

Gospels 1

Three Portraits, One Story

Matthew

Mark

Luke

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Introduction: Three Reliable Portraits

Matthew, Mark, and John did not intend to give a chronological account of Jesus’ life. Rather than focusing on the order of events, the stories they selected to tell and how they are arranged gives us insight into the “how” and “why” Jesus did what He did.

The gospel writers told Jesus’ story in their own vocabulary and literary style. When we find one event recorded in more than one gospel, it is called a parallel passage. You may have noticed that parallel passages are usually not a word for word copy. We find that each writer records the event from his perspective and so there are some details that one writer will have than another will leave out which can make it difficult to know whether this is the same event recorded by the other writers or a separate event altogether.

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For example, suppose you and 3 friends witness a car accident and the police asked each of you write down what you saw. There will be some details that all four of you include in your report, but there will be some details that each person will include in their report that the others did not.

Likewise, it is with the four gospel writers. The slight differences in their telling the story are not errors or mistakes, we are simply reading different perspectives of what happened. Therefore, if you are studying a passage that has parallel passages in another book, it is beneficial to study all the passages to get a more complete understanding of what happened.

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Matthew, Mark, and Luke—contain much similar material, while much that John recorded in his account is not found in any of the other Gospels.

	Same/Similar Material	Unique Material
Matthew	58%	42%
Mark	93%	7%
Luke	41%	59%
John	8%	92%

Matthew, Mark and Luke are called the “Synoptic Gospels”, a term derived from Greek that means “to see together”. They give us a synopsis of the same events. People have speculated about how the synoptic Gospels were written. First, Matthew, Mark, and Luke had access to oral tradition. In societies where printing did not exist or writing was scarce, men took great pains to accurately learn and remember the records they desired to preserve.

Second, personal contact contributed to the content of the gospel accounts. The apostle Matthew (and John) associated closely with Christ throughout His earthly ministry. Mark lived in Jerusalem, engaged in missionary work with Paul and Barnabas, and was closely associated with Peter, from whom he would have received firsthand accounts of the life of Christ.

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Luke 1:1-4 - Third, the gospel writers would also have taken care to examine written records, as Luke specifically stated he did. Luke notes that “many have taken in hand” (v. 1) meaning that others have attempted to write about Jesus but either those were never completed or perhaps Luke saw some information lacking that would motivate him to undertake this extensive project.

In vs. 3 - “It seemed good ... to write unto thee in order”. This writing resulted in a two-volume work, the Gospel of Luke and the book of Acts. Luke used three sources for his research.

1. He used the “declarations” (vs 1) or narratives of events that he and/or his audience participated in—things that have been fulfilled.
2. He used the previously written materials as verse one states. These may or may not include the writings of Matthew and Mark.
3. He used the oral testimony of eyewitnesses. This should not be taken lightly. Luke stresses that their witness goes back to the beginning of the story. They are well-informed and highly credible.

In vs. 3, Luke says that he has “perfect understanding of all things”. The word “understanding” means to follow alongside, like a news reporter following his subject asking questions. Luke did careful and detailed research which he describes here with four phrases:

1. “perfect understanding”. Perfect means accurate. His investigation was careful and precise.
2. “Of all things”. The book of Luke is the longest and most complete of the four Gospels. Combined with Acts, it makes up 27% of the NT. We read more from the pen of Luke than we do from Peter or John or even Paul.
3. “From the very first”. The NT begins with John the Baptist and Luke is the only Gospel writer who gives us a fully detailed account of the birth of John the Baptist.
4. “in order”. Luke’s account was in order. Many take this to mean that he arranged his writing in chronological order.

Side note: Luke’s book is addressed to the most excellent Theophilus. The title “Most excellent” was often given to those of a high-ranking official. It seems likely that Luke knew him and either wanted to convert him or strengthen his faith. It is also possible that Theophilus is the publisher of the book. It was common to dedicate a book to the publisher or to the one paying for the book to be published. While the book is addressed to an individual, it is meant for the broader Christian community.

The Synoptic Problem

We studied the doctrine of the Bible in Basic Bible Doctrine 1. We learned that when it came to inspiration, preservation, and translation, there are two groups in general: Partial Inspiration (includes critical text scholars) and Every Word Inspiration. Explain view of each → translation.

Some critical text scholars see a problem in the similar content of Matthew, Mark, and Luke. They call it the “synoptic problem” and try to explain how they could have such similar content.

According to this theory, Matt. and Luke copied from the Gospel of Mark and they also used another common source - Q document. This theory is to be thoroughly rejected based on the following:

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1. 2 Timothy 3:16. The Gospels record exactly what God wanted them to record.

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2. 2 Peter 1:21. The Spirit led the authors to record their accounts exactly as God wanted. This verse tells us three important facts concerning how we got the Bible:

- a. It was not invented by man nor man's ideas – "... came not by the will of man ..."
- b. Men of God wrote the Bible – "... holy men of God spoke ..."
- c. God authored the Bible – "... as they were moved by the Holy Ghost ..."

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3. John 14: 25, 26. If the Spirit wanted the writers of the Gospels to record a particular account, they never had a moment in which they could not remember exactly what happened or what Christ said. Then they wrote those things down accurately, without error.

The superintendence of the Holy Spirit in the writing of the Gospels gives us confidence in their veracity as we read them.

Why the repetition? (Parallel passages)

The repetition is valuable in that it emphasizes certain themes and provides more than one witness to the event.

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Scripture tells us that the testimony of two or three witnesses will establish a matter (Deut. 19:15; Matt. 18:16). God has given us three witnesses plus one extra (John) in some cases! Each writer did not need to consult the others but independently wrote what the Holy Spirit led him to write.

Furthermore, each Gospel is written for its own purpose. Since each Gospel is based on Christ's life and ministry, it stands to reason that specific events in Christ's life would serve the purpose of more than one Gospel.

For example, read any two news stories about the same event and you will realize a similar phenomenon. Some of the facts reported by both stories will be essentially the same. Yet the writers' purposes for their news stories are most likely different. Consequently, they will neither include the same facts nor arrange them in the same order.

When we find parallel accounts in the Gospels, we should ask why each writer included the account in his Gospel. How does the account fit into the overall context of the Gospel we are studying? And what specific details of the account might help us better understand the writer's purpose?

Why the variations? (Apparent contradiction)

Some of the parallel passages in the Gospels seem to present conflicting reports. Critics use these as proof that the Bible contradicts itself and therefore cannot be trusted. A closer look at some of the most commonly criticized passages in the Gospels shows that the apparent contradictions can all be satisfactorily explained. The explanations actually serve to build our confidence in the Gospels and the Bible in general.

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1. Apparent contradiction of numbers:

- a. One angel or two? Matt. 28: 1-3 (1 angel) & John 20:11, 12 (2 angels)
- b. One blind man or two? Matt. 20:29-34 (2 men) & Mark 10:46-52; Luke 18:35-43 (1 man)
- c. One demoniac or two? Matthew 8:28-34 (2 men) & Mark 5:1-20; Luke 8:26-39 (1 man)

Just because one account is narrower in focus does not mean it is wrong. An account is not automatically wrong because it is missing facts recorded in a parallel account. For example, take the 10 lepers that were cleansed in Luke 17:12-19. Only one, a Samaritan, returned to give thanks (appropriate that Luke mentioned it). But if Matthew or Mark were to record it and only mentioned one leper being cleansed and returning to give thanks, it doesn't contradict all 10 being cleansed.

We don't know why Mark and Luke didn't mention both blind men or both demoniacs, but we do know that not including both men is not a contradiction to the Matthew account.

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2. Apparent contradictions relating to location.

Regarding the blind that were healed. Luke states that a blind man was healed as he entered Jericho and Matthew and Mark state that a blind man was healed leaving Jericho. The location of Jesus in relation to Jericho has two plausible explanations.

- a. 3 or more blind men was healed. One healing entering Jericho and one leaving Jericho.
- b. Archeologists have uncovered two cities named Jericho from about the time of Christ. First, there was the Jericho of Old Testament history (Joshua 6:1ff.; 1 Kings 16:34). That city existed as a small village. About two miles south of that site was the new Jericho built by Herod the Great.

Jesus, therefore, traveling toward Jerusalem, would first pass through the Old Testament Jericho, and then go through Herodian Jericho. Accordingly, the references of Matthew and Mark to Jesus leaving Jericho would allude to old Jericho, whereas Luke's observation of Jesus drawing near to Jericho would refer to the newer city. Hence, meeting the blind men in transition between the two cities would fit the descriptions of Jesus both leaving Jericho and approaching Jericho.

3. Apparent contradictions relating to “time

- a. Years. The calendar we use today is called the “Gregorian calendar” after the Catholic Pope Gregory. It supposes that Jesus was born in year zero. We are currently in year 202X and therefore, it is commonly assumed that it has been that many years since the birth of Jesus.

However, Biblical, and historical evidence has proven this calendar inaccurate. The evidence points to the actual year of Jesus birth to be 4-6 B.C. (before Christ) according to our calendar.

- b. Days. The Jewish day extends from sunrise to sunset (6 p.m. to 6 p.m.). The western world measure our days the same as the Romans did and that was from 12 midnight to 12 midnight.

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- c. Hours. Mt., Mk, and Lk record time according to Jewish custom, from sunrise (6 a.m.). Mark 15:25 states that Jesus Christ was crucified at the third hour. Since he recorded according to Jewish custom, He would have been crucified at 9 a.m. John 19:14 says it was the sixth hour when Jesus was on trial. If John measured his day according to Jewish custom, then the sixth hour would be noon and you would have a contradiction, because Jesus couldn't be on the cross at 9 a.m. before his trial at noon. But understanding that John, writing his gospel from Ephesus, the capital city of Asia Minor, measured time according to the Roman custom starting at midnight. So, the sixth hour would be 6 a.m. There is no contradiction. Jesus went on trial at 6 a.m. and was crucified at 9 a.m.

4. Another apparent controversy has to do with Jesus' occupation. Jesus is called the son of a carpenter in Matthew 13:55 and a carpenter in Mark 6:3, suggesting that perhaps one of the statements is wrong. This explanation is simple: both are true. A father would teach his son a trade.

There are no contradictions in the bible. All the variations have plausible explanations. For those in the “Every Word” group as it relates to inspiration, preservation, and translation, should actually make your faith stronger in the Word of God.

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Matthew's message

Matthew wrote to a Jewish audience to persuade them that Jesus is the fulfillment of the Old Testament prophecies about the Messiah/King. Lineage was of utmost importance to the Jews when considering whether someone was the Messiah.

It made sense for Matthew to start with Jesus' lineage. Jesus will one day sit on the throne of David as God promised the king. And the salvation Jesus provided on the cross is the fulfillment of God's promise to Abraham that all the nations of the earth would be blessed through him.

Matthew went on to present the proof that Jesus had the credentials of the Messiah. The writer linked Old Testament prophecy to events happening in the ministry of Christ. He quoted from the Old Testament more times than any other Gospel. Sixteen times Matthew stated that a certain Old Testament statement or prophecy was fulfilled.

Matthew also made many more references to the kingdom than the other gospel writers did.

Matthew recorded the message of John the Baptist as Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand (Matt. 3:2), while both Mark and Luke reported it as repentance for the remission of sins (Mark 1:4; Luke 3:3). Both messages are right, but the difference emphasizes show how intent the Holy Spirit was on presenting Jesus as the Messiah/King through Matthew's Gospel.

Mark's message

The book of Mark, the shortest of the Gospels, begins with Christ's public ministry without a word about Jesus' birth and early life. Mark seemed to be in a hurry as he moved from scene to scene. His favorite word appears to be immediately or one of its other forms, straightway or forthwith (used a total of forty times).

Mark recorded only four of Christ's parables, preferring to present Christ through His works rather than through His teaching ministry. This presentation seems to support the view of many Bible teachers that Mark addressed his book specifically to the Romans because of their respect for action and efficiency.

The Romans were more impressed by deeds than words, and Mark presented a Man of power to them. Mark also presented Christ as the Servant. Thus the Gospel of Mark presents Jesus as a Man of action, constantly on the move in His devotion to serve the needs of the people.

Luke's message

Matthew's genealogy of Jesus goes back to Abraham to emphasize that Jesus was identified with the Jewish people. But Luke carried the genealogy back to Adam to emphasize that Jesus identified with the entire human race (Luke 3). Luke's genealogy seems to present Mary's line, which would be Jesus' natural record that connects Him directly with humanity.

Luke emphasized Jesus' perfection as the God-Man: the Son of the Highest; in favour with God and man (Luke 1:32; 2:52). Pilate, after questioning Him regarding all the charges made against Him, announced, I find no fault in this man (Luke 23:4, 14) and further answered Christ's critics, I have found no cause of death in him (23:15, 22). The centurion, watching His composure in death, glorified God, saying, Certainly this was a righteous man (23:47).

Conclusion

The writers did not attempt to produce a complete biography of Jesus Christ, but they took into consideration the needs of the people to whom they were writing. As such, under the leadership of the Holy Spirit (2 Peter 1:21), they selected the events and discourses which would emphasize the message to their particular audience. For example, Matthew, writing for the Jew, selected the events and discourses that emphasized Jesus being the long-awaited Messiah-King of the Jews.

While among the Gospels distinctions exist in the choice of content and the manner of presenting it, the three books stand united in their record concerning one Man, His ministry, and His mission. There are three distinct portraits but only one story of redemption.

Looking at the Lord Jesus Christ through the threefold synoptic Gospels provides a picture of Him that is truly three-dimensional. We see the height of His human perfection, the breadth of His miraculous ministry, and the depth of His divine love.

Slide 16 - The Genealogy of Jesus Christ

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A. Matthew's Genealogy (Matthew 1:1-17)

Mt. 1:1 – “THE book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham.” The Jews paid great attention to genealogies. For example, before a person could be ordained to the priesthood, he was required to prove his descent from Aaron. In the time of Ezra, some priests were rejected because of their failure to prove their right to the priesthood.

The Jews would immediately understand the significance of being a Son of David AND a son of Abraham. God promised each one that the coming Messiah would be one of their descendants. Matthew's theme, setting forth Jesus as Messiah, is obliged to prove from the Old Testament that He is Son of David—the One having a right to be king of Israel. This he does in the genealogy through his adopted father, Joseph.

It should be noted that there is a difference between names spelled in the Old Testament and its equivalent in the New Testament. The OT was written in Hebrew and the NT was written in Greek. So, a name in the OT is translated from Hebrew to English. An OT name in the NT was translated from Hebrew → Greek → English and some differences in spelling occurs.

The Greek language does interesting things with letters h and j. Hebrew names starting with H is dropped and terminating in h, which is a very common in Hebrew, must have the h changed to an s. A Hebrew name with an h or a j in the middle is often dropped in Greek, but not always.

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OT Name	Greek Rules	NT Name
Rehoboam	R eh oboam (the h is dropped and also the 'e')	Roboam
Hezekiah	H ezechia h (the h is dropped and h → s)	Ezekias
Elijah	Eli j a h (the j is dropped and h → s)	Elias

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Matthew 1:17 – “So all the generations from Abraham to David are fourteen generations; and from David until the carrying away into Babylon are fourteen generations; and from the carrying away into Babylon unto Christ are fourteen generations.”

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Matthew arranges his genealogy into three sets of 14 names, each representing a major period of Israel's history: Abraham, David, Exile.

	Abraham – David	David – Exile Time Period	Exile – Joseph Time Period
1	Abraham	David	Jechonias (Jechoniah/Jehoiachin)
2	Isaac	Solomon	Salathiel
3	Jacob	Roboam (Rehoboam)	Zorobabel (Zerubbabel)
4	Judas (Judah)	Abia (Abijah/Abijam)	Abiud
5	Phares (Pharez)	Asa	Eliakim
6	Esrom	Josaphat (Jehoshaphat)	Azor
7	Aram	Joram (Jehoram)	Sadoc
8	Aminadab	Ozias (Uzziah/Azariah)	Achim
9	Naasson	Joatham (Jotham)	Eliud
10	Salmon	Achaz (Ahaz)	Eleazar
11	Booz (Boaz)	Ezekias (Hezekiah)	Matthan
12	Obed	Manasses (Manasseh)	Jacob
13	Jesse	Amon	Joseph
14	David	Josias (Josiah)	Jesus

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1. Interestingly, Matthew omits 3 kings in verse 8 – jumps from Joram to Ozias (Uzziah). He omits Ahaziah, Joash, and Amaziah. Furthermore, he omits 1 more king, King Jehoiakim, in verse 11, jumping from Josias (Josiah) to his grandson Jechonias (Jehoiachin).

- a. Matthew did NOT make a mistake as some critical text scholars and theological liberals claim. The Jews were not interested in “complete” lists. This is primarily a Western expectation. They were interested in establishing the fact of descent. Persons were often omitted from genealogy who were seen as unflattering to the family... which these people were.

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- b. The words “father,” “son,” and “beget” can be used to establish a relationship between a man and his son or grandfather/son. For example, in Genesis 32:9, Jacob calls Abraham his father when he actually is Jacob’s grandfather. In 2 Samuel 19:24, Mephibosheth is called the son of Saul when he actually is Saul’s grandson. Josiah begetting his grandson Jehoiachin is valid.

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- c. Jehoram begetting Uzziah, skipping 3 generations, is also valid (Gen. 46:8-15; 6 sons, 25 grandsons, and 2 great grandsons).

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So biblically speaking a man can beget his “grandson” or even great grandsons.

d. A likely explanation why Matthew leaves four kings out of the genealogy is that he purposely left those unflattering to the family out of the genealogy to retain his structural arrangement of three divisions of fourteen generations each.

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e. But why 14? The Messiah must be a descendant of David. The Hebrew language uses its alphabet as its numbering system as well. Vowels are not counted. So, D-A-V-I-D without the vowels becomes D-V-D. In the Hebrew alphabet D=4 and V=6, so D-V-D is $4+6+4 = 14$.

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2. Matthew’s genealogy included 4 women from Abraham to David.

Matthew 1:3 – “And Judas begat Phares and Zara of Thamar...”

Matthew 1:5 – “And Salmon begat Booz of Rachab; and Booz begat Obed of Ruth...”

Matthew 1:6 – “... and David the king begat Solomon of her that had been the wife of Urias;”

What is surprising is that these women were of questionable character. Tamar was guilty of prostitution and incest. Rahab was a prostitute. Bathsheba was an adulteress. Tamar, Rahab and Ruth were Gentiles. Bathsheba was either a Gentile or if a Jew, she married a Gentile.

Why did Matthew specifically mention these 4 ladies in the genealogy of Jesus? I suppose we can come up with several applications, but I would answer with God’s grace. Jesus didn’t come for a particular gender, race, or type of sinner. Woven into the lineage of Jesus are the diverse kinds of people he came to save, both Jews and Gentiles.

3. There is a 5th woman mentioned here, Mary, the mother of Jesus. Matthew describes Mary differently than the other women. All five women give birth to a son in the lineage of David. The first four use the same structure “father begat son OF mother”. However, the structure changes with Mary – “of whom”. Matthew is making a subtle statement about the virgin birth of Jesus.

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4. There is a theological issue that needs to be addressed. In 2 Samuel 7, God promises David that through Solomon’s line there would always be a descendant to sit on his throne.

2 Samuel 7:16 – “And thine house and thy kingdom shall be established for ever before thee: thy throne shall be established for ever.”

But we read of King Jeconiah before he was taken to Babylon in captivity...

Jeremiah 22:30 – “Thus saith the LORD, Write ye this man childless, a man that shall not prosper in his days: for no man of his seed shall prosper, sitting upon the throne of David, and ruling any more in Judah.”

