destroyed millions of innocent lives almost a century ago, many of those same people are tone deaf when it comes to our own holocaust. As a nation of people, we would do well to remember the Lord hates “the hands that shed innocent blood” (Proverbs 6:16-17). We might as well call it what it really is, plain old murder (Galatians 5:19-21). Please do not think for a minute God is going to turn a blind eye to the national sin of abortion.

Another example of egregious misconduct by our Supreme Court is the sanctioning of same-sex marriage in America. On June 26, 2015, the Court ruled in favor of granting the legalization and recognition of same-sex marriage in this country. Quite frankly, never in my wildest imagination did I think the day would come, when as a gospel preacher, I would have to define marriage for people living in this country. The hard truth of the matter is that what our nation authorizes in the realm of marriage and what the Bible authorizes are poles apart. Jesus, who has all authority, defined marriage by going all the way back to creation and stating, “He who made them at the beginning made them male and female, and said, for this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh” (Matthew 19:4-5; 28:18; 17:5).

Like it or not, homosexuality and lesbianism are viewed as an abomination by the Creator (Leviticus 18:22). The homosexual lifestyle is an affront to the wisdom of God, who created the woman for the man (Genesis 2:18, 21-25; Romans 1:26-28). It undermines the fabric of the family designed by an omniscient God. And since God is our creator,

---

He has the right to legislate the marital relationship.

Advocates in America of the homosexual lifestyle and abortion provide us with an index to the moral erosion that has taken root in the country we call home. Whether people realize it or not, homosexuality and abortion are destroying the foundation of our nation. Seldom do nations turn back once they begin spiraling out of control morally. We desperately need a modern-day Jonah crying out, repent or perish.

### **OBLIGATION OF THE CIVIL GOVERNMENT**

Government has the responsibility of operating in a prudent manner that is beneficial to the welfare of the nation. Lawmakers would be wise to defer to the Bible for guidance. In the realm of our judicial system, the punishment must fit the crime. God's intent is for the government to exercise judicial authority in criminal matters and punish the evildoers. Those enforcing the laws of the land are not a "terror" to good people, but to evil (Romans 13:3). Furthermore, one of the means of insuring law and order is the administration of capital punishment when merited by perpetrators of the law. The apostle Paul wrote concerning those who enforce the laws of the land, "For he is a minister to you for good. But if you do evil, be afraid; for he does not bear the sword in vain; for he is God's minister, an avenger to execute wrath on him who practices evil" (Romans 13:4). The use of "the sword" (capital punishment), when employed consistently and correctly serves as a deterrent to criminal activity. One of the major reasons heinous crimes are rampant in America is because our lawmakers have failed to use capital punishment as a deterrent. When criminals brazenly break the law and get nothing more than the proverbial slap on the wrist, it makes a mockery of the judicial system, not to mention divine

legislation (Romans 13:1-4).

One of the reasons we pay taxes is to support the government, which includes police protection (Romans 13:1-4). Sadly, there are liberal voices in America feverishly working to defund the police. Cities that are listening to this foolish rhetoric are paying a heavy price. The lessening of police presence is a green light to crime, rape, murder, and violence. I recently watched in utter disbelief a video that had been posted online of a man stealing a big-screen television from a major department store in the Northwest part of this country with minimal resistance. The reporter indicated the man had previously stolen at that retail store and had a lengthy criminal record.

In many ways our judicial system is failing us in America. High priced, well dressed, articulate defense attorneys are often able to present a maze of smoke and mirrors that obfuscates the truth, thereby exonerating an otherwise guilty client. Therefore, rather than keeping offenders off the streets and out of trouble, they are often released to resume their criminal lifestyle. What are we to make of the lengthy court process and strategic appeals process that often leads to months and years before justice prevails? Solomon wrote, "Because the sentence against an evil man is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is set in them to do evil" (Ecclesiastes 8:11).

Another area of grave concern is our educational system. Our government spends billions of dollars yearly to educate young people. Sadly, in many school systems, the finished product is woefully lacking in basic elementary skills. Add to this the utter disdain and disregard for teaching children creationism versus organic evolution (Genesis 1:1-27; 2:7; Psalm 33:6-9). When children are brainwashed

---

regarding their origin, they develop a diminished view of the sanctity of life, which leads to the lowering of moral values. Should we be surprised that many people today have no compunction in committing murder, whether in or out of the womb?

One of the real tragedies of the American school system is many teachers have no leverage when it comes to discipline in the classroom. Students can misbehave and disrupt class with little or no punitive action. In 2021, only nineteen states in America allowed corporal punishment. In the state of Mississippi, where corporal punishment is legal, one teacher recently told me where he teaches many parents object to this form of discipline. Therein lies the problem, the home. Solomon was right when he penned, “He who spares his rod hates his son, but he who loves him disciplines him promptly” (Proverbs 13:24). When children are not disciplined in the home, the consequences are far reaching. Why should it surprise us today when young people have little or no respect for authoritative voices in school, the workplace, the community, and the realm of religion?

### **OBLIGATION TO THE CIVIL GOVERNMENT**

The apostle Paul makes it abundantly clear we have the responsibility of submitting to “governing authorities” (Romans 13:1-2). As citizens in the United States of America and the eternal kingdom of God, we should strive to the best of our ability to be model citizens (Matthew 22:21; Romans 13:1-7). Our family, friends, neighbors, co-workers, employers, and employees should see us as law-abiding people. And while it is true taxes subsidize the local, state, and federal government, that in no way means we endorse everything the government spends our tax dollars upon.

One of the major changes that has taken place in our nation is the aggressive and militant intolerance of “Christianity.” It is amazing a nation like America that has been blessed immeasurably by God’s providential care and goodness can now be deemed a “post Christian” nation. Immoral vices that once were viewed by society as deviant and abhorrent behavior have been sanitized and mainstreamed. And though the liberal agenda in America wants to censure our freedom of speech and label our opposition to issues like same-sex marriage as hate speech, we must not surrender truth, no matter the consequences. We must follow the example of the apostles, who in the face of opposition and persecution declared, “we ought to obey God rather than men” (Acts 5:29).

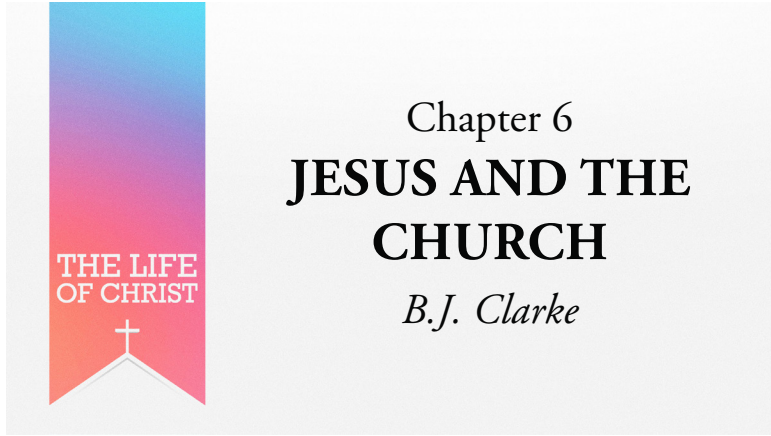
Centuries ago, the great King David asked, “If the foundations be destroyed, what can the righteous do” (Psalm 11:3)? While no doubt many of us feel helpless and question how individually we can stem the tide, we need to remember with God’s help our lights can shine in a darkened nation of sin (Matthew 5:14-16). First and foremost, we must be a voice for truth. The prophet Isaiah penned these powerful words, “Cry aloud, spare not, lift up your voice like a trumpet; tell My people their transgression, and the house of Jacob their sins” (Isaiah 59:1). Secondly, pray for our national leaders. In his letter to Timothy, Paul counseled, “Therefore I exhort first of all that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men, for kings and all who are in authority, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and reverence. For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior” (I Timothy 2:1-3). Thirdly, we must exercise our right to vote. Choose candidates that best represent the ideals of Scripture. Fourthly, show the world what it means to be a New Testament Christian by a Christ-

---

like life. The young evangelist Timothy was instructed, “Let no one despise your youth, but be an example to the believers in word, in conduct, in love, in spirit, in faith, in purity” (I Timothy 4:12).

### **CONCLUSION**

It is a tremendous blessing to live in America and enjoy unlimited opportunities and blessings. A kind providence has shined upon us for almost two hundred and fifty years (Psalm 68:19). Our nation’s governing authorities would be wise to return to the principles that made America a beacon of light around the world. Solomon said it best, “Righteousness exalts a nation, but sin is a reproach to any people” (Proverbs 14:34).



Several years ago, at a preacher’s luncheon, a preacher stood and said, “Brethren, I have come to the conclusion that we need to quit preaching the church and start preaching Jesus.” The preacher who made that statement was either accidentally or willfully ignorant of the fact that his suggestion is an utter impossibility for anyone who aims to be a **gospel** preacher.

The relationship between Jesus and His church is so inseparable that it is impossible to preach one without the other. Preaching Jesus Christ would, of necessity, include preaching His blood. Preaching the blood of Christ would, of necessity, include preaching what the blood was shed to purchase. Acts 20:28 reveals that the blood of Christ was shed to purchase the church. Hence, how could one possibly preach Jesus Christ without preaching the *church* of Christ, which He purchased with His own blood?

The relationship between Jesus and His church is precious indeed. The purpose of this message is to investigate the relationship between Jesus and His church. This association can be appreciated better by examining the

various figures employed in Holy Scripture to describe the relationship which exists between Christ Jesus and His church.

### **HE IS THE HEAD OF THE BODY**

The Father gave Jesus “to be the head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all” (Ephesians 1:22-23). As the head of the church, Jesus is the authority over all things pertaining to the church. He is the pre-eminent one (Colossians 1:18). There is no room for another head of the church. The local preacher is not the head of the local church. The elders of the local church possess authority only insofar as they submit to the authority of Christ (1 Peter 5:1-4). Just as the members of our physical body take their cue from the head (brain), so likewise, each member of the body of Christ must follow the instructions which flow forth from the head of the body. If each member of the body will do as the head directs, there will be unity in the body, and this will lead to the growth of the body (1 Corinthians 12:12-26; Ephesians 4:16).

In order to be saved, we must be members of the one body of which Christ is the head (Ephesians 4:4; 5:23). The significance of the church being the fullness of Christ is evidenced in the following example: *“Take a clear drinking glass or other container and fill it half full of water. Suppose that the glass represents Christ and that the water in the glass represents the church. Now the denominational view is that one can be in Christ and not be in the church. If this were the proper illustration for us to use, that would be true, for Christ (the glass) is only half full of water (the church). The other half of the glass without the water allows space for people to still be in Christ (inside the glass), but not in the church (the water). However, the above is **not** the proper illustration*



*to use to speak of being in Christ. Now take the same glass (representing Christ) and **fill it** with water (representing the church). Fill to the very top, till there is no room left. There you have the proper illustration regarding Christ and His church (Clarke).*

We enter into the body by baptism (1 Corinthians 12:13; Acts 2:41, 47). Both Jews and Gentiles are reconciled in the one body of which Jesus is the head (Ephesians 2:14-16).

### **HE IS THE KING OF HIS KINGDOM**

At the same time that Jesus promised to build His church, He promised that He would give Peter “the keys of the kingdom of heaven” (Matthew 16:19). In the American Standard Version of Revelation 1:5-6, we read: “*and from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, the firstborn of the dead, and the ruler of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loveth us, and loosed us from our sins by his blood; **and he made us to be a kingdom, to be priests unto his God and Father; to him be the glory and the dominion for ever and ever. Amen***” (Emphasis mine, BJC). Note the following implications of this passage: Christ purchased the church with His own blood (Acts 20:28). Those whom Christ loosed from sin by His blood, He has made to be His kingdom (Revelation 1:5-6). Therefore, since the blood of Christ purchased the church and the blood of Christ made those who are washed in His blood a kingdom, the church and the kingdom are the same (Compare Matthew 16:18-19).

The Old Testament prophets foresaw the coming of the kingdom (2 Samuel 7:12-13; Daniel 2:44; Luke 1:32-33). John the Immerser, Jesus, and the apostles, preached that the kingdom was at hand (Matthew 3:2; Mark 1:14-15). Jesus told

some of those to whom He spoke that they would be alive when the kingdom came with power (Mark 9:1). The power of the Holy Spirit came upon the apostles in Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost (Luke 24:49; Acts 1:8; 2:1-4), and that is the very day upon which the kingdom/church came (Acts 2:29-33, 47).

After the day of Pentecost, the kingdom is always referred to as being in existence (Acts 8:12; Colossians 1:13; 1 Thessalonians 2:12; Revelation 1:9). The Lord's Supper is observed within the kingdom (Luke 22:16-18, 29-30). The kingdom is spiritual in nature (John 18:36). It is entered by a spiritual birth, a new birth (John 3:3-5; Matthew 7:21-23). True greatness in this kingdom is measured by humble service (Matthew 20:20-28). The mission of the kingdom is spiritual in nature (John 6:15; 2 Corinthians 10:3-4; Ephesians 6:12; Luke 17:20-21).

Since Jesus is the King of kings, and Lord of lords (1 Timothy 6:15) we, as His subjects, must acquiesce to His rule. He is on the throne. He is in charge. He is the sole monarch and legislator of the kingdom. We are true citizens of His kingdom when He rules and reigns over our hearts. At the end of time, our King, Jesus, will deliver up the kingdom to His Father (1 Corinthians 15:24; 2 Peter 1:11).

### **HE IS THE BRIDEGROOM OF HIS BRIDE**

The very first bride was created by God, especially for man. This bride was made from a rib taken from the side of man (Genesis 2:18-25). The last book of the Bible also speaks of a bride: "And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband... Then came one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls full of the seven last plagues and

spoke to me, saying, “Come, I will show you the Bride, the wife of the Lamb” (Revelation 21:2, 9). The Lamb is clearly identified in Scripture (John 1:29-37; Revelation 5:8-12; 13:8). The bride is the Lamb’s wife (Revelation 21:9). The Lamb is Jesus (John 1:29). Therefore, the bride is the bride of Jesus, the Christ.

In truth, Eve was not the first bride God ever planned to create. The precious blood of the Lamb was planned by God to purchase His bride, the church before the foundation of the world (1 Peter 1:18-20). The Lamb was slain from the foundation of the world (Revelation 13:8). The blood of Christ purchased the church of Christ (Acts 20:28), which is the bride of Christ (2 Corinthians 11:2; Ephesians 5:25-32). Therefore, spiritually speaking, the church is married to Christ. To the Romans, Paul said, “Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we might bring forth fruit unto God” (Romans 7:4). Paul reminded the Corinthian church, “I espoused you to one husband, that I might present you as a pure virgin to Christ” (2 Corinthians 11:2). Paul compared the relationship of a husband and his wife to that of Christ and His church (Ephesians 5:25-27).

When did God first plan to create the Lamb’s bride, the church? Ephesians 3:9-11 reveals that God eternally purposed the church. The story of the Old Testament is “His” story, the story of how the Lamb would come (Acts 3:22-24; Isaiah 7:14; Matthew 1:18-25). But what about His bride, the church? The Old Testament also anticipates the coming of the bride, the church. 1 Timothy 3:15 reveals that the house of God is the church of the living God. The bride is the church. The church is the house. Therefore, when we read in the Old Testament

---

of the coming house, we are reading of the coming church, and since the church is His bride, when we read of the coming house/church, we are reading God's version of "Here Comes The Bride."

John the Baptizer advertised that the wedding day was drawing near (Matthew 3:1-2). Jesus predicted that the wedding day was drawing nigh (Matthew 4:17) and promised that the wedding would take place during the lifetime of some of the people He was preaching to in Mark 9:1. Jesus loved His bride so much that He gave Himself for her. "And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and **hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God** for a sweetsmelling savour (Ephesians 5:2). "Husbands, love your wives, even as **Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it;**" (Ephesians 5:25).

What, precisely, did Jesus give for His bride? Consider the following:

1. He gave His blood, sweat and tears (Luke 22:43-44).
2. He gave His back (John 19:1).
3. He gave His face (Matthew 26:67)
4. He gave His head (Matthew 27:29-30).
5. He gave His hands and His feet (Matthew 27:35)
6. He gave up Himself (Matthew 27:39-45; Father, Forgive them; Luke 23:34)
7. He gave up His fellowship with God (Matthew 27:46).
8. He gave Himself---all of Himself!

Did the wedding day ever come for the Lamb and His bride? About ten days before the wedding, Jesus told His apostles to tarry in the city of Jerusalem until they were endued with power from on high (Luke 24:49). He also told them that

---

they would receive the power after the Holy Spirit came upon them (Acts 1:8). The Sacred Writings make it crystal clear that the Day of Pentecost in Acts 2 was the Wedding Day for the Lamb and His bride!

What, precisely, should the bride give to the Lamb for what He did for His bride? We love Him because He first loved us (1 John 4:19). As the well-known lyric puts it, “Love so amazing, so divine, **demand**s my soul, my life, my all.”

1. We give up our name! It is very common for the bride to wear a different name after the wedding. This is true in the spiritual realm as well. After we become a part of the bride of Christ, we wear a new name (Isaiah 62:2; Acts 11:26); a royal name (James 2:7), the name Christian (1 Peter 4:16) by which we glorify God. We don't wear the name of the best man (John 3:29-30) or any other man. Why didn't the first century believers wear the same religious names that are so popular today?
2. We give Him our ears! (Matthew 13:9, Luke 14:35; John 6:44-45; Revelation 2:7, 11, 17, 29; 3:6, 13, 22; 13:9).
3. We give Him our eyes! (Matthew 5:28).
4. We give Him our head! (Matthew 22:37; Philippians 4:8).
5. We give Him our mouth! (Matthew 12:35-37; 28:18-20; Ephesians 4:29; Colossians 4:6).
6. We give Him our hands! (Matthew 25:31-46; Acts 9:35-38;).
7. We give Him our feet! (Mark 16:15-16; Hebrews 10:25).

Just as a bride forsakes all others in order to keep her vow of purity to her husband, so must the church keep herself pure for Christ, and for Him alone (2 Corinthians 6:14-7:1). The local church must be kept pure; a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump (1 Corinthians 5:6). To be a faithful and pure bride for Christ, the local church must purge out the leaven that would threaten the purity of the church (1 Corinthians 5:7-13).

It is also worth noting that God created one bride for Adam. Just one bride! Likewise, how many brides did God create for Christ? Just one! (Ephesians 5:23; 4:4; 1:22-23).

### **HE IS THE SHEPHERD OF HIS SHEEP**

The writer of Hebrews refers to Christ as “that great shepherd of the sheep” (Hebrews 13:20). Peter describes Christ as Chief Shepherd of the flock, including the shepherds of the local flock (1 Peter 5:1-4). Jesus is the good shepherd who offers His sheep the abundant life (John 10:11, 16). Those who are truly His sheep will hear His voice and follow Him (John 10:27-29). If we stray, we should return unto Shepherd and Bishop of our souls (1 Peter 2:25).

### **HE IS THE MASTER OF HIS VINEYARD**

Those who lived during the time of Jesus were very familiar with vineyards. Hence, Jesus often taught lessons to the people, using the vineyard as a centerpiece for His teaching. The vineyard is a place where work is to be done (Matthew 20:1-6; 21:28-31). The Lord of the vineyard invites all men to come and work in the vineyard (Matthew 20:6-7). The Lord of the vineyard will hold accountable the husbandmen for how they have labored in the vineyard (Matthew 21:33-44). Jesus expects those in the vineyard to

bear fruit (John 15:1-8).

Oh, how the local church would be blessed if we would practice what we sometimes sing: “I will work, I will pray, I will labor every day in the vineyard of the Lord” (Cf. 1 Corinthians 3:6-9; 15:58).

### **HE IS THE FOUNDATION AND CORNERSTONE OF HIS TEMPLE**

There is, of course, no material temple in the New Testament, such as there was in the Old Testament. However, Paul did refer to the church as a “temple” (1 Corinthians 3:9, 16-17; Ephesians 2:19-22). Peter also used this imagery when he wrote, “Ye also, as lively stones, **are built up an spiritual house**, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ” (1 Peter 2:5). Jesus Christ and the apostles are the foundation for this temple (1 Corinthians 3:11; Ephesians 2:20). Moreover, Jesus is the “chief corner stone” (1 Peter 2:6). He is “the stone which the builders disallowed,” and yet He has been “made the head of the corner” (1 Peter 2:7).

