



You Decide Series: Who is Jesus?

Grace Veritas
calledtobefree.com

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What Do You Think?

The purpose of this book is to present what the Scriptures say about Jesus. Not what others say, but what the Bible says when you read it for yourself and apply it accordingly.

This first means you need an accurate and reliable translation of the Scripture. And then a chance to think about it.

Our primary Bible translation is the New American Standard Version. We'll be reading passages from the four Gospels, written by Jesus' disciples, featuring testimonies from his followers, family, friends,

critics, enemies, and of course, as spoken by God and directly by Jesus himself.

So read on. Take the Lessons in order, but move forward at your own pace. Please consider the questions included with the text, and think about what the Scriptures are saying to you. Because it's what you think that determines what you believe and what you do.

God promises to bless you as you read his Holy Word and take it to heart.

Dedication

This study is dedicated to our many friends in India, Cambodia and the United States who are faithful to present the Gospel accurately and teach the Holy Scriptures without apology.

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Lesson 1 –

John the Baptist

Prepares the Way

Scripture: Matthew

Chapter 3 Verses 1-17

Introduction:

It's been 400 years since the last true prophet had come to Israel. Now a new prophet has arrived and John the Baptist is gaining popularity with the local people and the curious religious leaders who come to hear him.

But John's message of “repent and be baptized” is difficult for these leaders to hear. They are the most respected and proud people of their day and don't

see the sin in their hearts. But John continues his message. He knows if a person truly repents of their sin, they will naturally start doing good deeds. This is the fruit in their lives that confirms their repentance was real.

Jesus comes down to the Jordan river to be baptized. John is surprised because he knows Jesus has no sin to repent from and does not need to be baptized. But Jesus tells John to go ahead and baptize him, as this was part of God's plan and the starting point of Jesus' ministry. John is our witness that Jesus was a sinless man and God's beloved son as

confirmed by God's voice and the Holy Spirit.

(Matthew Chapter 3 Verses 1-17)

¹ Now in those days John the Baptist came, preaching in the wilderness of Judea, saying, ² "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." ³ For this is the one referred to by Isaiah the prophet when he said,

"The voice of one crying in the wilderness, 'Make ready the way of the Lord, Make His paths straight!'"

What message was John the Baptist preaching to the people?

4 Now John himself had a garment of camel's hair and a leather belt around his waist; and his food was locusts and wild honey.

5 Then Jerusalem was going out to him, and all Judea and all the district around the Jordan; 6 and they were being baptized by him in the Jordan River, as they confessed their sins.

What did John require people to do to be baptized?

7 But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming for baptism, he said to them, "You brood of vipers, who

warned you to flee from the wrath to come? 8 Therefore bear fruit in keeping with repentance;

John denounced these religious leaders as hypocrites. What did he tell them to do?

9 and do not suppose that you can say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham for our father'; for I say to you that from these stones God is able to raise up children to Abraham.

What good would it do them, for their righteousness to be based upon their ancestors?

10 The axe is already laid at the root of the trees; therefore every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire.

What will be God's judgement against those who do not produce good fruit? What do you think "good fruit" means?

11 "As for me, I baptize you with water for repentance, but He who is coming after me is mightier than I, and I am not fit to remove His sandals; He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire.

John says the one who comes after him is more powerful and more worthy than he is. What will this coming person baptize repentant people with?

12 His winnowing fork is in His hand, and He will thoroughly clear His threshing floor; and He will gather His wheat into the barn, but He will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire.”

A “winnowing” fork is used to separate the wheat from the chaff. Some are gathered into the barn, others cast out.

What is John predicting, and when do you think it might happen?

13 Then Jesus arrived from Galilee at the Jordan coming to John, to be baptized by him. 14 But John tried to prevent Him, saying, "I have need to be baptized by You, and do You come to me?"

Jesus came to John to be baptized, but John protested, saying he needed to be baptized himself by Jesus. Who had the greater authority from God? John was a prophet of God, yet he knew he was a sinful man

himself when confronted with Jesus. Why would he think this?

15 But Jesus answering said to him, "Permit it at this time; for in this way it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness." Then he permitted Him.

Jesus told John to baptize him to "fulfill all righteousness." What do you think he meant by "fulfill all righteousness?"

16 After being baptized, Jesus came up immediately from the water; and behold, the heavens were opened, and he saw the Spirit of God

descending as a dove and lighting on Him,

John saw the Spirit of God descending on Jesus in the form of a dove. If you were there, what would you have thought at first?

17 and behold, a voice out of the heavens said, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well-pleased."

Suddenly, a voice from heaven says, "This is My beloved son, in whom I am well pleased." If you were there, what would you have thought now? Who is this Jesus? What is his relationship

to God? What do you think should be your response?

Special Note: The Meaning of Messiah

The word "Messiah" comes from the Hebrew "mashiach" which means "anointed one" or "chosen one." In the Greek language, it is the word "Christos" or in English, "Christ." Thus the name "Jesus Christ" means the same as "Jesus the Messiah."

Anointing someone with oil was a sign that God was setting them apart as a prophet, a priest, or a king.

Jesus fulfills all three roles of Prophet, Priest, and King. He is a Prophet, because He preached the Word of God (if you have a Bible, see John 1:1–18; 14:24; and Luke 24:19); a Priest, because His death atones for our sins and reconciles us to the Father (see Hebrews 2:17; 4:14); and a King, because after His resurrection, God gave all authority to Him (see John 18:36; Ephesians 1:20–23; and Revelation 19:16).