Jeremiah does not say that Jeconiah should be literally childless, for we know Jeconiah had children. But he was to be childless in the sense of having no son to succeed him on the throne. The controversy is on the meaning of the word “seed”.

- a. If “seed” is meant by his physical children, we know that came to pass as he had no son succeed him on the throne.
- b. If “seed” includes future descendants, how is it that God can keep both promises and still have a Messiah sit on the throne of David?

Matthew makes it clear that Jesus was not Joseph’s physical son. Jesus was not in the physical lineage of Jeconiah, thereby fulfilling Jeremiah 22:30 – no man of his seed. However, Jesus was the adopted son of Joseph and became the legal heir to Joseph’s lineage and to the throne. Thus, both 2 Samuel 7:16 and Jeremiah 22:30 are fulfilled.

B. Luke’s Genealogy (Luke 3:23-38)

There are three main differences between Matthew’s genealogy and Luke’s.

1. Matthew begins with Abraham and moves forward toward Jesus whereas Luke begins with Jesus and moves backward all the way to Adam.
2. Comparing Luke’s list to Matthew’s list, the portion between David and Joseph show that these two lists are not the same, but two distinct lists. The only names which appear in both lists in the same order are Shealtiel and Zerubbabel (Mt 1:12; Lk 3:27).
3. Luke’s list contains over 40 people between David and Christ while Matthew’s only has 26.

How can we account for the differences in the two distinct lists? There have been a number of different theories suggested.

- a. The first theory suggests that Matthew gives the genealogy of Joseph’s physical father (Jacob) whereas Luke gives the genealogy of Joseph’s legal father (Heli). According to the Jewish Levirate law, if a man died childless, it was his brother’s responsibility to foster a child for him.

In such a case, the dead man would still be the legal father for the purpose of inheritance, and the live man the biological father. This theory assumes that Joseph’s legal father died childless. Although it is a possibility, there is nothing in the text to suggest that this was the case.

- b. Slide 29. A second theory suggests that Matthew gives the legal descent of Joseph, whereas Luke gives the physical descent. This theory says that because the line failed at Jeconiah (Jer. 22:30), it “skipped” the next legal heir to the throne. This is known as the collateral line. While possible, nothing in the text would suggest that this was the case.
- c. A third theory suggests that Luke’s record does not belong to Joseph at all but lists Mary’s family. Assuming that there was no male heir and that she was the oldest child, she would become the heiress (Num 27:1–11; 36:1–12). If this were the case, when she married Joseph, he would become the heir and the reason he is listed in place of Mary in Luke’s account.

There are other theories that attempt to harmonize the genealogies of Jesus in Matt. 1 and Luke 3. We cannot say for certain which theory is correct because of a lack of available data. What we can say for certain is that both Matthew's genealogy and Luke's are correct!

- a. It is scripture inspired by God and He cannot lie.
- b. The Pharisees opposed Christianity. If the genealogies were incorrect, they would have used this evidence to discredit Christianity and the claims of Christ to be the Messiah. The fact that they did not indicate that the two lists are credible.
- c. Some who want to discredit the Bible point to the "apparent" discrepancy of Salathiel's (Shealtiel) father. Matt. 1:12 states that Salathiel's father was King Jeconiah while Luke 3:27 states Neri was his father. One reasonable explanation is that Jeconiah's name was changed to Neri in captivity. Jewish tradition states that Jeconiah repented in Babylonian captivity.

If true, then a name change was not out of the ordinary to indicate a new beginning, the most famous being Abram to Abraham. The name Neri means "God is light" signifying he was a changed man. In this view, Neri and Jeconiah are the same person. His son, Shealtiel, could be called either the son of the son of Jeconiah (Matthew) or the son of Neri (Luke).

Unfortunately, the records used by Matthew and Luke no longer exist. As a result, we have no way to definitively answer questions about the lists. But the fact that no effort was made in the first century to harmonize the two genealogies is an indication that both Matthew and Luke were using real sources. In summary, my opinion is that...

- a. Matthew's genealogy shows Joseph was legal heir to the throne. He adopted Jesus to be his son. Therefore, Matthew's genealogy shows Jesus to be the legal heir to the throne of David through his adopted father Joseph.
- b. Luke's genealogy shows Mary in the bloodline of David. Since Joseph was not the biological father of Jesus, therefore, Jesus inherited the bloodline of David through his mother Mary.

These two genealogies give us a glimpse of Jesus' identity. Humanly, he was Mary's son; legally, he was Joseph's son; principally, he was God's Son.

Matthew: Christ is King

Matthew, also called Levi, was a Jewish tax collector, or publican. He worked for the Roman government collecting taxes from his fellow Jews. The more money he could squeeze out of the Jews, the more money he made. Needless to say, the Jews hated Jewish tax collectors and considered them selfish traitors and thieves. Jesus was well aware of how the Jews viewed tax collectors. Yet Jesus did not write off tax collectors as hopeless (21:28-32). Matthew learned this personally.

Matthew, the publican (Matthew 9:9-13)

Vv. 9-10 - Matthew's change of heart is obvious right away. He invited his fellow publicans to a meal with Jesus. He wanted them to know what he had discovered about the Teacher. Some of the publicans responded and ate with Jesus and His disciples.

V. 11 - The Pharisees, the self-righteous religious leaders of the Jews, asked Jesus' disciples why their Teacher ate with tax collectors and sinners.

V. 12 - Jesus answered the Pharisees by employing a metaphor. He said those who are whole don't need a physician, but those who are sick. The Pharisees thought they were whole and acceptable to God because they believed they kept the law.

V. 13 - Jesus rained on their parade by quoting Hosea 6:6, I will have mercy, and not sacrifice. God communicated through Hosea that the Jews needed to have faithful, loyal hearts rather than outward sacrifices. The ritualistic, self-righteous Pharisees of Jesus' day needed to hear that message too. They were condemned and didn't know it.

Matthew, the writer

The Scriptures do not name Matthew as the writer of the Gospel that bears his name, but there is no plausible reason to deny that Matthew authored the Gospel that bears his name. The content of Matthew's Gospel points to a Jewish audience, so Matthew probably wrote the Gospel somewhere in or near Israel.

As a tax collector, Matthew kept exact records. He did not need to rely on others for written material for his Gospel because he was thoroughly capable of recording events and conversations. He was, of course, free to use the records that others made of Christ's life.

Matthew's Purposes

A. Purpose #1 - Present Christ as King

In Matthew Christ is seen as the long-awaited King of Israel. For centuries godly Israelites have been longing for the appearance of Messiah the King. Numerous OT prophecies spoke of His coming. It was no small thing then when Matthew connects those OT prophecies to Jesus Christ.

The Gospel of Matthew is peculiarly arranged so as to present the credentials of the Christ of God. The Jewish people would naturally be interested in demonstrable proof that Christ was the Messiah as claimed. Matthew intentionally presents this proof.

1. His lineage

Only Matthew and Luke give much information concerning Christ's birth. Matthew views Christ's birth from the special Jewish vantage point with emphasis on His Messianic character, He is the One Who is born King of the Jews (2:2). As mentioned in lesson one, the Savior's genealogy in chapter 1 emphasizes His Davidic origin.

2. His teachings (Matthew 5:1-2)

Matthew's description of Christ's public teaching sets forth His right to the throne since He is able to formulate kingly proclamations. Christ opened his mouth and taught them (5:2). As a King, He has the authority to set forth what He expects of those who live under His rule.

The expectations in Matthew 5 through 7, commonly called the Sermon on the Mount, were certainly compatible with His claim to be a King. They were not intended to be guidelines by which the mass of mankind would live. You will notice that this great message was addressed to his disciples (5:1).

True righteousness that is acceptable to God comes through faith in Christ. Jesus set the standard of true righteousness through the Sermon on the Mount. Both His disciples and the reader today must conclude that they cannot achieve true righteousness on their own. That was a truth the scribes and Pharisees were never willing to believe. In fact, they rejected that truth so vehemently that they eventually crucified Christ to try to destroy Him and His message.

Once a person puts his faith in Christ, he has the opportunity to live out the characteristics Jesus spelled out in the Sermon on the Mount because his heart has been changed. The good behavior flows from his heart as evidence of his salvation. There is a growing, inward transformation rather than just an outward conformation.

3. His miracles (Matthew 11:3-5)

The Gospel of Matthew groups Christ's miracles—for the most part—in chapters 8 through 10. Matthew uses the accounts of Christ's miracles to support his presentation of Christ as the King of Israel. When John the Baptist heard the report of Christ's works while he was in prison, he sent some of his disciples to ask, Art thou he that should come, or do we look for another? 11:3-5. Jesus declared that John the Baptist could find abundant proof He was the Messiah through His miraculous works.

4. His formal presentation (Matthew 21:1-11)

In Christ's last journey to Jerusalem, He formally and publicly offered Himself as the promised Messiah (21:1-11). As He approached the city, the nation of Israel could certainly see in His very demeanor that He was the Messiah Whom the prophets had spoken. The crowd responded by shouting hosanna (21:9), which means save now, we pray. The shouts were militaristic in nature. The people expected liberation from Rome. But Christ rode a donkey, a symbol of humility and peace. In doing so He fulfilled Zechariah's prophecy (Zech. 9:9). Eventually Jesus went to the cross and brought liberation from sin rather than liberation from Rome.

Certainly the nation of Israel had no excuse. The Lord Jesus Christ, their long-awaited Messiah, intentionally presented Himself to the nation. He was declared to be the Son of God from Heaven. He thoroughly demonstrated the fact that He was sent from God. In the face of this evidence, the nation of Israel turned away. That leads us to the second purpose for which Matthew wrote.

B. Purpose #2 - Present Israel as condemned

A major thrust of the book is that of divine judgment on Israel because they rejected the Messiah. Particularly in chapters 11 and 12 of the Gospel, he presents the evidence for this indictment.

Matthew 11:19, 20 - He tells the nation that they rejected John the Baptist, His forerunner; and now they have rejected the Son of God Himself, declaring Him to be a friend of publicans and sinners (11:19). Matthew then states that Christ began to rebuke the cities in which He had done most of His mighty works because the cities did not repent (11:20).

Also chapter 23 presents a scathing rebuke of the Jewish leadership by Jesus Christ. However, amid these chapters in which the Lord pronounces judgment on the nation, He also gives some beautiful invitations to all those who will heed. No more wonderful invitation has ever been given than that in Matthew 11:28.

Furthermore, He uses for the first time in the Gospel the word whosoever (12:50). The use of this word reveals the fact that He is turning from Israel as an exclusive recipient of His message to the entire world. He is going to provide salvation for all who will receive it.

When it becomes apparent within the narrative of the Gospel of Matthew that the Lord Jesus has been rejected by Israel, the author then begins to show how Christ prepared His disciples for His ensuing departure from earth. They were expecting Him to establish His kingdom by some might or force. However, He began to make it clear to them that this would not be the case.

As Christ moves closer to the cross, He gives an additional revelation to His disciples. He announces the institution of the church (16:18). This is a completely new revelation, and it is the first time the word is used in the New Testament.

The Gospel of Matthew ends with the accounts of Jesus' arrest, trials, crucifixion, resurrection, and ascension (26—28). But the reader is not left wondering what happens next. We have a clear understanding of Christ's future return and reign. We anticipate being part of His Kingdom, but we should respond to Christ with submission and reverence now. He is as much as an authority in our lives now as He will be during His reign on earth. Our lives ought to show that Christ is our authority. More specifically, we ought to be involved in the church and in carrying out His Great Commission (28:18-20).

Outline of Matthew

- I. Advent of the Messiah. (1:1 to 4:11)
- II. Ministry of the Messiah. (4:12 to 16:12)
- III. Claim of the Messiah. (16:13 to 23:39)
- IV. Sacrifice of the Messiah. (Chapter 24 to 27)
- V. Triumph of the Messiah. (Chapter 28)

I. The Advent of the Messiah. (1:1 to 4:11)

1. Genealogy (1:1–17)

The Jews paid great attention to genealogies. Before a person could be ordained to the priesthood, he was required to prove his descent from Aaron. In the time of Ezra some were rejected because of their failure to prove their right to the priesthood. Matthew, setting forth Jesus as Messiah, is obliged to prove from the Old Testament that He is Son of David – the One having a right to be king of Israel. This he does in the genealogy found in Chap. 1:1–17, which is that of Joseph.

2 Birth (1:18–25)

The Old Testament teaches that Messiah is to be born of a virgin, and that He must be, not only the Son of David, but the Son of God. Isa. 9:6. Matthew then records the virgin birth of Christ to show how these scriptures were fulfilled in Him.

3. The Wise Men (2:1–12)

The Wise Men are believed to have been a priestly tribe of Medes, whose chief functions were the study of astrology and the interpretation of dreams. They are representative of that class of Gentiles who worship the true God according to all the light they have. Likely they became interested in religious literature of the Jews during the Babylonian Captivity and may have had some connection to Daniel.

4. Flight to Egypt and Return (2:13–23)

Herod was a monster of cruelty. Knowing his own unpopularity and constantly fearing the loss of his throne, he ruthlessly destroyed any whom he suspected in the least of aspiring to rulership. This will explain his distress at the news of the birth of a king of the Jews, and his act of slaying the children of Bethlehem. His murderous plan to kill the infant Christ was thwarted by a Divine warning.

5. Baptism of Jesus (Chap. 3)

Chapter 3 records the ministry of John the Baptist. His ministry was to prepare the nation for the coming of the Messiah. Jesus came from Galilee to where John was baptizing. It is estimated that he walked 60 miles (100 km) to do so.

There was water in Galilee. Why not have someone immerse him in water there? Why travel that great of distance? Because John had the authority to baptize and authority was important to Jesus.

Why was Jesus baptized? Jesus was sinless. He didn't have any sins to confess or repent of. But Jesus submitted to John's baptism and gives the reason in verse 15 - to fulfill all righteousness. It is a righteous thing to submit to scriptural baptism and Jesus set the example for us.

6. Temptation of Jesus (4:1–11)

Since Christ came as a representative of humanity and since His mission was to destroy the works of the devil, it was fitting that He should begin His ministry by a victory over the great adversary of the race. Chapter 4 records His great triumph.

II. The Ministry of the Messiah (4:12–16:12)

1. Starting point of ministry; first disciples; first works (4:12–25)

Matthew shows Galilee to be the starting point of Jesus' ministry in fulfillment of prophecy. Notice how often the expression "that it might be fulfilled" occurs in this Gospel. Jesus takes up John the Baptist's message; namely, the coming of the kingdom of heaven. By the expression "Kingdom of Heaven" we mean God's rule in and through Christ.

2. The laws of Messiah's Kingdom—the Sermon on the Mount (Chap. 5 to 7)

Having proclaimed the nearness of His kingdom, Jesus explains its laws in that discourse known as the Sermon on the Mount. There we learn about the character of the members of that kingdom, the principles governing it, and requirements for entering it.

3. Messiah's power manifested over disease, nature, demons, and death (Chap. 8 to 9:35)

Matthew now shows Jesus presenting His credentials to the nation by manifesting His power as a proof of His messiahship. But though the miracles were signs of His deity, they were never performed for mere display or to satisfy curiosity, but for the relief of suffering humanity.

4. The sending out of the twelve apostles (9:36 to 11:1)

Many disciples followed Jesus. Out of these He chooses twelve to help Him in preaching the Gospel, and to train them for their future work as leaders of the church He will start during His earthly ministry. For the purpose of confirming their message, He imparts the power to work miracles. Since the time of Gentile evangelization has not yet come, He limits their ministry to Israel.

5. John the Baptist's question (11:2–30)

The Jews' conception of the Messiah was that of a mighty prince who would set up a great kingdom. Jesus did not measure up to their ideals for He proclaimed the coming of a spiritual kingdom. Though John the Baptist's conception of the Messiah was a spiritual one, it is possible that he expected Messiah's kingdom to be set up immediately with power. Feeling disappointed in his expectations, and seeing no signs of the Messiah's delivering him from prison, he yields to doubt and despondency. But fortunately he takes his doubts to Jesus, who quickly confirms his faith.

6. Opposition of Pharisees (Chapter 12)

Chapter twelve records the Pharisees' opposition to Jesus. Their reasons for opposing Him were as follows: His lowly origin; His consorting with sinners; and His opposing their traditions. Chapter 12 describes opposition for the last-named reason, breaking the Sabbath.

7. Teaching in parables (Chapter 13)

Up to this point our Lord had been teaching in plain language, but on seeing the opposition to His message, He began teaching in parables when speaking of His Kingdom. He did this to prevent their distorting His words and using them against Him.

8. Herod's opposition; feeding of 5,000 (Chapter 14)

9. Opposition from leaders in Judea and Galilee (15:1 to 16:12)

This passage records further opposition of the leaders toward Jesus. They accuse Him of transgressing their traditions, whereupon in stern language He rebukes them for burying the true interpretation of Scripture beneath man-made traditions. Jesus refused their request for a sign since He only performed His miracles for the relief of suffering humanity.

III. The Claim of the Messiah. (16:13 to 23:39)

1. His claim before the disciples (16:13 to 20:28)

Thus far Jesus has not measured up to the people's ideal of the Messiah, for instead of proclaiming a physical kingdom, He has been proclaiming a spiritual one. Jesus does not make a public proclamation of His Messiahship, but He does so in private to His disciples and forbids them to tell anyone that He is the Messiah.

He makes known the means by which His kingdom is to be ushered in; namely, through His death and resurrection. Peter, sharing the common views of the people cannot conceive of a suffering and dying Messiah and tries to dissuade Jesus from submitting to death. Jesus rebukes him, and teaches the disciples that before the crown comes the cross.

2. His claim before the nation (20:29 to 23:39)

Though Jesus has not made public proclamation of His messiahship, it is necessary, in order that the Scriptures be fulfilled, and that the nation have an opportunity of accepting or rejecting Him, that He make some kind of public claim. This took place at the triumphal entry in Jerusalem (21:1–16). But notice that this was not a warlike demonstration, but the peaceful entry of a King, "meek and sitting upon an ass, and a colt the foal of an ass" (21:5).

Jesus' claims are rejected by the nation as represented by the leaders. Following this He foretells, in parables, the rejection of the Jewish nation by God and His turning to the Gentiles (the Parables of the Wicked Husbandman and the Marriage Supper). Chapter 23 marks Jesus' final break with the religious leaders, and His weeping over Jerusalem.

Next slide

IV. The Sacrifice of the Messiah. (Chapters 24 to 27)

1. Discourse Concerning Christ's Second Coming (24:1–41)

Two timeframes mark this prophecy. The near-term fulfillment is the fall of Jerusalem. The far-term fulfillment is His second coming. The first took place within forty years after the prediction, 70 AD; the second is still future. The one was restricted to Jerusalem. The second affects the whole planet.

2. Judgments to Take Place at the Second Coming (24:42 To 25:46)

Notice the Judgments mentioned in this passage. Judgment on unwatchful servants (24:42–51); judgment on unprepared servants (25:1–13); judgment on unprofitable servants (25:14–30); judgment on the nations (25:14–46).

3. Betrayal, Arrest, and Trial of Jesus (Chap. 26)

4. The Crucifixion (Chap. 27)

Isaiah's prophecy of the suffering Messiah (Isa. 53), finds its fulfillment in Chaps. 26; 27.

V. The Triumph of the Messiah. (Chapter 28)

The Gospel of Matthew reaches a happy consummation in the resurrection of the Messiah from the dead. All power is given to Him in heaven and in earth, for this reason He is able to send His followers into all the world with the message of salvation.

The Sermon on the Mount (Chapters 5-7)

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Vv. 1-2. Many believe Luke's Gospel gives a parallel abbreviated account of the "Sermon on the Mount" in Luke 6:17-49. However, the difference between these two are noteworthy.