Christians are the “living stones,” which are builded together into the temple of God (1 Peter 2:5). Therefore, the strength of the local church depends upon the strength of the living stones who make it up. Just as the Old Testament temple had to be built according to the pattern, which was given by the Spirit (1 Chronicles 28:11-12, 19), so must the New Testament temple, the church, follow the pattern given by the Spirit (2 Timothy 1:13; Hebrews 8:1-5). In the Old Testament, the temple was a location for worship, and a place where God’s presence would be found (2 Chronicles 7:12-16). The New Testament church/temple is the dwelling place of God’s name today! Christ is the High Priest over His house,

the church (Hebrews 4:14; 10:21). Our worship to God must be accomplished by approaching the Heavenly Father through our High Priest (Hebrews 10:20).

### **HE IS THE COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF OF HIS ARMY**

The church is at war! A battle for souls is raging! If we are Christians, then we are in the Lord's army. The warfare in which we are engaged is not carnal (John 18:36; 2 Corinthians 10:3-4; Ephesians 6:12). We are expected to "war a good warfare" (1 Timothy 1:18). In order to be good soldiers, and please Him who has chosen us to be soldiers, we must "fight the good fight of faith" (1 Timothy 6:12). We must "endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ" (2 Timothy 2:3). It is our duty to avoid entanglement with the affairs of this life (2 Timothy 2:3). Moreover, as Christian soldiers, we must "put on the whole armor of God" (Ephesians 6:10-18).

All soldiers are needed to fight this battle. Yet, the local church, the army of God, often suffers from too many soldiers being AWOL. When the tribes of Reuben and Gad made it clear that their intention was no to cross the Jordan, but to stay on the east side of the Jordan to raise their flocks, Moses rebuked them, "Shall your brethren go to war, and shall ye sit here?" (Numbers 32:6). Likewise, the inhabitants of Meroz were cursed for not participating and assisting in the battle where they were needed (Judges 5:23). In this wicked world, soldiers of Christ need to arise and put their armor on. The words "retreat" and "surrender" are not in the Christian soldier's vocabulary.

### **CONCLUSION**

The relationship between Jesus and His church is

---



precious. We have observed that He is (1) the Head of His body, (2) the King of His kingdom, (3) the Bridegroom of His bride, (4) the Shepherd of His sheep, (5) the Master of His vineyard, (6) the Foundation and Chief Cornerstone of His temple, and (7) the Commander-In-Chief of His army.

Let us, as individual members of the local church, appreciate, cherish, and reverence these relationships!

**WORKS CITED**

Clarke, Ted J. "A Plea For Non-Denominational Christianity."  
Fulton County Gospel News. August 1998.



THE LIFE  
OF CHRIST

## Chapter 7

# JESUS AND THE HOME

*Jason Rollo*

**A**s has been correctly noted by numerous preachers over the years, God has instituted three Divine institutions, namely: 1) The Home, 2) The Government, and 3) The Church. The oldest of these institutions is the home. Even a cursory reading of Genesis chapters one and two shows this beautiful truth. Yes, the home is from God—He designed it, and this detailed plan for the home is clearly revealed in Holy Writ. Further, God’s plan is the only plan worth heeding. Likewise, we should keep in mind one more thing: Jesus is God (cf., John 1:1f; 20:28-31; Colossians 1:19; 2:3, 9; Hebrews 1:8; Revelation 1:8, 17-18; 5:1-10; 19:16)! No, Jesus is not the Father or the Spirit, but as the Son (i.e., the second person of the Godhead), He is equally part of the ONE God of the Bible (James 2:19; 2 Corinthians 13:14; Revelation 1:4-5; Matthew 28:18-20). The ONE God of the Bible consists of three persons (cf., Genesis 1:26; 3:22; 11:7), yet God is ONE Divine Essence (God or Jehovah)! To take this concept a little further, especially as it relates to Jesus, the Bible clearly shows us that Jesus was the exact one involved in the carrying out (or execution) of creation itself (cf., John

1:1-3; Colossians 1:16-17; Revelation 3:14; etc.), including the creation of humanity (man and woman). But while we will have to wait for another time to fully study Jehovah God, it is clear that Jesus—Emmanuel, God with us (Matthew 1:21-23; Micah 5:2)—understands the home!

### **THE HOME: THE PLAN OF JESUS FOR DEVELOPING SOULS**

Question: What is the purpose of life? The Bible gives the answer. Ecclesiastes 12:13 reads, “Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God and keep His commandments: for this is the whole duty of man.” More specifically, we live under the law of Christ (Romans 8:2) and following such we are to glorify God—as faithful members of the Church of Christ (Ephesians 3:21; Romans 16:16f). Therefore, our purpose in this life is to obey God and to get “into” Christ, thus becoming members of His one body or church (Galatians 3:27-29; Ephesians 1:21-22; Acts 2:38, 47; 2 Thessalonians 1:7f). Another question: What does this fact have to do with the home? In short, a ton! Jesus said that His mission was about saving souls (Luke 9:56, 19:10). And the home (as God designed it) is the perfect place for THIS PURPOSE, namely—the purpose of developing precious souls for salvation (Hebrews 5:9; Matthews 7:21f)!

### **The Home And Learning From The Old Testament**

The Old Testament is for our learning (Romans 15:4). From the vast and various positive and negative examples given we can learn what to do and what not to do (1 Corinthians 10:1-12), including situations dealing with the home. In the Old Testament, we see terrible choices and broken homes, but we also see replicable examples from those

---

who chose to seek God, in their homes (Cf., Genesis 2:18-25; 4:19-24; 6:4-5, 8-10, 22; 7:1; 12:1-6; 18:19; 22:18; 50:23; Job 1:1-2; 42:12-17; Etc). A thorough study of 1 Samuel through 2 Chronicles serves as an almost inexhaustible reference guide on “the home”—with both positive and negative examples. Furthermore, the book of Proverbs is literally filled with needed wisdom and instruction, especially relating to the home. For instance, chapters 5 to 7 give valuable instruction concerning the sanctity that is to be kept in proper marriage, as opposed to the wickedness and stupidity seen within sinful adultery. Yes, as Proverbs 6:32 declares, “But whoso comitteth adultery with a woman lacketh understanding: he that doeth it destroyeth his own soul.” The exact opposite is found in Proverbs 31:10-31, wherein the “virtuous woman” (wife/mother) is seen in all her beauty and loveliness. Yes, this one inspired book alone teaches “a son” (cf., 2:1; 3:1; 4:1; 5:1) within the context of the home numerous truths, including: Embracing the fear of the Lord (1:7; 8:13; 9:10; 19:23), learning to trust God (3:5), avoiding following one’s own (human) wisdom (3:7; 14:12; 28:26), honoring God with proper giving (3:9-10), not entering into the paths of wickedness and evil people (4:14), guarding one’s heart (4:23; 28:14; 29:1), avoiding the “moveable” ways of sinful women (5:6), keeping sanctity within the marriage bed (5:15-18), embracing a proper work-ethic (6:6), avoiding various sins such as pride, lying, murder, gossip, and so forth (6:16-19; 10:12, 19; 11:13; 20:19), following true wisdom—God’s wisdom (8:11), striving to be a wise versus a foolish child (10:1; 15:5, 20), finding a proper spouse (11:22; 12:4; 14:1; 21:19; 27:15), not being lazy or slothful (12:27; 20:4; 24:30-34), understanding the importance of proper discipline within the home (13:24; 19:18; 22:15; 23:13; 29:15, 17), working to

---

be a proper citizen and to support righteous activity associated therewith (14:34; 29:2), learning how to correctly use one's tongue/language (15:1-4; 15:23; 21:23; 25:11), growing in study (15:28), respecting the elderly (16:31; 20:29), learning to control oneself (16:32; 25:28; 29:22), loving and standing for the truth (17:15; 23:23; 27:5; 28:1), being a good friend (17:17; 18:24; 27:6), avoiding the sinfulness and ignorance of using alcohol (20:1; 23:29-35; 31:4), developing/keeping a good name (22:1), remaining humble (22:4; 27:2), understanding the fleeting nature of riches/materialism (23:4-5), realizing that while sinless perfection is not possible, it is required to "live right" and be faithful in one's life (24:16), not adding to (or changing) God's Word (4:27; 24:21; 30:6), and on and on we could go. But again, one may ask: What does this have to do with Jesus and the home? More than one may realize, as we shall see. For now, suffice us to say, "Through wisdom is an house is builded; and by understanding it is established" (Proverbs 24:3). The Psalmist would put it this way, "Except the Lord build the house, they labour in vain that build it..." (127:1).

### **The Home And Learning From The New Testament**

As with the Old Testament, numerous examples (positive and negative) are found within the New Testament, dealing with the home. From the book of Acts (cf., 16:1f; 18:1-3, 25; 21:8-10; 24:24-25; etc.) to the various inspired Epistles (cf., Romans 16:1f; 2 Timothy 1:5; 3:14-15, 1 Corinthians 5:1f, etc.) we find example after example concerning the home as it should be, as well as relating to how it should "not" be. Likewise, the same can be said and demonstrated with a study of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. In these historical and inspired accounts, we see lovely marriages composed of

righteous husband/wife teams (cf., Luke 1:5-6), as well as those who love the Lord who are elderly, widows, etcetera (cf., Luke 2:25-39). Then again, we can also learn much about the home from the negative examples—things “not” to do (cf., Mark 6:16-29). With such things in mind, let us now turn to our immediate assignment, namely: Jesus and the home.

### **THE HOME: THIS PLAN, JESUS MAKES VERY CLEAR**

Unlike fickle man, Jesus does not mince words. He says what He means and means what He says (Matthew 12:30; John 14:6). This reality applies to the Biblical design of the home, as well. Matthew 19:4-12 forever shows what Jesus thinks about marriage and the home! With Jesus, such things are sacred, and the truths connected therewith are not to be dismissed without eternal consequences (Galatians 5:19f; Revelation 2:20-23). It is not a coincidence that the first miracle performed by Jesus at the beginning of his earthly ministry was at “a marriage” festival (John 2:1, 11). Those who endorse such abominations as “same-sex” marriage (which in reality is “not” marriage, but wickedness and fornication; Genesis 18:20-19:29; Jude 7; Romans 1:18f; 1 Corinthians 6:9f; etc.) are blatantly disregarding the rules established by the King of kings (cf., Genesis 1:27; 2:18-25; Matthew 19:4-6; Mark 10:6)! Jesus makes it abundantly clear that marriage involves “one man” and “one woman,” and such is intended—for life. Further, Jesus does not allow for marriage, divorce, and remarriage for any reason. Instead, Jesus gives only ONE exception for the innocent party concerning divorce/remarriage, as the result of adultery (cf., fornication - Matthew 19:9). The innocent party does not have to “put them away,” but they have that right. Furthermore,

Jesus allows the properly married the option of remarriage upon the death of his/her spouse (cf., Romans 7:1f), if they so choose. He also teaches us that there will be no marriage in eternity (Matthew 22:30). Again, Jesus (like his forerunner John the Immerser – Malachi 3:1; 4:5; Matthew 14:4) does not mince words on the serious subject of marriage and the home (cf., John 4:16-18). The righteous Jesus never endorsed sin within a home environment, but told those involved with such things to go and “sin no more” (John 8:11). Being God, Jesus understands that the very foundations of society are at stake if the home is destroyed. Let this last sentence sink in for a moment! While not omniscient (like Jesus), Satan seems to understand this truth, as well (Genesis 3:1f; 2 Corinthians 11:3) and has since the beginning of time unleashed an all-out attack on the home! Thus, realizing the importance of the human soul and thinking about the eternal consequences connected with our subject, we should perhaps study a little deeper into specifics relating to Jesus and his relationships and teachings concerning the home. Along this line, we note:

### **Jesus And His Childhood**

Jesus was born of a virgin (Isaiah 7:14; Matthew 1:21-25). There has never been anyone like Jesus. Yet, as is the case with some (but not with others), Jesus was raised by godly and wonderful parents (cf., Matthew 1:18f; Luke 1:26f; 2:1f). Thus, Jesus was able to “live” within and be a part of God’s intended (and IDEAL) plan, for the home. In other words, while the ugliness of sin (and the consequential and often generational nature of it) taints many a home, Jesus was able to see the home—as it should be! In fact, a deeper study of Luke chapters 1 and 2 shows the truly righteous and godly nature of the parents of Jesus (cf., Luke 2:22, 27, 39, 41-42).



Joseph and Mary loved God, and Jesus was reared seeing this beautiful home environment. How wonderful! Further, while reality would dictate that Jesus witnessed bad examples as well, he would have seen a proper environment from some of his relatives, as well (Luke 1:5-6). Within His early home, Jesus was taught how to value and honor his parents (Luke 2:51). He was taught how to embrace a proper work ethic (Mark 6:3), also how to grow up as a proper young man (Luke 2:52). In fact, Jesus learned how to overcome sibling issues (Matthew 13:54f; John 7:5; James 1:1; Jude 1:1), ultimately winning the end-of-the-day with his sinlessness, faithfulness, and glorious resurrection. A study of the childhood and early years of Jesus teach us about the home, and how God is to be put first within it (Matthew 6:33). Yes, even at the age of 12, Jesus understood that He “must be about [His] Father’s business” (Luke 2:49). The childhood of Jesus teaches us!

### **Jesus And His Example**

As noted earlier, Jesus witnessed a proper home environment. While he would not get married, as his mission involved saving souls (and was to be a short one – only a little over 33 years), He certainly valued the beauty of marriage and showed his approving example in attending such festivals (John 2:1f). As a brief sidenote, anyone who teaches that the “wine” Jesus made at the “marriage in Cana” was alcoholic, shows himself to be very poor student of the Bible and blasphemes our perfect and sinless Lord in the process. Such false teachers should be ashamed of themselves! To think that Jesus would send a bride and groom to their honeymoon drunken with intoxicating liquid is ridiculous (Habakkuk 2:15; Proverbs 20:1). Jesus would never set such an example (Isaiah 53:9; John 7:46; 8:46; 1 Peter 2:21-25). The example of Jesus

with children could also be studied and followed (Matthew 18:1f; 19:13f). From start to finish, Jesus loved the Biblically designed home and honored it often with his presence (Luke 4:38; 7:44).

### **Jesus And His Teaching**

From the unequivocal clarity of His teaching on marriage (including its being allowed only between an eligible man and an eligible woman), to the kindness seen in His healing of Peter’s sick mother-in-law, to the tender concern He showed for his own mother—even as he was literally dying on the cross, the teaching of Jesus relating to the home is evident (Matthew 5:31-32; 8:14-17; John 19:25-27). Just as one illustration, John chapter eleven teaches about Jesus and his interaction with a fantastic and godly family. Christ’s amazing love seen in his raising of Lazarus, including his deep care and concern for the sorrow of Martha and Mary is truly incredible (John 11:33-35). May we never make light of the depths of the inspired phrase, “Jesus wept.” Without question, the lessons one can learn from this account are many. A full study could be done regarding Jesus and His interaction within the households of certain Pharisees (Luke 7:37; 11:37), Publicans (Luke 5:27f), and even his involvement (and correction) with those who would pervert household justice (John 8:1f; Ask: Where was the man?). Yes, from the account of the raising of the daughter of Jairus (Luke 8:40f), to the help He provided for the Syrophenician woman’s daughter (Mark 7:25f), to the incredible parable given about the prodigal son and his father and brother—thus about “the home” (Luke 15:11f), we find much about Jesus and his direct interaction and teaching relating to the home. After all, wasn’t it Jesus who addressed the subject of adultery and forbidden

---

lust after a woman (Matthew 5:27f)? Did not He also address the subjects of divorce and remarriage, as well (Matthew 5:31-32; 19:1-12)? Further, was it not Jesus who dealt with specific subjects like: forgiveness, worry, materialism, and the like (Matthew 6:14f)—issues which have major impact on homes, throughout time? The answer to these questions is, “YES!” Jesus directly and indirectly has much to say about “the home.” Further, our Lord would make sure that homes understood God is to always come first regardless of circumstances, even beyond the wishes of family (Matthew 6:33; 10:34f; Luke 13:24; 14:12f)! On and on we could go, but the reality is this: The teachings (including the interactions/examples) of Jesus concerning the home are abundant in the Bible.

### **Jesus And His Disciples**

In addition to all that we have discussed, we must add this: Jesus continued HIS teaching (including about the home) through His apostles and inspired prophets. 1 Corinthians 14:37 makes this extremely clear. It reads, “If any man think himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things that I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord.” To this, the inspired Paul adds, “But I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man. For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ” (Galatians 1:11-12). Translation: The “red letters” are not the only teachings that come from Jesus! True, Jesus did not “directly” address every subject (including every issue with the home; cf., 1 Corinthians 7:12), but He did it nonetheless, through “means”—that is, through inspired men, give us all we need concerning the home (2 Peter 1:3, 20-21; Timothy 3:16-17).

Thus, we can look at what these men of God said about the home since their teachings (inspired of the Holy Spirit) also came from Jesus (John 16:7f; Acts 2:33)! A full study, thus, would require us to read and study Ephesians 5, Colossians 3, 1 Timothy 2 and 5, Titus 2, 1 Peter 3, 1 Corinthians 7, 11 and 14, Hebrews 13, as well as various other sections of Scripture. Within these wonderful texts we find clear truths, including such things as: 1) The authority structure within the home (i.e., the husband is the head of the house and is to provide for the family), 2) The fact the husband is to show deep sacrificial love and affection for his one wife, 3) The fact that the wife is to show love, respect, and care for her one husband and children (including fulfilling her domestic role), 4) The obligation of the father (and mother) to raise children in the Lord's way, 5) The love and obedience children are to demonstrate to their parents, 6) The importance of teaching/mentoring (cf., fathers for children, older women with younger women, etc.), 7) The sexual beauty seen within a godly and Biblical marriage (and never allowed outside of it), 8) The roles authorized within the home and church (cf., men - while not being more important) take the leadership, whereas wonderful and critically important women fulfill an equally important (but different) obligation, 9) The requirement and loving picture of taking care of elderly parents/grandparents, 10) Certainly, an in-depth look at the home would necessity a deeper study of all these things. And again, as noted above, we must never forget that such important teachings DO come from Jesus!

**THE HOME: THE PLAN OF JESUS—IS THE  
ONLY PLAN**

Sadly, and tragically, the world does not adhere to

---

---

the teachings of Jesus. Yet, His plan for the home is the only true plan (John 10:1f). Even though many principles are unwittingly followed (and for that we are thankful), we must admit that the world certainly does not follow Jesus and His important teachings on the home (1 John 2:15f; 5:19; James 4:4). By “unwittingly” we mean that some (especially those in more conservative areas) follow Biblical “principles” (including those connected with the home) without realizing it. They often unintentionally adhere to God’s authority and the decency flowing therefrom. One example will suffice to show this reality. Consider a late-teen or early twenty-year-old atheist fornicator holding the door open for an elderly lady coming out of a public place. Why would he or she do such a thing? Has he or she ever read 1 Timothy 5:1f or 1 Peter 5:5? Probably not. However, these “principles” have been instilled through societal influences—or more specifically—through Biblical influences (read Jesus influences)! Yet, as these influences grow weaker, the wickedness within a society must (of necessity) increase. Thus, members of the Lord’s church should ever strive to “be the light” and “be the salt” in this world, because it can make a terrific difference within an area and nation (Genesis 18:32; Jeremiah 5:1; Matthew 5:13-16; Psalm 7:11; 9:17; Proverbs 14:34). Let us never overlook this important truth (Philippians 2:15-16; 1 Peter 2:5-12; 3:12-17)! Therefore, supposed “little things” are not really that small, after all; Compare, things like changing our language (cf., saying things like: alternative lifestyle versus sodomy; living together versus fornication; social drinking versus drunkenness; Etc.)! A study of what has happened within the United States of America (especially since the 1960’s) certainly demonstrates the immoral slide of a nation. While homosexuality was a death-penalty crime when this nation

---

was established, it has become promoted and championed even to the point that the “LGBTQS+ . . . , etc.” movement has its own flag (cf., even mocking the Genesis flood historical account) and even declares an entire month of the year as “Pride month” to promote and celebrate vile sexual deviancy/wickedness. Wow! Now that is evil gone to seed (Galatians 6:7-10; Psalm 9:17). We need more study in the Pentateuch concerning God’s mind toward the evils and sins of Canaan (Leviticus 18:1f; Deuteronomy 7:1f; 9:1f). Let us never forget that such things are a direct attack on the Biblical home. These same folks, like those of old (cf., Molech worship; Leviticus 18:21; 20:2f; Jeremiah 32:35) also promote the slaughter of the unborn (which they call “abortion”—remember the point about changing our language? Such should be called what it is, namely, **BABY MURDER** (Exodus 21:23; Proverbs 6:17; Jeremiah 1:5)! Along the same line, the language and cursing/cussing coming from the lips of many is almost unbelievable. As an example, as this penman was writing this manuscript in a public restaurant, a table of early twenties-age young people were sitting and eating breakfast and one of the “girls”—**GIRLS**— in general conversation (which could be overheard) used a string of dirty words that would make a sailor blush. As almost anyone can attest, this real example is sadly not a rare exception. Yes, as the influence of Jesus on the home diminishes, tragic societal consequences will certainly follow. Just ask Daniel and his friends why they were in captivity (cf., Daniel 3:1f; 6:1f). If one does not believe this point, it would not be wise to read the prophets, for they will show this pattern over and over and over (Hosea 4:1f; Jeremiah 6:13-16). Note: And these things were usually dealing with God’s own people! Whether it’s the tragedy and numerous sins witnessed within marriage, divorce, remarriage (cf., those doing such

regardless of the reason), sodomy, lesbianism, transgenderism (whatever that nonsense means), rampant lust, uncleanness, fornication (in the various forms, including the wicked work of pornography, pedophilia, bestiality, and the like), or the murder of babies, to the corruption (cf., bribery) found within political and government work (cf., too, the work of electing prosecutors who will not actually prosecute crime), one thing is clear: Without Jesus and His teachings, this country (as with all countries) will have major problems and ultimately will reap the heavy wages of such sin! Thankfully, our true citizenship is not here, but in heaven (Philippians 3:20; Hebrews 11:13f)!