Lesson 2 –

John the Baptist's Followers Turn to Follow Jesus

Scripture: John 1:29-51

29 The next day [after Jesus' baptism] he [John the Baptist] saw Jesus coming to him and said, "Behold, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!"

John the Baptist identified Jesus as the "Lamb of God." This reference is likely to the sacrificial lamb slain every morning and evening in the Jewish Temple for the sins of the

people (as explained in the Old Testament, Exodus 29:38-42). How could any person be sinless and spotless enough to be a “perfect sacrifice” to Holy God, and not only “cover” sin but “take away the sin of the whole world?”

30 “This is He on behalf of whom I said, ‘After me comes a Man who has a higher rank than I, for He existed before me.’

John the Baptist was older than Jesus. How could he say that Jesus existed before he did?

31 "I did not recognize Him, but so that He might be manifested to Israel, I came baptizing in water." 32 John testified saying, "I have seen the Spirit descending as a dove out of heaven, and He remained upon Him. 33 I did not recognize Him, but He who sent me to baptize in water said to me, 'He upon whom you see the Spirit descending and remaining upon Him, this is the One who baptizes in the Holy Spirit.' 34 I myself have seen, and have testified that this is the Son of God."

John is saying that although he didn't know ahead of time who

the Messiah was, he was shown and told it by God as he baptized Jesus. What is your reaction to John's testimony that Jesus is the Son of God? What does the title "Son of God" mean to you?

35 Again the next day John [the Baptist] was standing with two of his disciples,
36 and he looked at Jesus as He walked, and said, "Behold, the Lamb of God!"
37 The two disciples heard him speak, and they followed Jesus. 38 And Jesus turned and saw them following, and said to them, "What do you seek?" They said to Him, "Rabbi (which translated means Teacher),

where are You staying?"
39 He said to them, "Come,
and you will see." So they
came and saw where He
was staying; and they
stayed with Him that day,
for it was about the tenth
hour.

*"Student" and "disciple" are
similar terms, but a disciple is
more than a learner (student)
but a committed follower
(disciple).*

*The disciples of John the Baptist
followed along with John, but
now were trying to decide if
they would follow Jesus instead.*

40 One of the two who heard John [the Baptist] speak and followed Him, was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother.

41 He found first his own brother Simon and said to him, "We have found the Messiah" (which translated means Christ).

42 He brought him to Jesus. Jesus looked at him and said, "You are Simon the son of John; you shall be called Cephas" (which is translated Peter).

43 The next day He [Jesus] purposed to go into Galilee, and He found Philip. And Jesus said to him, "Follow Me."

What is Andrew thinking when he says “We have found the Messiah”? Is he thinking of Jesus as a Prophet, a Priest or a King? Or perhaps all three? Which do you think Jesus is?

44 Now Philip was from Bethsaida, of the city of Andrew and Peter. 45 Philip found Nathanael and said to him, “We have found Him of whom Moses in the Law and also the Prophets wrote—Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph.” 46 Nathanael said to him, “Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?” Philip said to him, “Come and see.”

Bethsaida was a town on the Sea of Galilee, north of the Jordan River where John the Baptist was baptizing. Philip, Peter and Andrew were all from there and were fishermen by trade. Nazareth, where Jesus had grown up, was also north but inland, and was a town known as sheep country because of its available water and grazing land. Nathanael's comments are actually a "put-down" of humble Nazareth.

Do you think it odd that a mighty King would be from sheep country? How about Jesus, the "lamb of God"?

Jesus saw Nathanael coming to Him, and said of him, "Behold, an Israelite indeed, in whom there is no deceit!" 48 Nathanael said to Him, "How do You know me?" Jesus answered and said to him, "Before Philip called you, when you were under the fig tree, I saw you."

49 Nathanael answered Him, "Rabbi, You are the Son of God; You are the King of Israel." 50 Jesus answered and said to him, "Because I said to you that I saw you under the fig tree, do you believe? You will see greater things than these."

51 And He said to him, "Truly, truly, I say to you,

you will see the heavens opened and the angels of God ascending and descending on the Son of Man."

Nathanael recognized Jesus as the "Son of God" but perhaps his understanding was only that the Messiah would be King of Israel.

Jesus answers by saying that the entrance to heaven is based upon His work as Son of Man, shepherding us into heaven by his sacrifice for our sins as the Lamb of God.

What do you think? Can you see your need for a Prophet (to tell us what God requires), a

Priest (to offer himself up as a final and perfect sacrifice for sin) and as a King (to execute justice and righteousness on the earth)?

Special Note: God is One in Three Persons

The Bible teaches that God is "one." The Hebrew word translated "one" is "echad." It means "unity" not "singularity." There is another Hebrew word that means absolute singularity, "yachid," but it is never used in the Scriptures in reference to God.

Christians believe that the Bible presents one God who exists in

three Persons—Father, Son and Holy Spirit. In Matthew 28:19, Jesus commands His followers to “go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.” He refers to all three Persons functioning as the same God.

In the text we just read, all three Persons are seen at the same time in the baptism of Jesus, where the Spirit descends and remains on Jesus, and the Father speaks aloud from heaven for all to hear. Luke 3:21–22 reads, “When all the people were being baptized, Jesus was baptized too. And as he was praying, heaven was opened and the Holy Spirit

descended on him in bodily form like a dove. And a voice came from heaven: 'You are my Son, whom I love; with you I am well pleased.'"