Luke's account is really the "Sermon on the Plain" It has Jesus coming DOWN instead of going UP. Luke's account has Jesus speaking to the multitudes, whereas Matthew has Jesus withdrawing from the multitude and speaking only with His disciples. 4:25 – great multitudes; 5:1 - Jesus seeing the multitudes (how many?) went up a mountain with his disciples to teach them.

Slide 34

A. Beatitudes (5:3-12)

The beatitudes are structured like proverbs. Each one has three parts: (1) It starts with the word "blessed," (2) then describes a particular characteristic, and (3) ends with an appropriate blessing.

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Verse 3. Jesus is not telling His disciples "how" to enter God's kingdom, because they already were in the kingdom. He was teaching them what those in kingdom should be like.

What does it mean to be poor in spirit? It does not mean hating yourself or feeling like you have no value. It does not mean a false humility. It is humility and the recognition of your own spiritual bankruptcy. No one can enter in the kingdom who has not recognized their sinful condition and desperate need for God to meet that need.

V. 4 - Jesus is speaking here of the mourning of repentance, not the loss of a loved one. Following v. 3, recognizing our spiritual poverty, verse 4 calls us to repent from our sin which caused that poverty.

V. 5. - Meekness is strength under control (broken horse). Those who look out for the interests of others, who demonstrate integrity, consideration, will be entrusted with possessions and positions.

Verse 6. Do you? The righteousness Jesus is talking about is our moral behavior and right motives.

Verse 7. The principle is simple: God tends to treat us the way we treat others. The reason a Christian can show mercy is that he has received mercy from God. We can love because we have been loved; we can forgive because we have been forgiven.

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Verse 8. "Pure in heart" carries the meaning of cleanness. On the outside the Pharisees looked good but were not good on the inside. Jesus demands that our purity reach the depths of the heart – by ye holy for I am holy.

Verse 9. To be called the a "child of God" is not merely a statement of relationship but of character. It meant that they would act like God would. God is a peacemaker. We are to do things that make for peace. This does not mean compromising our stand for Jesus, but it might well include listening carefully, speaking softly, setting aside personal desires, not retaliating when wronged, apologizing for offense, smiling when things get heated, putting others first, etc.

Vv. 10-12. The Christian is not blessed for persecution caused by stupidity or abrasiveness, but persecution because of righteousness. Just as meekness, purity, and mercy are marks of every Christian, so is persecution. In other words, if we follow Christ, we should expect to be persecuted.

Slide 37 -38

B. The Christian's influence - Salt and Light (Mt 5:13-16)

Verse 13. Salt. Among other things, salt was primarily used to preserve and flavor food. Likewise, Christians are primarily responsible for the preservation of morality and justice. Historically, Christians can be credited for many of the advances in science, medicine, prison reform, orphanages, abolition of slavery and child labor, education and literacy. The kingdom of God has flavored this world in significant ways. The problem is when salt loses its flavor. When one becomes mixed with the world, he loses his preserving influence in the society.

Vv. 14-16. Light. Even dim light in a dark place is easy to spot. Why would you to hide it? Yet many Christians avoid being recognized. The Word of God is light, so, being a light means giving out the Word of God in some way. Does this verse say, "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify you and pat you on the back, and give you a gold medal?" No! This verse says that you and I are to let our light so shine in this world that we may glorify our Father which is in heaven. The aim and purpose of our lives should be to glorify our God.

Slide 39

C. Law is Fulfilled (Matthew 5:17-20)

Jesus is about to take the popular OT interpretations of his day and contrast it with his own interpretation and application. He deepens the meaning of the OT and contradict the oral traditions of the scribes. The Pharisees were famous for their observance of religious rituals even though their hearts weren't right. Jesus is looking for humble and teachable hearts rather than those who simply conform to list of religious regulations.

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D. Six Contrasts: "You Have Heard ... But I Say."

This section is depicted by Jesus saying "You have heard it said.... but I say". Jesus was contradicting Pharisaic interpretation of the OT and not the Scripture itself. Pharisaic interpretation tended to relax the commands of God making God's law more "manageable." But Jesus does just the opposite.

The Pharisees made God's law easier to keep whereas Jesus made it more difficult. The odd thing is that the Pharisees kept adding regulations, whereas Jesus took them away. So why were Jesus' prescriptions more difficult to follow? He internalized the law. He got to the heart of the matter.

Next slide to show chart

LAW	TYPE	PHARISEES	JESUS
Murder (21-26)	Command	Restrict to the act	Extend to thoughts
Adultery (27-30)	Command	Restrict to the act	Extend to thoughts
Divorce (31-32)	Permission	Extend for most cases	Restrict to adultery
Oaths (33-37)	Command	Restrict to certain promises	Extend to yes/no
Retaliation (38-42)	Permission	Extend to "just" causes	Restrict to nothing
Love (43-48)	Command	Restrict to neighbors	Extend to enemies

Slide 41 - 46

Verses 21-26. Contrast #1 - Murder/Anger. "Thou shalt not murder" is the 6th commandment. The Pharisees stressed only the action of murder. Jesus, on the other hand, extended punishment to the motives and/or emotions behind the murder.

Verses 27-30. Contrast #2 – Adultery. Jesus moves from the 6th to the 7th commandment: "Thou shall not commit adultery." Again, the Pharisees dealt only with the act; Jesus extends the thought life. It describes a person who allows those initial thoughts to flourish. It is impossible in our society, where sexual images pervade our media, to prevent an initial image crossing our mind's eye, but we are guilty with the second look.

Verses 31-32. Contrast #3 – Divorce. The issue of divorce is one of the most difficult and sensitive issues pastors and churches face today. The Pharisees extended this to most cases while Jesus restricted God's permission of divorce only to cases of adultery.

Verses 33-37. Contrast #4 – Oaths. This is not the sin of "cursing," but the sin of using oaths to affirm that what is said is true. Like, "I swear it is the truth". The Pharisees used all kinds of tricks to sidestep the truth, and oaths were among them. Jesus taught that our conversation should be so honest, and our character so true, that we would not need "crutches" to get people to believe us. Words depend on character, and oaths cannot compensate for a poor character.

Verses 38-42. Contrast #5 – Retaliation. The Pharisees permitted a tit-for-tat retaliation for most cases, but Jesus said never. (1) A slap on the cheek, (2) The tunic was commonly required as collateral in legal cases. Jesus said, "Don't just give him your inner garment, give him the more valuable outer garment as well." (3) Roman soldiers had the power to conscript common citizens to help carry their military supplies. If one demanded a mile, give him two.

Vv. 43-48. Contrast #6 – Love. The Pharisees limited this to just love your neighbor (Lev. 19:18), but Jesus extended it to your enemies. God has demonstrated his love for all people, even sinful people, by providing sunshine and rain. If we are children of God, then we are to love the way God loves.

Verse 48. The Greek word "perfect" here means "mature, whole, complete." Jesus is not calling us to be morally flawless as God is. But he is calling us to love as God loves. This means we love both our friends and our enemies. One way we express our love to our enemies is getting the gospel to them.

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E. 3 Warnings of Public Devotion (6:1-18)

In chapter 5, Jesus gave six illustrations of public moral behavior and with each one Jesus said, “check your motives.” Chapter six is going to give three illustrations of religious duties: almsgiving (2–4), prayer (5–13), and fasting (14–18). With each of these three, Jesus will say, “check your motives.”

Vv. 1-4. Warning #1 – Almsgiving

Read Slide 48

The Jews had no governmental welfare system. Thus, voluntary almsgiving was critical to the poor and disabled. When the Pharisees wanted to give something to the poor, it was their custom to go down to a busy street corner in Jerusalem and blow a trumpet. Although the purpose was to call the poor and needy together to receive the gifts, it afforded a fine opportunity to attract attention and let others see their good works.

When the church members laid their money at the Apostles’ feet, it was not done in secret. For example, in Acts 4, everyone in the church knew that Barnabas had given the income from the sale of his land. In contrast to Barnabas was Ananias and Sapphira (Acts 5:1–11), who tried to use their gift to make people think they were more spiritual than they really were. The difference, of course, was in the motive and manner in which it was done.

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Vv. 5-15. Warning #2 – Prayer

Slide 50 - 52

Verses 5-8. We should pray neither like the Pharisees, for public recognition, nor like the unbelievers, with “vain repetitions”. Jesus is not against public prayer. What he is against is prayer that gains admiration from the audience, rather than prayer that genuinely talks to God. He calls them hypocrites – pretty strong language.

Verses 9-13. A Model Prayer commonly called “The Lord’s Prayer” (John 17). Here we have a model, not a recipe for prayer. It contains the essential ingredients of prayer: Adoration, Submission, Confession, Supplication. More can be taught on this, but we must move on.

Verses 14-15. Forgiveness.

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Read Verses 16-18. Warning #3 - Fasting

As with almsgiving and prayer, when we fast, we must not show off our devotion, otherwise, the praise of men is the only reward we will get. But if we practice our piety before God alone, he will see and reward us. So, when we fast, and Jesus assumes that we will, we are to comb our hair and wash our face as we always do and go about business as usual. This does not mean that no one will ever know we are fasting. For instance, it would be hard to hide the fact from a spouse. What it does mean is that we don’t go around announcing it.

Slide 54

F. Three Prohibitions: Wealth, Worry, Judging (6:19-7:6)

Verses 19-24. Prohibition #1 – Wealth

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Verses 19-21. Earthly vs. Heavenly Wealth. We are accustomed to dividing life into the “spiritual” and the “material”; but Jesus made no such division. In many of His parables, He made it clear that a right attitude toward wealth is a mark of true spirituality. The Pharisees were covetous and used religion to make money. If we have the true righteousness of Christ in our lives, then we will have a proper attitude toward material wealth.

Nowhere did Jesus magnify poverty or criticize the legitimate getting of wealth. God has declared that all things He has made are good (Gen. 1:31). God knows that we need certain things in order to live (Matt. 6:32). In fact, He has given us “richly all things to enjoy” (1 Tim. 6:17). It is not wrong to possess things, but it is wrong for things to possess us. There are many warnings in the Bible against covetousness. Materialism will enslave the heart, mind, and the will.

Verses 22-23. Light vs. Darkness. A body full of light would send it forth in acts of generosity. A body full of darkness would have no light to send forth. As a result, that person would be stingy.

Verse 24. God vs. Money. One of the two will dominate our time and attention. Eventually both the “masters” will demand our attention at the same time. Then our true love will become obvious.

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Verses 25-34. Prohibition #2 – Worry

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Verses 25-30. Worry is sinful. Jesus highlights two things which we worry about most: food and clothing. He gives three reasons why we shouldn't worry about them. (1) There are more important things in life than food and clothing. (2) God loves us and wants to provide for us. (3) Worry cannot change anything.

Verses 31-34. Jesus calls us to trust God rather than the security of riches. How can we be salt and light if we pursue the same priorities as do the unsaved? God has promised to meet the needs of those who continually seek his kingdom and righteousness.

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Verses 7:1-6 – Prohibition #3 – Judging

Slide 61

Vv. 1-2 - These verses have really been misunderstood. To judge can mean “to decide, to evaluate, or to condemn”. These verses do not mean that a child of God is forbidden to judge others, but it does mean that we are not to judge the inward motives of others in the sense of condemning them. We do not know or understand why a brother in Christ does a certain thing. We see only outward acts. Jesus is not saying “do not judge” but He goes on to warn against hypocritical judgment.

Read Verses 3-5.

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He is comparing a spec of sawdust in your brother's eye while you have a great beam sticking out of your own eye. The "beam" is the spirit of criticism and prejudice. With that blocking your vision, you are in no position to judge the little sin of another. It is usually easier to identify other people's faults than our own. To compound the problem, we are often most offended by character flaws in others which we ourselves have. For example, a temperamental person may be highly insulted if someone gets angry with him.

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Verse 6. Jesus places it here to balance his teaching on judging. Obviously, we must have some measure of judging before we can identify them as pigs or dogs - those who reject the truth. The application is "If someone rejects the truth, don't keep preaching to them." That is what Jesus said—wipe the dust from your shoes.

Slide 64

G. Concluding Remarks (7:7-8:1)

1. Ask, Seek, Knock

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Verses 7-11. Our prayer lives show more about what we believe and what we say. Do you believe that God is a good Father? Then you will pray. Certainly, no human father would trick his children by giving them a rock that looked like bread. Nor would he give them a snake for a fish.

This implies several things. (1) He wants to give us good gifts. (2) We can approach him personally and persistently (as the present imperatives of "Ask, seek, knock" imply). And (3) if we ask for something harmful, or if we ask with selfish motives or without faith, God is not obligated to answer our prayer. Sometimes God's answer is "Yes," sometimes it is "No," and sometimes, "Wait."

Slide 66 - 67

Verse 12. The Golden Rule. It summarizes the entire OT and the Sermon on the Mount.

Slide 68 - 69

Vv. 13-14. Two Paths. Broad/narrow indicates the relative number of people who will be saved.

Slide 70 - 72

Verses 15-23. Two Fruits

1. Vv. 15–20. A prophet was one who received a revelation from God and spoke it to people. A false prophet is one who claims, "God said to me ..." when God did not. How does one recognize a false prophet? By their fruit. We can hide our true character only so long, but eventually it comes out. Typically, they are greedy for material gain and they have no shame. Sexual immorality and financial mismanagement go with false teaching.

2. Verses 21-23. Because people are so enamored with the spectacular rather than the spiritual, many are fooled by plastic fruit. By plastic fruit I mean the imitation of the miraculous (v. 22). Since miracles are relatively easy to manipulate or fake, they are simply fakes.... God said "I never knew you" The just shall live by faith.

There is a warning for us. Some still talk about miracle workers today, and say "You can tell God is with them." In light of these verses, can we be sure of that? The name of Christ is on the lips of many people who are leaders of cults. Just to use the name of Christ and the Bible is not proof that a system is genuine.

Slide 73 - 74

Vv. 24-27. Two Houses. In the Palestinian desert it is much easier to build on the sandy surface than to dig down to bedrock. Likewise, it is easier to listen to Jesus' words than it is to obey him. These two houses will look the same to the passerby. But the difference will be obvious enough in the storm. Likewise, two professing Christians may both go to church, pray, and read their Bibles. The storm will tell the difference. Times of tribulation often reveal the genuineness of a person's faith.

Slide 75 - 76

Vv. 7:28-8:1. Response. The disciples were amazed at his teaching. He taught with authority; He wasn't just repeating something He had read. And you and I need to recognize that we have nothing worthwhile to say unless it is with the authority of the Word of God and unless we believe it is the Word of God.

Slide 77

Mark: Jesus, the Suffering Servant

Though the second Gospel does not specifically name its writer, but there is no legitimate reason to believe that anyone other than John Mark wrote the Gospel of Mark.

Mark, the minister

Acts 12:12 - John Mark is mentioned in connection with his mother, Mary. Peter went to her house after God miraculously freed him from prison. The church was gathered at Mary's house to pray.

Acts 12:25 - Mark was first mentioned in ministry when he joined Paul and Barnabas on their return trip to Antioch from Jerusalem.

Acts 13:13 - Mark's next mention is not positive. He joined Paul and Barnabas on their first missionary journey but then abandoned them in Perga to return to Jerusalem. While no commentary is given as to why Mark left, Paul considered him a risk to take on their second missionary journey. Paul ended up going with Silas while Barnabas took Mark (15).

But Mark made a comeback. Later, Mark served in Rome as an assistant to the imprisoned Paul. Paul also sent Mark on a mission to Asia Minor (Philemon 24; Col. 4:10).

2 Timothy 4:11 – Still later, Paul asked Timothy to bring Mark to him in Rome where Paul was again imprisoned and facing an imminent execution.

Mark, the writer

Mark seems to have had a close connection with Peter. Peter was most likely instrumental in providing much of the firsthand accounts that Mark used in writing his Gospel. Mark took Peter's reports and, under the direction of the Holy Spirit, arranged them to form what is now the Gospel of Mark. This historical evidence finds some support in the Scriptures.

2 Peter 5:13 - Peter called Mark my son, a term that is consistent with the historical association Mark had with Peter.

Mark's Purposes

The historical setting of the Gospel of Mark helps us understand Mark's purposes in writing the Gospel. Mark wrote sometime between AD 57 and 63 to Roman believers living in Rome. Mark's Gospel presents the suffering of Christ and provides encouragement to those who would stand strong in the face of increasing persecution and spread the gospel.

Purpose #1 - Demonstrate Christ Suffered and Served

Mark's Gospel focuses primarily on the suffering and death of Christ, getting to the predictions of His death by the eighth chapter (8:31-33). The passion of Christ takes up about one-third of the Gospel, but that is not the sole reference to Christ's suffering. Mark refers or alludes to suffering throughout his Gospel.

1. Temptation in the wilderness (1:12, 13)

Mark is the only Gospel writer to mention the wild beasts Jesus faced in the wilderness during His temptation. Perhaps he did so to encourage the Roman Christians who would also face wild beasts in the Roman arena as part of their persecution under Nero. Christ was victorious over the beasts and even over Satan, the most notorious and powerful enemy the Roman believers would ever face. The mention of the ministering angels who came to Christ's aid would have been a further encouragement to the Romans demonstrating God's care and provision in the midst of suffering.

2. Rejection by family (3:20-22)

Some in Jesus' family thought He was beside himself. They accused Him of being a fanatic. Most likely they were worried about their family name and reputation. So their concerns were somewhat selfish. They tried to lay hold on him, or in a sense arrest Jesus and take Him back to Nazareth.

3:31-35 - Later in the passage Jesus' mother and brothers called out to Him from outside the multitude that surrounded Jesus. Jesus responded to the multitude by saying that those who do God's will, including some that were then with Him, constituted His family. Doing God's will was more important to Jesus than preserving a reputation.

3. Passion predictions.

Three times Jesus announced to His disciples that He would soon die and then rise from the dead. Mark's inclusion of all three announcements helps build the case that Christ was the Suffering Servant. Each time the disciples were confused by Jesus' announcement. His first announcement was even met with protest.

- A. 8:31-33 - Jesus' teaching regarding His suffering, death, and resurrection was new to the disciples. The verb *must suffer* (v. 31) shows that Jesus' suffering was a necessity. Peter responded in protest, expecting a nationalistic Jesus Who would ride into Jerusalem on a horse as a conquering king. Jesus rebuked Peter, telling Satan to get behind Him (v. 33), meaning He wanted Satan to get out of sight and stop trying to thwart His path to the cross.
- B. 9:30-32 - Jesus' second announcement regarding His coming suffering and resurrection accompanies the beginning of His trek to the cross. He departed from Galilee and headed to Jerusalem where He would be crucified. Jesus added that He would be delivered into the hands of men who would kill him (v. 31). This does not diminish Christ's voluntary offering of Himself. The word for delivered into can carry the idea of betrayed.
- C. 10:45 - Jesus stated His purpose for coming to earth.

Despite Jesus' knowledge of the specifics of what He faced in Jerusalem, He continued to make His way there with His disciples close behind.

Purpose #2 - Encourage Roman Christians

Along with Mark's desire to present Christ as the Suffering Servant, he also wanted to encourage suffering believers. The two purposes really go hand in hand. The believers would be encouraged by the suffering of Christ on their behalf. If He, the Son of God, suffered so, then the Roman believers were in good company.

1. Greatness comes by serving

Jesus' second and third predictions of His coming Passion, that we just read, were followed by attempts at power grabs on the part of His disciples. It shows that the disciples didn't really understand what would happen to Christ in Jerusalem.

9:33-35 - The disciples disputed among themselves who would be the greatest in Christ's Kingdom.

10:35-44 - Then James and John boldly asked to sit on Jesus' right and left hands in His Kingdom.