### **Jesus Has A Plan For The Home—And It Is The Only Plan**

We must never forget that regardless of what the world does, Jesus has a beautiful plan for mankind, including for the home. His plan is the **ONLY** pattern that will last (2 Peter 1:3; John 12:48; Acts 20:32). As has been noted, all other teachings regarding any topic, and this certainly includes teachings on the home, will not last and will ultimately bring only sadness, harm, and tragedy. This study does not have the time to cover statistics and research studies (cf., studies and statistics relating to divorce, pre-marital sex, homosexual deviancy, etc.), but many studies are available which prove the disaster of anti-Jesus beliefs. In other words, even research paints a very brutal picture of the downfall of lives, homes, and cultures, when the words and teachings of Jesus are ignored. Then again, one could also read about old Israel/Jerusalem (Matthew 23:37; 24:1f) or fallen Rome (Revelation 13:1f; 19:20; 20:10)!

But it does not have to be this way. Jesus and His inspired Word teaches us all we need to know concerning the

---

home. His truths address: 1) Being single, 2) Getting married (including the need to marry Christians), 3) The beauty of a godly marriage versus the harm and sorrow seen within an ungodly marriage, 4) Being faithful in marriage, 5) How to properly raise children, 6) Dealing with unfaithfulness in marriage, 7) Being a widow/widower, 8) The nature of growing old and the kindness seen within taking care of aged relatives, 9) The wonderful beauty of grandparents/grandkids, 10) And many other things connected with the home. Truly, Jesus has a plan for the home and it is the ONLY plan worth following (Matthew 11:28-30; John 10:10)!

### **Tragic Eternal Consequences Result From Rejecting Jesus And His Plan For The Home**

This concept has been dealt with to some degree already, but it is worth mentioning again. The effects of Humanism upon the home have certainly taken its toll. The evils found within the Humanist Manifestos have been well implemented in this land. Equally, Modernism and Postmodernism have certainly done their evil work, especially in schools and colleges—often while parents sit in ignorant and willful bliss! But God is greater still (1 John 4:4). As the book of Revelation shows us, regardless of what might happen in this life, Jesus wins, and faithful members of the Church of Christ also win (Revelation 7:14; 12:11; 17:14; Ephesians 5:23f; 1 Corinthians 15:24)! As 1 John 5:4 declares, “For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith.” As noted at the beginning, the Biblical home, established and followed as Jesus endorses, will certainly give one the best opportunity for the development of his/her soul (so they can find eternal life). No, this does not mean that one from



a broken home cannot find/know God—certainly not. The Bible is filled with examples of those from corrupt home environments that found and followed God (cf., 1-2 Kings and 1-2 Chronicles). Further, there have been many who had a Biblically based home, yet who failed in their obligations (cf. 1 Samuel 2:12f). But the point is this: The Biblical home, that is the home based on what Jesus and His Word teaches, forever gives a person THE BEST OPPORTUNITY to fulfill one’s purpose in life! Thus, each of us should think long and hard about our choices and especially about the influences allowed within our homes (including the dangerous associated with certain friends, television, music, cell phones, and so forth). If we fail in our obligations to train our babies toward a life for God (including specifics like teaching them to marry a faithful Christian), then we are seriously underestimating the nature of eternity (2 Corinthians 5:10). God is the “Father of spirits” (Hebrews 12:9) and each precious child deserves a Jesus based home. We need more like Abraham (Genesis 18:19). We need more like Joseph (Genesis 50:19f). We need more like Ruth (Ruth 2:12). We need more like Esther (Esther 4:14f). We need more like Hannah (1 Samuel 1:1f). We need more like Lois and Eunice (2 Timothy 1:5; 3:14-15). We need more like Peter and his wife and children (1 Timothy 3:1f; 1 Peter 5:1f). We need more households like that of Demetrius and less like that of Diotrephes (3 John 9-12). On and on we could go with such examples (cf., Romans 16:1f), but time and space will not allow.

## CONCLUSION

As the old saying goes, “As goes the home, so goes the nation.” How true! Let us build our homes based upon WHO Jesus is (John 1:17-18; Hebrews 1:1-3) and based upon

---

WHAT Jesus taught (Philippians 2:5; 1 Corinthians 11:1; Romans 15:2-3; Matthew 7:21f; John 12:48). Following Jesus regarding the home absolutely does matter. It matters in this life, but even more importantly it will matter in eternity—including the very reality of Heaven or Hell (Matthew 25:1f). May we never forget, “Except the Lord build the house, they labour in vain that build it...” (Psalm 127:1)!



Chapter 8  
**JESUS CALLED  
HIS DISCIPLES**

*Larry Acuff*

**I**t is always a pleasure to be a part of the Truth in Love Lectureship and I express my appreciation for the invitation.

How many remember the VBS song?  
Jesus called them one by one,  
Peter, Andrew, James and John,  
Next, came Philip, Thomas too,  
Matthew and Bartholomew.

Chorus-  
Yes, Jesus called them,  
Yes, Jesus called them,  
Yes, Jesus called them,  
He called them one by one.

James the one they called the less,  
Simon, also Thaddeus,  
Twelfth apostle Judas made,  
Jesus was by him betrayed.

Matthias then took Judas' place,  
To preach to men of every race,  
Paul three preaching trips did make,  
And went to Rome for Jesus' sake.  
(<https://www.godsongs.net/>)

This lesson is entitled: Jesus Called His Disciples. First, Jesus had many disciples (Luke 10) and from them he selected twelve men to be Apostles (Matthew 10:2-4; Mark 3:13-19; Luke 6:12-19). Later we know that Matthias was selected as an Apostle (Acts 1:15-26) and then Paul, as he wrote, "And last of all he was seen of me also, as of one born out of due time" (1 Corinthians 15:8). What an honor to be chosen by our Lord to be one of his Apostles. Of course, these men thought at that time, that an earthly kingdom was going to be established (Mark 10:34-35). It is hard to get the world out of our thoughts.

However, Jesus selected twelve men to be his Apostles. The scriptures state, "And Jesus, walking by the sea of Galilee, saw two brethren, Simon called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea: for they were fishers. And he saith unto them, Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men" (Matthew 4:18-19).

Jesus said, "Follow me." Following Jesus requires several things of all his followers. Following Jesus requires that we come to the realization that we are sinners. The Holy Bible says, "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23) and that we must repent of our sins (Luke 13:3). We must be baptized to have those sins remitted (Acts 2:38).

Following Jesus mean that we say yes to Him and no to other things. It is easy to be lukewarm. John writes, "I know

thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot. So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth” (Revelation 3L15-16). Our Lord asked us to put Him first (Matthew 6:33).

Following Jesus means that we must listen, obey, and do things His way. Jesus said, “Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me” (John 14:6). He is the way!

In this lesson we are going to emphasize four things: Jesus called His disciples after prayer; Jesus called His disciples to pattern after Him; Jesus called His disciples to participate, and Jesus called His disciples to be endued with power.

### **JESUS CALLED HIS DISCIPLES AFTER PRAYER**

The Bible says:

“And it came to pass in those days, that he went out into a mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to God. And when it was day, he called unto him his disciples: and of them he chose twelve, whom also he named apostles; Simon, (whom he also named Peter,) and Andrew his brother, James and John, Philip and Bartholomew, Matthew and Thomas, James the son of Alphaeus, and Simon called Zelotes, And Judas the brother of James, and Judas Iscariot, which also was the traitor. And he came down with them, and stood in the plain, and the company of his disciples, and a great multitude of people out of all Judaea and Jerusalem, and from the sea coast of Tyre and Sidon, which came to hear

him, and to be healed of their diseases; And they that were vexed with unclean spirits: and they were healed. And the whole multitude sought to touch him: for there went virtue out of him, and healed them all” (Luke 6:12-19).

If Jesus prayed before a major decision, should not we do likewise? Jesus selected these twelve men after he had spent a night in prayer. It was more than, “Dear Lord, bless me, my wife, my son John and his wife, us four and no more.”

Parents in guiding their children need to pray diligently. Not only for them, but with them. Can you imagine the difference it would make if parents, when a child is born, would sit that child in their lap, read the Bible, and pray every day?

As elders and gospel preachers, do we spend time in prayer before we make our decisions? We are taught to pray without ceasing (1 Thessalonians 5:17). We are taught that “the effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much” (James 5:16).

There is a wonderful example of prayer in Acts chapter twelve. Note:

“Peter therefore was kept in prison: but prayer was made without ceasing of the church unto God for him. And when Herod would have brought him forth, the same night Peter was sleeping between two soldiers, bound with two chains: and the keepers before the door kept the prison. And, behold, the angel of the Lord came upon him, and a light shined in the prison: and he smote Peter on the side, and raised him up, saying, Arise up quickly.

And his chains fell off from his hands. And the angel said unto him, Gird thyself, and bind on thy sandals. And so he did. And he saith unto him, Cast thy garment about thee, and follow me. And he went out, and followed him; and wist not that it was true which was done by the angel; but thought he saw a vision. When they were past the first and the second ward, they came unto the iron gate that leadeth unto the city; which opened to them of his own accord: and they went out, and passed on through one street; and forthwith the angel departed from him. And when Peter was come to himself, he said, Now I know of a surety, that the Lord hath sent his angel, and hath delivered me out of the hand of Herod, and from all the expectation of the people of the Jews. And when he had considered the thing, he came to the house of Mary the mother of John, whose surname was Mark; where many were gathered together praying” (Acts 12:5-12).

God heard and answered their prayer. It seemed hard for them to believe when Peter knocked on the door. The same is true with us. Many times, we may attribute the answer to prayer to something else instead of to God’s answering our prayer.

There is an interesting passage in the book of Luke. Jesus called His disciples. In Luke, the writer records this, “And it came to pass, that, as he was praying in a certain place, when he ceased, one of his disciples said unto him, Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples” (Luke 11:1).

Teach us to pray! Jesus did just that! Following in verses two through thirteen we have the model prayer (Luke 11:1-13). Prayer was a characteristic habit of the Lord Jesus Christ, so it would only seem natural that His disciples would ask Him to do such.

We learn to pray by looking at the prayer life of Jesus. Some have suggested that there are thirty-eight prayers of Jesus in the gospels. Regardless of the number, we know that Jesus was a man of prayer. He prayed for His Apostles. The Bible records, “I 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. Now they have known that all things whatsoever thou hast given me are of thee. For I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me; and they have received them, and have known surely that I came out from thee, and they have believed that thou didst send me. I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine. And all mine are thine, and thine are mine; and I am glorified in them...Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word” (John 17:6-10, 20).

Jesus called his disciples after spending all night in prayer.

### **JESUS CALLED HIS DISCIPLES TO PATTERN AFTER HIM**

“For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps” (1 Peter 2:21). Remember the words, “Follow me” (John 1:43). Note Paul’s words in his letter to the Galatians, “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” (Galatians 2:20). If Jesus called His disciples to pattern after Him, what was that pattern?

The pattern of prayer, which we have noted in the previous point (Luke 11:1).

The pattern of obedience to the Father’s will. Jesus said, “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. And he that sent me is with me: the Father hath not left me alone; for I do always those things that please him” (John 8:28-29). Jesus also said, “I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work” (John 9:4).

Jesus set the pattern of love. An example of this is, “Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends” (John 15:13). Evidence of his love is seen in his coming to the earth to die for the sins of man. Paul expressed it like this: “But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross” (Philippians 2:7-8).

Jesus set the pattern as is revealed in Luke 9:57-62:

“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. And 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. And he said unto another, Follow me. But he said, Lord,

suffer me first to go and bury my father. Jesus said unto him, Let the dead bury their dead: but go thou and preach the kingdom of God. And another also said, Lord, I will follow thee; but let me first go bid them farewell, which are at home at my house. And Jesus said unto him, No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God.”

The disciples of Jesus must put him first and follow in his footsteps. Jesus called his disciples to pattern after him.

### **JESUS CALLED HIS DISCIPLES TO PARTICIPATE**

Being one of Jesus’ disciples was not some kind of an honorary position. We will give you a plaque and/or a certificate to put on your wall. No, being a disciple meant participation. Note the following passage of scripture:

“And there went great multitudes with him: and he turned, and said unto them, 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. And whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple. For which of you, intending to build a tower, sitteth not down first, and counteth the cost, whether he have sufficient to finish it? Lest haply, after he hath laid the foundation, and is not able to finish it, all that behold it begin to mock him, Saying, This man began to build, and was not able to finish. Or

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? Or else, while the other is yet a great way off, he sendeth an ambassage, and desireth conditions of peace. So likewise, whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple” (Luke 14:25-33).

To be a disciple of Jesus meant participation. Doing something. When looking close at this passage, we find several illustrations of what it means to participate. Everything else must take second place.

Family must take second place. Jesus must come first. Jobs must take second place. Sports must take second place. Every person who follows Jesus must put themselves second. Jesus said that disciples must “bear his cross.” Repeat, “must bear his cross.” When looking at a crucified man, there are several things to remember:

A crucified man holds on to nothing. You cannot participate and hold on to the world. The Bible tells us, “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. For 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. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever” (1 John 2:15-17).

A crucified man cannot look back. Paul wrote, “Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and

reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus” (Philippians 3:13-14). Paul said, “forgetting those things which are behind...” Put the sinful world in the past. Many try to hold on to worldly relationships. Many try to hold on to friends who are of the world not realizing that the holy Bible says, “Be not deceived: evil communications corrupt good manners” (1 Corinthians 15:33). Some want to hold on to their money, wicked friends, and worldly activities. Someone may say, “You just don’t know how bad I was.” They have a hard time putting the past behind them. Paul, the writer of Philippians, had persecuted Christians and made havoc of the church (Acts 8, 9, 22, 26), but God used him mightily to save souls.

A crucified man looks in only one direction. He can only look ahead. Paul wrote, “but this one thing I do.” We must have a single purpose. We must have a single mind. Discipleship means looking forward. There are crucial choices that must be made. Discipleship means putting the kingdom first and to look forward. Caleb of the Old Testament, after spying out the land, saw that mountain he wanted and even after forty-five years, had put the past behind him and said, “Now therefore give me this mountain, whereof the LORD spake in that day; for thou heardest in that day how the Anakims were there, and that the cities were great and fenced: if so be the LORD will be with me, then I shall be able to drive them out, as the LORD said” (Joshua 14:12).

Jesus called his disciples to participate.

**JESUS CALLED HIS DISCIPLES TO  
BE ENDUED WITH POWER**

“Then opened he their understanding, that they

might understand the scriptures, And said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day: And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. And ye are witnesses of these things. And, 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” (Luke 24:45-49).

The Apostles waited in Jerusalem and on the Day of Pentecost scripture reveals, “And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance” (Acts 2:1-4). They were endued with power from on high!

On the Day of Pentecost, they were given the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. They were endued with power from on high. That measure of the Spirit was given to the Apostles. It is not given to use today.

As Christian’s, God has promised us his power through his providence. He has revealed to us in scripture that he will be with us. The writer of Hebrews wrote, “Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee” (Hebrews 13:5). Remember what the Apostle Paul wrote, “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” (Romans 8:28).

We have the power of the holy scriptures, “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” (Hebrews 4:12). As disciples today, we do not perform miracles because we have the word of God that tells men what to do to be saved and how to live the Christian life.

When the word of God is preached, it moves people to do his will. In the conversion of the Eunuch, the Bible says, “Then Philip opened his mouth, and began at the same scripture, and preached unto him Jesus” (Acts 8:35). We are endowed with power from the holy scriptures!

### CONCLUSION

“Jesus called them one by one, Peter, Andrew, James and John, Next, came Philip, Thomas too, Matthew and Bartholomew....” He has called us also to be his disciples. He has called us by his gospel as the Bible teaches, “Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began” (2 Timothy 1:9), and, “Whereunto he called you by our gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ” (2 Thessalonians 2:14).



Chapter 9  
**JESUS LOVED  
HIS DISCIPLES**

*Johnie Scaggs*

**J**ohn 15:9-21:

“As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you: continue ye in my love. 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. These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full. This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you. Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends. Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you. Henceforth 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. 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. These things I command you, that ye love one another. If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you. 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. 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. But all these things will they do unto you for my name's sake, because they know not him that sent me."

The love Jesus had for His disciples was tremendous. He describes His love for His disciples as that which is equal to the love His father has for Him. First, Jesus says that God loved Him before the "foundation of the world" (John 17:24). Then He states, "And 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" (John 17:26).

Today in our world and even among some of our brethren, some people have a misconception of true love. Their idea of love is based more on an emotional concept rather than on obeying all that God has required of His children. Jesus, however, defines for us in clear terms what true Biblical love is. Let us examine the love which Jesus had for His disciples and how he manifested His love toward them, and then how they can demonstrate their love to Him.



## **TRUE LOVE IS A LOVE THAT KEEPS HIS COMMANDMENTS**

The love Jesus had for His disciples caused them to want to keep His commandments. Jesus said, “As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you: continue ye in my love. 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” (John 15:9,10). Jesus declares that He abides in His Father’s love by keeping His commandments. It is because of His love for His Father and His disciples that He keeps the commandments of His Father. Jesus stated, “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” (John 14:21).

We should understand God loves everyone, “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” (John 3:16). However, He has a special love for those who are His disciples (His children). Judas (not Iscariot) asked the Lord, “how is it that thou wilt manifest thyself unto us, and not unto the world?” (John 14:22). “Jesus 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. He that loveth me not keepeth not my sayings: and the word which ye hear is not mine, but the Father’s which sent me” (John 14:23,24). God does not make His abode with those who do not love Him, and one’s love is demonstrated by keeping His words. Guy N. Woods wrote, “The acid test of love is the keeping of the commandments (1 John 5:3); it is in this way shown to exist; and, where there is no obedience, there is no love, in spite of any claims thereto. Moreover the Father loves and

indwells those who love the Son and those are those who keep his commandments (1 John 2:4)” (p. 315).

Christ could not have abided in the love of the Father if He had not kept the commandments of His Father, and likewise, we cannot remain in the love of Christ and be His disciples if we do not keep His commandments. Therefore, those who accuse us of being “commandment keepers” should lay the same charge against the Lord, for it is through His example of keeping the commandments of the Father that we learn to do likewise. So John wrote, “And this is his commandment, That we should believe on the name of his Son, Jesus Christ, and love one another, as he gave us commandment” (1 John 4:7).