Now consider yourself. *You exist with a body, a soul (your mind and personality) and a spirit (your conscience, which knows right from wrong). Yet you are one person.*

The scripture says in Genesis 1:26-27: "Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; and let them rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over the cattle and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps on

the earth.” 27 God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.”

Note that in this Genesis account, God refers to himself in the plural.

If we are created in the image of God, and clearly have a spirit, soul and body, why do we find it difficult to know the God who made us as Father, Son & Holy Spirit?

Lesson 3

Jesus Turns Water into Wine at a Wedding in Cana

Scripture: John 2:1-11

1 On the third day there was a wedding in Cana of Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there; 2 and both Jesus and His disciples were invited to the wedding.

Jesus and his disciples were traveling north from the wilderness near the Jordan River toward the Sea of Galilee. The city of Cana was very near the city of Nazareth, where Jesus was raised and Mary his mother

lived. In such a rural area, it would be normal for friends and neighbors to help prepare the wedding celebration.

3 When the wine ran out, the mother of Jesus said to Him, "They have no wine."

4 And Jesus said to her, "Woman, what does that have to do with us? My hour has not yet come."

Mary would seem to be saying more than they had simply run out of wine. What do you think she is really saying to Jesus?

Mary seems to have an expectation that Jesus can resolve this problem. What

reason does Jesus give for not helping at this time? Although often hidden from our eyes, God has his own perfect timing in all things. But He also answers the prayers of his faithful followers.

5 His mother said to the servants, "Whatever He says to you, do it."

Mary seems quite confident that Jesus will answer her request, although she doesn't seem to know exactly how he will do it. Do you think her confidence in him is knowing of his desire to honor his mother?

6 Now there were six stone waterpots set there for the Jewish custom of purification, containing twenty or thirty gallons each. 7 Jesus said to them, "Fill the waterpots with water." So they filled them up to the brim.

These large waterpots would be used by the guests for ceremonial foot washing before entering the house. What would the servants have thought when Jesus told them to fill these large pots with water?

8 And He said to them,
“Draw some out now and
take it to the headwaiter.”
So they took it to him.

*Wisely the servants obeyed.
What do you think they would
have thought now, as they
presented the contents to the
headwaiter?*

*Here is a lesson: When God
directs our paths, it is necessary
to obey by faith and not by
sight. Do you agree?*

9 When the headwaiter
tasted the water which had
become wine, and did not
know where it came from
(but the servants who had
drawn the water knew), the

headwaiter called the bridegroom, 10 and said to him, "Every man serves the good wine first, and when the people have drunk freely, then he serves the poorer wine; but you have kept the good wine until now."

At this point, only the servants, Jesus' disciples and his mother knew how the water had been transformed into wine. Soon the word would spread throughout that celebration and the city what had happened. Some would believe it, and some would doubt.

11 This beginning of His signs Jesus did in Cana of Galilee, and manifested His glory, and His disciples believed in Him.

What is the “glory” shown in Jesus? His disciples believed in Him because of this sign. What did they believe?

What do you think about Jesus in light of this miracle?

Lesson 4 –

Jesus Teaches a Ruler of the Jews About the New Birth

Scripture: John 3:1-21

Introduction:

Jesus had been doing wonderful “signs” in Galilee – healing the sick, casting out demons, even turning water into wine.

Nicodemus was a highly revered religious leader and teacher. He came to Jesus wanting to know how Jesus could do these miraculous deeds.

1 Now there was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the

Jews; 2 this man came to Jesus by night and said to Him, "Rabbi, we know that You have come from God as a teacher; for no one can do these signs that You do unless God is with him."

Why do you think Nicodemus came to see Jesus? Why did he come at night?

3 Jesus answered and said to him, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God."

Nicodemus said that God must be with Jesus, and probably thought that Jesus would be

honored by his presence and kind words. But Jesus went right to the issue – to see the kingdom of God, you must be born again. What do you think Jesus meant by the “kingdom of God” and being “born again”?

4 Nicodemus said to Him, “How can a man be born when he is old? He cannot enter a second time into his mother’s womb and be born, can he?”

Nicodemus seems totally confused by Jesus’ words. He could only understand being “born” as a physical event. But what about something else?

5 Jesus answered, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.

Jesus makes it clear one must be born of "water" and the "Spirit" to enter the kingdom of God. Many people think the "water" here is your physical birth.

The second birth is a new awakening from the Holy Spirit of God, bringing your own "spirit" to life. Your spirit (your conscience) is made aware of your sinfulness, the absolute holiness of God, and your need for a savior to take away your sin and open the way to the kingdom of God.

What do you think about this?

6 “That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. 7 Do not be amazed that I said to you, ‘You must be born again.’”

Only the Holy Spirit can bring about a new and permanent relationship with God. You must have this “born again” work of the Spirit to bring about this change. Jesus emphasizes that you must be born again. But how?

8 The wind blows where it wishes and you hear the sound of it, but do not know

where it comes from and where it is going; so is everyone who is born of the Spirit.”

Jesus may be using a play-on-words to help us understand. In Hebrew and Greek, the word translated as “wind” and “spirit” is the same word. We feel the effects of wind and spirit, but they are invisible to us. We can’t understand where and when the wind is blowing or when the Holy Spirit will be here. So, we should take advantage of the presence of the Holy Spirit while we may. Do you agree that the Holy Spirit moves as He wishes?