The disciples were slow to understand what Christ meant, but the Roman Christians would have understood right away that the suffering Jesus endured had implications on discipleship. Their suffering in Rome was to be expected as part of living for Christ.

2. Service includes bearing one's cross

To further support his theme, Mark twice recorded Jesus' teaching concerning bearing one's cross.

8:34-38

10:21-22 - The rich young ruler decided that sacrificing and suffering for Christ was not for him, He chose to keep his riches and his life of ease instead.

Peter, Mark's close associate, wrote about Christ's suffering at about the same time Mark was writing his Gospel. Peter knew what it meant both to fail Christ and to stand for Him. He denied Christ but then endured imprisonment and beatings for the cause of Christ.

Christ then was both the example of suffering as well as the ultimate hope in the face of death. He cares for the believer as a faithful shepherd cares for each of his sheep.

The message would have been clear to the Christians in Rome: to live obediently for Christ is to sometimes suffer wrongly or to perhaps even die for one's faith. But Christ already blazed that trail ahead of them. They were therefore in good company. They could find comfort and help from Christ.

Slide 78

Outline of Mark

Keeping in mind that Mark is portraying Christ as the mighty Conqueror, let us go through the gospel and see how this thought is carried out.

1. Introduction and First Tour of Galilee (1:1 – 4:34)

1:1-20, Jesus is declared to be the Son of God, and the one for whom John the Baptist was preparing the way. Following His baptism, Jesus spends forty days in the desert, being tempted by Satan, before returning to Galilee, and calling his first disciples to follow Him and become fishers of men.

1:21-45, Jesus amazes the congregation in the synagogue in Capernaum by using His authority to set a man free from an evil spirit. Jesus heals Simon Peter's mother-in-law, and many others, who are brought to Him. Jesus demonstrates His compassion and mercy by reaching out and touching a man with leprosy, declaring that He is willing to heal him.

2:1-22, Jesus heals the paralytic, let down through the roof by his friends, who have faith that Jesus can heal him. Jesus declares that the man's sins are forgiven, (something that only God can do), and then heals him, thus demonstrating His power and authority to the Scribes and Pharisees. When they criticize Him for eating with sinners, and not fasting, Jesus declares that He has come to call sinners, and that He is the bridegroom, doing new things among them.

2:23-3:12, Jesus challenges the legalistic observance of the Sabbath by declaring that the Sabbath was created for man. He heals a man with a shriveled hand on the Sabbath, stirring up the anger of the Pharisees, who begin plotting how they can kill Jesus. Large crowds follow Jesus, because He has healed many people. Evil spirits recognize who Jesus is, and cry out that He is the Son of God.

3:13-35, Jesus appoints His twelve apostles. Jesus teaches that a kingdom divided against itself will fall, and about the need to bind up, or deal with, the strong man, before one can plunder his kingdom. In response to the accusations of the Pharisees that His authority and power come from Satan, Jesus teaches about the seriousness of blaspheming against the work of the Holy Spirit. Jesus declares that doing His will is evidence of being part of the family of God.

4:1-34, Jesus teaches many things about the kingdom of God, using parables. He likens the word of God to seed sown by a farmer. Only the seed falling on good ground produces fruit. The seed falling on shallow ground starts to grow, but then withers and dies. Some seed is stolen away by the birds, and some choked by other plants. The kingdom of God is also like a small mustard seed, which eventually grows to become the largest tree in the garden.

2. Tour of Decapolis (4:35 – 5:43)

4:35-5:20, Jesus calms a storm at sea by ordering the wind and waves to be still. When they reach land, a heavily demonized man, who mutilates himself, and exhibits supernatural strength, approaches Jesus. Jesus delivers him of many demons, allowing the demons to enter a herd of pigs. The man is set completely free, but the pigs react to the demons by throwing themselves into the sea. Instead of rejoicing, the local people are afraid, and ask Jesus to leave the area.

5:21-43, Jesus raises the daughter of Jairus from the dead, after being ridiculed by the mourners, whom He has to send away. Jesus heals the woman with the issue of blood who comes up behind Him and reaches out to touch the hem of His garment. (Because her illness makes her 'unclean', she is breaking the law by touching a rabbi). Jesus, realizing that power has gone out of Himself, asks the woman to reveal herself, and then commends her for her faith.

3. Second Tour of Galilee (6:1-29)

6:1-29, Jesus is unable to do many miracles in His home town, because of the lack of faith there. Jesus sends out His disciples with His authority to preach the good news, heal the sick and cast out demons. King Herod hears what is happening, and thinks that John the Baptist has been resurrected from the dead. Herod previously had John the Baptist beheaded, because he spoke out against Herod marrying his sister-in-law.

4. Retreat to the Desert (6:30 – 56)

6:30-56, the crowds follow Jesus everywhere. Out of His compassion for them, Jesus feeds the crowd with five loaves and two fish, which He blesses, before giving them to the disciples to distribute to the people. After spending time alone in prayer, Jesus amazes the disciples by walking on the water to join them, in a boat, on their way to Bethsaida. When they arrive many people are healed, as they reach out and touch Jesus.

5. Third Tour of Galilee (7:1 – 23)

7:1-23, Jesus challenges the Pharisees and teachers of the law about their legalism. They are nullifying the word of God, and missing the heart of God, by insisting that people should follow man-made traditions. It is not what we eat which makes us unclean, but rather what comes out of our heart. The words which are spoken, evil and wicked thoughts, and the attitude of the heart are the important things which determine whether a person is clean.

6. Tour of the North Country (7:24 – 9:29)

7:24-37 records the healing of the daughter of the Syrian-Phoenician woman. Jesus identifies that this woman has faith in Him, even though she is not Jewish, and He sets her daughter free, through deliverance. The people are again amazed when Jesus heals a deaf and dumb man, and proclaim “He has done all things well”.

8:1-21, Jesus has compassion for the second time on the crowds who are following Him, and miraculously feeds them with seven loaves of bread and a few fish. The Pharisees again come to Jesus and challenge Him to perform miracles, to prove who He is. Jesus refuses, and warns the disciples to beware of the Pharisees, which, like yeast in a batch of dough, will influence all the people.

8:22-9:1 records the two-stage healing of a blind man. In response to a question from Jesus, Peter declares that Jesus is the Messiah, but later he argues with Jesus about His future suffering and death. Peter’s rebuke by Jesus reminds us how easy it is to speak out things which are not of God, but of the enemy. Jesus teaches the importance of fulfilling our destiny in Him, (carrying our cross), and not being ashamed of Him, rather than seeking worldly wealth and forfeiting eternal life.

9:2-29 records the transfiguration of Jesus, and His meeting with Elijah and Moses, as witnessed by Peter, James and John. Jesus heals a deaf and dumb boy, who experiences epileptic-type fits. He explains to His disciples, who were unable to heal the boy, that healing in this instance involves something more than just exercising spiritual authority over demons.

7. Fourth Tour of Galilee (7:30 – 50)

In Mark 9:30-50, Jesus teaches the disciples about His forthcoming death and resurrection, but they fail to understand Him. Jesus teaches the disciples, who are arguing about who is the greatest, about servant leadership. He talks about the seriousness of sinning against, or causing, a child to sin. It’s better to be thrown into the sea, with a millstone around your neck, than to do that. Jesus teaches that it is far better to get rid of anything in this life, (no matter how precious it may be), which is stopping you entering the kingdom of God, than to spend eternity separated from God in hell.

8. Tour of Perea and Judea (Chapter 10)

10:1-31, Jesus reminds His listeners that God’s plan is that marriage should be a life-long relationship. Issuing a certificate of divorce, in order to have a relationship with someone else, is the same as committing adultery. He encourages us to have a child-like (trusting) faith in God. Jesus tests the heart of the rich young ruler, who claims to have kept the law. Jesus challenges him to give away his money to the poor and follow Him as a disciple.

10:32-52, Jesus continues to speak prophetically about what will happen to Him in Jerusalem. Jesus again teaches about servant leadership, after James and John upset the other disciples, by asking if they can have the places of honour when Jesus comes in glory. He reminds them that He has come not to be served, but to serve, and to give His life as a ransom for many. On the road to Jericho, Jesus responds to the faith of blind Bartimaeus, and heals him.

9. Ministry in Jerusalem (Chapters 11 – 13)

11:1-26, Jesus enters Jerusalem on a colt, and the people welcome Him saying “Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord”. Jesus drives out the money changers and traders from the temple, declaring that they have made God’s house a den of thieves. On the way to Jerusalem, Jesus curses a fig tree, because it has no fruit, and the next day the tree has withered and died. Jesus uses this to encourage the disciples to have faith in God’s ability to answer prayer.

11:27-12:17, the Pharisees and teachers of the law test and challenge Jesus about His authority to do what He is doing. Jesus responds by telling the parable of the vineyard and the tenant farmers, who ignore the wishes of the landlord and eventually kill the landlord’s son. In a veiled reference to Himself, He reminds them of the scripture which says that the stone that the builders rejected has become the capstone.

12:18-34, Jesus responds to a question from the Sadducees, who do not believe in the resurrection of the dead. Jesus affirms that there will indeed be a resurrection, because God is the God of the living, but that, in our resurrected state, we will be like the angels, and not married or given in marriage. Jesus declares that the greatest commandment is to love God with all of our being, and the second commandment is to love our neighbors as we love ourselves.

12:35-44, Jesus teaches from Scripture that the Messiah is not simply a direct descendant of David, but someone whom David would call Lord. He warns His listeners that the teachers of the law like to be considered important, but much of what they do is pretense, and they fail to look after the widows. Jesus commends a widow for making a sacrificial offering to God, even though she is poor.

In Mark 13, Jesus teaches about His second coming in glory, and with great power. Only the Father knows when this will happen. Jesus warns that, prior to His return, there will be a time of great turmoil, including wars, earthquakes, and famines. There will be persecution of believers, but Jesus encourages us not to be anxious about being arrested, because the Holy Spirit will give us the words to speak. Jesus also encourages us to keep watch, and not fall into deception.

10. The Crucifixion and Resurrection (Chapters 14 – 16)

14:1-26, Jesus commends a woman who pours expensive oil on His head, in response to some of the onlookers, who complain that it is a waste of money. Jesus celebrates the Passover with His disciples in what we might call the first Communion service, and in which Jesus likens the bread and wine to His own body and blood. Jesus declares that one of the twelve disciples will betray Him. (Judas has already been plotting with the priests to do this.)

14:27-42, Peter, contradicting what Jesus has said, declares that he will never deny or disown Jesus, even if the other disciples do so. Jesus prays in the garden of Gethsemane that He is willing to submit to the will of the Father. Peter, James and John, who are with Jesus, keep falling asleep and do not know what to say to Jesus, who is deeply distressed concerning what is about to happen.

14:43-72, Jesus is arrested and brought to trial, where they mock Him, beat Him, and spit upon Him. They declare that He is guilty of blasphemy, and condemn Him as worthy of death. Three times Peter denies that he is a follower of Jesus, and swears that he doesn't know the man. When the cock crows, Peter remembers that Jesus prophesied that this would happen, and he breaks down and weeps.

15:1-32, Jesus is taken to Pilate. Pilate offers to release Jesus or Barabbas. When the crowd is incited to shout for Barabbas to be freed, and for Jesus be crucified, Pilate has Jesus flogged, and hands Him over to be crucified. The soldiers mock Jesus, place a crown of thorns upon His head, and beat Him, before taking Him to Golgotha, where they crucify Him. The priests, the men crucified with Him, and those passing by, mock Jesus.

15:33-47, six hours after being crucified, Jesus cries out the first verse of Psalm 22, (a prophetic Psalm which speaks of the sufferings that Jesus is enduring). Jesus then breaths His last, and the curtain in the temple is torn in two. The centurion who witnesses the crucifixion declares that Jesus truly was the Son of God. Mary Magdalene, and some of the other women, watch as Jesus is taken from the cross, laid in a tomb and a rock placed at its entrance.

Mark 16 tells of the resurrection of Jesus. When the women go to the tomb to anoint the body, they discover that the stone has been rolled away, and inside the tomb an angel declares to them that Jesus is risen. Jesus appears to Mary Magdalene, and later to the disciples, commissioning them to go into the world and preach the good news. He promises that signs, including deliverance and healing, will accompany the preaching of the word.

Lesson 4 – Luke: Jesus, the Son of Man

Luke, the beloved physician and companion of Paul, was the writer of the Gospel of Luke.

Luke, the minister

Though Luke's nationality is not certain, it is possible he was a Gentile. In Col. 4, Paul specifically mentions all the Jews who had been a comfort to him (4:10, 11) and then mentions Luke later (4:14). If true, this would mean that Luke was the only New Testament writer who was not a Jew. But this evidence is by no means definitive. The Bible does not state that Luke was either Jew or Gentile.

Paul started his second missionary journey with Silas. They stopped in Lystra and picked up Timothy. They continued west but were forbidden of the Holy Spirit to preach in the province of Asia Minor and ended up in the city of Troas. There Paul had the vision of a man of Macedonia saying, "Come over into Macedonia, and help us." In the next verse (Acts 16:10) the narrative changes from "they" to "we", implying that Luke joined them at Troas and traveled with them to Philippi.

Acts 16:10 - It is believed by many that Luke was the pastor or at least one of the leaders of this church for the first six years. The reason is that Luke traveled with them to Philippi because the narrative changed from "they" to "we" in Acts 16:10. When Paul and the group left Philippi, the narrative returned to "they", as though Luke remained in Philippi. Then, 5 to 7 years later, when Paul traveled through Philippi on his way towards Jerusalem, the narrative again switches back from "they" to "we", implying that Luke left Philippi and traveled with Paul's group again.

Acts 21:17-19 - Luke was present when Paul made his way back to Jerusalem and gave a detailed report about all that God had done among the Gentiles during the third missionary journey.

Luke was also along on Paul's journey to Rome. Luke's missionary experience and interaction with Paul must have helped form his understanding of the gospel. He saw firsthand the power and spread of the gospel. He witnessed the changed lives.

While we can't know for sure when Luke wrote his Gospel, it may very well have been after the third missionary journey while Paul was under arrest in Caesarea. It is possible Luke didn't finish it until he arrived with Paul in Rome. Whenever Luke wrote, we can conclude that his experiences as a missionary most likely influenced his Gospel as he wrote under the direction of the Holy Spirit.

Luke, the writer (Luke 1:1-4)

Luke was a careful researcher as we already discussed at the beginning of this course. He consulted other accounts about Christ (v. 1). The Gospels of Matthew and Mark could be two of the accounts Luke consulted. We do know that the accounts he used were written by eyewitnesses and ministers of the word (v. 2). Under the direction of the Holy Spirit, Luke wrote an orderly account of all things from the very first (v. 3). So he wrote what the eyewitnesses observed and reported about Christ.

Luke said he had perfect understanding and that he wrote the account in order. Understanding in the original language means to trace carefully. Perfect conveys the idea of accurate. In order communicates that idea that Luke was systematic in his arranging of the events he recorded. Luke's stated goal of his careful research and recording was so a man named Theophilus could be confident of what he had already learned about Christ's words and deeds (v. 4).

We don't know anything more about Theophilus other than his name means lover of God. Perhaps he was a new believer wanting to know more about Christ. Or maybe he was an unbeliever who was coming close to putting his faith in Christ. Either way, the Gospel of Luke, along with the book of Acts (Acts 1:1), would have helped him with his lack of understanding.

Besides Theophilus, Luke seems to have written for a Gentile audience in general, and new Gentile believers specifically. For instance, He used the context of world politics as the setting for Christ. Also, he wrote as if the reader would not have been familiar with the places and geography of Israel.

Luke's Purposes

Many Gentiles in Luke's day had left the traditional gods to try to find hope and security in mystery religions of the east. Luke's message of the Son of Man Who had actually lived on earth and showed love for people would have been intriguing to them.

Purpose #1 - Present Jesus as the Perfect God-Man

Matthew traced Jesus' genealogy back to Abraham to emphasize Jesus' identification with the Jewish people. Luke, on the other hand, carried Jesus' genealogy back to Adam to emphasize that Jesus identified with the entire human race. Luke's use of Mary's line of descendants, instead of Joseph's line, directly connects Jesus with humanity. That emphasis is apparent in the rest of the Gospel.

Christ as the Son of Man is perhaps the portrait of Him that we can most readily understand with our finite minds. We see Him in activities and circumstances to which we can relate and we feel His compassion and care for us.

Luke's attention to the birth of Christ is unmatched in any of the other Gospels. The reader is given the opportunity to consider Jesus as a baby. Our experience with babies helps us understand some of what it was like for Mary and Joseph.

2:41-52 - Luke includes the account of Jesus in the temple as a boy. He amazed the scholars with His knowledge and understanding, an early sign that Jesus is no ordinary man.

Luke also includes instances of Jesus doing activities like praying (5:16), eating with people (5:29; 7:36), and compassionately interrupting a funeral. All of these relate the humanity of Christ.

Several parables are recounted in Luke that are not in any of the other Gospels. They stress areas of life that translate to today. The parable of the Good Samaritan, for instance, illustrates what it means to love one's neighbor (10:25-37). The parables of the lost coin, the lost sheep, and the Prodigal Son show Christ's love for perishing sinners (15:1-32), a love that should be emulated by believers today.

19:41-44 - As Jesus entered Jerusalem, He wept over the city knowing the trouble that would come to the city because of their rejection of Him. Luke is the only writer to include this point. It again shows Jesus' humanity and helps us make a connection with Him.

22:39-43 - Jesus' humanity is perhaps seen most notably in the Garden of Gethsemane on the night He was betrayed and arrested.

Luke recorded Pilate's announcements of Jesus' innocence after hearing all the charges against Jesus (Luke 23:4, 14, 15, 22). Those announcements didn't make Jesus innocent, they simply recognized what was already true of Jesus.

23:47 - As Christ hung on the cross, the centurion concluded that Jesus is a righteous man. Jesus was not spared in any way the physical pain and suffering of the cross. He met the cross as fully human, yet without sin.

24:36-43 - After Jesus' resurrection, Luke recounted Jesus' appearance to His disciples. Luke emphasized Jesus' humanity by telling how Jesus told the doubting disciples to handle His body, to touch His wounds, and to discover for themselves that He indeed has human flesh. He even went so far as to ask them to bring Him some food so He could eat it and show that His presence with them was physical and that His resurrection was for real.

Purpose #2 - Communicate that Jesus is the Savior of all

Luke, a firsthand witness of the power of the gospel to change lives, wrote his Gospel to present Jesus as the Son of Man and Savior for everyone.

1. Announcement by the angels

2:14 - Luke is the only writer to record what the angels announced to the shepherds as the shepherds watched their flocks in the fields the night of Christ's birth. The angels gave a global announcement of peace essentially a reference to the salvation that comes through Christ.

The fact that the announcement came to shepherds would have been important to Luke. Shepherds were outcasts in Israel. No one respected them. Instead the people considered them unclean because of their occupation. The angels' appearance to the shepherds was obviously orchestrated by God on purpose. He wanted the world to know that His Son was to be Savior of even the lowly shepherds.

2. Song of Simeon

2:26 - The song of Simeon reflects Luke's theme that Jesus the Son of Man is the Savior of all people. God had revealed to Simeon that he would not die before he saw the Lord's Christ. When Simeon saw the baby, he took Him in his arms and sang to the Lord.

God's salvation of the Gentiles was not an afterthought. From the beginning God intended for Jesus to be the Savior of all. The Gentiles were in darkness in that they were lost in their sins and had no hope. Jesus was the light to illuminate the way of salvation. Mary and Joseph marveled at Simeon's song. Perhaps they had not yet realized Jesus' impact would be worldwide.