By keeping His commandments, we can have true joy. “These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full” (John 15:11). Joy is from “chara,” which means “joy, gladness, great happiness” (logos). The Lord’s joy was that He kept the commandments of the Father, and therefore His joy was one of perfection. Our joy is yet to be perfected; notice the words, “that your joy might be full.” To experience the joy Christ has, we must keep His commandments. By keeping His commandments, we can experience the greatest joy possible. It is a joy that is to be realized in this world and the world to come. Guy N. Woods lists five things we can have as the joy of our love for Christ fills our hearts. “(1) communion and fellowship with the best of earth; (2) union with the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit; (3) the satisfaction of doing good to others; (4) the consciousness of doing the Father’s will and (5) the assurance of life everlasting at the end of this age” (p. 327).

By keeping His commandments, we can be called a

---

friend of Jesus. “Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends. Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you. Henceforth 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” (John 15:13-15). “..., the conditional “if” is highly significant; the genuine test of friendship is to be seen in the readiness of one both to desire and to do the will of the Lord. It is vain to profess to love him, or, for that matter, to be friendly toward him, while refusing to do what he said” (Woods, p. 328).

Like Abraham, we can be called a friend of God if we place our faith in Him. “And the scripture was fulfilled which saith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness: and he was called the Friend of God” (James 2:23). Abraham’s faith in God is why he is called a friend of God (Hebrews 11:8-10). We must have this same type of faith. A faith that will cause us to do whatever the Lord requires of us. The faith we need is not one built on some emotional feeling but rather a faith-born from the word of God. “So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God” (Romans 10:17). The faith which is needed is an intellectual faith based on the word of God. If we do not obey His commandments, we cannot say we have placed our faith in Him. The true test of our loyalty and friendship to the Lord is not would we be willing to die for Him, but rather are we willing to give our lives in service to Him by obeying His commandments.

**TRUE LOVE WILL CAUSE ONE TO MAKE  
THE ULTIMATE SACRIFICE**

Jesus loved His disciples so much that He was willing

---

to make the great sacrifice of giving His own life for them/us. Because of His great love, we as His disciples should be ready to make the ultimate sacrifice if called on to do so for the name of Jesus. Jesus said, “Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends” (John 15:13). The love Jesus had for His disciples was one that was willing to give His life for them. That is, He was ready to go to the cross and die in their place. “Self-sacrifice is the highest test of love in the human realm.” (Woods, p. 327). True love is not a feeling one gets in the heart or the pit of the stomach. True love is an action; it is an act of the will. John wrote, “Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren” (1 John 3:16). Isaiah prophesied about the sacrifice Jesus would make. Isaiah wrote:

“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. Surely he hath borne our griefs, And carried our sorrows: Yet we did esteem him stricken, Smitten of God, and afflicted 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” (Isaiah 53:3-5).

Peter wrote, “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” (1 Peter 2:24).

It is hard to imagine how one so great, the son of God, the creator of the world, could give His life for those who would reject Him. Jesus knowing all things, knew prior to His betrayal, that within a few hours, all His disciples would desert Him. One would betray Him with a kiss, another would deny Him three times, and all the others would abandon Him. Yet, one of His last acts before these events took place was that He humbled Himself and washed His disciples' feet.

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. And supper being ended, the devil having now put into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, to betray him; Jesus knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he was come from God, and went to God; He riseth from supper, and laid aside his garments; and took a towel, and girded himself. 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 (John 13:1).

This was a demonstration of His great love for not only His twelve disciples but for all His disciples. Our Lord calls upon each of His disciples to humble themselves and become a servant. "Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up" (James 4:10). Peter also wrote, "Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time" (1 Peter 5:6). Jesus said, "And whosoever shall exalt himself shall be abased; and he that shall humble himself shall be exalted" (Matthew 23:12).

**TRUE LOVE WILL CAUSE ONE  
TO PRODUCE FRUIT**

The love Jesus had for His disciples would cause them

---

to understand that their love for Him would help them realize that they needed to bear fruit. Jesus said, “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” (John 13:16). Chapter fifteen begins with Jesus describing Himself as the true vine and that every branch connected to the vine must produce fruit or else it would be cut off. However, He also noted, “...and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit” (John 15:2b). In verse five, He identifies the branches as His disciples. “I am the vine, ye are the branches” (John 15:5a). The fruit under consideration would include the whole system of faith, such as producing the fruit of the Spirit, Galatians 5, and the spreading of the gospel of Jesus Christ to a lost and dying world. Jesus said, “And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching 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” (Matthew 28:18-20).

As His disciples today, we also are to bear fruit. The great commission is still valid today. We are to go into all the world, and teach all nations just as they were commanded to do. In our daily life, we are to produce fruit as well. We live in a world today that, for the most part, no longer believes in God, and they seem to be getting further and further away from the word of God. Therefore, our work of teaching the lost should weigh heavily on our shoulders. Without the Lord’s disciples teaching the lost today, where will they be in the years to come?

Furthermore, we are to produce fruit daily in our lives. This fruit will be seen in our lives before others, which involves the Fruit of the Spirit in Galatians 5. “But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law. And they that are Christ’s have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts” (Galatians 5:22-24). Because we are in Christ, we will strive to continually put the works of the flesh far from us and work daily on producing the fruit of the Spirit.

### **TRUE LOVE WILL CAUSE ONE TO PRAY TO THE FATHER**

Jesus loved His disciples and prayed for them often, and challenged them to remember to call upon the Father in time of need. “...whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you” (15:16b). To ask “in my name” is to ask by His authority. Jesus taught His disciples how to pray in Matthew 6:9-13. But He also led by example. In John 17, He lifted up His eyes to heaven and began to pray to the Father. Among the things He prayed for were His disciples, and those who would come after them. “I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine.... Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word” (John 17:9,20). Jesus was concerned about leaving them in the world. He knew of the dangers they would face, and He prayed that God would be with them and help them in their time of need. These are some of His parting words before He goes into the garden, and then is taken to be crucified.

We have the same gift of prayer today because we are His disciples. We can go to God and ask Him for that which we

---

need, knowing that He hears our prayers and answers. David wrote, “Evening, and morning, and at noon, will I pray, and cry aloud: And he shall hear my voice” (Psalm 55:17). Paul echoed these words when he wrote, “Pray without ceasing” (1 Thessalonians 5:17). Paul not only prayed for the brethren but often called upon them to pray for him (2 Thessalonians 1:11; 3:1). We need to pray for the brethren today as Paul did and plead with them to pray for us as ministers of the gospel of Christ that we might have the courage to stand firm for the word of God.

### **TRUE LOVE WILL CAUSE ONE TO UNDERSTAND THAT WE WILL BE PERSECUTED**

Because of His love for His disciples, Jesus wanted them to understand that not all who heard them would love them. But instead, many would hate and despise them. “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” (John 15:20). He reminded them, in verse 18, that some in the world would hate them because they hated Him. All of His disciples would be greatly persecuted and all, but one, would die for the cause of Christ. Jesus wanted them to understand the persecution they would face and taught about these things many times during His ministry. His word, when preached, would cut into the very soul of those who heard it and cause some to love them and others to hate them. The Hebrews writer stated, “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 discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart” (Hebrews. 4:12).



His word will cause a division even within one's own family. Christ said, "Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword. For 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. And a man's foes shall be they of his own household" (Matthew 10:34-36). Christ is the gospel of peace, but the peace He brings will not always be understood by some, and therefore it will cause heartache for those who do not obey it. Others, who are obedient to Him, will find peace in a troublesome world. When the word of God is proclaimed as it was on the Day of Pentecost, it will prick the heart, and some will obey, and some will turn away. And because of the word, those who turn away will sometimes despise those who obey, and do their best to show them their displeasure by saying all kinds of evil things about them and the cause of Christ. But we would do well to remember the words of Paul: "Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord" (1 Corinthians 15:58).

### **CONCLUSION**

We serve a savior who loved us and showed His love by the things He taught us and by giving His own life for us. His love is so great for us that it is difficult to express such incredible love. But because He loves us, He gave us a road map to heaven, and He went on before us to make all things ready, so that we could be with Him and the Father forever. John wrote, "Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In 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. 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. And whither I go ye know, and the way ye know” (John 14:1-4).

### **WORKS CITED**

Woods, Guy N., *New Testament Commentaries, John*.  
Nashville, TN: Gospel Advocate Company 1989



Chapter 10  
**JESUS STANDS  
BEFORE THE CROSS**

*Michael Clarke*

**W**hen I was a little boy, nothing seemed more frustrating than when “Dateline,” or any other popular investigative documentary was on television. It would almost always be on the screen for an hour or more because my father devours those types of show. In those days, I did not want to watch anything of the sort.

Then it happened one day. I found myself reading the description of a documentary. I do not remember what it was about or if it was even worth the hour to watch it. Reality hit me like a truck, and I thought, “I’m reading the synopsis of this documentary on purpose!” Ever since, I have been obsessed with documentaries just like dad. My choice of documentary type varies even beyond true crime pieces, and I am not ashamed to say that I would watch a documentary about how Heinz makes their ketchup fit into those tiny packets.

Consider for a moment the number of times someone has been accused of a crime and their whole defense was built off of one idea—“I did not do it.” A simple Google search of the topic “Documentaries about people who did not commit the crime” yielded twelve such programs about people who

were supposedly framed. Having not taken the time to watch them, and thus not able to speak to the validity of their claim, I am left with this statement: people do not want to face judgment for something they did not do.

As we ponder Jesus standing before the cross, I submit that He was innocent (but you already knew that) and did not deserve to face judgment for any of the supposed crimes that were laid at His feet. While there will not be a documentary about Jesus' betrayal, trial, walk, and even death on the cross hitting any popular avenue coming soon, we can be sure of one thing. The Bible and history detail what happened and whether it was legal or not.

### **HIS BETRAYAL**

Who loves feeling betrayed? The term "betrayal" is defined as "the action of betraying one's country, a group, or a person; treachery" (New Oxford Dictionary). The betrayal of Christ is discussed in each of the Gospel accounts (Matthew 26:36-46; Mark 14:32-42; Luke 22:39-46; John 18:1-11; NKJV). For the purpose of our study together, we will focus on John's writing.

In order to truly appreciate his account, we need to notice the text in its entirety, and then we will be able to make key points about these eleven verses:

"When Jesus had spoken these words, He went out with His disciples over the Brook Kidron, where there was a garden, which He and His disciples entered. And Judas, who betrayed Him, also knew the place; for Jesus often met there with His disciples. Then Judas, having received a detachment of troops, and officers

from the chief priests and Pharisees, came there with lanterns, torches, and weapons. Jesus therefore, knowing all things that would come upon Him, went forward and said to them, “Whom are you seeking?” They answered Him, “Jesus of Nazareth.” Jesus said to them, “I am He.” And Judas, who betrayed Him, also stood with them. Now when He said to them, “I am He,” they drew back and fell to the ground. Then He asked them again, “Whom are you seeking?” And they said, “Jesus of Nazareth.” Jesus answered, “I have told you that I am He. Therefore, if you seek Me, let these go their way,” that the saying might be fulfilled which He spoke, “Of those whom You gave Me I have lost none.” Then Simon Peter, having a sword, drew it and struck the high priest’s servant, and cut off his right ear. The servant’s name was Malchus. So Jesus said to Peter, “Put your sword into the sheath. Shall I not drink the cup which My Father has given Me?” (John 18:1-11).

According to John, Jesus has just finished praying one of the most powerful prayers ever recorded in Scripture (John 17). In that prayer, He focused on three things: Himself (vv. 1-5), His disciples (vv. 6-19), and all believers (vv. 20-26). After this prayer had concluded, they made their way to a garden (18:1). We then see five forms of betrayal.

**1. Betrayal of knowledge.** “And Judas, who betrayed Him, also knew the place; for Jesus often met there with His disciples” (John 18:2). This is the equivalent of having come

---

to a place of solace, comfort, and ease only to find that you are under attack. Judas took the knowledge of Jesus' favorite spot to take the disciples, and utilized it in his plan to betray Jesus.

**2. Betrayal of doctrine.** What was the main duty of the chief priests and all other religious leaders of that day? It was supposed to be pointing people to Christ. Yet, due to the popularity of Jesus, and the impact that He made everywhere He went, the decision was made to eliminate Him, not because He had committed any crimes, but because He had taken away from their rank of followers. They could not stand for that, so they supplied Judas with a group of troops to ensure that Jesus would be captured (John 18:3). They even determined to kill Him after witnessing the reality of His claims of Messiahship (Matthew 26:4; Luke 13:31; Luke 22:2; John 5:16-18; 7:1). When they denied that Jesus was the Son of God, they betrayed the very doctrine they were supposed to teach.

**3. Betrayal of duty.** The responsibilities of a disciple of Christ were recorded in Matthew 10:5-15. Among those duties, they received the following instruction:

“But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. And as you go, preach, saying, ‘The kingdom of heaven is at hand.’ Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out demons. Freely you have received, freely give. Provide neither gold nor silver nor copper in your money belts, nor bag for your journey, nor two tunics, nor sandals, nor staffs; for a worker is worthy of his food.” (Matthew 10:6-10)

Zoom in on verses nine through ten. They are instructed here to not take any money in their money purses (10:9). Nor are they allowed to bring clothing, sandals, bags, or staffs (10:10). Why? Because Jesus intended them to be paid by the people who they were helping along the way. That means everything they received was due to accomplishing the work of the Savior. The laborer is worthy of all the wages that they labor to receive (1 Timothy 5:18). Knowing this, it becomes more harrowing that Judas was a thief and often stole from the money bag (John 12:4-6). Theft is a sin no matter how we slice it, but the fact remains that we often look at theft of the Lord's work as a "higher" crime. Judas was not stealing from the wages collected in fishing, but of the wages they received in being ministers of the Gospel. He betrayed his duty as an apostle ultimately when he determined to betray Christ for thirty pieces of silver (Matthew 26:14-16).

**4. Betrayal of Judas.** Perhaps we have not considered his own betrayal when we study, teach, and remember the life of Judas. We know him for one simple act—the betrayal of Christ. Luke tells us that Satan entered Judas, and then Judas went to the chief priests seeking payment to betray Jesus (Luke 22:3-6). I would never suggest that Satan was manipulating Judas' every move and forcing him to betray Christ. However, we all know what it is like to be betrayed by Satan. He promises us happiness or contentment from committing a transgression. He convinces us to do heinous things all in the name of fulfillment.

Therefore when Judas betrayed Christ for money, it would also be a betrayal of Judas himself when he came to his senses and realized the money did not help (Matthew 27:1-5). Judas determined to take his life because he thought there was no other way. Satan had put his hooks so deep into him that

---

the only solution appeared to be death. We are taught to be charitable and hope that Judas was not simply bloodthirsty in his betrayal. Perhaps he did not realize the plan was to kill Christ, and when he discovered the condemnation of death, he could not handle the grief that came with it. Perhaps the thought of Jesus being able to pass through the midst of His accusers was on Judas' mind when he kissed Jesus on the cheek that night of betrayal (John 8:59; Matthew 26:49). Perhaps he was simply overcome with the guilt of what he had done in delivering Jesus up to be slaughtered. He, like all the other apostles, had been informed about Jesus' endgame (Matthew 16:21). No matter what rationale he gave himself, if Judas denied the appeals of Satan, perhaps his life would not have ended in such a way.

**5. Betrayal of God's image.** God made us in His image (Genesis 1:26). The very existence of mankind is attributed to the Godhead, and we were intended to behave as God behaves. Adam and Eve had other plans and betrayed the very Creator Who gave them life when they brought sin into the world (Genesis 3:1-7). Jesus would one day need to be betrayed in order to give the first betrayers (mankind) salvation.

In the midst of all of these betrayals, we find the greatest betrayal that has ever taken place throughout all of history. Jesus did not deserve to be arrested. He had committed no crime. Despite this truth, He asked those who were with Judas whom they were seeking and admitted that He was their target (John 18:4-8). At this time, Peter had enough and cut off the right ear of Malchus (John 18:10). Jesus rebuked him for doing this and asked an important question: "Shall I not drink the cup which My Father has given me?" (John 18:11).

Suppose that Peter and the other apostles were



successful in keeping Jesus from going to the cross that night. What would be our situation today? You might be thinking, “God would have found a way to have Jesus die for our sins.” I agree that God is powerful enough to determine whatever way He pleased for our salvation. But that line of thinking would require God to change how He had already determined for Jesus to die.

Remember that the prayer in the garden was not, “If there is another way, that would be nice, but it is not something I am all that concerned about.” No, the prayer was pleading with God to provide another way for salvation to be given if possible (Luke 22:42-44). That prayer was answered, and its revelation was that there was not another way that God had determined would be sufficient enough to cleanse mankind from their sin. Jesus had to die on the cross (Hebrews 9:22). We can conclude then that if the apostles that night had managed to successfully keep Jesus from death, they would have unwittingly and unknowingly betrayed God and Christ in their plan for eternal salvation. Praise God that our Savior was willing to die and told Peter to put away the sword (John 18:11).

### **HIS TRIAL**

“Due process” is a term that unfortunately can be found lacking throughout history. It is defined as “fair treatment through the normal judicial system, especially as a citizen’s entitlement” (New Oxford Dictionary). The way the law itself is written on the subject is quite clear. Notice what the terms due process and Magna Carta (UK) outline about legal rights:

“Due process. While American due process rights find their origins in English law, it

has evolved its own path and looks a little different. Due process rights are specifically spelled out in the 5th amendment and the 14th amendment. The 5th Amendment spells out an individual's right to not be compelled to speak against themselves at their own trial and have that silence used against them. The 5th amendment also has a due process clause which safeguards a person from being deprived of life, liberty or property without due process of the law. It says: "No person shall . . . be deprived of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law." The 14th amendment says something similar: "Nor shall any State deprive any person of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law." When the due process clause speaks of the "state" it is also speaking of Puerto Rico. Although Puerto Rico is not technically a state, it is still subject to due process laws. Also, when the due process clause speaks of a "person" it is referring to natural persons and entities such as corporations. Person also refers to citizens and noncitizens within the United States. Persons who are not citizens still have due process rights under the due process clause. Due process is the legal requirement that requires the state to respect all the legal rights owed to a person. Due process balances the power of the state and protects the individual person from the power of the state. When a government harms a person without going

through due process first, this constitutes a due process violation.”

“Magna Carta (U.K.) Under the due process clause, vague laws violate a person’s due process because they are too unclear to be understood by the average person. Due process requires that laws be written in a way that is specific and understandable by the average individual. Vague laws make it too probable that a person’s due process will be violated because the law is misunderstood or interpreted in so many way as to make it impossible for any person to reliably stay within the constraints of the law. Vague laws can make a criminal out of even the most law-abiding person” (smokeball.com).

These two terms along with a host of others are intended to be the backbone of our judicial system. William Gladstone is reported to have said, “Justice delayed is justice denied.” What a statement in regard to how the world will begin to look at the system if it does not do what it is supposed to do! If we cannot trust our government to handle justice, how can we trust them with anything else? For that matter, why should we trust them with anything else?

Yes, governments all around the world today are shirking their responsibilities to uphold the law in many cases. If you keep up with any type of reporting on all things governmental, you will find out quickly that governments can be corrupt. And the reason they are corrupt does not simply come due to the political association of who is in office. No,

it is because God is not found among them and righteousness is not their concern (Proverbs 14:34).

It would stand to reason then that when Jesus was arrested, He too would be in line to be treated fairly and justly by the leaders of the land. He had rights, and surely they were respected, right? Unfortunately, we do not find such to be the case, and with confidence, I submit that the entire portion of Jesus' "run in with the law" was a complete and total sham. Let's consider each of the trials Jesus faced.

**1. Jesus before Annas.** In the midst of Peter's denials of Jesus, Annas the high priest (and Caiaphas' father-in-law; John 18:13) questioned the Savior about His disciples and His doctrine (John 18:19). In answering the inquiries, Jesus made the following statement:

"Jesus answered him, "I spoke openly to the world. I always taught in synagogues and in the temple, where the Jews always meet, and in secret I have said nothing. Why do you ask Me? Ask those who have heard Me what I said to them. Indeed they know what I said" (John 18:20-21).

As soon as He had finished with this response, an officer struck Him with the palm of his hand and said, "Do you answer the high priest like that?" It was almost as if he were suggesting that Annas was the deity in that conversation. Our Savior, in spite of the treatment being experienced, was still able to answer in a thought provoking way: "If I have spoken evil, bear witness of the evil; but if well, why do you strike Me?" (John 18:23).