9 Nicodemus said to Him,
“How can these things be?”

10 Jesus answered and said to him, “Are you the teacher of Israel and do not understand these things?”

11 “Truly, truly, I say to you, we speak of what we know and testify of what we have seen, and you do not accept our testimony.

12 “If I told you earthly things and you do not believe, how will you believe if I tell you heavenly things?”

13 No one has ascended into heaven, but He who descended from heaven: the Son of Man.

Although noted as a great teacher, Nicodemus seems to

have forgotten the Old Testament Scriptures about the Messiah. Jesus says he speaks of what he knows and what he has seen, and that no one has ascended into heaven as a witness but only he, who descended from heaven. That's a bold statement. Who is Jesus saying he is?

14 "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up; 15 so that whoever believes will in Him have eternal life.

Jesus reminds Nicodemus of an incident when Moses led the children of Israel out of the

wilderness. Because of their sinfulness, they found themselves in an area full of deadly snakes. When they repented, God provided a solution – He had them make a snake of bronze and put it high up upon a pole. If anyone was bitten, they could look up at that bronze snake and be healed.

What if someone was bitten but would not look up to the bronze serpent? Then they were not healed. They had to act upon the healing gift that God provided. Likewise, to be healed of our sin, we must look up to the Savior.

16 "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life.

*John 3:16 is the most beloved and quoted verse in all the Bible: **For God so loved the world, that He gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believes in Him, shall not perish, but have eternal life.** According to this verse, what must we do to be saved?*

17 For God did not send the Son into the world to judge the world, but that the world might be saved through Him.

18 He who believes in Him is not judged; he who does not believe has been judged already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.

Jesus' came into the world to save it. Those who do not believe in Him remain under judgement. The question is, do you believe in Him or not?

19 This is the judgment, that the Light has come into the world, and men loved the darkness rather than the Light, for their deeds were evil. 20 For everyone who does evil hates the Light, and does not come to the Light for fear that his deeds

will be exposed.

21 But he who practices the truth comes to the Light, so that his deeds may be manifested as having been wrought in God.”

Many people love their sin more than they fear the judgement of God. They do not understand that this judgment is already in place. They hate the “light” for fear that their deeds will be exposed, forgetting about the consequence which is coming.

You cannot change God’s judgement, but you can obtain forgiveness through Jesus’ sacrifice. Those who find forgiveness will come to the

light and practice the truth, so that their new deeds will be shown to be based upon the love of God.

Lesson 5 –

John the Baptist's Work is Now Superseded by Jesus

Scripture: John 3:22-36

22 After these things Jesus and His disciples came into the land of Judea, and there He was spending time with them and baptizing.

Traveling south, Jesus and the disciples came again into the countryside of Judea. This is the first mention that they were baptizing, although other scripture says that the disciples were baptizing and not Jesus himself. (John 4:1-2).

John's baptism was for repentance, whereas Jesus' baptism is more—a baptism of the Holy Spirit. (See Lesson 2, John 1:33.)

23 John [the Baptist] also was baptizing in Aenon near Salim, because there was much water there; and people were coming and were being baptized.

24 [For John had not yet been thrown into prison.]

25 Therefore there arose a discussion on the part of John's disciples with a Jew about purification. 26 And they came to John and said to him, "Rabbi, He who was with you beyond the Jordan, to whom you have testified,

behold, He is baptizing and all are coming to Him."

Why do you think John's disciples were concerned about Jesus' disciples also baptizing?

27 John answered and said, "A man can receive nothing unless it has been given him from heaven. 28 You yourselves are my witnesses that I said, 'I am not the Christ,' but, 'I have been sent ahead of Him.'

John knew he had nothing apart from God. What was his mission in relation to the coming of Christ?

29 He who has the bride is the bridegroom; but the friend of the bridegroom, who stands and hears him, rejoices greatly because of the bridegroom's voice. So this joy of mine has been made full. 30 He must increase, but I must decrease.

In this analogy, who is the bridegroom? The rejoicing friend of the bridegroom? The bride?

31 "He who comes from above is above all, he who is of the earth is from the earth and speaks of the earth. He who comes from heaven is above all.

Where does John say that Jesus is from?

32 What He has seen and heard, of that He testifies; and no one receives His testimony. 33 He who has received His testimony has set his seal to this, that God is true.

People do not believe Jesus' testimony because it doesn't fit their preconceived ideas about the Messiah. But those that do receive it see the signs that Jesus performs and know that in these signs God is giving us His true testimony.

Do you think that a person who does all that Jesus did is from God?

34 For He whom God has sent speaks the words of God; for He gives the Spirit without measure.

The ultimate signs are the words of God and the work of the Holy Spirit. Jesus speaks the truth about God and salvation without holding anything back to please others.

35 The Father loves the Son and has given all things into His hand. 36 He who believes in the Son has eternal life; but he who

does not obey [believe] the Son will not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him."

According to John the Baptist, what is the key to eternal life? What abides (remains upon) those who do not believe?

Lesson 6 –

Jesus Meets the Samaritan Woman at the Well

Scripture: John 4:1-42

1 Therefore when the Lord knew that the Pharisees had heard that Jesus was making and baptizing more disciples than John

2 (although Jesus Himself was not baptizing, but His disciples were), 3 He left Judea and went away again into Galilee. 4 And He had to pass through Samaria. 5 So He came to a city of Samaria called Sychar, near the parcel of ground that Jacob gave to his son Joseph; 6 and Jacob's well

was there. So Jesus, being wearied from His journey, was sitting thus by the well. It was about the sixth hour [noon].