3. Salvation of Gentiles

In showing that Jesus, the perfect Son of Man, is the Savior for all, Luke highlighted Jesus' teaching about reaching Gentiles. In one instance, in Luke 4, Jesus taught in the synagogue of Nazareth from the book of Isaiah. He elaborated on the text by using Old Testament illustrations of Gentiles who experienced God's grace.

4:25-26 - The first Gentile was a very poor widow of Zarephath (1 Kings 17:8-16).

4:27 - The second was Naaman, the prestigious commander of the Syrian army (2 Kings 5:1-19).

God reached out to these two Gentiles of very different backgrounds while His people, the Jews, for the most part rejected Him. Obviously, Jesus' teaching about God extending grace to Gentiles was not a popular message among the Jews. Jesus further demonstrated God's interest in Gentiles by directly interacting with Gentile individuals who put their faith in Him.

7:1-10 - Luke recorded such an incident about a Roman centurion soldier.

13:27-39 - Luke included the Gentiles from all over the world in Christ's future Kingdom while some Jews will be excluded because of their unbelief.

14:15-24 - Luke again picked up Jesus' theme of the inclusion of Gentiles in His Kingdom by telling a parable about a great supper. The great supper symbolized Christ's Kingdom. The Jews who reject Christ are represented by the guests who were invited to the great supper but made excuses for not going (vv. 18-20). The Jews that the Jewish elite considered inferior are represented by the poor and the lame who respond to the invitation. The Gentiles are those whom the servant found by going to the highways and hedges (v. 23). Some Gentiles respond positively to the offer to attend the supper.

24:47 - Luke ends his Gospel with Jesus' explanation of His death. He said He had to die and rise again so that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations.

24:48 - Jesus then identified His disciples as those who would be His witnesses.

Luke follows up his Gospel with the book of Acts, which tells how the disciples and others took the gospel to the ends of the earth.

Outline of Luke

1. Preface (1:1-4)

Luke states that he has written this gospel, following careful investigation of the reports of eye witnesses, so that we can be certain of what happened. Luke starts his gospel with the account of how the angel Gabriel appears to Zechariah and tells him that his wife will conceive a son, John the Baptist, who will prepare the way for the Lord.

2. Coming of the Son of Man (1:5 – 2:52)

1:5-56, the Angel Gabriel appears to Mary and tells her that she has been chosen to be the mother of Jesus, who will be miraculously conceived in her womb by the power of the Holy Spirit. Mary visits her cousin Elizabeth, rejoicing in what God has done and will do.

Luke 1:57-80 records the birth of John the Baptist and the restoration of Zechariah's speech. Zechariah prophesies that John will be a prophet of God and prepare the way of the Lord.

Luke 2:1-20 records the birth of Jesus in Bethlehem. Lowly shepherds are the first to hear the news that the Saviour has been born. They return from visiting the stable, glorifying and praising God for all they have seen and been told.

Luke 2:21-52 records how Jesus was circumcised on the eighth day. Simeon prophesies over the baby that He is the Saviour. In the Scriptures little is said about the childhood of Jesus, except that, as a twelve-year-old, He amazed everyone by His understanding, as he debated with the teachers of the law in the temple.

3. Preparation of the Son of Man (3:1 – 4:13)

In Luke 3:1-20, we read about the ministry of John the Baptist, who preached a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. He told the crowds, who came to him, that true repentance should result in changed behavior.

Luke 3:21-38 records the baptism of Jesus, and states that the Holy Spirit came upon Jesus, and a voice from heaven said "this is my beloved son, in whom I am well pleased". Luke then lists the 'earthly' genealogy of Jesus through Mary, tracing the line of Joseph back to Adam.

Luke 4:1-13 describes the temptation of Jesus by Satan. Jesus maintains His sinless-ness, by resisting each of the temptations of Satan. He rebukes Satan with scriptures from the book of Deuteronomy.

4. Ministry of the Son of Man (4:14 – 19:27)

Part 1: Service in the Light of the Cross (4:14 – 9:62). In Galilee.

Luke 4:1-13 describes the temptation of Jesus by Satan. Jesus maintains His sinless-ness, by resisting each of the temptations of Satan. He rebukes Satan with scriptures from the book of Deuteronomy.

In Luke 4:14-44, we read how Jesus returns from the desert in the power of the Holy Spirit. In the synagogue in Nazareth, He reads the messianic prophecy from Isaiah 63:1-3, and tells the people that He is fulfilling that prophecy. In Capernaum he confronts a demonized man and sets him free, heals Simon Peter's mother-in-law, and heals many who are brought to Him.

In Luke 5:1-16, we read about the calling of the first disciples, including Simon Peter. Peter's response, on meeting Jesus, is to say: "Go away from me. I am a sinful man". The compassion of Jesus is shown in the way He reaches out and touches a man with leprosy, and restores him to health. Verse 16 reminds us that, despite his busyness and the demands made upon Him, Jesus often withdraws to pray.

Luke 5:17-39 records the healing of the paralytic man, let down through the roof. Note that Jesus first ministers forgiveness of sins, before He ministers healing. Jesus calls a tax collector, named Levi, to follow Him, which arouses the anger of the Pharisees.

In Luke 6:1-16, we find the Pharisees are upset that Jesus does not follow their legalistic interpretation of how to keep the Sabbath. They are furious when Jesus heals a man with a withered hand. Following a night of prayer, Jesus appoints twelve of His disciples to be apostles.

Luke 6:17-49 is a challenge of what it means to live in the kingdom of God. We are to bless and forgive our enemies. We are to be generous and merciful to others, just as God is merciful to us. We need to judge ourselves, before we judge others. If we say Jesus is Lord, but are not obedient to His word, our lives are built on shallow foundations, which will eventually collapse.

In Luke 7:1-17, we read how Jesus heals the servant of the Roman centurion. He commends the man for his faith, saying that this centurion has more faith than He has found in all Israel. At Nain, Jesus raises a widow's son from the dead, and the people are filled with awe.

In Luke 7:18-50, Jesus confirms who He is, by declaring His ministry is the fulfilment of the messianic prophecy of Isaiah 61:1-3. Jesus goes to dinner at the house of Simon the Pharisee, who does not treat him with honour or respect. A sinful woman weeps over Jesus' feet, and wipes them with her hair. Jesus commends her actions, and tells her that her sins are forgiven, and that her faith has saved her.

In Luke 8:1-21, Jesus tells the parable of the sower. He explains to His disciples that what happens to the seed, in the various places where it lands, represents how people respond to God's word, and whether what they have heard produces lasting fruit.

Luke 8:22-56 records the accounts of three dramatic healings. Jesus demonstrates the reality of the demonic realm and His complete authority over Satan by delivering the highly demonized Gadarene demoniac. He demonstrates His authority over sickness by healing the woman with the issue of blood. He demonstrates his authority over death by raising Jairus' daughter.

In Luke 9:1-27, Jesus sends out the twelve disciples, with power and authority, to preach the good news, and heal the sick. Also Jesus miraculously feeds a large crowd with five loaves of bread and two fish. Then Jesus challenges the disciples to deny themselves, take up their cross, and follow Him.

Luke 9:28-62 records how Peter, James and John witness Jesus being transfigured, and meeting with Moses and Elijah. Jesus heals a boy who is afflicted with demonically induced, convulsive fits. Jesus talks about being a disciple, and says that we can't follow Him in a half-hearted way.

Part 2: Service on the Way to the Cross (10:1 – 19:27). In Judea and Perea.

In Luke 10:1-24, Jesus sends out the seventy-two disciples. He tells them they will not be accepted everywhere, but whoever rejects them is rejecting Jesus, and will face judgement on account of that. They return with great joy and excitement, because the demons submitted to them. Jesus reminds them that their greatest joy should be on account of their salvation.

Luke 10:25-42 records the parable of the good Samaritan, told by Jesus in response to a question about loving our neighbors. Jesus stays at the home of Mary and Martha, where He commends Mary for spending time listening to Him, and gently rebukes Martha for being distracted and worried about many things.

In Luke 11:1-32, Jesus teaches the disciples how to pray. He encourages us to be bold in asking God to meet our needs, and give us the gift of the Holy Spirit. Jesus amazes the crowd by healing a mute man, by driving out an evil spirit. He teaches about deliverance, saying that it is a sign that the kingdom of God has come. Jesus is critical of those who only want to see miracles, but are not willing to hear God's word, or repent.

In Luke 11:33-54, Jesus encourages us to be light to those around us, and to get rid of all darkness on the inside. Jesus is very critical of the Pharisees, who focus on the external expression of religiosity, but do not have the heart of God. They have become self-important, and lay burdens on others, which stop them entering the kingdom of God.

In Luke 12:1-34, Jesus encourages us to be bold in proclaiming and acknowledging Jesus, and not to live in fear of what others say or think. The Holy Spirit will give us the words to speak. Jesus teaches us not to be focussed on worldly wealth, and the accumulation of possessions. Our hearts should be set on seeking God's kingdom, and building up treasure in heaven, rather than treasure on earth.

In Luke 12:35-59, Jesus encourages us to be faithful in serving God, and to live our lives as if the return of Jesus is imminent, as no one knows when His return will be. Jesus warns His disciples not to expect unity and peace, because the gospel message will bring division, even within families.

In Luke 13:1-30, Jesus heals a woman on the Sabbath who had been crippled by a spirit of infirmity for many years, and the Pharisees are indignant. Jesus likens the kingdom of God to a mustard tree, or yeast working its way into dough. He teaches that many want to be in heaven, but that the entry is through a narrow door. Those killed in tragic accidents, or on the orders of Pilate, were not being punished because they were more sinful than others.

In Luke 13:31-14:35, Jesus heals a man with dropsy, (abnormal body swelling), on the Sabbath. Jesus teaches that we need to be humble, and not exalt ourselves. The kingdom of God is like a king inviting many people to attend a great banquet, but many make lame excuses and do not come. There is a cost in following Jesus, and in being a true disciple. We need to be willing to put Jesus above everything else in our lives.

The parables of the lost sheep, the lost coin and the prodigal son in Luke 15:1-16:18 teach about the nature of God, and how He seeks the lost, and welcomes the repentant sinner with open arms. The parable of the shrewd manager teaches us that our goal should be laying up treasure in heaven. Jesus teaches that the goal of accumulating money and earthly wealth is in conflict with wholeheartedly serving God.

In Luke 16:19-17:10, Jesus teaches that, following death, there is a separation, and an un-crossable chasm created between the unrighteous and the righteous. Jesus teaches that those who cause others to sin will be severely judged. We are encouraged to forgive those who sin against us, exercise faith, and to faithfully serve God without self-exaltation.

In Luke 17:11-37, Jesus heals ten lepers, but only one comes back to give thanks. Jesus teaches about His second coming. It will be unexpected and sudden, and many will be simply going about their normal business. There will be a separation at that time, just as in the days of Noah, and Lot, when some were saved, but many perished.

In Luke 18, Jesus teaches us to be persistent in prayer and to be humble before God. Jesus welcomes the little children, and encourages us to trust, and have 'child-like' faith, when we seek God. He teaches how wealth and riches can be a barrier to entering God's kingdom. (This surprises the disciples, as prosperity was believed to be a sign of God's blessing.) Jesus tells his disciples what will happen to Him in Jerusalem. Jesus heals a blind beggar near Jericho.

In Luke 19:1-27, Jesus meets with Zacchaeus, who declares he will make restitution to all those whom he has cheated. Jesus tells the parable of the talents, encouraging us to use our God-given gifts to serve God.

5. Triumph of the Son of Man (19:28 – 24:53)

Luke 19:28 – 48, Jesus is welcomed by the crowds as He enters Jerusalem on a donkey, and drives out the traders from the temple, before teaching the crowds. The Pharisees want to kill Jesus, but are too frightened to do anything, because of His popularity.

Luke 20:1-26 records how the Pharisees tried to trap Jesus in what He was teaching, in order to have a reason for arresting Him. Jesus tells the parable of the vineyard, in which the tenants of the vineyard kill messengers from the king, (the prophets), and finally the king's son, (Jesus). In an obvious reference to Himself, He asks them the meaning of the phrase 'The stone the builders have rejected has become the capstone'.

In response to a question from the Sadducees, who do not believe in the resurrection, Jesus teaches, in Luke 20:27-21:4, that there will be a resurrection, but that it is only on earth that people marry or are given in marriage. In the hearing of the crowds, Jesus warns the disciples to beware of the teachers of the law, because they are filled with self-importance. Jesus commends the widow for making an offering to the Lord, despite her poverty.

In Luke 21:5-38, Jesus prophesies that the temple will be destroyed, (fulfilled in 70 AD), and talks about the end times. He tells them there will be many false prophets claiming to have the anointing of God, and that believers will be persecuted and betrayed, even by their own families. There will be worldwide turmoil and natural disasters. Jesus will return in the clouds with power and great glory. Heaven and earth will pass away but Jesus' words are eternal.

In Luke 22, Jesus celebrates the Passover meal with His disciples, telling them they must serve one another. Jesus sweats drops of blood, as He anguishes about what is about to happen, but He willingly surrenders to the Father's will. Jesus is betrayed by Judas and arrested. He is mocked and ill-treated by His captors. Jesus' prophecy that Peter will deny Him is fulfilled, and Peter weeps bitterly.

In Luke 23, Jesus is taken before Pilate and King Herod. The crowds shout for the release of Barabbas, and Jesus is handed over to be crucified. On the cross, Jesus tells one of the criminals, being crucified with Him, that he will enter paradise that very day. Jesus prays forgiveness for those who are crucifying Him. He commits His spirit into the Father's hands, before He dies, and is placed in the tomb.

Luke 24 records how the resurrection of Jesus on the third day is announced to the women preparing to anoint His body. He appears to two disciples on the Emmaus Road. Jesus appears to all the disciples and opens their minds to understand the Scriptures and what they have witnessed. Before ascending into heaven, Jesus tells His disciples to wait in Jerusalem, until they have been empowered from on high.

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One Story: The Incarnation

Scripture Focus: Mt. 1-2; Lk 1-2

Summary: This section gives attention to the incarnation of Jesus Christ, the world to which He came, and some responses to His coming. It emphasizes Jesus' uniqueness as the virgin-born Son of God.

Outline

- I. The World at Christ's Birth
- II. The Truth about Christ's Birth
- III. Responses to Christ's Birth

While understanding the three portraits of Christ revealed in the synoptics is important, there is only one story that the Gospels tell. That story is one of redemption and salvation. It is the story that transcends each Gospel. And it is the story that we must not miss.

I. The World at Christ's Birth

Gen. 3:15 - God promised to Adam to send a Deliverer who would bruise Satan's head.

Gal. 4:4, 5 - Thousands of years later, the apostle Paul wrote about the timing of Christ's birth.

The time in which Jesus was born facilitated the spread of the message of Christ. Roman peace, extensive road systems, and a common language were all instrumental in the dissemination of His gospel. But that does not mean the world into which Christ was born was ideal.

A. Less than ideal Roman Empire

Rome ruled the world at the time of Christ's birth. The Roman Empire was greater in territory and stronger in military power than any other empire the world had known. Its law system and the strength of its armies were sources of Roman pride.

Yet the Roman Empire was a fearful place to live for its slaves. They made up about two-thirds of the empire's population. The government considered slaves non-persons. So slaves had no rights and no recourse if they were treated poorly. Slave owners could even kill their slaves without fear of reprisal.

Subjecting most of the empire's population to such an arrangement meant that life in the empire was cheap. Fun and games included deadly gladiator sports, and theaters offered wicked stories from Greek mythology. Roman law and order, prosperity, and ease had not produced an ideal state.

Seneca, the Stoic philosopher who lived at the same time as the events of the New Testament (4 BC to AD 65), wrote, *Daily the appetite for sin increases, the sense of shame diminishes, crimes are no longer secret.* The world at the time of Christ's birth was a world in need.

B. Less than fulfilling religion

1. Roman religion

The Romans combined various forms of religious belief and practice to form their own religion. They worshiped a variety of gods and goddesses. Even their emperors became objects of worship.

Greek philosophy permeated Roman thought. The most popular was Epicureanism, which held that the greatest goal is happiness. Philosophers Plato and Aristotle had accepted homosexuality as a legitimate sexual preference. They also approved of abortion. Although Plato and Aristotle lived 300-400 years before Christ, their philosophies remained and influenced Roman thought. Seneca, a philosopher contemporary with Christ, taught that suicide is acceptable when life becomes unbearable. He was later forced to commit suicide when he was implicated in a plot to kill Nero.

2. Jewish religion

Judah was under subjection to Rome when Jesus was born. Although the Jews possessed all of the Old Testament Scriptures, for generations, they added to and took away from that inerrant, infallible authority in their worship and practice. They wanted to control their religion and make it their own.

The Pharisees added to the Scripture. They effectively made the Jewish religion a list of outward acts devoid of any inward reality. They regarded their additions with greater devotion than they did the original. Jesus eventually confronted these Jewish religious leaders and exposed their hypocrisy. The Pharisees defended their religion and sought to do away with Jesus in response.

The Sadducees treated the body of truth with skepticism; they rejected whatever seemed unreasonable to them and therefore took away from the Scriptures. The Herodians were more interested in gaining favor with the authorities than in standing for the truth. The Zealots were often violent in their desire to overthrow Roman rule. The Essenes wished to withdraw from all of the sects and merely live a remote, monastic existence, contemplating truth.

To large segments of Jewry the Jewish religion was one of empty hope. It became about people instead of God. It was to this vacuum in a hollow world that Jesus came.

II. The Truth about Christ's Birth

A. His lineage

The Jews kept careful records of family lineage to ensure that they could trace the royal line through whom Messiah would come. As mentioned in earlier lessons, both Matthew and Luke included a genealogy of Jesus. Matthew traced the lineage of Joseph in order to establish Jesus' legal rights (as Joseph's stepson) to the throne of David. Luke's record traces Jesus' lineage through Mary, also a descendant of David.

Matthew's Gospel, testifying to the Jews that Jesus came from the kingly line, begins the genealogy with Abraham and centers on David. Luke's Gospel, presenting Jesus as the Son of Man with a message for all mankind, traces His ancestry not only to David but to Adam, the father of the race. These genealogies should have satisfied the Jews that Jesus had indeed descended from David and was thus eligible for the throne of Israel.

B. His deity

The One Who would fulfill Old Testament prophecy would be more than an ordinary child.

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Genesis 3:15 - The expression seed of the woman (Gen. 3:15) indicates a virgin birth, for no seed of the man is involved.

Isaiah 7:14 – This prophecy explains more clearly the promise made to Eve. The Lord himself shall give you a sign promised that something more significant would occur.

Luke 1:35 - The angel Gabriel's promise to Mary confirms the virgin birth of Jesus. Without a human father, this Child would be born of a virgin by the power of God.

The New Testament clearly teaches the Virgin Birth as a literal fact. It is not an explanation made years later by adherents of the Christian message eager to enhance the miraculous nature of their Master. If we accept the authority of Scripture as the inspired, infallible Word of God, we must accept its message that Jesus Christ was conceived by the Holy Spirit without a human father and born of the virgin Mary, The Virgin Birth is an integral part of the complete gospel of Christ.

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III. Responses to Christ's Birth

A. Response of Belief

1. By Mary

Although young, Mary had a thorough knowledge of the Scriptures, which is evident in her ready response to the angel's message and her Scripture-filled hymn of praise (Luke 1:46-55). Mary's knowledge and devout attitude enabled her to accept the angel's message and to praise God for the privilege of bearing the Promised One.

Luke 1:46, 47 – God my Savior. Mary recognized she was a sinner and needed a Savior.

2. By Joseph

Matt. 1:18-25 - Joseph felt greatly disturbed by Mary's news. If he denounced Mary publicly, she would be disgraced. So, an angel appeared to reassure him that Mary was guiltless and had been, in fact, chosen of the Holy Spirit to bear Emmanuel. The astounding news that Mary's child was the promised Redeemer settled the matter for Joseph. He submitted to God's plan in every detail, including uprooting his family and moving to Egypt when Jesus' life was in danger.