**2. Jesus before the Sanhedrin.** Caiaphas, the high

priest at the time, was the one who advised the Jews that it was expedient for them to kill Jesus (John 18:12-14). Matthew gives us more to study and ponder in his account of Jesus' facing the Sanhedrin. He writes that the chief priests, elders, and all the council sought false testimony that could have Jesus put to death (Matthew 26:59). They found none even though many false witnesses had come forward (Matthew 26:60). Finally, two false witnesses were able to provide the "smoking gun" the Sanhedrin were seeking:

“And said, “This fellow said, ‘I am able to destroy the temple of God and to build it in three days.’” And the high priest arose and said to Him, “Do You answer nothing? What is it these men testify against You?” But Jesus kept silent. And the high priest answered and said to Him, “I put You under oath by the living God: Tell us if You are the Christ, the Son of God!” Jesus said to him, “It is as you said. Nevertheless, I say to you, hereafter you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Power, and coming on the clouds of heaven.” Then the high priest tore his clothes, saying, “He has spoken blasphemy! What further need do we have of witnesses? Look, now you have heard His blasphemy! What do you think?” They answered and said, “He is deserving of death” (Matthew 26:61-66).

**3. Jesus before Pilate and Herod.** Jesus also faced trial by Rome and was yet again given the “short end of the stick,” legally speaking. He was sent to Pilate, and their

interaction was quite unique. Pilate heard the accusations of the people regarding Jesus and even asked if Jesus was the King of the Jews (Luke 23:1-3; John 18:28-33; Mark 15:2; Matthew 27:11). Jesus did not shy away from responding, “It is as you say” (Luke 23:3; John 18:37; Mark 15:2; Matthew 27:11). In John’s account, Jesus went on a little further and asked if Pilate was asking for himself or because of what others told him (John 18:34-36). Matthew and Mark point out that Jesus was being accused and answered nothing to Pilate’s surprise (Matthew 27:12-14; Mark 15:3-5). To Pilate’s credit, he stated to the chief priests and crowd, “I find no fault in this man” (Luke 23:4; John 18:38). The people became more fierce and gave Pilate an opportunity to pass the decision on to someone else when they mentioned Galilee (Luke 23:5-6). The moment Pilate knew that Jesus belonged to Herod’s jurisdiction, he sent Him on to Herod who was also in Jerusalem (Luke 23:7).

Herod was excited to see Jesus because of all that he had heard about the Savior, and he desired to witness a miracle performed by Jesus (Luke 23:8). He questioned Jesus and received no answer while the chief priests and scribes stood by accusing (Luke 23:9). After mocking Jesus and putting a robe on Him, they gave Pilate the responsibility to handle it. From that day forward, Pilate and Herod became friends, having previously been enemies (Luke 23:10-12). When Jesus arrived back to Pilate, His innocence was proclaimed:

“Then Pilate, when he had called together the chief priests, the rulers, and the people, said to them, “You have brought this Man to me, as one who misleads the people. And indeed, having examined Him in your presence, I have

found no fault in this Man concerning those things of which you accuse Him; no, neither did Herod, for I sent you back to him; and indeed nothing deserving of death has been done by Him. I will therefore chastise Him and release Him” (Luke 23:13-16).

There was a chance! It was not too late to overturn this injustice and allow Jesus to walk free. The law allowed for them to release someone at the feast time (Luke 23:17; John 18:39). While the hope of correcting this incredible tragedy was there, it was not seized. The people were so bloodthirsty to kill Jesus that they commanded for Barabbas (a thief by brutality of murder) to be released, and Jesus to be crucified (Luke 23:18-19; John 18:40; Mark 15:6-15; Matthew 27:15-26). Pilate, wanting to release Jesus, gave them one more chance. But they adamantly began to chant, “Crucify Him, crucify Him!” (Luke 23:21).

Even when prompted to give the rationale as to how He could and should be put to death, the people began to demand that He be crucified, even putting political pressure on Pilate (Luke 23:22-23; John 19:6-16). To add insult to injury, Barabbas walked free with the capability to commit more theft and murder, while the Savior Who created all of what surrounded them and mankind itself, was sentenced to be brutally murdered (Luke 23:24-25). Jesus’ trials had been completed, and He had been sentenced to death.

The question might be posed, “How do we know that they were doing this illegally? Could Jesus have had due process and still been found guilty due to lack of evidence?” When we look at the evidence surrounding His arrest, trials, and what was overridden in the legal process, the writing of

Wayne Jackson must be noted:

“Arrests could not be made at night. The time and date of the trial were illegal because it took place at night on the eve of the Sabbath—a time that precluded any opportunity for a required adjournment to the next day in the event of a conviction. The Sanhedrin was without authority to instigate charges. It was only supposed to investigate charges that had been brought before it, but in Jesus’ trial, the court itself formulated the charges. The requirement of two witnesses testifying in agreement to merit the death penalty had not been met. The court did not meet in the regular meeting place of the Sanhedrin, as required by Jewish law. Christ was not permitted a defense. Under existing Jewish law, an exhaustive search into the facts presented by the witnesses should have occurred—but did not. The Sanhedrin itself pronounced the death sentence. During Roman captivity, however, the Sanhedrin was not allowed to impose the death sentence (John 18:31)” (Jackson).

He was not even to Calvary yet, and His suffering was already on full display. It all started in Gethsemane, where Jesus was praying to the Father. Being in great agony, He went through the process of hematidrosis (Luke 22:44). He was not even arrested yet, and He was suffering. Now, having been arrested and tried illegally, the justice system had failed Him. He would unfortunately not go straight to the cross. He



would endure two forms of physical punishment before even heading to Calvary.

**1. He would be beaten and mocked.** Crucifixion on its own was the most brutal death that a man could have experienced in that time. A typical crucifixion would have the following: scourging, nailing to a cross, and if needed, and the breaking of one's legs to ensure suffocation and death. Jesus was shown "special" treatment and would be mocked and beaten before going to the cross.

“Then they spat in His face and beat Him; and others struck Him with the palms of their hands, saying, “Prophecy to us, Christ! Who is the one who struck You?” (Matthew 26:67-68).

“Then the soldiers led Him away into the hall called Praetorium, and they called together the whole garrison. And they clothed Him with purple; and they twisted a crown of thorns, put it on His head, and began to salute Him, “Hail, King of the Jews!” Then they struck Him on the head with a reed and spat on Him; and bowing the knee, they worshiped Him. And when they had mocked Him, they took the purple off Him, put His own clothes on Him, and led Him out to crucify Him” (Mark 15:16-20).

“Now the men who held Jesus mocked Him and beat Him. And having blindfolded Him, they struck Him on the face and asked Him, saying, “Prophecy! Who is the one who

struck You?” And many other things they blasphemously spoke against Him” (Luke 22:63-65).

“So then Pilate took Jesus and scourged Him. And the soldiers twisted a crown of thorns and put it on His head, and they put on Him a purple robe. Then they said, “Hail, King of the Jews!” And they struck Him with their hands” (John 19:1-3).

Perhaps you have played a game before in which the lights are off or you blindfold someone and ask them to guess what they are eating, feeling, or smelling. Haunted houses will often put grapes and other food items into bowls and tell you that they are actually eyeballs and more all to get a ruse out of the individuals going through their haunted house. Jesus was blindfolded and beaten, and as if it were some type of sporting event, they mocked Him saying, “Tell us who hit you? If you really are the Son of God surely you know who hit you.” I truly cannot imagine how it must have felt to know with each blow exactly who hit Him and say nothing. Their mocking went as far as to fake salute Him and call Him their King. Something that perhaps make Jesus’ crucifixion even more difficult was how the people utilized the crown of thorns. This was used as a sick way of having Jesus shown as king. These were also no ordinary thorns:

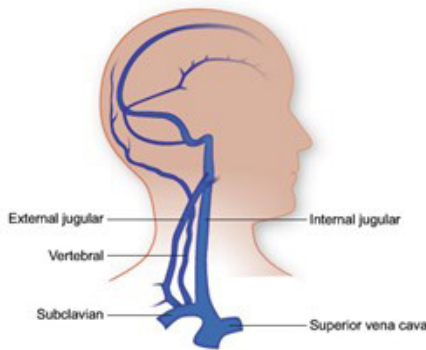
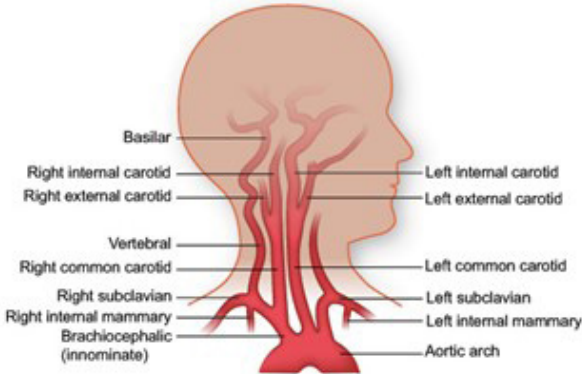
“The thorns could have come from the lote tree. This tree had thorns averaging one inch in length. It was improbable for anyone to form a wreath-like crown using these thorns without

being injured. It would be more probable, therefore, that the crown of thorns was more like a helmet. In fact, it would have been easier to cut off a bush and use it as a helmet of thorns” (Harrub and Thompson).

The head is the most vascular part of the body and bleeds more profusely than any other part:

“Blood is carried from your heart to the rest of your body through a complex network of arteries, arterioles, and capillaries. Blood is returned to your heart through venules and veins. The one-way vascular system carries blood to all parts of your body. This process of blood flow within your body is called circulation. Arteries carry oxygen-rich blood away from your heart, and veins carry oxygen-poor blood back to your heart. In pulmonary circulation, though, the roles are switched. It is the pulmonary artery that brings oxygen-poor blood into your lungs and the pulmonary vein that brings oxygen-rich blood back to your heart. Like the heart, the brain’s cells need a constant supply of oxygen-rich blood. This blood supply is delivered to the brain by the two large carotid arteries in the front of your neck and by two smaller vertebral arteries at the back of your neck. The right and left vertebral arteries come together at the base of your brain to form what is called the basilar artery in the vasculature of your head. As

shown in the diagrams of the vasculature of the head, the vessels that carry oxygen-rich blood are on the chart to the left, and the vessels that carry oxygen-poor blood are on the chart to the right” (Texas Heart Institute).



Can you imagine having a helmet of thorns placed on your head and then beaten into position? Knowing what we do about the head and how easily it bleeds, we know this would have made Jesus’ last hours agonizing. What Jesus endured before any of the “normal” activities of the cross was truly

more suffering than the average person would ever have faced in the era of crucifixion.

**2. He would be scourged.** If it is to be believed that Jesus suffered from a medical condition called hematidrosis, then the following symptoms would have been experienced:

“In many cases, the phenomenon is preceded by severely stressful emotions or events, whereas in others, there is no identifiable cause. The secretion is not frank blood but rather sweat tinged with blood. The blood is usually found to ooze steadily and for a prolonged time from the forehead, nails, navel, nose, and even through the lacrimal duct, which results in blood-stained tears. In some cases, each episode is preceded by a severe headache or by abdominal pain. The amount of blood lost is insignificant; however, the **skin becomes very tender and easily broken**” (Dr. Liji Thomas; emphasis added).

Taking the condition of our Lord’s tender flesh into consideration, the scourging would have been more excruciating and painful. What you and I know about scourging from the text seems fairly cut and dry. John’s account simply states that Jesus was taken by Pilate and scourged (John 19:1). Written words like that do not truly paint the picture of what Jesus’ scourging would have been like. Scourging was one of the most intricate punishments that the Romans had taken and perfected to be brutally and horrendously painful:

“The prospective crucifixion victim, as a rule, was first subjected to flagellation, i.e., a beating with a three-thong whip (fashioned of plaited leather, and studded with bone and metal). The victim was stripped naked and then was secured with leather ties. He was then beaten from his upper hack to the lower extremities of his legs. The flesh was flayed from the muscle. Eventually muscle could be shredded from the bone. The bones of the back, including the spinal column might well be exposed in a bloody mass. In an article which appeared a few years back in the Journal of the American Medical Association, Dr. W. Edwards wrote: “The severe scourging, with its intense pain and appreciable blood loss, most probably left Jesus in a pre-shock state. Moreover, hematidrosis had rendered his skin particularly tender. The physical and mental abuse meted out by the Jews and the Romans, as well as the lack of food, water, and sleep, also contributed to his generally weakened state. Therefore, even before the actual crucifixion, Jesus’ physical condition was at least serious and possibly critical” (p. 1458).

Can you imagine the physical torment that Jesus was enduring? And we still have not made it to what was supposed to be the actual “punishment” of the cross. In fact, it must be noted that Jesus was not at full health even when He was taken to be scourged:

“Christ suffered great emotional stress (as evinced by the probable hematidrosis), abandonment by His disciples, and a physical beating after the Jewish trial. It also is important to note that Jesus was forced to walk more than 2.5 miles to and from the sites of various trials, having slept little if any the night before. All these factors would have rendered Jesus particularly vulnerable to the physiological effects of scourging” (Harrub & Thompson).

The scourging left our Lord a bloody mess, and there was no comfort to be given as He was now ready to be led to Golgotha.

### **HIS WALK TO THE CROSS**

We come now to the last walk that Jesus would ever take before His death. As if all the torment and pain He endured up to this point was not enough, they made Him walk bloodied, bruised, and exhausted to His own execution. This walk is covered generically by several of the Gospel accounts (Matthew 27:31-33; Mark 15:20-22; Luke 23:26-32; John 19:16-18). Let’s consider this final journey before His death and see what we can learn.

**1. Jesus could not carry His cross.** John is the only account to mention that Jesus had to carry His cross (John 19:17). Luke gives us the “rest” of that story and informs us that Simon, a Cyrenian, was tasked with carrying the cross after Jesus (Luke 23:26). The word “after” means “to bear on the back” (Strong), and that is what Simon did just as Jesus had been doing before. Often when we read passages about

bearing our cross, I think we might be forgetting the imagery of a broken Man struggling to carry the cross and make it. Had the Romans not allowed Simon to finish carrying the cross, do we really think that Jesus would have stopped? It is not difficult to imagine Jesus dragging that cross on His hands and knees if that was what would get Him to Calvary so we could have salvation. The dedication shown by our Lord is awe-inspiring. He could have refused to carry it from the beginning, and even when it was obvious He could not make it, He was not the one asking for someone to take it from Him. Think of the legitimate excuses that could have been made. He had been beaten (most likely as close to death as possible) in His scourging and had not slept much, but still attempted to bring that cross all the way to Calvary. Amazing.

**2. Jesus was mourned and lamented after.** As Jesus was making the journey to Golgotha, Luke tells us that a great multitude was following after Him (Luke 23:27). Herein lies the religious leaders' issues with Jesus. He never broke a law or did anything that was truly deserving of death (1 Peter 2:22). In truth, the only crimes committed were from the events of Judas' kiss to Jesus' last breath on the cross. I do not know how many people would make up a "great multitude" from a numerical standpoint. But I do know that Jesus was loved, and people mourned what was going to befall Him.

**3. Jesus showed love and concern for others.** When Jesus saw the women lamenting and weeping, He informed them:

“But Jesus, turning to them, said, “Daughters of Jerusalem, do not weep for Me, but weep for yourselves and for your children. For indeed the days are coming in which they



will say, ‘Blessed are the barren, wombs that never bore, and breasts which never nursed!’ Then they will begin ‘TO SAY TO THE MOUNTAINS, “FALL ON US!” AND TO THE HILLS, “COVER US!” ‘ For if they do these things in the green wood, what will be done in the dry?’” (Luke 23:28-31).

Jesus was on His way to die, yet the concern and love for those who were going to be staying behind was more important to Him. He reminded them of the destruction on its way in AD 70 when Jerusalem would fall and the temple would be destroyed. He had already given a lengthy section on the upcoming desolation (Matthew 24:1-35) and still sought the opportunity to give warning about what was coming. The last part of when Jesus said— “For if they do these things in the green wood, what will be done in the dry?” (Luke 23:31)— is a reference to how the Jews were conducting themselves. What would they stoop down and do when things got hard? If one would read the records of Josephus, they would find plenty written about this very statement. Jesus showed love for others in that moment more than for Himself. What a picture!

**4. Jesus was led to His death.** When we started our study, we looked at the betrayal of Jesus and how awful it was to be betrayed by Judas. We then saw how Jesus was treated illegally in the trial process of His arrest. Then He was beaten and compelled to carry His own cross. Luke ends his section on the walk to the cross with the following passage: “There were also two others, criminals, led with Him to be put to death” (Luke 23:32). Did you catch how Luke phrased who was with Jesus on the way to Calvary? He called them “criminals.” This is another reference to the fact that Jesus did

not deserve to die. There should and could have been three criminals crucified that day. The two thieves and Barabbas were the ones who deserved to die that day. As horrific as it is that Jesus took Barabbas' place, imagine if He hadn't. Where would we find ourselves spiritually? What would the end of our story be? For that matter, what hope would we even have? Though He was killed for unnecessary reason (meaning He was innocent of breaking any law), His death was most necessary.

### APPLICATION

As we bring our study to a close, we need to remind ourselves about the modern day truths we can find in Jesus standing before the cross. Of all the lessons we have considered so far, let me leave you with three that must be understood for us to truly live for Christ.

#### **1. When we follow Satan, we end up betrayed.**

Satan is a deceiver. There is no other way to describe him other than using that word. All he wants to do is cause more people to be as miserable and lost as he is. Because of where he is located (Hell), he knows that we will not follow him unless it is appealing. Does it sound appealing to you to burn for an eternity? Obviously not. So, he instead shifts away from the punishment side of things and tries to get us to focus on the pleasure of life if we live it his way. Every single person who has reached the point in life when they know right from wrong has found themselves betrayed. Do you think Judas believed that his life would end the way that it did? Or do you think that Satan was up front with him about what was going to happen to him? No, neither seem to be the case when we consider what Jesus once said to a group of people who thought they were living right.

“I know that you are Abraham’s descendants, but you seek to kill Me, because My word has no place in you. I speak what I have seen with My Father, and you do what you have seen with your father.” They answered and said to Him, “Abraham is our father.” Jesus said to them, “If you were Abraham’s children, you would do the works of Abraham. But now you seek to kill Me, a Man who has told you the truth which I heard from God. Abraham did not do this. You do the deeds of your father.” Then they said to Him, “We were not born of fornication; we have one Father—God.” Jesus said to them, “If God were your Father, you would love Me, for I proceeded forth and came from God; nor have I come of Myself, but He sent Me. Why do you not understand My speech? Because you are not able to listen to My word. You are of your father the devil, and the desires of your father you want to do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own resources, for he is a liar and the father of it” (John 8:37-44).

Firm belief that what we are doing is right is never enough. They thought they belonged to Abraham. It was their firm and steadfast belief that they were doing the right thing. Jesus let them know that just because they felt they belonged to Abraham did not mean they did (John 8:39). They could not belong to Abraham, even though they were from his lineage.

So, they shifted to their discussion to belonging to God their Father only to have that whole ideology come crumbling down before them (John 8:41-43). Finally, Jesus told them the truth—they belonged to Satan. We have often quoted this passage to show that Satan is not who we want as our leader. There is something that Jesus says that is bone chilling: “You are of your father the devil, and the desires of your father you want to do” (John 8:44). Not many people in this world would want to be the children of Satan. Somewhere on this earth, there are descendants of people who committed heinous acts. There are cases of people who change their name to no longer be associated with the injustice of their ancestors.

All this time, these people believed they belonged to God, when their reality was ownership by Satan. Unfortunately, I have fallen into their category as well as we all have. There are times when I have simply decided to transgress because I wanted to do it my way. Yet, it is not actually my way that I am following and living but Satan’s in those moments—always a puppet and never the puppeteer. Instead of being controlled by Satan’s desires which profit us nothing and end in our betrayal, how about we follow God’s path that will ultimately bless us?