The Samaritans were descendants of colonists that the Kings of Persia had planted into Israel after conquering it in 721 B.C.

This mixed race of people believed the first five books of the Old Testament, but added to it other ideas plus worship at a temple they built on Mount Gerizim. The Jews shunned the Samaritans, to the extent that they would travel around Samaria instead of going through it. For over 700 years,

the Jews had lost their opportunity to make peace. Think about it: are there people or even neighbors around you that you shun because of a disagreement or prejudice?

7 There came a woman of Samaria to draw water. Jesus said to her, "Give Me a drink." 8 For His disciples had gone away into the city to buy food. 9 Therefore the Samaritan woman said to Him, "How is it that You, being a Jew, ask me for a drink since I am a Samaritan woman?" (For Jews have no dealings with Samaritans.) 10 Jesus answered and said to her, "If you knew the gift

of God, and who it is who says to you, 'Give Me a drink,' you would have asked Him, and He would have given you living water."

Jesus was not only willing to speak with the woman, but saw this as a God-appointed time to share with her. The conversation will soon be centered on eternal life through faith in Jesus as Messiah.

11 She said to Him, "Sir, You have nothing to draw with and the well is deep; where then do You get that living water? 12 You are not greater than our father

Jacob, are You, who gave us the well, and drank of it himself and his sons and his cattle?"

Do you think this woman may be acting smugly, stating that she has the only pitcher and the well itself was given to them by Jacob (the father of the Jews)?

13 Jesus answered and said to her, "Everyone who drinks of this water will thirst again; 14 but whoever drinks of the water that I will give him shall never thirst; but the water that I will give him will become in him a well of water springing up to eternal life."
15 The woman said to Him,

“Sir, give me this water, so I will not be thirsty nor come all the way here to draw.”

This woman is certainly intrigued by Jesus' words, as she is tired of drawing water at the well. This is not the normal time of day that most women would come to draw water. Typically, women would come in the cool of the day, in the morning or evening.

Why do you think she chose this time to come alone?

16 He said to her, “Go, call your husband and come here.”

17 The woman answered and said, "I have no husband." Jesus said to her, "You have correctly said, 'I have no husband'; 18 for you have had five husbands, and the one whom you now have is not your husband; this you have said truly."

Why has Jesus asked her to go call her husband? Perhaps because she needs to face her sinfulness. There is no repentance without a conviction of sin. It is sin that causes us to be separated from God. How much sin do you think it takes to cause our separation from God?

19 The woman said to Him, "Sir, I perceive that You are a prophet. 20 Our fathers worshiped in this mountain, and you people say that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship." 21 Jesus said to her, "Woman, believe Me, an hour is coming when neither in this mountain nor in Jerusalem will you worship the Father. 22 You worship what you do not know; we worship what we know, for salvation is from the Jews. 23 But an hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for such people the Father seeks to be His worshipers.

24 God is spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth.”

The woman, caught in her sin, wants to change the subject. She moves the conversation off of herself and onto where worship should be conducted. Jesus answers that question and moves the conversation onto how it must be conducted. What does Jesus say about how it must be conducted? Worshiping in spirit is aligning our spirit with God's Spirit, while truth is focusing on the truth of God's Word, our honest confession of sin, and the redemptive work of Jesus Christ.

25 The woman said to Him, "I know that Messiah is coming (He who is called Christ); when that One comes, He will declare all things to us." 26 Jesus said to her, "I who speak to you am He."

This is a strong declaration from Jesus himself that he is the Christ – prophet, priest and king.

27 At this point His disciples came, and they were amazed that He had been speaking with a woman, yet no one said, "What do You seek?" or, "Why do You speak with her?" 28 So the woman left her waterpot,

and went into the city and said to the men, ²⁹ “Come, see a man who told me all the things that I have done; this is not the Christ, is it?”
³⁰ They went out of the city, and were coming to Him.

The disciples were amazed that Jesus was talking with a woman, a Samaritan, and a sinner. How does that make you feel about Jesus?

Who is God seeking to worship Him, those who are self-righteous, or those who are willing to turn from sin and worship Him in spirit and truth?

31 Meanwhile the disciples were urging Him, saying, "Rabbi, eat." 32 But He said to them, "I have food to eat that you do not know about." 33 So the disciples were saying to one another, "No one brought Him anything to eat, did he?" 34 Jesus said to them, "My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me and to accomplish His work."

Have you ever been so excited about the work you are doing, that you totally forget to eat?

35 Do you not say, 'There are yet four months, and then comes the harvest'? Behold, I say to you, lift up

your eyes and look on the fields, that they are white for harvest.

36 Already he who reaps is receiving wages and is gathering fruit for life eternal; so that he who sows and he who reaps may rejoice together.

37 For in this case the saying is true, 'One sows and another reaps.'

38 I sent you to reap that for which you have not labored; others have labored and you have entered into their labor."

Those who work together in telling the good news (the Gospel) about Jesus as the Christ are all working together

under the power of God. None can boast, but all rejoice.

39 From that city many of the Samaritans believed in Him because of the word of the woman who testified, "He told me all the things that I have done." 40 So when the Samaritans came to Jesus, they were asking Him to stay with them; and He stayed there two days. 41 Many more believed because of His word; 42 and they were saying to the woman, "It is no longer because of what you said that we believe, for we have heard for ourselves and know that this One is

indeed the Savior of the world."