3. By Elizabeth and Zacharias

Luke 1:43, 44 - When Mary told her cousin Elizabeth the angel's startling message, Elizabeth recognized the connection between the birth of her promised son and Mary's Son. When Elizabeth heard Mary, John leaped in her womb for joy (v. 44).

Luke 1:69 - Elizabeth's husband, Zacharias, a priest, was well acquainted with the prophecies concerning the Messiah and His forerunner. He referred to the coming Messiah as the horn of salvation for us.

B. Response of praise and thanks

1. By the shepherds

Bethlehem lay about 5 miles (8 km) south of Jerusalem in hilly country. It was a good place to raise sheep to supply lambs for sacrifices at the temple in Jerusalem. There angels delivered the message of the Incarnation to some shepherds (Luke 2:8-14), who then rushed to worship the Child (2:15, 16).

Luke 2:17-20 - They returned glorifying and praising God.

2. By Simeon and Anna

Luke 2:30-32 - When Joseph and Mary took Jesus to the temple for His circumcision, they met Simeon, who had waited in expectation of Messiah's birth. God told him that before he died he would see the Messiah. God was true to His promise. He thanked God for allowing him to see thy salvation.

Luke 2:36-38 - Mary and Joseph also met Anna, who spent night and day in the temple in worship and prayer. She, too, saw Jesus and gave thanks.

3. By the wise men

Matthew includes the account of the wise men to support his emphasis on presenting Jesus as the Messiah-King (Matt. 2:1-12). The wise men, called magi in the Greek language, were likely from Chaldea. Their interest in the stars prompted them to pay special attention to an unusual star and perhaps connect it with the prophecy that there shall come a Star out of Jacob (Num. 24:17). Perhaps the ministries of Daniel led to their understanding about the Jewish Messiah.

Luke 2:11 - Delayed by their visit to Herod, the Magi traveled to Joseph and Mary's home, where they fell down before Jesus and worshipped Him before presenting their gifts to the young child.

C. Response of fear

1. By Satan

Satan knew of the prophecy that the Seed of the woman would bruise the head of the serpent (Gen. 3:15). Throughout Old Testament events he undermined and opposed Israel in the hope of destroying the people through whom the Redeemer would come. Despite Satan's many attempts to prevent the birth, Jesus was born. Satan then attempted to manipulate Herod's paranoia and baby Jesus' vulnerability to kill the Redeemer before He could fulfill His mission.

2. By Herod

Herod was prompted to investigate Micah's prophecy (Micah 5:2) when the wise men came searching for the newborn King of the Jews. He took the visit of the Magi seriously, especially the OT reference to the birthplace of this King in Bethlehem. He took immediate measures to ensure the death of this rival by ordering the slaughter of all the male children up to two years of age in the vicinity of Bethlehem (Matt. 2:16). Before Satan could carry out his plot through Herod, an angel warned Joseph in a dream to leave Bethlehem and go into Egypt, which Joseph did (Matt. 2:13-15). Herod died soon afterward, and the angel directed Joseph to return to his homeland. Because Archelaus, Herod's son, was nearly as cruel as his father, Joseph bypassed Jerusalem and settled with his family in Nazareth, in the province of Galilee. Jesus coming out of Egypt was a fulfillment of prophecy (Hosea 11:11).

Slide 85 - One Story: Baptism and Temptation

Scripture Focus: Matthew 3; 4:1-11; Mark 1:1-13; Luke 3:1-23

Summary: This section traces Jesus' life from His boyhood, through His initiation into public ministry (His baptism), to His temptation by Satan in the wilderness. Both Jesus' baptism and temptation demonstrate that Jesus' is sinless and qualified to be the Savior.

Outline

- I. Jesus' Boyhood
- II. Jesus' Baptism: Approved
- III. Jesus' Temptation: Qualified

I. Jesus' Boyhood

Luke 2:40, 52 - The Bible does not record much about Jesus' childhood and youth. But we know that because He assumed a body, He limited Himself to the requirements of that body. We know that He grew strong and wise and that the grace of God was upon Him. He increased in all the qualities of a complete person—in body, mind, and soul.

The Gospels afford us only one glimpse of Jesus during His years at Nazareth. That glimpse concerns His journey to Jerusalem at the age of twelve.

Luke 2:42-51 - Jesus' meeting with the temple leaders demonstrated His unusual knowledge of the Old Testament and His insight into its meaning. The doctors of the law couldn't believe a child could know so much and communicate so well.

Joseph and Mary had started heading for home when they discovered after a day's journey that Jesus was missing. They weren't being bad parents, they assumed He was with their relatives traveling with them. They quickly returned to Jerusalem, where they found Him in the temple. They didn't understand what Jesus meant by being about His Father's business. One day they would. Dutifully Jesus returned to the routine of life at Nazareth, obedient to Mary and Joseph (Luke 2:51).

II. Jesus' Baptism: Approved

- A. God sent John to prepare for Christ

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Mal. 4:5,6 – These were the closing verses of the Old Testament, the last of the prophets had prophesied. Four hundred years of silence had passed since that prophecy.

Luke 1:17 - Then an angel of the Lord announced to Zacharias that he and his wife, Elizabeth, would be blessed with a son, John. John the Baptist fulfilled this prophecy at least in part.

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Matt. 3:1-3. There are many who contend that he should not be called "the Baptist" but rather "the baptizer". But notice the "B". In English grammar, you capitalize a name or a title of a person. The title Baptist was given to him because he was sent from God with the authority to baptize.

For hundreds of years, the Jews had not heard from God as there was no prophet in Israel. Suddenly, John comes on the scene. It was his job to introduce the Messiah. John was the fulfillment of Is. 40:3.

He was the "voice crying in the wilderness". John chose a wilderness as his place of preaching. Other prophets went into the cities and villages where people could be found. But not John. He chose the wilderness as his place of preaching. People went out to him instead of him going to the people.

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"Prepare ye the way". John's mission was to prepare the people for the Messiah. He did this through an itinerant ministry along the banks of the Jordan river from Aenon in the north (John 3:23) to Bethabara in the south (Jn 1:28). People from all over Palestine came to hear him. His message was simple, yet profound, "Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."

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Matt. 3:5-6 - Those that showed evidence of repentance and confessed their sins were baptized. The Baptism of John was merely a sign of true reconciliation with God. John's baptism never brought salvation. Simply being baptized by John would be worthless without repentance and faith in God.

B. God disapproved of the religious leaders

The Sadducees and Pharisees were among those who came out to John in the wilderness to be baptized by him. But their motives were not pure. They weren't interested in genuine repentance. They were there for attention.

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Matt. 3:7 - John saw through their pretense and called them a generation of vipers, meaning they were the offspring of a viper, possibly a reference to Satan (cf. Gen. 3:14, 15; John 8:44). He made a correlation between the viper's poisonous venom and the religious leaders' beliefs.

The Pharisees were self-righteous followers of the many traditions they wrote and imposed on the law. They believed God was pleased with their works, so they saw no reason to repent. The Sadducees were religious liberals who compromised the law. They didn't believe in anything miraculous. They denied there was a resurrection.

The two groups strongly opposed each other, but their high view of self was essentially the same. That common self-righteousness was their venom. John asked them, who had warned you to flee God's wrath. The picture is of vipers fleeing before a fire.

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Matt. 3:8 - He wanted to see evidence of repentance before he would baptize. The word "repentance" literally means "a change of mind that results in a change of action/direction." The verb essentially means "to change one's outlook towards God." Instead of running from God, one runs to God. This results in turning from sin and being sorry for sins. If they had repented it would be evidenced in changed lives, which is the "fruit of repentance."

John understood that the religious leaders viewed his baptism as another outward act that could benefit their standing before men and add to their acceptance before God. John did not indulge their poisonous self-righteousness by baptizing them. The Pharisees and Sadducees gave no evidence of actual repentance. They were fruitless.

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Matt. 3:9 - John the Baptist went on to debunk the Jews' belief that being Jewish made them right with God. He pointed out that God could choose to make even lifeless stones, which were perhaps a reference to Gentiles, to become children of Abraham. Instead of being guaranteed a place in God's Kingdom, those Jews who never bore fruit of repentance would eventually be judged by God by fire.

One might think that John the Baptist was rather harsh to the Pharisees and Sadducees. But he was kind to them in that he exposed their self-righteousness and told them how to avoid God's wrath.

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C. God approved of Christ

Matt. 3:13-15. Jesus came from Galilee to where John was baptizing.

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It is estimated that he walked 60 miles (100 km) to do so. There was water in Galilee. Why not have someone immerse him in water there? Why travel that great of distance? Because John had the authority to baptize, and authority was important to Jesus.

Why was Jesus baptized? Jesus was sinless. He didn't have any sins to confess or repent of. But Jesus submitted to John's baptism and gives the reason in verse 15 - to fulfill all righteousness. It is a righteous thing to submit to scriptural baptism and Jesus set the example for us.

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Matt. 3:16-17. Coming out of the water, three things happened: the heavens were opened, the Spirit of God descended like a dove, and God spoke from heaven. Note that the Trinity is present at Jesus' baptism. This is the first of three times when God validated Jesus with a voice from heaven.

But before Jesus could begin his public ministry there was one more thing that needed to happen.

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III. Jesus' Temptation: Qualified

Slide 97 - Matt. 4:1-2.

Slide 98 – Map - Jesus was led up by the Spirit to be tempted shows that he was subjected to temptation. Tradition says that he was likely led to the rugged mountainous region back of Jericho. He fasted for 40 days. Moses and Elijah are two others in the Bible who fasted 40 days. Although Jesus was 100% God, he was also 100% human. Here we are told he hungered.

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A. Test 1: To provide bread (vv. 3-4)

As a result of his 40-day fast, he was hungry, and Satan's first temptation centered around the desire for food. But Jesus was not going to obey Satan or prove to him who he was. Jesus answered Satan with the Word of God and quoted Deut. 8:3: It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God (Matt. 4:4; cf. Deut. 8:3). What God says is more important than what Satan says and more important than what our own needs and desires tell us. God's will should always determine the choices we make. Jesus faced Satan with the Word of God as His only weapon, and Satan lost the first round in the battle to break the Son's loyalty to the Father.

Slide 100

B. Test 2: To win popular acclaim (vv. 5-7)

How the devil took him there is not stated. But they end up at the high point of the temple which coincides with the SE corner of the outer wall. A fall from this point to the valley of the Kedron below would certainly have been fatal. Then Satan quotes, albeit incorrectly, Psalm 91:12 further tempting Jesus to prove He is God basically stating for no injury can result if he is the Son of God.

Notice that Satan did not attempt in any way to force Jesus to jump. The Devil does not make us sin. Temptations may come to us, but we must consent to them before they become sins. Consistent with his behavior with Adam and Eve, Satan misquoted the Scripture, leaving out to keep thee in all thy ways (cf. Ps. 91:11, 12; Matt. 4:6). Cast thyself down is not part of the passage in Psalm 91. Daring God by putting oneself deliberately in danger is not trusting God.

But Jesus quoted Scripture back to him - "Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God" basically saying back to Satan - to throw down one's self so that God would intervene against the laws of nature would be merely testing God which we are forbidden to do.

Slide 101

C. Test 3: To gain kingdoms to rule (vv. 8-10)

How Satan took Jesus to this high mountain is not stated, nor which mountain. Satan showed Jesus all the kingdoms of the world and the glory of them to Jesus. Satan says to Jesus "All these things will I give thee".

Interesting. Jesus did not challenge Satan on that and so apparently it was in Satan's power to give it. We don't quite understand it, but perhaps when Adam and Eve disobeyed God and sin entered into the world that Satan somehow legally obtained the title or deed to this world, which Jesus took back after his death and resurrection.

So, Satan shows Jesus all this and then gets to what he really wants, worship. He told Jesus that he could have all this if only he would bow down and worship him. Again, Jesus responds with Scripture, "Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve."

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Matt. 3:11. Jesus ordered Satan to leave and he left for a season, defeated but not destroyed. Jesus exposed Satan and his tactics, and He defeated Satan using the Word of God. One major application we can take away from this passage is to quote Scripture when we are tempted. Then angels came and ministered to Him, supplying his physical needs. He was now ready to begin His ministry.

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One Story: Miracles

Scripture Focus: Matt. 14:22-36; Mark 3:1-12; Luke 8:22-56

Summary: In Luke 4:18 and 19, Jesus outlined His mission on earth. This section considers the different way He demonstrated His compassion by using His divine power over nature, sickness, Satan, and death.

Outline

- I. Compassionate Power over Nature
- II. Compassionate Power over Sickness
- III. Compassionate Power over Satan
- IV. Compassionate Power over Death

I. Compassionate Power over Nature

A. The obedient fish (Luke 5:1-11)

Luke 5:1-7. Jesus preached to a multitude, using Simon Peter's fishing boat as a platform after Peter and his men had fished all night without catching anything. When Jesus concluded His message, He instructed Peter to launch out and cast his nets. Peter protested but obeyed. The result was more fish than the fishermen could handle.

Luke 5:8-11. Jesus did not depart from Peter. Instead Jesus told Peter not to fear for Peter would become a fisher of men. When Peter, James, and John came to shore, they forsook all they had and followed Jesus.

B. Calming the storm (Mark 4:36-39)

Throughout His Galilean ministry Jesus often crossed the Sea of Galilee. He could sit down or lie down to rest while His disciples cared for the boat during the crossing. It was a shorter and quicker way to travel—except during storms, which arose often and with little warning. Of the many tempests that swept the Sea of Galilee, the Gospels mention two occasions on which Christ performed a miracle to calm the stormy sea.

Mark 4:36-39. After a busy day, Jesus and His disciples entered a boat to cross the lake to the region of the Gadarenes, an area inhabited largely by Gentiles, where Jesus desired to minister. Weary after a long day, He lay down and slept. Then a sudden storm swept over the lake. Even after the storm rose to its full fury, Jesus slept on. The disciples, in their fear, awoke Him, crying, Master, carest thou not that we perish? He arose, and at His rebuke of the wind and sea, the storm instantly ceased.

The disciples had seen Jesus care for other needs in supernatural ways, but they had not learned to trust Him to meet their needs. In the end the revelation of His power over the forces of nature and the implication of His deity were more important to His disciples than His act of stilling the storm.

C. Feeding the five thousand (Mark 6:34-44)

Mark 6:34-36. Jesus spent the day teaching the crowd. The people had made no provision for food for that long day, and it was a long way back home. Their problem seemed too big to solve. The crowd was large, consisting of five thousand men, plus women and children. To buy bread for such a multitude, even if enough bread were available, would have cost eight months' pay for an average worker. The disciples told Jesus to send the crowd home hungry.

Mark 6:37-44. Jesus felt compassion toward the people in their spiritual need, and He also cared for them in their physical need. Jesus accepted the little lunch offered to Him so He could manifest His power by multiplying it. Five thousand men, plus women and children, did all eat, and were filled.

II. Compassionate Power over Sickness

Works of healing were part of Jesus' ministry from the beginning. His goal was not to heal as many people as He could in His three-year ministry, but the healings were helpful in communicating both His power and compassion. He healed each person compassionately, whether He was ministering to a multitude or to an individual. Consider a few examples.

A. Healing the paralyzed man (Mark 2:1-12)

vv. 1-4. Four friends of a paralyzed man were so certain Jesus could restore their friend to wholeness that they placed him before Jesus in a dramatic way. They tore off a roof and lowered their friend down, so he rested in front of Jesus. Jesus noted the faith of the men in their determination to bring their friend to Jesus and in the man's willingness to risk that dangerous mode of entry.

vv. 5-11. They believed in Jesus' power and in His willingness to heal. Yet Jesus didn't heal the paralytic immediately. Instead, He exhibited an attribute of His deity and, recognizing the man's faith, forgave the man's sins. When the scribes began to reason in their minds that only God could forgive sins, Jesus read their thoughts and mentioned that it is easier to say that a man's sins are forgiven than it is to tell him to take up his bed and walk. Then Jesus healed him.

B. Cleansing the lepers (Luke 17:11-19)

Although each of the synoptic writers recorded a work of Jesus in healing someone of leprosy, only the physician, Luke, provided an account of the occasion when Jesus healed ten men together. On His last major tour of His ministry, Jesus passed from Galilee through Samaria to reach Jerusalem.

vv. 11-14. Ten lepers cried out to Him to have mercy on them. One of them was a Samaritan; the others were Jews. In answer to their plea for mercy, Jesus told them to go to the priest, who could not heal them but who could confirm that they had been healed. It was up to the ten whether to make that journey at only Jesus' word. As they went, they were healed.

vv. 15-19. Only one of the ten, a Samaritan, returned to thank Jesus. This interaction between the Samaritan and Jesus clearly showed that salvation is for all, for no one was more hated by the Jews than the Samaritans.

C. Giving sight to the blind (Matt. 20:30-34)

On His way to Jerusalem when he would suffer and die for the sins of mankind. Jesus passed by two blind men. In many of His miracles Jesus had merely spoken to accomplish the healing. But in the case of these blind men, He touched their eyes, and immediately their eyes received sight. Not only were their eyes changed, but their lives were changed as well, for they followed Christ.

III. Compassionate Power over Satan

As prince of this world, Satan seeks not only to rule men in his kingdom of darkness but even to possess them body and soul. Demons, part of the angelic host that defected from Heaven when Satan rebelled against God, can possess bodies, influence people's minds, and seriously affect every aspect of human life.

The compassionate Christ was concerned with this satanic attack on the human race and, in His ministry, delivered many children and adults from demon possession. The demons had to obey Christ's direct command. (Luke 4:41; 8:26-29, 33).

IV. Compassionate Power over Death

The Synoptics record just three times when Jesus raised someone from the dead. People may find natural explanations for a person's recovery from bodily ailments, but faking death is practically impossible. For example,

- Jairus's daughter, for example, still lay in the room where she had died (Mark 5:22-24, 35-43).
- The widow's son lay in his coffin on the way to the cemetery when Jesus brought him back to life (Luke 7:11-17).
- Lazarus laid in the grave for four days before Jesus came to call him back to life (Jn 11:1-44).

Each restoration of life brought instant rejoicing to family and friends and greater public admiration for Jesus. This ascending scale of the miraculous also brought increasing opposition as proof accumulated that Jesus did indeed fulfill prophecy concerning the coming of Messiah.

Slide 104

One Story: Transfiguration

Scripture Focus: Matt. 16:1-4; 13-20; 17:1-12; Mark 9:1-13; Luke 9:18-36

Summary: This section looks at Peter's answer to Jesus' question, "Who do you think I am"? It then considers the events and significance of the Transfiguration and looks at what responses it evokes from people, including learners today.

Outline

- I. The Realization of Jesus as Messiah
- II. The Transfiguration of Christ
- III. The Response to the Revelation of Christ

I. The Realization of Jesus as Messiah

A. People postulated about Jesus' identity

People asked one question about Jesus wherever He went: Who is He? Different people phrased the question in different ways. The doctors of the law probably asked it in amazement at the articulate twelve-year-old Who talked with them so knowledgeably about the Scriptures. Curious bystanders at Jesus' baptism must have puzzled over the voice from Heaven and the introduction by which John the Baptist announced Jesus as Son of God and Messiah.

Luke 7:20. From prison John the Baptist asked, Art thou he that should come? Or look we for another?

Luke 5:21. The Pharisees and scribes reasoned, Who is this which speaketh blasphemies?

Mt. 16:14. Many common people thought Jesus to be one of the forerunners of the promised Messiah.