**2. The real reason Jesus was put to death.** All of this was done to Jesus because He was deemed a threat to the religious leaders’ way of life. Yet, in all reality, it was because of me. I murdered Christ. I called for Him to be killed. I slapped Him. I mocked Him. I scourged Him. I placed a crown of thorns on His precious head and then beat it into His skull. I forced Him to carry the cross that would be His ultimate end at Golgotha. I am not innocent in this matter. I am guilty and deserve to be punished to the fullest extent of God’s Law. Worse yet, I am not alone in any of this. You did it too. We

killed the Son of God. That is the real reason that Jesus died. Yes, Judas betrayed Him and the religious leaders orchestrated the events that killed Him. But we are all responsible. Isaiah gives the exact reason that Jesus died. Notice the possessive terms that he used:

“Who has believed our report? And to whom has the arm of the LORD been revealed? For He shall grow up before Him as a tender plant, And as a root out of dry ground. He has no form or comeliness; And when we see Him, There is no beauty that we should desire Him. He is despised and rejected by men, A Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. And we hid, as it were, our faces from Him; He was despised, and we did not esteem Him. Surely He has borne **our griefs** And carried **our sorrows**; Yet we esteemed Him stricken, Smitten by God, and afflicted. But He was wounded for **our transgressions**, He was bruised for **our iniquities**; The chastisement for our peace was upon Him, And by His stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; We have turned, every one, to his own way; And the LORD has laid on Him the iniquity of us all. He was oppressed and He was afflicted, Yet He opened not His mouth; He was led as a lamb to the slaughter, And as a sheep before its shearers is silent, So He opened not His mouth. He was taken from prison and from judgment, And who will declare His generation? For He was

cut off from the land of the living; For the transgressions of My people He was stricken. And they made His grave with the wicked— But with the rich at His death, Because He had done no violence, Nor was any deceit in His mouth. Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise Him; He has put Him to grief. When You 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” (Isaiah 53:1-10; emphasis added).

There can be no doubt as to whose fault it is when we look at the reason Jesus died. All we have to do is simply look in the mirror, and we can see the answer. He was slain because of you and me.

**3. Where is our dedication?** One more time, picture Jesus bearing the cross that would be His ultimate demise—bloodied, bruised, exhausted, and broken and struggling, yet carrying it all nonetheless. What an immaculate illustration of dedication! We too have been given a command to deny ourselves and pick up our cross:

“And he who does not take his cross and follow after Me is not worthy of Me” (Matthew 10:38).

“Then Jesus said to His disciples, “If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me” (Matthew 16:24).

“When He had called the people to Himself, with His disciples also, He said to them, “Whoever desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me” (Mark 8:34).

“Then Jesus, looking at him, loved him, and said to him, “One thing you lack: Go your way, sell whatever you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, take up the cross, and follow Me” (Mark 10:21).

“Then He said to them all, “If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me” (Luke 9:23).

“And whoever does not bear his cross and come after Me cannot be My disciple” (Luke 14:27).

Do you understand what He was saying? Do we truly grasp the mind-set necessary to deny ourselves and pick up our cross and follow Him? The actions of our world (and sadly even the church sometimes) really say otherwise. We do not deny self nearly enough to justify being called His servants. We place other things above Him on a regular basis.

**Family.** There are many people right now who are actively rejecting Jesus and His Word because they seek to keep the peace in their family. Mama, Daddy, or anyone else in the family might not be a Christian (or might not be a strong one), and so we are going to duck out before the next service

begins. To keep the peace with our family, we are not going to be at war with each other about going to church. Well, you may not be at war with your family, but you certainly are at war with God if that is the case. That is a war that you cannot win. Just deny yourself, and pick up the cross. Follow Him.

**Work.** Jobs are necessary. Families cannot make it without financial support and help. Our work lives can become a massive crutch in not serving the Lord if we are not careful. Do we really have to work all that overtime? Is it actually a requirement, or is it our rationale to miss a Sunday? Do we really have to subject our family to a life of only one parent being present at every service? God must always come first in the home (Deuteronomy 6:1-12). The most successful businessmen of this world will not get into Heaven because of all the overtime they worked. Deny yourself, and pick up the cross. Follow Him.

**School and Sports.** This is one area in which the church seems to be losing big time. Too many parents are allowing the secular studies and activities of life to get in the way of being an active part of the church. Whether it is homework, practice, plays, or any other time-consuming event, the chances are that there will be a time when we have to choose between them and God are incredibly high. How you choose for your children today will determine how they choose in life when they are in charge. Children are not guaranteed to get to Heaven simply because a parent makes all the right choices for them while they are in the home (Ezekiel 18:19-24). However, children who have at least been given a proper upbringing by their parents will have been shown what is most important. All parents can do is teach their children and hope that they choose to follow the teaching. In regard to school, we can never let homework or a test or a play interfere with being



the church. In regard to sports, your child is almost destined to not go pro. We need to stop putting the importance of their sporting events over the events of the church. Tournaments over youth days? Practice over devotionals? Can it really then be all that surprising when they grow up and believe that Sunday night is a suggestion instead of an opportunity to be closer to God? Brethren, please deny yourselves, pick up the cross, and follow Him!

If we truly want to appreciate what Jesus did for us, then we need to show Him that we love Him enough to actually obey what we have been commanded. Otherwise, we are merely playing church instead of being the church. Fall in love with the sacrifice of Jesus, and you will be able to accomplish things that you never dreamed of in your life. We must realize that our dedication asked in return is just a fraction of the dedication Jesus showed when He was put to the test.

There is a song that is often sung at church camps around the world entitled, “Can He Still Feel The Nails?” This song begs us all to consider how our actions affect Jesus. Consider the lyrics: “Does He still feel the nails every time I fail? Does He hear the crowd cry Crucify, again? Am I causing Him pain? Then I know I’ve got to change. I just can’t bear the thought of hurting Him” (Ray Boltz). This song can be linked to an idea the Hebrews writer gave us: “If they fall away, to renew again to repentance, since they crucify again for themselves the Son of God, and put Him to an open shame” (Hebrews 6:6). We must not make the cross of Christ a mockery with our actions.

## **CONCLUSION**

The events that led up to the crucifixion of Jesus are more intricate than perhaps we have ever considered before. So much happened before Calvary, and Jesus endured immense agony for you and for me. Jesus stood before the cross so that we do not have to. Jesus died and took our place to ensure our eternal salvation (Romans 5:6-8). Had this event not taken place, we would be standing before God awaiting the righteous judgment to be passed on us and sentencing us to our eternal death. Even though that is what we all deserve, and we cannot ever earn the right to be deserving of such a gift, we received it anyway because Jesus was willing to stand before the cross.

## WORKS CITED

New King James Version.

New Oxford Dictionary.

<https://www.smokeball.com/blog/what-does-due-process-mean/>

Jackson, Wayne. "The Crucifixion of Christ." ChristianCourier.com. Access date: November 14, 2018. <https://www.christiancourier.com/articles/855-crucifixion-of-christ-the>

Thomson, Bert & Harrub, Brad. An Examination of the Medical Evidence for the Physical Death of Christ <http://www.apologeticspress.org/apcontent.aspx?article=145>

<https://www.texasheart.org/heart-health/heart-information-center/topics/vasculature-of-the-head/>

<https://www.news-medical.net/health/What-is-Hematidrosis.aspx>

[https://www.allthelyrics.com/lyrics/boltz\\_ray/does\\_he\\_still\\_feel\\_the\\_nails-lyrics-214500.html](https://www.allthelyrics.com/lyrics/boltz_ray/does_he_still_feel_the_nails-lyrics-214500.html)





## Chapter 11

# JESUS RISES AFTER THE CROSS

*Joshua Cantrell*

**F**rom the foundation of the world, there have been many events that have changed the course of human history. A few events that come to mind are: Abraham’s sacrifice of his son (Genesis 22). Joseph and his story to redemption (Genesis 37-50). David’s rise, fall, and restoration (Psalm 51). All of these events help shape the way we view the Bible and our relationship with God. We read about Jesus and his love for everyone (Luke 19:10). Both Jew and Gentile in one body (Ephesians 2). When we read the Bible, we come to an understanding of how much God loves us. When you and I did not know we were lost, God revealed himself to us. He revealed his plan to us. That plan was hidden but was made known by the Apostles (Ephesians 3). As Paul writes to the brethren in Ephesus, he accounts something that will help us in our study:

“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; And to make all men see what is the

fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ: To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God. According to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord” (Ephesians 3:8-11).

Before the Earth came into existence, before God created the world, there was a plan for us to be saved. That plan was always Jesus Christ. Considering what man did, and what God does next shows us the length of that love. When Adam sinned in Genesis 3, a perfect man sinned. In order for us to be justified back to God, a perfect man has to redeem us. Paul would say; “For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive,” (1 Corinthians 15:22).

The foundation for Christianity doesn’t just end with the death of Jesus, but begins with the resurrection, and the establishment of this church. The resurrection of Jesus is one of the most important events in human history. When you read the New Testament, we often read references that Jesus will die for the sins of the world and establish His church (Acts 20:28; 1 Corinthians 15:21-50). There have been many studies that emphasize the birth and life of Jesus. These studies certainly give us a great deal of knowledge to help us understand the way those events help us in our salvation.

Without his birth and life, we would have no example of how we should live our lives. Christianity stands and falls on the fact that Jesus got up from the grave. When the two Mary’s go to the sepulchre, note what Matthew records;

---

“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. 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. His countenance was like lightning, and his raiment white as snow: And for fear of him the keepers did shake, and became as dead men. And the angel answered and said unto the women, Fear not ye: for I know that ye seek Jesus, which was crucified. He is not here: for he is risen, as he said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay,” (Matthew. 28:1-6).

Imagine how it must have been for them to go to the tomb where days before they laid Jesus’ body and now see that the stone had been rolled away and to see his body was no longer in there. Christ often told his disciples and followers of his resurrection (Matthew 16:21; Matthew 17:22; Mark 8:31). From their point of view, they did not fully understand what he was referring to. Nevertheless, Jesus told them it would come to fruition. Jesus did not stay in the grave, he got up on the exact day as he said he would. Each person with the ability of understanding can be saved from their sin because of the resurrection of Jesus. It is the foundation upon which our Spiritual confession is acceptable to God.

The Gospel accounts give us a blow-by-blow narrative of what Jesus went through. From the illegal trials, to the humiliation, the crown of thrones. Yet Jesus bore it all that we might live through him. About once a year the world takes a

day to remember the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus. For Christians, this is something we do every day of our lives. On Sunday as we worship with brethren, during the Lord's Supper we reflect back to what he endured. As we study with our families and teach others we look back to the resurrection of Jesus.

There have been many "claims" today of people who speak as if they should be compared to Jesus. Interesting enough each of them are still in their graves. Jesus is the only one who got out of the grave and did not need anyone to wake him up. Jesus truly has all power, and all authority in heaven and in earth (Matthew 28:18-20).

### **JESUS RISES...SO THERE IS HOPE**

When we read Genesis 3 we see how hope was lost. The Serpent deceived the woman, and Adam followed, thus allowing sin to come into the world (Genesis 3:1-8; Romans 5:12). Interestingly enough when they sinned, God goes looking for them. With so many concepts in Genesis 3, surely the fact that God goes looking for them shows us once again the depth of his love. Hope was lost, but hope was restored because of Jesus (Genesis 3:15). When Paul speaks to the brethren at Rome, in chapter three, he concludes his thoughts from the chapters before. Note what is stated;

“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. 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. But now



the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets,” (Romans 3:19-21).

As you read through the Old Testament we can see with every prophecy how we are one step closer to having the Messiah in the world. Let’s note a few prophecies:

“Judah, thou art he whom thy brethren shall praise; thy hand shall be in the neck of thine enemies; thy father’s children shall bow down before thee. Judah is a lion’s whelp: from the prey, my son, thou art gone up: he stooped down, he couched as a lion, and as an old lion; who shall rouse him up? The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor the lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be” (Genesis 49:8-10).

“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. He shall build an house for my name, and I will stablish the throne of his kingdom for ever” (2 Samuel 7:12-13).

“Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel” (Isaiah 7:14).

“For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, The might God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace” (Isaiah 9:6).

Each of these prophecies (along with many others), shows us that we have Hope. Upon reading the Old Testament, it often looks as if hope is not coming. God was going to send His son when the time was right (Galatians 4:4). When he is on the cross it is easy to conclude how hope could be lost. When we read about Thomas (John 20:24) and his attitude towards the other disciples who had seen the resurrected Lord, it's easy to understand why he did not believe. Thomas knew his Master, Lord, and Friend had died. Now to hear that he was alive again would have caused each of us to feel the same way Thomas did. Paul would say to the Romans: “For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for?” (Romans 8:24). John records, “Then saith he to Thomas, Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side: and not be faithless, but believing. And Thomas answered and said unto him, My Lord and my God. Jesus saith unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen me, and yet have believed” (John 20:27-29).

With all the words in the English language, surely hope has to be amongst the most beautiful. We have hope because of Jesus. Without Jesus, there would be no hope. When Paul writes to the brethren at Corinth, he reminds them of what Jesus did for us: “Then cometh the end, when he shall have

delivered up the kingdom of God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power. For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death” (1 Corinthians 15:24-26). The fact that Jesus conquered death for us gives us hope for going to heaven. The sting that death had over the Christian no longer holds us captive. We can look death in the face and not be afraid because the victory is won.

Jesus lay in his tomb for three days and got up exactly as he said he would (Mark 14:58; John 2:19). A.T. Robertson writes in his book “A Harmony of the Gospel,” a book by book account of the resurrection of Jesus:

“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. 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. His countenance was like lightning, and his raiment white as snow: And for fear of him the keepers did shake, and became as dead men. And the angel answered and said unto the women, Fear not ye: for I know that ye seek Jesus, which was crucified. He is not here: for he is risen, as he said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay. And go quickly, and tell his disciples that he is risen from the dead; and, behold, he goeth before you into Galilee; there shall ye see him: lo, I have told you. And they departed quickly from the sepulchre with

fear and great joy; and did run to bring his disciples word. 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. Then said Jesus unto them, Be not afraid: go tell my brethren that they go into Galilee, and there shall they see me. Now when they were going, behold, some of the watch came into the city, and shewed unto the chief priests all the things that were done. And when they were assembled with the elders, and had taken counsel, they gave large money unto the soldiers, Saying, Say ye, His disciples came by night, and stole him away while we slept” (Matthew 28:1-13).

“And when the sabbath was past, Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James, and Salome, had bought sweet spices, that they might come and anoint him. And very early in the morning the first day of the week, they came unto the sepulchre at the rising of the sun. And they said among themselves, Who shall roll us away the stone from the door of the sepulchre? And when they looked, they saw that the stone was rolled away: for it was very great. And entering into the sepulchre, they saw a young man sitting on the right side, clothed in a long white garment; and they were affrighted. And he saith unto them, Be not affrighted: Ye seek Jesus of Nazareth, which was crucified: he is risen; he is not here: behold

the place where they laid him. But go your way, tell his disciples and Peter that he goeth before you into Galilee: there shall ye see him, as he said unto you. And they went out quickly, and fled from the sepulchre; for they trembled and were amazed: neither said they any thing to any man; for they were afraid. Now when Jesus was risen early the first day of the week, he appeared first to Mary Magdalene, out of whom he had cast seven devils. And she went and told them that had been with him, as they mourned and wept. And they, when they had heard that he was alive, and had been seen of her, believed not. After that he appeared in another form unto two of them, as they walked, and went into the country” (Mark 16:1-12).

“Now upon the first day of the week, very early in the morning, they came unto the sepulchre, bringing the spices which they had prepared, and certain others with them. And they found the stone rolled away from the sepulchre. And they entered in, and found not the body of the Lord Jesus. And it came to pass, as they were much perplexed thereabout, behold, two men stood by them in shining garments: 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? He is not here, but is risen: remember how he spake unto you when he was yet in Galilee, Saying, The Son of man must be delivered into the hands of

sinful men, and be crucified, and the third day rise again. And they remembered his words, And returned from the sepulchre, and told all these things unto the eleven, and to all the rest. It was Mary Magdalene and Joanna, and Mary the mother of James, and other women that were with them, which told these things unto the apostles. And their words seemed to them as idle tales, and they believed them not. 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” (Luke 24:1-12).

“The first day of the week cometh Mary Magdalene early, when it was yet dark, unto the sepulchre, and seeth the stone taken away from the sepulchre. Then she runneth, and cometh to Simon Peter, and to the other disciple, whom Jesus loved, and saith unto them, They have taken away the Lord out of the sepulchre, and we know not where they have laid him. Peter therefore went forth, and that other disciple, and came to the sepulchre. So they ran both together: and the other disciple did outrun Peter, and came first to the sepulchre. And he stooping down, and looking in, saw the linen clothes lying; yet went he not in. Then cometh Simon Peter following him, and went into the sepulchre, and seeth the linen clothes lie, And the napkin, that was about his head, not lying

with the linen clothes, but wrapped together in a place by itself. Then went in also that other disciple, which came first to the sepulchre, and he saw, and believed. For as yet they knew not the scripture, that he must rise again from the dead. Then the disciples went away again unto their own home. But Mary stood without at the sepulchre weeping: and as she wept, she stooped down, and looked into the sepulchre, And seeth two angels in white sitting, the one at the head, and the other at the feet, where the body of Jesus had lain. And they say unto her, Woman, why weepest thou? She saith unto them, Because they have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid him. And when she had thus said, she turned herself back, and saw Jesus standing, and knew not that it was Jesus. 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. Jesus saith unto her, Mary. She turned herself, and saith unto him, Rabboni; which is to say, Master. 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. Mary Magdalene came and told the disciples that she had seen the Lord, and that he had spoken these things unto her. Then the same day at evening, being

the first day of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews, came Jesus and stood in the midst, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you. 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” (John 20:1-20).

Each account of the resurrection of Jesus by each author is different, but they have many similarities as well. Each account from the gospel writers helps us get the total accounts of the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus. The hope we have because of his death gives us life eternal. While many look to live, for now, God has given us an opportunity to prepare for the hereafter (Hebrews 9:27). The death of Jesus is one of the worst acts in human history, but also one of the greatest. God in his infinite wisdom was about to do his greatest work. One the Devil did not foresee. A woman would have a child, that child would grow up and save humanity from the snare of death. The Devil has no power, death has no sting, and victory can be ours because of Jesus (1 Corinthians 15:57).

### **JESUS RISES...PROVES HE IS THE SON OF GOD**

When we read the Old Testament, it often speaks of one man who would deliver us from bondage, and establish His church, that being Jesus Christ. Of all the “prophets” who claimed to be Jesus, they could never do what he did. They could never have prophecies written about them and have those fulfilled in their lifetimes. The Jews often looked for a king to sit on a literal throne like David. When Peter was preaching on Pentecost, he discussed this, “Men and brethren,



let me speak unto you of the patriarch David, that he is not dead and buried, and his sepulchre is with us unto this day,” (Acts 2:29). David was indeed a great leader, and man of God. Yet, he was not the Son of God.

The Jews wanted to kill Jesus for many reasons, one of them is because they claimed He made Himself to be the son of God (John 19:7). Jesus did not have to make Himself be something He already was. The Jews constantly tried to deny Him his Kingship. The Gospel accounts show us how much the Jews hated Jesus. Jesus did not let this stop him, and His mission to get to the cross (Luke 2:49). They led Him to Pilate’s hall to be crucified. Pilate knew for envy sake they delivered Him (Matthew 27:18). The claims they made against Jesus were all because they were looking for something that was right in front of them. They wanted a King, they wanted a Messiah, yet they rejected the very God sent to them.

The empty tomb of Jesus is more proof that Jesus is the son of God. The tomb is connected to the body of Jesus. It signifies that truly Jesus had a physical body of flesh and blood. Jesus is God in the flesh (John 1:14). He was a divine person with a divine nature. The fact that Jesus was God, and man at the same time, is proof that He is Christ. In John’s inspired book he shows a few of the miracles Christ performed: Turning water to wine, the healing of nobleman’s son, the impotent man healed, feedings the five thousand, Jesus walking on water, the blind man healed, and the resurrection of Lazarus. These miracles show that Jesus is both God and man. He was so much a man that he died in a physical body, yet, He was so much God He woke up in the same body they killed him in.

While the tomb was empty, for many critics, this is not enough to properly prove that Jesus resurrected from the

---

grave. Our faith in the resurrection comes from those who witnessed the resurrected Lord: Mary Magdalene, Peter, and those on the road to Emmaus, and the eleven others. If even they thought for a moment this was just some ghost, the fact that this is Jesus is even more verified by his bodily wounds. The resurrection of Jesus manifests that the heavenly father has accepted Jesus' sacrifice. Jesus' death was a sacrifice on our behalf. For as he stated, "Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it up again. No man taketh it down from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have the power to lay it down, and I have power to take it up again, This commandment have I received of my Father" (John 10:17-18).