After 2 days with Jesus, what was the conclusion of the people? Who do they say he is now?

Lesson 7 –

A Mighty Catch of Fish and Men

Scripture: Luke 5:1-11

¹ Now it happened that while the crowd was pressing around Him and listening to the word of God, He was standing by the lake of Gennesaret [Sea of Galilee]; ² and He saw two boats lying at the edge of the lake; but the fishermen had gotten out of them and were washing their nets.

With the crowd pressing in on him, it was hard for Jesus to talk

and be heard. We recall that Jesus was already known by Simon and his brother Andrew, and James and his brother John.

3 And He got into one of the boats, which was Simon's, and asked him to put out a little way from the land. And He sat down and began teaching the people from the boat.

Simon put up no objection for Jesus using his boat in this way. After all, the fishing was done and the nets were already washed and put away.

4 When He had finished speaking, He said to Simon,

“Put out into the deep water and let down your nets for a catch.” 5 Simon answered and said, “Master [or teacher], we worked hard all night and caught nothing, but I will do as You say and let down the nets.”

Jesus was about to do a favor and teach Simon a mighty lesson. But Simon objected. Why did he object? But what did he do?

6 When they had done this, they enclosed a great quantity of fish, and their nets began to break; 7 so they signaled to their partners in the other boat

for them to come and help them. And they came and filled both of the boats, so that they began to sink.

The obedience of Simon brought forth a supernatural catch of fish. More than he or his brother could handle. So they called for help. How willing are you to help, or to call for help when you need it?

8 But when Simon Peter saw that, he fell down at Jesus' feet, saying, "Go away from me Lord, for I am a sinful man!" 9 For amazement had seized him and all his companions because of the catch of fish which they had

taken; 10 and so also were James and John, sons of Zebedee, who were partners with Simon.

What did Simon suddenly realize about Jesus? Did he now see that Jesus was more than a man—more than a prophet—more than a priest—more than the perfect lamb of God—even more than the coming King? Did he suddenly see Jesus as one in unity with the creator? As God himself?

What was Simon's immediate reaction? Why did he want Jesus to depart from him?

And Jesus said to Simon,
“Do not fear, from now on
you will be catching men.”

¹¹ When they had brought
their boats to land, they left
everything and followed
Him.

Lesson 8 –

Jesus Forgives Sin and Heals the Paralytic Man Scripture: Mark 2:1-12

¹ When He had come back to Capernaum several days afterward, it was heard that He was at home. ² And many were gathered together, so that there was no longer room, not even near the door; and He was speaking the word to them.

Obviously, people were there to hear Jesus speak and perhaps witness a miracle. So many people, that there was no room in the house. When you see a

crowd, do you sometimes want to see what it's all about?

3 And they came, bringing to Him a paralytic, carried by four men. 4 Being unable to get to Him because of the crowd, they removed the roof above Him; and when they had dug an opening, they let down the pallet on which the paralytic was lying.

This was a pretty brash thing to do—opening up the roof to get their friend to Jesus. If you were there, would you be upset, or excited to see what might happen next?

5 And Jesus seeing their faith said to the paralytic, “Son, your sins are forgiven.”

Jesus wasn't upset although his talk was interrupted. What was the “faith” that Jesus saw? What is faith? What did the man's friends expect? What did Jesus actually say?

6 But some of the scribes were sitting there and reasoning in their hearts, 7 “Why does this man speak that way? He is blaspheming; who can forgive sins but God alone?”

These scribes were probably Pharisees from Jerusalem who wanted to spy out what Jesus was doing. They inwardly reasoned, “who can forgive sins but God alone?”

The Scripture teaches that all sin, even sin in your heart, is a sin against God our creator. By thinking “he is blaspheming” they undoubtedly were searching for a religious charge to bring against Jesus.

8 Immediately Jesus, aware in His spirit that they were reasoning that way within themselves, said to them, “Why are you reasoning about these things in your hearts? 9 Which is easier,

to say to the paralytic, 'Your sins are forgiven'; or to say, 'Get up, and pick up your pallet and walk'? 10 But so that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins"—He said to the paralytic, 11 "I say to you, get up, pick up your pallet and go home."

These scribes were not interested in the well-being of the paralytic man, but only in their mission to entrap Jesus. Jesus saw that the major problem in the life of the paralytic man was unconfessed and unrepentant sin. Seeing that, he demonstrated his love and authority by forgiving him.

Test it for yourself, which is easier to say: “your sins are forgiven” or “get up, and pick up your pallet and walk.”

Jesus was underscoring that he has the authority on earth to forgive sins and to heal.

12 And he got up and immediately picked up the pallet and went out in the sight of everyone, so that they were all amazed and were glorifying God, saying, “We have never seen anything like this.”

Special Note: Are All Physical Ailments Caused by Sin?

The answer is complex, because the scripture says “all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God” and “there is no one righteous, no not one.”

In a world full of sinful people, our collective sins have opened the door to many kinds of illnesses, accidents and death. Perhaps your sin has led to your specific problem, but that might not be the case universally. In a sinful world, sickness and death eventually prevails over all of us.

Wouldn't it be great if God would provide a universal

forgiveness for sin and then heal all our infirmities? Great News! He has and will through Jesus Christ.

Jesus became the sacrifice for all our sin(s): “If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” (1 John 1:9).