The Pharisees and the Sadducees grew disturbed about the multitudes who followed Jesus. They wanted to find evidence they could use to destroy His ministry, so they tested Him by asking Him to show them a sign from Heaven to prove by some direct miracle that He is Messiah.

Mt. 12:38, 39. Jesus didn't indulge the Pharisees and Sadducees. He told them the only sign they would have was the sign of Jonah, a reference to Jesus' resurrection after 3 days/nights in the tomb.

B. Jesus asked about His identity (Matt. 16:13-20)

vv. 13-14. A few months before Jesus was crucified, He and His disciples visited near Caesarea Philippi, where He spent more time with His disciples. He was training them for the tasks they would have after His departure. The purpose of that training included ensuring that they clearly understood His nature as the God-Man and the mission He had come into the world to accomplish.

So He asked the disciples how people were identifying Him. Some of the people said He was John the Baptist while others said He was Elijah, Jeremiah, or one of the prophets.

vv. 15-16. Then Jesus asked His disciples directly whom they thought He was. Instead of several responses, only one came, as Peter spoke for the group. The truth about Jesus expressed in Peter's confession is a solid rock that is foundational to Jesus' identity.

Peter's answer identified both the mission of Jesus, the sent One of God, and His true nature, the Son of God. As the Son of God, He is Lord. As the Christ, He is the One the Father sent to accomplish the sacrifice for sin on the cross. He would rise from the dead in proof of His deity. The truth about Jesus became the foundation of ministry that was to spread worldwide His church that He will establish.

v. 17-20. After commending Peter for his confession of faith and the importance of its message, Jesus charged the disciples not to tell anyone that He is the Christ. This caution seems contrary to what we would expect, but the confession was to be proclaimed after the Cross and His Resurrection.

II. The Transfiguration of Christ

Some find a supposed "contradiction" in the number of days until the Transfiguration. Counting the days between the promise and its fulfillment, Matthew and Mark reported that Jesus' transfiguration came six days later. Luke stated that eight days passed. The difference can be explained in that Matthew and Mark counted the days between the day Jesus spoke the words and the day of the Transfiguration whereas Luke included the day Jesus spoke the words and the day of fulfillment.

A. The revelation of Christ's glory (Matt. 16:28 – 17:2)

v. 16:28. Jesus made a remarkable statement that seemed to contradict what He had been saying about His coming death. He declared that some of His disciples would live to see Him in His kingdom. Apparently, He meant that some of the disciples would witness His transfiguration before seeing death.

v. 17:1. Six days after that promise, He selected three disciples, Peter, James, and John to go with Him to a private place on Mount Hermon.

v. 2 - Jesus was transfigured before them. His face changed from within and became as bright as the sun. His clothing glowed as white as the light. The disciples saw Christ in His splendor. They would never look or think of Him the same.

B. The conversation about Christ's death

v. 3 - When the three disciples awakened, they saw Jesus in His glory, standing with two men whom they could identify as Moses and Elijah. God had buried Moses at his death, but Elijah had been taken up alive into Heaven in a chariot of fire. Moses represented the Law, and Elijah, the prophets. According to Luke 9:31, the three men talked about Jesus' soon decease at Jerusalem.

Next slide

III. The Response to the Revelation of Christ

A. The initial response (17:4-5)

v. 4. Jesus' transfiguration was indeed a glimpse of the kingdom. The scene overwhelmed Peter, who responded with a mixture of admiration and fear. His suggestion to make three tabernacles alluded to the Feast of Tabernacles, which was coming up. The suggestion was, however, inappropriate, for Peter said, It is good for us to be here; that is, Let's stay here.

v. 5 - The Transfiguration affirmed Peter's testimony that Jesus is the Son of God and Messiah. God the Father affirmed Jesus' righteousness with the words in [Him] I am well pleased.

B. The intermediate response

v. 9 - As the three disciples and the Master journeyed down the mountain, Peter, James, and John must have been bursting with excitement to tell everybody. But Jesus instructed them not to tell anyone what they had seen.

vv. 10-12 - Peter, James, and John puzzled over Jesus' statement that He would rise from the dead. Since they had trouble believing that He would die, rising from the dead was still more mysterious and remote.

vv. 22, 23 - In Galilee Jesus continued teaching His disciples, preparing them for their future ministry. He outlined three important events they needed to be prepared to face: the betrayal of their Master, His death, and His resurrection. That He should die seemed so destructive to their hopes that they could not grasp the significance of His final statement that He would be resurrected. It was not long before all these events took place. In time the disciples looked back on the betrayal, death, and resurrection of Christ with a dedication to tell others the gospel.

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C. The current response

2 Peter 1:16-18 - The disciples eventually learned that the Transfiguration of Christ has relevance for the current age. Peter related it to the yet future coming of the Lord. When Christ returns, He will do so in the honor and glory He demonstrated at His transfiguration.

As believers, we ought to be looking forward to Christ's return for us at the Rapture and then His return with us to set up His kingdom on earth. The disciples found the return of Christ highly motivating. Those events should be highly motivating for us too. For what we do for the Lord before He comes will affect our rewards and opportunities to praise the Lord for all eternity.

2 Cor. 5:9, 10.

Our ongoing response to the Transfiguration should also include telling others about Christ. Christ wanted Peter, James, and John to keep His revelation of Himself a secret for a time, but that is no longer the case. We are called to tell the world about Christ.

Matt. 28:16-20.

Slide 108

One Story: Triumphal Entry

Scripture Focus: Matt. 21:1-17; Mark 11:1-11; Luke 19:11-48; 20:9-19

Summary: This section follows Jesus on His final journey to Jerusalem. It considers His teaching to the disciples and their inability to understand. It also presents Jesus' offer of peace that Jerusalem rejected but that is now available to all men through His death on the cross.

Outline

- I. Jesus' Teaching concerning His Death
- II. Disciples' Expectations of Glory
- III. Jesus' Parable about the Rejection of the Kingdom
- IV. Jesus' Entry into Jerusalem
- V. Cleansing of the Temple

I. Jesus' Teaching concerning His Death

As the opposition to Jesus Christ's ministry increased, so did His warnings to His disciples. He taught them that He would suffer rejection by the Jewish leaders. But the disciples could not grasp the prospect that Christ would die at the hands of His enemies, even though He repeatedly warned them that He would.

On the way to Jerusalem to observe the final Passover of His earthly ministry, Jesus gave the disciples more details about what would soon happen. He added that the chief priests and scribes would condemn Him to death. He also would be delivered to the Gentiles (the Roman government, which they were expecting Messiah to overthrow). He would be publicly condemned to crucifixion, the most painful mode of capital punishment in the Roman Empire, inflicted upon the worst of criminals.

Jesus would set the example of denying self to fulfill the will of the Father. Matt. 16:24, 25; Mark 8:34, 35; Luke 9:23, 24; Luke 14.33

II. Disciples' Expectations of Glory (Matt. 19:27-30)

The disciples clung to the hope common among the people that Jesus, as the Messiah, would destroy His enemies during His present ministry. In spite of Jesus' frequent explanations that He must die, the disciples fixed their thoughts on the Kingdom and what it would mean to them.

v. 27-30 - Behold, we have forsaken all, and followed thee, Peter pointed out. What shall we have therefore? Jesus' answer must have exceeded their most magnificent expectations. He assured them that they would each have a throne when He sat upon His throne of glory and each would receive a hundredfold for what he had lost. He also explained that this prediction would take place in the regeneration, that is, the rebirth of the nations, the restoration of all things.

Matt. 20:20-21 - After Jesus told them He was going to Jerusalem to die, James and John came with their mother, who requested that her two sons sit on His right and left in the Kingdom. Everyone assumed that their arrival in Jerusalem would signal the beginning of the messianic Kingdom, so they wanted to get their places in that Kingdom lined up.

vv. 20:22-23 - Again Jesus had to remind His disciples of His cup of sorrow. He rebuked them for their untimely ambition and reminded them that the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many (v. 28).

In Luke 19:11-27, Jesus told the parable of the pounds because His followers thought the Kingdom of God should immediately appear. His parable began by comparing the plan of God with their expectations:

v. 12 - A certain nobleman went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom, and to return. Notice that the nobleman would not receive his kingdom immediately but would first go away for a long time.

While he was away, his servants were to faithfully take care of his business. Upon his return he would hold them accountable. Only then would the ruler set up his kingdom. This parable would mean more to the disciples once they understood that Christ's Kingdom was delayed and that God's program included an unspecified amount of time for Christ to build His church.

III. Jesus' Parable about the Rejection of the Kingdom

Questions naturally come to our minds. Didn't John the Baptist and Jesus both preach, The kingdom of heaven is at hand (Matt. 3:2; 4:17)? When did God determine that, instead of being imminent, the Kingdom would be postponed until after Jesus died (went to a far country) and then returned (His second coming)? The timing of the Kingdom was determined by the Jews' response to Jesus. Jesus told a parable that related the Jew's rejection of Him to the timing of the Kingdom.

Read Luke 20:9-15.

In the parable the vineyard is Israel. The husbandmen are the religious rulers of the Jews. The far country is Heaven, and the servants are the prophets. The heir in the parable is Jesus. The Jews' rejection of Jesus is seen when the stewards slay the heir. Jesus added to the parable by explaining the consequences of rejecting the heir. The heir, the stone which the builders rejected, will become the chief cornerstone (v. 17). The stone, Jesus, would bring destruction for those who reject Him (v.18).

In considering the opposition Jesus faced, we see a crisis unfolding. The Pharisees went from just investigating this Prophet, Jesus, to their decision to destroy Him. When the Pharisees decided that Jesus threatened their plans and began plotting His murder, they were plainly rejecting the terms of God's Kingdom. From that point Jesus ceased proclaiming the Kingdom and began teaching of His approaching death.

The offer of the Kingdom was contingent on reception of the King. He was in the midst of them, but the Jews did not recognize or receive Him, so the offer was postponed.

Slide 109 -Read Acts 1:6, 7 and then go to Slide 110

IV. Jesus' Entry into Jerusalem

A. The people's response to Jesus

Crowds emerged into a multitude as Jesus and His disciples approached Jerusalem; excitement spread rapidly along the road as word circulated that Jesus of Nazareth would be at the Passover.

Matt. 21:1-5 - As Jesus and His disciples went on their way toward Jerusalem, they drew near the Mount of Olives. Jesus told two of His disciples to go to a nearby village and find a donkey tied with her colt. The disciples found the animals as Jesus had told them. Matthew tells us that this means of entrance fulfilled the prophecies of Isaiah 62:11 and Zechariah.

vv. 7-9. Jesus rode into Jerusalem along with His following, conscious that He was fulfilling the ancient prophecy and offering Himself to the city as the Messiah, the Prince of Peace. Multitudes cried, Hosanna; Son of David, recognition of His kingly heritage; and Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord, quoting Psalm 18:26. They cast their outer garments for a pathway for the King and cut branches from the trees and laid them along the road. Jesus' public entry into Jerusalem unmistakably announced His presence in the city.

Luke 19:39-40 - Some of the Pharisees in irritation asked Jesus to quiet His disciples. Jesus replied that if He quieted the disciples, the stones would cry out (Luke 19:40).

B. Jesus' response to the people

Lk. 19:41. Jesus was crying over the city, evidence of a broken heart. Jesus was filled with sadness as He looked upon the people. He loved them all. He came to give His life for them and offer them salvation. He came to bring them peace. He wanted so much to care for them. But Jesus knew that they would reject Him. They wanted a conquering king, not a suffering Savior. They were more interested in being freed from Rome rather than being freed from their sin and death. These were the same crowds that would in a few short days be shouting to crucify Him.

Lk 19:42-44. Jesus knew that Jerusalem would soon be destroyed. In AD 70, about thirty-seven years after Jesus entered Jerusalem, the Jews rebelled against the Roman rulers who controlled the city. The Roman army, led by Titus, destroyed the city and the Jewish temple. An estimated loss of 600,000 lives, some of whom were women and children, was particularly touching to Christ.

V. Cleansing of the Temple

A. Chasing out the thieves

The day after entering Jerusalem, Jesus went to the temple where the Sadducees were performing their temple duties. However, many of them were doing more than what God wanted them to do. They were taking advantage of the people and cheating them out of their money. They required the Jews to use temple coins, but they charged an unfair exchange rate for the temple coins.

In addition, other Sadducees set up tables to sell doves to the poor. God said that if a family was too poor to afford a lamb for the Passover sacrifice, they could sacrifice doves instead. It seemed like the Sadducees were doing something nice for the poor by selling doves. But again, they were not honest. They were charging high prices. They were taking advantage of the poor and robbing them.

vv. 45-46. Jesus saw the corruption happening inside God's house of worship. He was filled with righteous anger. He made a whip and drove the animals, money changers, and sellers of animals out of the temple. He overturned the money changers' tables and destroyed their booths. The temple was supposed to be a place of prayer. Instead, the Sadducees made it a place of dishonest gain.

B. Caring for the needy

Matt. 21:14-16 - After chasing out the Sadducees, the blind and the lame came to Jesus. Jesus showed compassion on them and healed them. Some of the children standing nearby cried out, Hosanna to the son of David. The chief priests and scribes who were watching Jesus became irritated at the children for ascribing a messianic title to Jesus. The religious leaders voiced their objection. Jesus answered by quoting from Psalm 8:2, which showed that He deserved the children's praise.

Jesus offered His peace and care to Jerusalem. He even wept over the people. But the city ultimately rejected Him. Yet that was part of God's plan. For the Jews' rejection of Jesus eventually led to His death on the cross. The cross makes peace available to all people. Those who put their trust in Him as their Savior will have peace with God because He will cleanse them of their sins.

Slide 111

One Story: Prayer

Scripture Focus: Matt. 26:36-46; Mark 14:32-42; Luke 11:1-13; 18:1-14; 22:39-46

Summary: This section considers Jesus' teaching on prayer through the model prayer He gave the disciples. It also considers examples of His prayer life, including His prayer in Gethsemane.

Outline

I. Jesus Taught Prayer

II. Jesus Lived Prayer

I. Jesus Taught Prayer

A. By His model prayer

Jesus taught prayer by example and by instruction. In fact, He taught by example before He presented instruction on the subject of prayer. The disciples must have realized the connection between His frequent and often lengthy times of prayer and the power evidenced in His teaching, preaching, and healing.

Luke 11:1 - Jesus understood the disciples' request to mean how to pray and for what to pray. So, He provided them with a model prayer, a pattern for prayer.

v. 2a - The first division of this model prayer concerns the One addressed in prayer. Jesus introduced the privilege believers have of addressing God as Father. An attitude of awe should accompany each prayer as we think about God's holiness. Since God's name is holy, we should be reverent and careful in the way we use any name for Him. The actual request is for God to be hallowed. Hallowing God's name means to give Him the honor and praise He deserves for His holiness.

v. 2b - The second division of this model prayer concerns God's will. This part of the prayer calls for God's kingdom to come to fruition and for God's will to be done on earth as it is in Heaven.

v. 3 - The third division of the Lord's Prayer is the only part of the prayer that asks for something material for the petitioner. God wants us to recognize that He meets our daily needs and that we should ultimately trust in Him to provide for us. The Lord's prayer doesn't leave room for selfishness.

v. 4 - The fourth division concerns our relationship with others based on God's love for us. We by faith ask God for forgiveness and then extend that forgiveness to those who have wronged us. There is no place for grudges or bitterness in the Lord's sample prayer. God's merciful and gracious forgiveness of us should compel us to be forgiving people.

v. 4 - The fifth division recognizes that we are not perfect. Overcoming temptation takes God's enabling. The idea of the model prayer is to ask God to keep us from yielding to temptation.

B. By His sermons (Matt. 6:5-8)

Matt. 6:5-8 is part of the Sermon on the Mount that we already discussed. We should pray neither like the Pharisees, for public recognition, nor like the unbelievers, with “vain repetitions”. Jesus is not against public prayer. What he is against is prayer that gains admiration from the audience, rather than prayer that genuinely talks to God. He calls them hypocrites – pretty strong language.

C. By His parables

1. Luke 11:5-10. The parable of the persistent friend teaches that we do not have to overcome God's reluctance, but we must take firm hold of His willingness. It is only when we ask, seek, and knock in ever-increasing persistence that God separates those who can take it or leave it from those who earnestly and consistently pray.

2. Luke 18:1-8. The parable of the unjust judge teaches by contrast. God is the opposite of the unjust judge. If the unjust judge finally answered the widow's plea, how much more will the just Judge do so when we persistently pursue a righteous cause in prayer before Him. In fact, the Father will answer quickly (v. 8). We must continue to trust Him while we wait on Him.

3. Luke 18:9-13. The third parable concerns those which trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others. In the parable a Pharisee and a publican both went to the temple to pray. They were at opposite ends of the social register of Jerusalem.

The Pharisee recited his virtues, which were impressive to a Pharisee. He prayed with himself and about himself. He left as he had arrived: satisfied with himself. The tax collector, by contrast, recited no virtues but earnestly opened his heart to God in confession of his sin.

Jesus said that man was justified in the sight of God, whereas the Pharisee was not. Jesus' message was clear: prayer is for confession and restoration. God will humble those who exalt themselves and will exalt those who humble themselves.

II. Jesus Lived Prayer

A. Private prayer

Jesus taught prayer, and He lived it. At every event in His busy life He took time to pray. He arose early and prayed before dawn (Mk 1:35). He prayed until after midnight (Matt. 14:23). He prayed all night (Luke 6:12). He prayed at His baptism (Lk 3:21), in the wilderness (5:16), as He was transfigured on the Mount (9:29), while sweating blood at Gethsemane (22:44), and on the cross (Matt. 27:46).

His dependence upon the Father was evident in His extensive prayer life. A large part of His prayer time was spent alone, praying for the Father's direction and the Holy Spirit's enabling for the tasks of the coming days and weeks.

Whether we pray privately reveals a lot about our spiritual lives. A strong private prayer life usually shows our dependence on God and our humility.

B. Intercessory prayer

Jesus practiced and encouraged intercessory prayer. He prayed for children (Matt. 19:13-15); for His enemies (Luke 23:34); for the disciples as He chose them (Luke 6:12, 13); as the Twelve went out to preach (Matt. 9:38; 10:1) and when they returned (11:25). He prayed for Peter that his faith would not fail (Luke 22:32). He encouraged the disciples to pray for spiritual wisdom to endure the testing of their faith following His crucifixion (Luke 22:46).

C. Sensitive prayer

Even in the midst of His anguish as He approached the cross, Jesus did not forget His disciples. He took the disciples, minus Judas, to Gethsemane, a frequent stopping place and prayer retreat. Eight of the disciples stayed at the gate, but Peter, James, and John went farther into the garden. Jesus told them to wait for Him and to keep a prayer vigil with Him. He went a little farther to pray alone.

Luke 22:45 - When He returned to them after His first prayer session and found them sleeping, He cautioned them to watch and pray in case they were tempted to sin or became consumed with sorrow. Luke told us they were sleeping for sorrow; that is, they were worn out by the tension of the mounting pressures, the anxiety, and the confusion.

D. Submissive prayer

Jesus' prayer in the Garden of Gethsemane was a submissive prayer.

Luke 22:44 - Jesus' soul, that is, His humanity, was exceedingly sorrowful. His body was pressed to its limits as blood was mingled with His sweat, a sign of intense stress. Jesus knew in advance what the Cross would mean in suffering.

Why would the prospect of His death so dismay Jesus? He knew that when He would be hung upon the cross, that all of the sins of the world would come upon Him. He would be completely alone as the Father would turn away. His anticipation of this separation agonized Him as He prayed.

2. Submission

Three times Jesus prayed, O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt (Matt. 26:39, 42, 44). Cup referred to God's judgment upon sin.