Paul gives us a claim to Jesus being the son of God: "Concerning his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, which was made of the seed of David according to the flesh; And declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead" (Romans 1:3-4). The resurrection of Jesus clearly makes the claim that he is the son of God.

### **JESUS RISES...WE CAN BE JUSTIFIED**

Justification is defined as: being made right before God. Another definition states: "acquitted of all charges." Concerning the Gospel and salvation: "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 the Green. For therein in the righteousness of God revealed for faith to faith: and it is written, the just shall live by faith" (Romans 1:16-17). Justification is found in the Gospel of Christ.

The book of Romans spent a great deal of time

---

discussing Justification (Romans 2:13; 3:20; 3:24; 3:28; 4:2; 5:1; 5:9; 8:30). Paul shows us that justification can only be accessed by having faith in Jesus and obeying the Gospel. Just as Christ died and was buried, so we must also (Romans 6:3-4). Justification has more to do with God's grace for us, than us doing something for it. Though we do have to do our part in responding to the Gospel, God has made it acceptable for each of us through his son.

There was only one way for us to be "acquitted" from the wrath of God. The death of Jesus Christ made us free from the charges that we were guilty of. God has blessed us where we can have hope after this life is over. The joy and anticipation of going to Heaven surely will be worth it all. The source of this justification is God. Paul says, "To declare, I say, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus" (Romans 3:26).

God is the source of our justification, but we need also to understand there is a need for it. No one can obey the Gospel for us. We each must make the decision for ourselves. Paul points out that the Law of Moses only made us aware of their spiritual condition, but could not help us (Romans 3:20). Once an individual looks into the mirror it only reveals what is there. They still have to make the decision to change. The death of Jesus provides our justification, which each of us needs if we are going to make heaven our eternal home.

## **JESUS RISES... HIS CHURCH WAS ESTABLISHED**

The Old Testament Prophets referenced the coming Messiah and his kingdom on numerous occasions (Isaiah 2:1-2; Daniel 2:44; Micah 3:1-2). In the New Testament, Christ told the apostles to wait for the power of the Holy Spirit (Mark 9:1; Luke 24:46-49). Matthew records a great statement by

---

the Apostle Peter:

“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. 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. (Matthew 16:18-19).

The Lord coming to establish His church is the greatest news that has befallen man. To know that God is going to send His son, His son is going to suffer. That son is going to establish His church where we can have access to eternal life. While we are on this earth we can be a part of the greatest family that God ever created. This church was bought with the very blood of Christ (Acts 20:28).

When Peter is preaching on Pentecost, he is using the keys Christ gave him to establish the church (Matthew 16:19). The Holy Spirit came with power (Acts 2:1-5), Peter and the Apostles began preaching. The Church of our Lord was now a reality, and about 3,000 souls responded to the Gospel (Acts 2:41).

## CONCLUSION

The resurrection of Christ is one of the greatest events in history. We have everlasting hope because of His resurrection. We are serving the true and the living God. The tomb was found empty, and because he got up we can have everlasting life. The life of Jesus does not end at the cross, it does not end at the tomb, but it begins. Jesus conquered death

and defeated the devil, and his resurrection provides for us eternal life with him.

### **WORKS CITED**

The Holy Bible. King James Version

Barnes, Albert. Barnes' Notes on The New Testament. Grand Rapids, MI, 1962





## Chapter 12

# JESUS WILL COME AGAIN

*Johnie Scaggs, Jr.*

**A**cts 1:9-11:  
“And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight. And while they looked stedfastly toward heaven as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel; 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.”

The second coming of Jesus has always been of great interest to those who love the Lord. There are many reasons for this curiosity. One of those reasons is the unknown. We can understand things of this world because of our experience or the experience of someone who has been there before us and has given us a reasonable explanation about what we might encounter in this world. For example, I have never been

to Paris, but I have seen pictures and others have explained things about Paris, that I have a better view of what it is like. However, that is not the case for the world beyond this world; therefore, all we can know about the second coming of the Lord is what has been written for us in the word of God, and therefore it is to His word that we appeal.

William Banowsky wrote, “The Old Testament contains about 380 prophecies of Christ’s first coming to save men. At least 370 New Testament verses refer to his second coming to judge men. Of the New Testament’s 7,959 verses, one of every 25 touches the theme of Christ’s return. The doctrine is taught in 23 of the 27 New Testament books” (p. 211). The fact that the Holy Spirit saw it fit to speak about the second coming of the Lord should cause one to think more seriously about His appearance.

There are many skeptics who do not believe that Jesus will come again. I often hear someone ask the question, “Do you really believe that Jesus will come again?” Peter warns us about people of this disposition:

“Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, And 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. For 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: Whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished: But 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” (2 Peter 3:3-7).

### **THE FACT OF HIS COMING**

The Bible is filled with references to His coming again. Jesus said, “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” (Matthew 16:27). Jude wrote:

“And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, Behold, the Lord cometh to execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against him” (Jude 14,15).

Paul wrote:

“But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of

the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord” (1 Thessalonians 4:13-18).

Paul sets forth several things within this text that we need to consider: one thing he makes very clear is that the Lord is coming again, and we need to be ready for His coming. First, His coming will be personal. Paul and Luke both inform us that the Lord’s coming will be personal (1 Thessalonians 4:16; Acts 1:11). The Lord, Himself will come. He will not be sending someone in His place, but rather He will come with a shout and the voice of the archangel and with the trump of God. There will be no mistake about who it is on that beautiful day when the Lord comes to receive His children into everlasting rest. Second, Paul says that when the Lord comes, you will be able to identify Him by hearing His voice (1 Thessalonians 4:16). Jesus stated, “Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice” (John 5:28). Thirdly, when He comes, the second time, it will be as such that all shall see Him. John writes: “Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they (also) which pierced him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him, Even so Amen” (Revelation 1:7). Though I have never heard His voice or seen His face, I will do both on that day, and I will know He is the Lord of Lords and King of Kings who rules on high. Fourthly, we are informed that His coming will be without warning:

“But of the times and the seasons, brethren,

---

ye have no need that I write unto you. For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night. For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape” (1 Thessalonians 5:1-3).

There will not be a warning bell before He comes. When we make appointments here on this earth, we will know when the day is approaching and what time we are supposed to be present. Often, if one cannot make an appointment, they can reschedule; however, the day of the Lord will not come with a warning but rather, as a thief in the night, He will come. The Hebrews writer wrote:, “And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment” (Hebrews 9:27). After death, the next appointment is the judgment day. Fifthly, when the Lord comes, it will be in flaming fire: “And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ” (2 Thessalonians 1:7-8). Luke informs us that He will come in the clouds with power and great glory on that occasion. “And then shall they see the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory” (Luke 21:27).

### **WHY IS HE COMING?**

The Bible is clear as to the reason for the Lord’s return. It is also evident as to matters that help us to understand why He is not coming. First, He is not coming to establish His kingdom. This has already been accomplished: “And he said

unto them, Verily I say unto you, That there be some of them that stand here, which shall not taste of death, till they have seen the kingdom of God come with power” (Mark 9:1). Jesus spoke to those of that day and taught them that the kingdom would be established in their lifetime. If the kingdom was not established in their lifetime, we should have some folks past the age of 2,000. I, nor has anyone else, have seen men of this age today. Therefore, we can know for certain that the kingdom has already been established.

Furthermore, Paul wrote concerning the placement of Christians and stated, “Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son: In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins” (Colossians 1:13,14). The Hebrews writer wrote: “Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear” (Hebrews 12:28). A person cannot be placed into a kingdom that does not exist, nor can he receive a kingdom if it does not exist. Therefore, the kingdom has been established.

The Premillennialists believe that the Lord will establish His kingdom in Jerusalem and reign for a period of a thousand years. This is supposed to happen right after the rapture. The Premillennialists have built a doctrine that does not harmonize with the Bible. The fact that the kingdom is noted as being already in existence proves that their doctrine is false. The word “rapture” is not even found in the Bible. Knowing this is the case, they will refer to 1 Thessalonians 4:17, where the phrase “caught up” is used. However, this does not help their case at all. Notice that the text speaks about the dead in Christ will rise first and then the faithful Christians who are still living on the earth “. . . shall be “caught

up” together with them in the clouds” (1 Thessalonians 4:17). What happens then? The judgment day will take place at this time. Guy N. Woods wrote:

“We have seen that this theory is in hopeless conflict with the Scriptures which associate Christ’s second coming immediately with (a) the resurrection of the just and unjust, so that the dead, both good and bad, rise at the same time (Daniel 12:2; John 5:28,29; I Corinthians 15:23ff; Revelation 20:11-15); (b) the simultaneous judgment of all men, good and bad (Matthew 7:21-23; 13:3-43; 16:24,25: 31-46; Romans 2:5-16)” (p. 20).

There is simply no time between the time of the resurrection of the dead and the judgment. The Lord will at that time separate the righteous from the unrighteous. Jesus said, “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: And before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats: And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left” (Matthew 25:31-33).

There will not be any second chances given on that occasion. “And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment” (Hebrews 9:17).

Second, the Lord is not coming to teach or invite anyone into the kingdom. The parable of the ten virgins, Matthew 25:1-13, clearly teaches that when the door is shut at the Lord’s coming, those on the outside will be shut out forever.

This Lord is coming for the following reasons: First, He is coming to raise the dead. Jesus said, “Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice” (John 5:28). Paul wrote, “For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first” (1 Thessalonians 4:16). He also referred to the dead being raised in his letter to the Corinthians: “In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed” (1 Corinthians 15:52). Second, He is coming to destroy the world and give the kingdom back to the Father. “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” (1 Corinthians 15:24). Listen to the words of Peter: “But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which, the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up,” (2 Peter 3:10). This world will be burned up; it will no longer exist. Peter emphasizes the elements shall melt with fervent heat, and the earth will do the same. Furthermore, the earth and the works therein shall be burned up. The earth and all that pertains to the earth will be utterly destroyed. On this point, Guy N Woods wrote, “The “day of the Lord,” will thus see the utter destruction of this earth. It is idle to point to Peter’s promise of a “new heaven and a new earth” (2 Peter 3:13); whatever the nature, characteristics, and locale of the New earth, it is this earth which embodies the hopes and expectations of the Premillennialists; and this earth will burn upon the occasion of our Lord’s return” (p. 25). Thirdly, He is coming to judge

---

the world. Luke wrote, "Because 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" (Acts 17:31). Every person will receive their reward on that day. We shall all give an account of what we have done on that day. Make no mistake, all the secrets of mankind will be revealed on that day. "In the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ according to my gospel" (Romans 2:16). "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" (1 Corinthians 4:5). "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad" (2 Corinthians 5:10). In the book of Revelation, John describes the judgment day scene. "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; And 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" (Revelation 6:15,16). But on that day, there will be no place to run to or hide from the judgment of the Lord.

### **WHEN WILL THE COMING OF JESUS BE?**

Over the years, many men and women have made great predictions as to the coming of the Lord. Some of these predictions have been widely published and are well known. However, they have all been found to be wrong. It would seem that even some of the first century Christians believed

that the Lord would return in their lifetime, but He did not do so. However, by the Holy Spirit, He gave them words of comfort in Paul's letter to the brethren of Thessalonians.

No one knows when He will come. He clarifies this in His teaching to His disciples. "But of that day and that hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father" (Mark 13:32). Numerous parables teach us that He will come when we least expect Him to come. The parable of the ten virgins (Matthew 25:1-13), the parable of the doorkeeper, (Luke 12:35-38), the parable of the homeowner (Luke 12:39,30), and the parable of the steward (Luke 12:41-46) all helps us to understand that He will come when we least expect Him.

Peter says He will come as a thief in the night: "But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which, the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up" (2 Peter 3:10).

### **WHAT WILL THE SIGNS BE BEFORE HIS COMING?**

This is the big question on most people's minds regarding the end of time. What will be the signs? How will we know when He is coming? Some believe when the "one world power" has been completed, the world will end. They also think that there will be great earthquakes and floods, etc. They come to this way of thinking by misinterpreting Matthew 24, Mark 13, Luke 21, and the book of Revelation. These signs in Matthew 24:4-35 are speaking about the destruction of Jerusalem, not the end of time. Verse 34 makes this clear. "Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass till all these things be fulfilled." Then Jesus says,



“But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only. But as the days of Noe were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. 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, And knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. Then shall two be in the field; the one shall be taken, and the other left. Two women shall be grinding at the mill; the one shall be taken, and the other left. Watch therefore: for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come” (Matthew 24:36-42).

There were no signs given before the flood as to when that day would occur, and Jesus says there will be no signs given before His second coming. Jesus says that business will be continuing in the same manner as it has been. They were eating and drinking, marrying, and giving in marriage right up until the time when the flood came and destroyed them. Jesus says this is what will be happening when He comes again. All things will be normal, and then the end will come.

### **CONCLUSION**

All these things being true, what should we do? First, we need to get ready for His coming. Remember the Lord is coming to bring judgment to the world. It will be a sad day for those who do not obey Him. “And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven

with his mighty angels, In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power” (2 Thessalonians 1:7-9). However, to those who have been faithful, these are the words they will hear, “His lord said unto him, Well done, thou good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord” (Matthew 25:21).

Second, knowing these things, we are to watch, and be on guard for the second coming of the Lord because it could happen any day. “Watch therefore: for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come” (Matthew 24:42).



THE LIFE  
OF CHRIST

## Chapter 13

# JESUS AND CHILDREN

*B.J. Rollo*

**T**he Bible is filled with tidbits of information that we can glean as we as a Christian study through the scriptures. One such set of information is how Jesus interacted with children. There are several scriptures that focus on Jesus and an interaction with a child. While there are not a vast number of these instances, the ones we do have can be very profitable to study. These interactions should inform our behavior toward children in some way. Jesus seems to have quite an affinity for the children. Several times we see Him interact with or use the children in an illustration in his teachings. One such interaction will serve as our main text for this study. The passage can be found in Matthew 18:2-5:

“And Jesus called a little child unto him, and set him in the midst of them, And said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven.

And whoso shall receive one such little child  
in my name receiveth me.”

In this text we see several obvious things that should enlighten us about how Jesus viewed children as well as how we should view the young among us. As we consider “Jesus and Children”, let us notice the innocence of children, the humility so often associated with them, and finally, the responsibility adults have to care for the most vulnerable among us.

### **CHILDREN ARE INNOCENT**

In the scripture we referenced above, Matthew 18:2 says, “Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.” Jesus was likely holding one of the apostle Peter’s children. We learn from the prior chapter that He was in Peter’s home. As is common today, our children are near when friends come to visit. I am sure it was similar in Jesus’ day. When He visited the home of Peter and his wife, I assume their children were present. On this occasion, He “called a child unto him”. We don’t know for certain, but this could have been a child of Peter’s who was nearby. He used the sweet innocence of this child to illustrate how pure Christians are expected to be to enter the Kingdom of Heaven. What a thought! As we become a Christian, we are as innocent and pure as a child. In this example, we see Jesus’ affection toward the innocent. The word “pure” in the scripture, most often refers to the gold or items that could be found within the temple. It was to represent what was required to approach a most Holy God in worship. The same applies today to each of us as we approach Him in worship. How amazing that children, in their normal state, are acceptable to approach God. God’s Word gives us

direction to become pure again, just as we were when we were children. Psalm 119:140 instructs that: “Thy word [is] very pure: therefore thy servant loveth it.” Those of us who choose to follow God’s Word can become pure through love of and obedience to His commands. Additionally, we find in 1 Peter 1:22: “Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, [see that ye] love one another with a pure heart fervently.” Once we have become pure, we must love one another. Children have a natural ability to love. As Christians, we too must practice this same purity.

### **CHILDREN ARE HUMBLE**

The next verse in our main passage states, “Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven.” Jesus also noted that children are humble. Children are not afraid to fail. They have no pride to hinder their trying in most every circumstance. They are not hindered by a concern of what others think of them. They are, in many ways, oblivious of social pressures. These are all exhibited in their humility. How lovely would the world be if everyone was as humble as a child? Jesus used the child to be a physical representation of humility for the followers to see that day in the home of Peter. What an object lesson! Humility is highly favored with God. Isaiah 2:9 encourages us to be humble when it states, “And the mean man boweth down, and the great man humbleth himself.” If we wish to be great, we must learn humility. Additionally, Isaiah 57:15 notes that, “For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name [is] Holy; I dwell in the high and holy [place], with him also [that is] of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive

the heart of the contrite ones.” Much like Jesus’ statement in Matthew 18, God is seen saying that he receives the humble ones. If we want to be seen and received of God, we must become humble just like the child in Peter’s home.

### **CHILDREN NEED CARE**

Finally, in our main passage in Matthew, we read, “And whoso shall receive one such little child in my name receiveth me.” In the end of the passage regarding Jesus and his interaction with this child, we see that He indicates that children must be cared for by the adults present. Caring for the innocent and humble child was the equivalent of receiving Jesus. Jesus often expressed the need to care for children. In Matthew 7:11 he indicates that a proper father will give his children good things. Most of us that are parents can identify with this sentiment. Do we remember that the things of God are the good things? Physical provisions are necessary and required, but spiritual things are also included in caring for our children. The passage states, “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?”

Additionally, in Matthew 15:26, He indicates the inferior nature of animals to our children. Children should receive much better care than we give our pets. He states, “But he answered and said, It is not meet to take the children’s bread, and to cast [it] to dogs.” In the account in the gospel of Mark, we see that children should be cared for not only better, but first. Mark 7:27 gives additional information and says, “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.” In our society, it is common to treat animals

as if they were our children. They are not equal in God's eyes and must never be equal in our eyes either.

Another way that we see Jesus caring for children is by curing them of disease and demons. In Matthew 17:18 we read: "And Jesus rebuked the devil; and he departed out of him: and the child was cured from that very hour." Jesus, despite all of his work that was to be done while on Earth, took time to cure this child. Jesus showed his compassion so often. This is one example we can note. Later, in Matthew 19:13-14, we see Jesus again correcting his disciples when they would have prohibited the children from coming to Him for care. The passage says: "Then were there brought unto him little children, that he should put [his] hands on them, and pray: and the disciples rebuked them. But Jesus said, Suffer little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me: for of such is the kingdom of heaven." His apostles must have had some misunderstanding of the importance and value of children. Jesus took these opportunities to bring them to the forefront and correct their confusion with those present.

## CONCLUSION

Jesus had many recorded interactions with children. In each of these, we see a kind, compassionate Savior who valued the young. Whether He was in an intimate setting, in the home of a friend or in a crowd of people in the city who wanted to see a miracle, Jesus took time to interact with children. As a Christian, may we always view children as the precious gift from God that they are in our world. Jesus, through these interactions, noted their innocence and purity was to be emulated. He also taught through their example that humility was desirable and necessary for all to inherit the Kingdom of Heaven. Because of their innocence, purity, and

humility, they need and deserve our care. May we learn to see these precious little souls as the treasure that Jesus showed us through his teachings!





## Chapter 14

# THE MASTER TEACHER

*Robert Taylor, Jr.*

**J**ehovah God had but one only begotten Son whom He sent to this low ground of sin, sickness, and sorrow. He did not send Jesus as an entertainer, a teller of funny stories to keep men in stitches, a drama coach, a skit writer, a song writer, a musician, a politician, an arbiter to settle earthly conflicts of a secular nature, a corporate head of a world wide business, or a peddler of a social gospel. To the contrary, He sent His Son to be a preacher/teacher. Not a preacher/teacher of just any thing and everything coming down the pike of popularity but a preacher of pardon, a revealer of redemption, a teacher of truth, and a proclaimer of piety.

### **THE IMPORTANCE OF PREACHING/TEACHING**

Jehovah God has dealt with man in three dispensations Patriarchal, Mosaic, and Christian. Preaching/teaching has been on the front burner in each of these time periods. Noah was a preacher of righteousness (2 Peter 2:5). Abraham was commended because God knew he would teach truth to his household-family and servants (Genesis 18:19). Patriarchy was a teaching system, as well as the family altar where the

father offered sacrifices for himself and family.