For all who put their faith in him, He promises a resurrected body and eternal life. Recall John 3:16: “For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life.” Do you have this confidence?

Lesson 9 –

Jesus Reveals Himself as Lord of the Sabbath Scripture: John 5:1-18

¹ After these things there was a feast of the Jews, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem.

The feast mentioned here was probably the Jewish Feast of Tabernacles. The Feast of Tabernacles, like all the feasts, was instituted by God as a way of reminding Israelites in every generation of their faithful deliverance by God from Egypt.

2 Now there is in Jerusalem by the sheep gate a pool, which is called in Hebrew Bethesda, having five porticoes. 3 In these lay a multitude of those who were sick, blind, lame, and withered, [waiting for the moving of the waters; 4 for an angel of the Lord went down at certain seasons into the pool and stirred up the water; whoever then first, after the stirring up of the water, stepped in was made well from whatever disease with which he was afflicted.]

Many of the earliest Bible manuscripts do not contain the text shown in brackets []. This

local belief—that the first one in the pool would be healed, implies “be the first”, “try harder” or “fight your way to the top.” This is the tradition of men, not the teaching of Jesus who says, “love your neighbor as yourself.”

5 A man was there who had been ill for thirty-eight years. 6 When Jesus saw him lying there, and knew that he had already been a long time in that condition, He said to him, “Do you wish to get well?” 7 The sick man answered Him, “Sir, I have no man to put me into the pool when the water is stirred up, but

while I am coming, another steps down before me.”

The man had been waiting 38 years by the pool, basing his hope for healing on himself or others, and not on God.

Perhaps this is why Jesus asked if he really wanted to be healed? Did the man seek the sympathy or approval of men more than the healing itself? What do you think?

8 Jesus said to him, “Get up, pick up your pallet and walk.” 9 Immediately the man became well, and picked up his pallet and began to walk.

*Thirty-eight years of waiting,
and Jesus healed him in a
second.*

Now it was the Sabbath on that day. ¹⁰ So the Jews were saying to the man who was cured, "It is the Sabbath, and it is not permissible for you to carry your pallet." ¹¹ But he answered them, "He who made me well was the one who said to me, 'Pick up your pallet and walk.'" ¹² They asked him, "Who is the man who said to you, 'Pick up your pallet and walk'?" ¹³ But the man who was healed did not know who it was, for Jesus had

slipped away while there was a crowd in that place.

The Sabbath, Saturday, was a special day of rest given by God to the Jews. Finally, after all these years, Jesus gave this man real rest. But what was the attitude of the Jews toward the man? And toward the unidentified healer Jesus?

Do you find it equally amazing that the man didn't know who Jesus was, or to thank him?

14 Afterward Jesus found him in the temple and said to him, "Behold, you have become well; do not sin anymore, so that nothing

worse happens to you.”

Did the man seek out and find Jesus, or did Jesus find the man? What does that say about each of them? Jesus gave the man a warning—do not sin anymore or something worse might happen to him. What does this say about the relationship between sin and suffering?

15 The man went away, and told the Jews that it was Jesus who had made him well. 16 For this reason the Jews were persecuting Jesus, because He was doing these things on the Sabbath. 17 But He answered them, “My Father

is working until now, and I
Myself am working.”

*Why do you think the man went
and told the Jews it was Jesus,
when he probably knew this
would get Jesus into trouble?*

18 For this reason therefore
the Jews were seeking all
the more to kill Him,
because He not only was
breaking the Sabbath, but
also was calling God His
own Father, making Himself
equal with God.

*So why did the Jews want to kill
Jesus?*

Lesson 10 –

Jesus' Discourse on His Equality with the Father Scripture: John 5:19-47

19 Therefore Jesus answered and was saying to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of Himself, unless it is something He sees the Father doing; for whatever the Father does, these things the Son also does in like manner.

Jesus' discourse here is in response to the Jew's charge that he was blaspheming, because he was calling God his

own father and thus making himself out to be equal with God.

20 For the Father loves the Son, and shows Him all things that He Himself is doing; and the Father will show Him greater works than these, so that you will marvel. 21 For just as the Father raises the dead and gives them life, even so the Son also gives life to whom He wishes. 22 For not even the Father judges anyone, but He has given all judgment to the Son, 23 so that all will honor the Son even as they honor the Father. He who does not honor the Son does not

honor the Father who sent Him.

A clarifying passage of Scripture is in Philippians Chapter 2, which reads:

“⁵ Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus, ⁶ who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, ⁷ but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men. ⁸ Being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.”

24 "Truly, truly, I say to you, he who hears My word, and believes Him who sent Me, has eternal life, and does not come into judgment, but has passed out of death into life.

What does Jesus say is necessary to pass out of death into life?

25 Truly, truly, I say to you, an hour is coming and now is, when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God, and those who hear will live. 26 For just as the Father has life in Himself, even so He gave to the Son also to have life in Himself; 27 and He gave Him

authority to execute judgment, because He is the Son of Man. 28 Do not marvel at this; for an hour is coming, in which all who are in the tombs will hear His voice, 29 and will come forth; those who did the good deeds to a resurrection of life, those who committed the evil deeds to a resurrection of judgment.

The Father has given Jesus authority to execute judgement. The criteria?—John 3:16, “For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life.” To explore what it means

to be “good,” it is discussed by Jesus in Lesson 11.

30 “I can do nothing on My own initiative. As I hear, I judge; and My judgment is just, because I do not seek My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me.