Three times Jesus requested that, if God were willing, the judgment for sin would not fall upon Him. It was not a demand; it was a conditional request: if. However, the only adequate payment for the sin of mankind is the shed blood of the Son of God upon the cross:

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Without shedding of blood [there] is no remission (Heb. 9:22); Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved (Acts 4:12).

None of us will ever face what Christ faced as He submitted to the cross. We will struggle to obey God and submit to His will at times, but prayer is necessary in order to obediently submit to God. We can't rely on our good intentions or a more concerted effort if we hope to submit to God's will.

Slide 114

One Story: Arrest and Trial

Scripture Focus: Matt. 26:57-68; 27:1, 2, 11-31; Mark 14:53-65; 15:1-20; Luke 22:54, 63-71; 23:1-25

Summary: This section focuses on the time between Jesus' arrest and His walk to the cross. Neither the religious nor the civil trials were just. Jesus' demeanor, attitude, and answers serve as models for believers today who face rivalry, opposition, or hatred.

Outline

I. Betrayal and Arrest

II. Jewish Trials

III. Civil Trials

I. Betrayal and Arrest

The Pharisees had been planning Jesus' death for many months. His arrest in Gethsemane took place in the middle of the night because they feared the pilgrims from Galilee, who were in Jerusalem for Passover. Jesus' enemies wanted a quick trial and execution before the people could protest. As such, Jesus' trial was not held to determine His guilt or innocence, but as a conspiracy to assassinate Him.

Matt. 26: 48, 49. Judas boldly betrayed Jesus, giving Him a kiss and calling Him Rabbi.

vv. 52, 53. How silly the crowd must have looked from Jesus' perspective. They had no idea Who He really was and all the power He had at His disposal. Jesus also pointed out that He could have called on the Father to give Him twelve legions of angels, that's 72,000 angels. If they were summoned, no human mob would dare fight them. One angel in the OT killed 185,000 soldiers.

v. 56. The disciples fled as the mob bound Jesus and took Him away.

During His arrest Jesus was not informed of any charge against Him; that was yet to be determined in a secret meeting. This was the first of many legal irregularities.

II. Jewish Trials

A. Annas

It is not recorded in the synoptic gospels but according to John 18, Jesus was taken first to Annas. Annas had been high priest and continued to maintain authority. The current high priest was Caiaphas, his son-in-law. John records that Annas asked Jesus about His disciples and doctrine. Jesus pointed out that Annas was not following the Jewish laws. He should have had witnesses to testify against Jesus instead of asking Jesus to incriminate Himself. Annas then sent Jesus to Caiaphas.

B. Caiaphas and the Sanhedrin

1. Search for witnesses

While Annas examined Jesus, word went out to selected members of the Sanhedrin to meet at the palace of Caiaphas, the current high priest. The meeting took place around 3:00 a.m.

Matt. 26:59-61. This council finally found two witnesses to testify after many false witnesses proved unhelpful. The members of the court made no attempt to establish the credibility of the witnesses, who were not even put under oath.

The witnesses testified simultaneously, but their testimonies did not agree (Mark 14:56). They both misunderstood and misquoted what Jesus said about destroying and rebuilding the temple (v. 61). Jesus was speaking about His body, not the actual temple. Ironically, the saying the Sanhedrin used to try to condemn Jesus was meant as a figure of speech for Christ's death and resurrection.

V. 59 - The Sanhedrin's total focus was to manufacture a reason to give Jesus a death sentence. They cared little about procedure and trial laws.

2. Christ's claim

v. 64 - After the false witness failed, Jesus was made to give incriminating claims about Himself. For a mere man to claim to be the Son of Man was blasphemy punishable by death, but the council never considered it possible that Jesus was telling the truth about Himself!

v. 65-66 - The council announced an immediate verdict, including the punishment: He is guilty of death. Jesus allowed Himself to be condemned so that He might make a way for His condemners to find forgiveness of sin and enjoy eternal life. Remember that He died for the sins of the Sanhedrin as much as He died for our sins.

The beatings Jesus received were supposed to prove He was not the Son of God. The Sanhedrin believed that the true Son of God would never allow any man to abuse Him. But the members of the Sanhedrin were wrong. They failed to understand that Jesus was fulfilling Isaiah's prophecies as the Lamb of God

Slide 115 – Read Isaiah 50:6; 53:7

The council declared a short recess until dawn, when it would meet again, to ratify the verdict and sentence. The Sanhedrin's basis for condemning Christ remained blasphemy. Their next move was to get the Roman governor, Pilate, to review the case and to secure his approval for Jesus' crucifixion. The Jews were not allowed to carry out the execution on their own.

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III. Civil Trials

A. Before Pilate

As soon as possible the Jewish leaders met with Pilate. Pilate asked, What is the charge? The Jewish officials evaded a straight answer because they knew Pilate would not care whether Jesus blasphemed the Jewish religion.

The Jews they had to have an accusation that would stand up under Roman law. So, forgetting the charge agreed upon in their own court (blasphemy), they offered a new set of accusations, again without a formal arraignment or credible witnesses.

The accusation that Jesus was trying to make Himself a king was the one that would have concerned Pilate the most. Pilate took Jesus into the judgment hall to talk with Him undisturbed.

Luke 23:3 - There he asked, Art thou the King of the Jews? Jesus said, Thou sayest it. With His answer, Jesus implied He was a king while also putting the issue back in Pilate's court. Pilate saw no threat to Rome in the discussions about Jewish religions or philosophical questions.

v. 4 - He announced to the crowd assembled in the open court, I find no fault in this man. According to this declaration of Jesus' innocence, He should have been released.

v. 5-7 - Encouraged by members of the Sanhedrin, the mob cried out that Jesus had been stirring up a rebellion. When the crowd identified Galilee as a site of the alleged rebellion, Pilate saw a way to rid himself of the responsibility. Herod, tetrarch of Galilee, was in Jerusalem for the celebration of Passover. Since Jesus came from Galilee, Pilate quickly sent Jesus to the palace, where Herod stayed when in Jerusalem.

B. Before Herod Antipas

Herod was the unprincipled scoundrel who had had John the Baptist beheaded at the request of his stepdaughter. Considering Jesus a prophet and a worker of miracles, Herod hoped that Jesus would do a miracle to free Himself.

v. 8-10 - Though Herod asked Jesus many questions, and though the chief priests and scribes had followed Jesus there to continue their accusations, Jesus again said nothing.

v. 11 - The soldiers noticed Herod's disappointment that this miracle worker had refused to do any miracles or give any prophecies. Since Jesus Himself provided no amusement, the soldiers dressed Him in an elegant robe and ridiculed the idea of His being a king. When they had finished their sport, they followed their orders and led Him back to the judgment hall.

Pilate had sent Jesus to Herod, expecting Herod to hear the accusations, evaluate the evidence, and announce a verdict. But Herod had merely wanted to satisfy his curiosity. Nothing in Scripture suggests that Herod talked to Jesus about the specific charges. When Jesus remained silent before him, Herod's curiosity faded, and he sent Jesus back to Pilate.

C. Acquitted by Pilate

vv. 13-17 - Jesus returned to Pilate, who again announced that he found no evidence of crime and that Jesus should be released. The chief priests circulated the idea that Pilate should release Barabbas instead, a known murderer and insurrectionist. They stirred the crowd to cry out for the release of Barabbas, a man who had actually done all that Christ was accused of!

vv. 24-25 - Pilate washed his hands as though that would remove his responsibility and guilt.

D. Last interview by Pilate

The Jews who responded to Pilate's last defense of Jesus reminded the governor that Jesus had said He is the Son of God (John 19:7). They reminded him that if he released Jesus, Caesar would hear of it and that they would emphasize Jesus' claim to be a king (John 19:12). Caesar wanted no rivals, and Pilate would suffer if he helped one.

Luke 23:24, 26a. Pilate surrendered his legal convictions to the threat to his position; he had Jesus flogged and then handed Him over for crucifixion.

Slide 117

One Story: Crucifixion

Scripture Focus: Matt. 27:26-66; Mark 15:15-41; Luke 23:24-56; John 19:26-30

Summary: This section traces Jesus' walk toward Golgotha to His time on the cross and what happened when He gave up His spirit and died.

Outline

I. Toward the Cross

II. At the Cross

III. Down from the Cross

I. Toward the Cross

Matt. 27:31 - After Pilate capitulated to the cries of the mob, they . . . led him away to crucify him.

v. 32 - The Prisoner—condemned, sentenced, and compelled to carry His own cross to the scene of His execution—was so weakened by beatings and scourging that He collapsed under the burden of the cross. The soldiers seized Simon of Cyrene and forced him to carry the cross to Golgotha.

Luke 23:27-31 tells of a great company of people who followed Him, lamenting. Jesus addressed a group of women. They mourned for Him, but He warned them that destruction was coming and that they ought to mourn for themselves. Jesus was referring to the destruction of Jerusalem at the hand of the Romans. Historically Jerusalem was destroyed in AD 70, about 35 years after Jesus was crucified.

In the procession were two other men, also going to their executions. Matthew and Mark called them robbers; Luke called them malefactors (criminals). Very likely they were insurrectionists and murderers like Barabbas. The procession went out of the city to a place called Golgotha.

II. At the Cross

A. The scene

The soldiers nailed Jesus to the cross and placed a plaque above His head, announcing the charge against Him. It was written in Hebrew, Greek, and Latin. Each Gospel records a slightly different wording of the announcement, probably based on whichever language it was translating. However, each language clearly stated the central charge: Jesus claimed to be king of the Jews.

The soldiers and the religious leaders continued mocking the Lord. Even the dying criminals on either side Jesus reviled Him and challenged Him to save Himself.

B. The Savior's words

The Bible does not provide many details of Jesus Christ's suffering on the cross. The Word of God does, however, record Jesus' words. These seven statements fulfilled the prophecies that revealed what the Messiah, the Suffering Servant, would say and think. The seven words from the cross fall into three divisions. The first three register His concern for others. The next two are about His sufferings. The last two are His remarkable cries of victory.

1. Father, forgive them (Luke 23:34)

The first statement was Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do (Luke 23:34). Just as Jesus taught in the Sermon on the Mount (Matt. 5:44), he prayed for his persecutors. It serves as a model for all Christians.

2. You will be with Me in paradise (Luke 23:43)

The second statement from the cross illustrates the power of God's forgiveness as Christ interacted with the thieves hanging to His left and right. The first thief continued to mock Jesus for not saving the three of them, concluding that Jesus was not Who He said He was.

The repentant thief confessed to his own sin guilt. He asked Jesus to remember him in His kingdom. Jesus turned to the repentant thief and promised, To day shalt thou be with me in paradise.

3. Behold your mother! (John 19:26, 27)

The third statement from the cross conveyed Jesus' love for His mother. In the hour of His great agony, He transferred His role in the family to His faithful disciple, John, who would understand better than Jesus' unbelieving siblings what Mary might need in the days to come.

4. Why have You forsaken Me? (Matt. 27:46, 47)

The fourth statement expressed Jesus' deep anguish. He did not speak of His suffering until He had hung on the cross for six hours, three of them in total darkness. The prophetic statement in Psalm 22:1, sometimes called the psalm of crucifixion, underlines the significance of Jesus' statement. We don't know details about the separation of Jesus from the Father. The Bible doesn't fill us in. But we don't need to know them. We simply need to know that the separation was a cause of great suffering for Jesus and that Jesus sufficiently paid the penalty for our sins in the process.

5. I thirst (John 19:28)

Jesus Christ's fifth statement from the cross was only one word in Greek meaning I thirst. More than eighteen hours without sleep, food, or drink had passed since His arrest in Gethsemane. He had been scourged and beaten. His throat, mouth, and lips would have been parched. Talking would have been difficult.

6. It is finished! (John 19:30)

The sixth statement was a note of triumph: It is finished! Jesus Christ had paid the full and final payment for our redemption. The sacrifices under the Mosaic law had only covered sin, not taken it away. They were promissory notes for redemption until the better sacrifice would be provided. Christ had come to take away sins by His sacrifice.

7. Father, into Your hands I commend My Spirit! (Luke 23:46)

With a loud voice Jesus uttered the seventh statement, dismissing His spirit. He laid His life down.

III. Down from the Cross

A. Unusual events (Matt. 27:45-54)

v. 45 - An unnatural darkness had begun at noon and continued for three hours, the first of several events that brought fear to the watchers near the cross.

v. 51 - At the final cry of Jesus Christ, the veil that separated the Holy of Holies from the rest of the temple tore in two from top to bottom. That veil had represented the barrier separating mankind from God. Jesus' death tore the barrier away.

v. 52, 53 - Matthew recorded that a great earthquake occurred, breaking open many tombs. Some of the dead were raised to life and walked the streets of Jerusalem after Jesus Christ's resurrection.

v. 54 - We don't know if the centurion put his faith in Jesus for salvation, but at least his heart was open to the truth about Jesus. As he reflected on all that happened that day, he certainly saw the events from a completely different perspective. Jesus was not just a weak, delusional man who could not defend himself. Jesus is the Son of God and He died with for a purpose. Finding out what that purpose was may have driven the centurion to find out more about Jesus. Perhaps he even met Christ and trusted Him after Christ rose from the dead.

B. The burial

According to Jewish law, a criminal had to be buried before sundown on the day he died (Deut. 21:22, 23). So Joseph of Arimathaea claimed Jesus' body and got permission from Pilate to bury the body in his own tomb. He rolled a heavy stone across the opening and left Him.

Matthew tells us that the Jews, hearing of this burial arrangement, took precautions to ensure that nothing would disturb that tomb. They wanted the disciples to have no way of claiming that Jesus rose again after three days. Those religious leaders thought the disciples might attempt to steal the body, but they may also have remembered that Jesus had brought the dead back to life. They were taking no chances.

Slide 118

One Story: Resurrection and Ascension

Scripture Focus: Matt. 27:55-28:20; Mark 15:39-16:20; Luke 23:47-24:53; Jn 20:1-18; Acts 1:4-11

Summary: This final section considers the sufficiency of Jesus' death, as attested through His resurrection. It refutes theories against a literal bodily resurrection. Finally, it considers some of the effects of the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Outline

- I. Jesus Is Buried
- II. Jesus Rises from the Dead
- III. Jesus Appears to His Followers
- IV. Jesus Commissions His Disciples
- V. Jesus Ascends to Heaven

I. Jesus Is Buried

Luke 23:46 - Jesus' last words on the cross were, Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit. Then Scripture tells us, He yielded up his spirit. Yielded up literally means sent away. He was not executed; no human could take His life from Him, He did not die as others die, as a defeat, but as the lone Victor over sin and death. He gave himself for our sins.

After His death, God directed two men to care for Jesus' body. Joseph of Arimathaea asked Pilate for permission to bury the body. He took Jesus' body and wrapped it in clean linen cloth with spices that Nicodemus had brought. Joseph and Nicodemus carried the body to the tomb that Joseph had prepared for his own family. Then they rolled the stone door into place.

II. Jesus Rises from the Dead

Matt. 28:1-2 - Mary Magdalene and other women came to the tomb to anoint Jesus, but before they got there, an earthquake shook the ground. An angel appeared and rolled back the stone that had sealed the entrance to the tomb.

v. 3, 4 - The earthquake and the angel's brightness frightened the guards so that they fainted in terror. When the guards came to, they found the tomb empty and fled to alert the chief priests.

v. 5 - Inside the tomb the angels told the women not to fear and that Jesus had risen from the dead. They reminded the women of Jesus' words about His death and resurrection. The women remembered the words and left to tell the disciples the good news.

Peter and John went to the tomb with Mary Magdalene, the two disciples went into the tomb and saw the grave clothes. John believed Jesus was resurrected, though Peter wondered.

III. Jesus Appears to His Followers

A. To the women

Mark 16:9 - Mary Magdalene stayed at the tomb weeping after Peter and John left. She then turned and saw Jesus, but she didn't know it was Him. Jesus revealed Himself to her. Mary Magdalene returned to Jerusalem where she told Peter and John that she had seen the risen Lord.

Matt. 28:8-10 - Jesus appeared to the other women as they returned to Bethany.

B. To the travelers (Luke 24:15-31)

Luke 24:15, 16 - Jesus appeared to Cleopas and his companion as they traveled to Emmaus, though Jesus kept His identity hidden from their eyes as they walked. Their interaction with Jesus reveals how Jesus' followers in general felt while Jesus was lying in the grave.

vv. 17-21 - Between the time of Jesus' burial and the resurrection lay long, bleak hours of despair for the disciples. It seemed impossible that Jesus, the Miracle Worker, could not save Himself from His enemies. They puzzled over why He had kept so silent. Their hopes for the kingdom were shattered.

vv. 30-31 - Jesus eventually revealed Himself to the men on the road to Emmaus. The two men then went to Jesus' disciples who had gathered in Jerusalem to report that they had seen Jesus.

C. To the disciples (Luke 24:36-45)

vv. 36, 37 - While the disciples were gathered together in Jerusalem, Jesus appeared to them. His sudden appearance terrified them. They thought they saw a spirit.

vv. 38-43. Jesus immediately addressed their doubts.

vv. 44-45. After seeing the resurrected Christ, the disciples tried to understand all that had transpired. Jesus helped them by teaching them how the events over the last few days were revealed in the Scriptures.

IV. Jesus Commissions His Disciples

v. 48 - Jesus told His disciples that they were to be witnesses of Him. In other words, their lives would be changed radically. They had a mission to complete on Christ's behalf.

Jesus appeared to many over the next forty days. One of those appearances was with his disciples on a mountain in Galilee.

Matt. 28:16-20. Those who doubted were probably questioning whether the Person appearing to them was Jesus. None of the disciples doubted Jesus once He began to speak about His mission for them.

Jesus rightfully claimed that all authority had been given to Him. Based on that authority He told the disciples to make disciples of all nations, baptizing and teaching the new believers all that Jesus had commanded. He then added that He would be with the disciples always.

Acts 1:6. Later Jesus appeared to the disciples one last time near Jerusalem on the Mount of Olives. They asked Jesus if He was going to restore His kingdom to Israel at that time. Jesus answered that it wasn't time yet; then He gave more details related to the commissioning of His disciples.

He explained that they would be His witnesses in Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and then the uttermost ends of the earth. He also explained that the Spirit would come upon them to give them the power to carry out their mission.

V. Jesus Ascends to Heaven

Luke 24:51 - Jesus ascended to Heaven from the Mount of Olives. After He was out of sight, two angels promised the disciples that He would return (Acts 1:11).

The disciples returned to Jerusalem to wait for the coming of the Holy Spirit. As Jesus promised, the Spirit empowered them and changed their lives. Jesus' resurrection had turned the course of their lives forever. When the disciples saw Jesus being arrested, they forsook Him and fled, fearing they would be included.

Peter then denied Him three times, refusing to be identified as a follower of Jesus. When the grim news came of His death, they hid behind closed doors for fear of the Jews. With their Leader gone, they were disorganized and incapable of continuing any ministry.

After the resurrection, however, they became bold in the power of the Spirit to challenge the very crowd who had crucified Christ. Peter preached boldly about Christ to the Jews on the Day of Pentecost: Him . . . ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain: Whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ (Acts 2:23, 24, 36).

Three thousand people were converted at the first preaching of the message that Jesus was crucified and risen. Within a few days another five thousand men were converted, and a great company of priests were converted. The book of Acts describes the remarkable power of the message. The church in Jerusalem grew. Eventually others followed with a church-planting ministry that carries the same message today.

And so ends our study on the synoptic gospels – Jesus, 3 Portraits, 1 Story.

Slide 120 – 121 Matthew part 1

Slide 122 – 123 Matthew part 2

Slide 124 – 125 Mark

Slide 126 – 127 Luke part 1

Slide 128 – 129 Luke part 2

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