Moses and a distinguished line of Hebrew prophets who succeeded him were preachers/ teachers of the first order. Provisions were made to have the law of Moses read to Israel at regular intervals. We see such exhibited in honorable fashion in Joshua 8 and Nehemiah 8. The development of the synagogue during the Captivity period furthered the teaching of Mosaic mandates to scattered Israelites directly and to many Gentiles also who desired to know about the God who inhabits heaven and rules the Universe from His august throne.

Jesus taught and preached constantly while here. He assembled disciples and a select band called apostles training them well in the fine art of preaching/teaching. The Great Commission was built on the firm foundation of preaching/ teaching the gospel to the whole world (Matthew 28:19,20; Mark 16:15; Luke 24:47; Acts 1:8). Acts, the epistles, and the book of Revelation extend much emphasis to preaching/teaching.

A noted religious educator of the past was once desirous of showing just how crucial and critical teaching is to Christianity. He presented this IMAGINARY scenario. Jesus has been to earth. He has just returned to the Father and adoring angels in the Palace of the Universe. Upon His return one of the angelic hosts queried, "Lord, what provisions were made to preserve thy Cause on earth?" The Lord then is imagined to have replied, "I have committed my Cause into the hands of men who will preach and teach My message." The angel then inquired, "But suppose they do not preach/teach the message imparted to them? Then what?" Jesus is supposed to have said, "Then I have no other way to insure My Cause on earth!" Though strictly

an imagined scenario, it rings with the full element of truth. Preaching/teaching is vital and fundamental. Paul informs us that the treasures of truth have been committed to “earthen vessels” (2 Corinthians 4:7). Be it recalled also that the angel who appeared to Cornelius in Acts 10,11 did not tell this Gentile and his family what to do to be saved. Instead, he gave the directive that Cornelius send for Peter “Who shall tell thee words, whereby thou and all thy house shall be saved” (Acts 11:14). Even when the Risen Redeemer appeared to Saul on the Syrian Road near Damascus, He did not preach pardon’s plan to the stricken persecutor but directed him to go into nearby Damascus and there it would be told him what was required. Ananias was the chosen human instrument to fill this conversion need for the now stunned Saul (Acts 22:16).

That initial generation of Christians did not let disappoint Lord in the task given them. He beautifully bequeathed truth to them and they obediently responded. Within a quarter of a century after the Great Commission was bequeathed them, the gospel went to the ends of the earth (Romans 10:18). By the end of the first thirty years of Christianity, the gospel had been preached to every creature under heaven (Colossians 1:23). Eight of that first generation-Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, Paul, Peter, James and Jude-committed to writing the entire New Testament. They were inspired by the Holy Spirit in this literary undertaking.

Jesus set the tone and established the tenor of preaching/teaching proficiency for all his future preachers/teachers by way of emulation on their part. He was perfect in an absolute sense. We are imperfect, but we can be proficient in the preaching/teaching of His Word.

## **HIS MARVELOUS MASTERY OF PERSISTENT PRACTICE**

Ezra, a great teacher in Old Testament times, was a doer of God's law before he taught the statutes of the Lord to his Israelite peers (Ezra 7:10). Far greater than Ezra, the Christ, would do the same and on a perfect pitch.

Jesus was the **FIRST** a doer and **THEN** a teacher. We read in the preface statement of Luke's second treatise of truth, "The former treatise have I made, O Theophilus, of all that Jesus began both to do and teach" (Acts 1:1). This was a reference to what Luke had written about Jesus Christ in his gospel record. Jesus **DID** and then **TAUGHT**.

Jesus taught parental respect, submission, and honor in Matthew 15:4-6; 19:19; Mark 7:9-13. He respected Joseph and His mother Mary while growing toward maturity (Luke 2:51). He made provisions for His mother while agonizing on Calvary (John 19:26,27).

He taught men to love and pray for their enemies in Matthew 5:43ff. He loved and prayed for those who crucified Him in Luke 23:34.

He taught men to do God's will in such places as Matthew 7:21ff. This He did in fundamental fashion as reflected in Luke 2:49; John 4:34; 6:38; 8:29; 17:3,4; John 19:30; Matthew 26:36-42.

He taught men to love God supremely and to love their neighbors as self in Matthew 22:36-40. This He practiced to perfection. He taught His disciples to love brethren as He loved them (John 13:34,35). His supreme sacrifice on Calvary showed love in its beautiful breadth, in its lovely length, in its deep depth, and in its holy height. He was/is an everlasting love, on that knows neither abatement nor lawful bounds (John 13:1).

There were some of His precepts that He did not practice simply because they had no application to Him. He taught His disciples to confess their sins and pray for the pardon of the same (Matthew 6:12; Luke 11:4). He never confessed any of His own or prayer for pardon of sin. He had none to confess and none that needed pardon. He taught repentance in Matthew 4:17 and Luke 13:3,5. Yet, He never repented personally. He had no sins for which to repent. However, every precept He taught, which was applicable to Him, He practiced with mastery of mission and proficiency of perfection.

### **HIS MASTERY OF DEITY, MEN, AND SUBJECT MATTER**

He talked about matters of creation. NEVER did He have to use guess-work language in discussing such as Darwin and others have had to do. He was the very agent of creation and knew all about it. Jesus frequently spoke about both the First Person and the Third Person. He knew both of Them perfectly. They were His eternal colleagues. He often talked of Old Testament history and knew it with precise perfection. He talked of man's nature. There was no need that any educate Him as touching man's make-up. He had made man and knew man far better than man knew himself (cf. Jolm 2:24,25). He read hearts and discerned motives (Matthew 9:4). He spoke of the kingdom and was never at a loss in depicting all its fundamental facets. Matthew 13 is a parabolic sampling of His perfect grasp of the soon-to-come Messianic kingdom. He knew Nicodemus needed a lesson on the new birth more than a dis course on miracles, and this He gave him in John 3:lff. He knew the woman at Jacob's well needed worshipful instructions, and sufficiency

of presented evidence that He was the long-awaited Messiah. This He provided in John 4. He knew just what His disciples needed relative to the basics of coming Christianity. These He set forth in might and majesty in the Galilean Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5-7). He knew just what the eleven needed on the eve of His crucifixion. Hence, He gave them the Upper Room Discourse (John 14-16). He knew what His enemies needed, and this He provided in John 8 and Matthew 23. The latter chapter is His most scathing sermon during all His ministry.

Frequently, He was on the interrogating end of questions asked and answers given. He was never at a loss to answer directly what querists asked or indirectly point them to the places in Sacred Scriptures where the desired information was available.

With amazing perfection, He knew His subject matter and the people to whom He beautifully bequeathed it.

### **HIS MASTERY OVER METHODS EMPLOYED**

Jesus did not depend on one method to the utter exclusion of all other equally apt methods.

He could lecture with profundity of proficiency as He did in Matthew 5-7 or John 14-16.

Jesus was masterful in one-on-one conversations. Witness what He did with Nicodemus in John 3, and the woman at Jacob's well in John 4. Intense and informational were His conversations with the twelve as He imparted the truths they desperately needed. However, His words were far more than informational; they were packed with power to mold and move people. When the disciples would ask questions, Jesus would respond with a marvelous mastery of

the material set forth.

He could paint pictures with His parables. With an alert mind, we can visualize the sower going forth to sow, the eager connoisseur finding the pearl of great price, the rich farmer feverishly seeking solutions for his bountiful harvests and where to store such, the woman seeking a lost coin, the concerned shepherd seeking a lost sheep, and the Wonderful Father awaiting the coveted return of the prodigal boy away in the far off country of sin. It is said of one of the great Restoration preachers, that he could make the prodigal son parable so real and lifelike, that his audience would turn around to get a glimpse of his coming home again. Think how graphic and vivid it must have been when Jesus told the story initially! If a picture is worth 10,000 words, as we have been told it is, think how multiple were the words represented by His picture perfect portrayals in the precious parables.

He was a master with questions. His questions were always concise, not laboriously technical in extended details, such as many are that I answer in Question and Answer sessions, and Open Forums across our brotherhood each year. Here is a stately sampling of some of His germane questions. In Matthew 16:13,15, He asked, "Who do men say that the Son of man is? ... But who say ye that I am,?" (ASV). In Luke 10:26, "What is written in the law? how readest thou?" In Matthew 22:42, "What think ye of Christ? whose son is he?" In John 6:67, "Will ye also go away?" In Luke 14:3, "Is it lawful to heal on the sabbath day?" In Matthew 21:25, "The baptism of John, whence was it? from heaven, or of men?" In John 21:15-17, He thrice queried Peter, "Lovest thou me?"

Jesus' questions were always right, were directed

---

to the proper person, were asked for right reasons, and demanded righteous responses in return.

### **HIS MASTERY IN TRAINING PREACHERS AND TEACHERS**

A professor of mine in college once said, “The world has not yet heard its greatest preaching!” I disagreed then and still do. His statement implied that the future would produce greater preachers than John the Baptist, Jesus, His apostles and His inspired evangelists. Jesus occupies the apex of great preachers. His great Harbinger, and His personally trained apostles and prophets come next. They even eclipsed the preaching prophets of the Old Testament due to the content of New Testament proclamations of ultimate truth.

There are none now, nor will there be, preachers in the future who will eclipse John the Baptist, Jesus Christ, Paul, Peter, John the apostle, Stephen, Philip, Timothy, etc.

Those trained by Jesus were destined to give a new dimension to preaching proficiency and instructive effectiveness. And this they DID!

### **CONCLUSION**

In every sense of the term, Jesus is the Master Preacher/ Teacher of the ceaseless ages. All others pale into insignificance when compared to Him. He has no preaching superiors or even close peers.

This manuscript is from Brother Taylor’s Book: The Bible Doctrine of Jesus Christ. We are thankful for Rebecca Taylor Davis & Tim Taylor for allowing us to use this material to honor Brother Taylor.





Chapter 15  
**WOMEN WHO LABORED  
IN THE GOSPEL**

*Irene C. Taylor*

**W**omen have always filled an important place in the work of the Lord. Though not positioned in the forefront, they are, nonetheless, a vital part of the basic structure of God’s plan for spreading His Word. The Bible, God’s written Word, is our instruction book for service in His Cause. “For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope” (Romans 15:4). Since we no longer have direct revelations from above, it is to this guidebook, the Bible, we must go to learn about the woman’s role in Christian service or labor.

**OLD TESTAMENT WOMEN WHO HELPED  
LAY A FOUNDATION FOR SERVICE**

Throughout the Bible, women have been among God’s faithful workers. The faithful, dedicated service of women in the Old Testament times laid a foundation upon which future works could be built. Their works are recorded for our learning. When we look at their lives, and focus on the example of their service, we can more fully appreciate

their worth. By observing their dedication to our God, we can gain insight to a primary attitude that must be present before effective service, or labor, can be achieved.

Who can read the story of Esther without marveling at her courage and loyalty, both to God and to her people? She alone was in position to counteract evil Haman's plot to kill all Jews. By influencing King Ahasuerus to make provisions for the salvation of the Jews, she was able to protect both herself and her people. What if she had not so conducted herself so as to win the king's favor? Is this not a clear example to us that it matters how we conduct ourselves, that we may be in position to wield a good influence, especially when times are critical? Her life is a lasting tribute to the fact that it does matter what we do and what others think of us.

The life of Ruth likewise portrays the truth that the choices we make in life affect us personally, as well as those about us, along with future generations. When we choose right, we will be in position to be useful servants in His Kingdom. Numerous Old Testament women left behind a legacy of service to God, our Heavenly Father. Read carefully the lives of Sarai (Sarah), of Hannah, of Rachel and Rebekah, of Rahab, and of Deborah, to name a few. Though these were not of the Christian Era, who will deny the impact that their example yields in showing us the reality of God's place for women in His plan?

### **NEW TESTAMENT WOMEN WHO SERVED**

God has always held women in high esteem, though society has not always reflected such. Society has been negligent in adhering to God's pattern, and women have felt the effect of that negligence. Wherever Christianity has

reigned, women have been elevated. How sad that the masses have not come to realize this and have, instead, listened to the faltering platforms of modern man. Of all God's creation, perhaps women should be the most grateful. At the least, women should certainly be among those most eager and ready to serve.

New Testament women were among the most dedicated of workers for the Lord. During the earthly ministry of Jesus, loyal women served Him to the very end. After His resurrection, women were still active in The Cause. It was a woman, Mary Magdalene, to whom our Lord first appeared (John 20:1ff). She, along with Joanna and Susanna, ministered to Jesus during His walk on the earth (Luke 8:2-3). They were not merely talking the talk; they were walking the walk.

Mary and Martha, sisters, were often with Jesus. Their home and hospitality were often shared with Him. They, along with their brother Lazarus, enjoyed a special friendship with our Lord. It was Mary who chose to sit at Jesus' feet to learn from Him, postponing her part in preparation of the meal (Luke 10:38-42). She had "chosen that good part" realizing that secular matters should take second place. But, at the death of brother Lazarus, it was Martha who went to meet Jesus, while Mary remained in the house (John 11:20).

After the resurrection of our Lord, it became necessary for His followers to continue the work He had begun here below. Someone has observed that it is our hands, our feet, and our voices upon which the Lord must depend now to tell the world of saving Truth. From the beginning of the church (Acts 2), until the end of time, God's plan places in human hands the furtherance of His Cause. Among those dedicated workers have been, and now are, a number of women. When we read of the work of the apostles, we can be sure that there

were women working in the background, upholding their efforts. When we read of Peter, we also understand the support he enjoyed from his wife and mother-in-law (1 Corinthians 9:5).

In the early church, work was so effectively performed by women. We read of the benevolence of Dorcas (Acts 9:36-41). Think of the power her influence wielded on the women she helped. She utilized her talents to work for the Lord and brought blessings to those whom she helped.

In the ministry of Paul, we read of the women who befriended him, who provided assistance at times when he needed it. Though they did their work from a heart of love, without thought of earthly reward, Paul chose to pay tribute to many of them with the approval of Divine Inspiration. Beginning in Romans 16:1, we read of a lady named Phebe. She is described fourfold—as a sister, a servant of the church, a saint, and a succourer (1-2). From this depiction, we learn that not only was she a saint, or sister in Christ, but she was a worker. She willingly worked in the activities of the church, as well as being a special supporter of the work of many, including Paul. What a special, beautiful tribute.

Also mentioned is Priscilla, wife of Aquila. It is interesting to note that each time one is mentioned the other is listed also (Acts 18:1-3; 18, 26; Romans 16:3-4; 2 Timothy 4:19; 1 Cor. 16:19). Here was a husband/wife team whose goal in life was to labor for the Lord, and to be of service to His fellow laborers. The depth of their devotion to Paul is evident. They “laid down their own necks” for him (Rom. 16:4). It was Jesus who declared, “Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends” (John 15:13). Aptly designated as a team for Truth, this couple’s contribution to the work of Paul is beyond measure. They opened their home

---

as a meeting place for the church (Romans 16:5). This is not a pattern for the house churches advocated by some today. It was a generous provision of a meeting place at a time when no church buildings, as such, were available (as far as can be determined).

Other women, here listed by Paul, are not mentioned elsewhere in the Bible. He offers appreciative tribute to Mary who labored much for him and those with him (v. 6). He lists Tryphena and Tryphosa as two who labored in the Lord, and Persis, who labored much in the Lord (v. 12). These designations reveal to us that theirs was not a one-time action. Though the commendation of these women is brief, it gives us keen insight into their character, and their worth to Paul and his work in the Kingdom. Paul was a man of deep gratitude, and he graciously expressed such to those who worked with him. To be chosen and approved by Deity for inclusion in the Holy Book is, in and of itself, a high honor. There can be no greater honor than to receive approval of Deity!

The final woman mentioned by Paul, in Romans 16, is a personal favorite of this writer. She is truly an example of Christian hospitality, though perhaps seldom viewed as such. In verse thirteen, we read this simple statement, “Salute Rufus chosen in the Lord, and his mother, and mine.” We are not to assume that she was Paul’s literal mother, or that he and Rufus were brothers in the flesh. We are not told of Paul’s parentage, or physical family, other than an occasional mention of kinsmen (Acts 23:16; Romans 16:10). Further, it does not seem likely that here he is speaking of two women—Rufus’ mother and his mother. It may well be that when Paul became a Christian he was disinherited by his family. Such is the practice of some Jewish families even today. Whatever Paul’s situation, this fine woman obviously provided him a

---

place to come, on occasion, and/or offered him comforts such as a mother can give.

The more general acceptance, however, of Paul's salutation—his mother and mine—is that Rufus' mother had been so kind to him on different occasions, mothering him in days of sickness and strain, and is remembered by the Apostle for all his loving attention (Lockyer, p. 245).

Within those four precious words is a tribute of heartfelt love and deep appreciation.

Many unnamed women were involved in the work of the early church. Content to work quietly and diligently behind the scenes, their work was no less important than those men and women named in the Bible.

### **WHAT ABOUT WOMEN OF TODAY?**

Has all the work available for women been accomplished? Is there nothing left for us to do? Is this why some are clamoring for the “right” to fill roles formerly occupied by men in the church? To ask these questions is to answer them. A resounding NO should ring in the mind of every Christian woman. When we look about the world today—even in the religious world—with its flagrant disrespect for God and His moral standards, can any honestly say there is nothing for us to do?

How about beginning at the very foundation of society? Grandmothers like Lois need to be busy training (not merely teaching) daughters to be like Eunice (2 Timothy 1:5). Then,

we could have more sons and daughters who would respect and serve God faithfully, as did Timothy. Faithful workers are not born that way. They must be trained. Training takes more than word-of-mouth teaching. It demands that a proper example be set before the one being trained. It is not a matter of, “Do what I say, not what I do.” When our example does not match our words, our instruction has little, if any, meaning. Many of the problems faced in society and the church can be traced back to a lack of training according to God’s pattern.

Titus 2 is a passage that should be regularly ingested by every Christian woman. There, we are instructed—commanded—as older women to teach the younger women. The American Standard Version translates teach (in v. 4) as train. The older women are to train the young women in specific good things. We are cognizant of the fact that, in society in general, many younger women no longer revere their place in the home. No longer is the husband viewed as head of the family; no longer is wife content in her role as keeper of the home. Society has played a gigantic role in changing the concept of home and family, but we, older women, must honestly question our part in the problem.

### **WHO TRAINED THESE YOUNGER WOMEN?**

Were we really diligent in teaching (training) God’s way, or have we acquiesced to the world’s way? Did we fail to obey this command, and just let nature take its course in the lives of our children? Have we, by our lives, shown the beauty of God’s pattern for the home? Recall the poem, which goes something like this, “I’d rather see a sermon than hear one any day.” When Christian women come to the realization that by properly training our children we are rendering perhaps

the greatest of service to the Lord, we will be more diligent in obeying the command to train our children to love and respect His way.

Women today can be laborers for the Lord by being faithful in our Christian lives and active in the work of His church. There is work for each of us to do. We just need to be humble and willing to do it. When we fail to do our part, it simply leaves a double share for others. Too many desire a specific list of duties available for us women to perform. Some are not content to do work behind the scenes. Instead, they long for exciting works that will bring them notice. These wonderful ladies who provide and serve the meals during lectureship week are certainly laboring for the Lord's Cause, and—make no mistake about it — it is work.

Work is seldom exciting or glamorous, but it is rewarding. God commands His children to be workers. “The harvest truly is plenteous, but the labourers are few; Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth labourers into his harvest” (Matthew 9:37-38). Christians are commanded always to abound “in the work of the Lord” (1 Corinthians 15:58). We have Heaven's assurance that such labors are not in vain!

When there is work to be done, each of us should be ready and willing to arise to the task. Whether it is teaching (and we each teach everyday by the lives we live), benevolence, assisting those who are sick or in sorrow, or any of the myriads of menial tasks necessary for the work and worship programs of the church, we should be involved cheerfully.



## **LESSONS LEARNED**

1. It takes courage to stand for the right.
2. Upholding truth often must be done alone with the Lord.
3. We must love and respect God's Will to be of effective service.
4. Whatever He says, we must do.
5. Our labors for the Lord are not in vain.
6. We must uphold the hands of those working in the kingdom, especially godly elders and preachers.
7. Woman's greatest labor for the Lord begins in the home.
8. Training involves more than mere words.
9. The Christian's labor is never finished.
10. If we love, we will labor.

**WORKS CITED**

Holy Bible: King James Version.

Lockyer, Herbert, R.S.L. All The Women Of The Bible.  
Grand  
Rapids: Zondervan Books.