31 “If I alone testify about Myself, my testimony is not true. 32 There is another who testifies of Me, and I know that the testimony which He gives about Me is true. 33 You have sent to John [the Baptist], and he has testified to the truth. 34 But the testimony which I receive is not from man, but I say these things so that you may be saved. 35 He

was the lamp that was burning and was shining and you were willing to rejoice for a while in his light.

36 But the testimony which I have is greater than the testimony of John; for the works which the Father has given Me to accomplish—the very works that I do—testify about Me, that the Father has sent Me.

37 And the Father who sent Me, He has testified of Me. You have neither heard His voice at any time nor seen His form. 38 You do not have His word abiding in you, for you do not believe Him whom He sent.

From whom does the ultimate testimony come that Jesus is the Son of God?

39 You search the Scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life; it is these that testify about Me; 40 and you are unwilling to come to Me so that you may have life. 41 I do not receive glory from men; 42 but I know you, that you do not have the love of God in yourselves.

43 I have come in My Father's name, and you do not receive Me; if another comes in his own name, you will receive him. 44 How can you believe, when you

receive glory from one another and you do not seek the glory that is from the one and only God?

Why could the Jews not see the truth about Jesus? What clouded their vision?

45 Do not think that I will accuse you [the Jews] before the Father; the one who accuses you is Moses, in whom you have set your hope. 46 For if you believed Moses, you would believe Me, for he wrote about Me. 47 But if you do not believe his writings, how will you believe My words?"

Lesson 11 –

Jesus' Teaching on the "Goodness" of Mankind Scripture: Luke 18: 9-27

9 And He also told this parable to some people who trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and viewed others with contempt:

What is this teaching of Jesus going to be about?

10 "Two men went up into the temple to pray, one a Pharisee [a very proud religious Jew] and the other a tax collector [considered a sinner by the

Pharisees because they worked for the Romans].

11 The Pharisee stood and was praying this to himself: 'God, I thank You that I am not like other people: swindlers, unjust, adulterers, or even like this tax collector. 12 I fast twice a week; I pay tithes of all that I get.'

13 But the tax collector, standing some distance away, was even unwilling to lift up his eyes to heaven, but was beating his breast, saying, 'God, be merciful to me, the sinner!' 14 I tell you, this man went to his house justified rather than the other; for everyone who exalts himself will be

humbled, but he who humbles himself will be exalted."

A proud man vs. a humble and contrite man. According to Jesus, which one was "justified"? A simple way of understanding "justified" is "just-as-if-I-never sinned." When God forgives us, we are truly forgiven. The Pharisee thought his good works would save him for eternal life, but no. It was the forgiveness of God that saved the tax collector (and us too).

15 And they were bringing even their babies to Him so that He would touch them,

but when the disciples saw it, they began rebuking them. 16 But Jesus called for them, saying, "Permit the children to come to Me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these. 17 Truly I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God like a child will not enter it at all."

Babies are not proud, but thankful and loving. To get into the kingdom of God, how should we be like little children?

18 A ruler questioned Him, saying, "Good Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?" 19 And Jesus

said to him, "Why do you call Me good? No one is good except God alone."

This proud young man calls Jesus "good." Jesus tells him the stark truth – no one is good but God alone. In effect, Jesus is asking him if he is calling Him God. Are you willing to call Jesus good on this basis?

20 "You know the commandments, 'Do not commit adultery, Do not murder, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Honor your father and mother.'" 21 And he said, "All these things I have kept

from my youth.”

Like the Pharisee, this young ruler is very proud of his rule-keeping. However, Jesus teaches that not only what we do is held into account, but also what we think. The scripture says, “There is none righteous, no not one.” Like the tax collector, what should this young ruler really do?

22 When Jesus heard this, He said to him, “One thing you still lack; sell all that you possess and distribute it to the poor, and you shall have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me.”

23 But when he had heard

these things, he became very sad, for he was extremely rich.

Imagine what effect it would have on this rich young ruler to sell all and follow Jesus?

24 And Jesus looked at him and said, "How hard it is for those who are wealthy to enter the kingdom of God!

25 For it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God."

26 They who heard it said, "Then who can be saved?"

27 But He said, "The things that are impossible with

people are possible with God.”

Why is it so hard for those who are wealthy to enter the kingdom of God? How can you buy humility and repentance?

Lesson 12 –

Jesus Calms the Storm

Scripture: Mark 4:35-41

35 On that day, when evening came, He said to them, "Let us go over to the other side."

36 Leaving the crowd, they took Him along with them in the boat, just as He was; and other boats were with Him.

37 And there arose a fierce gale of wind, and the waves were breaking over the boat so much that the boat was already filling up. 38 Jesus Himself was in the stern, asleep on the cushion; and they woke Him and said to

Him, "Teacher, do You not care that we are perishing?"

39 And He got up and rebuked the wind and said to the sea, "Hush, be still." And the wind died down and it became perfectly calm.

40 And He said to them, "Why are you afraid? Do you still have no faith?"

41 They became very much afraid and said to one another, "Who then is this, that even the wind and the sea obey Him?"

What is the faith that Jesus wanted them to have? Faith in a bigger boat? Faith in their

swim lessons? Faith in their plans?

No, but faith in Him. They said to one another, “Who then is this, that even the wind and sea obey Him?” What is your answer to their question?

Lesson 13 –

Jesus Commands the Demons to Depart from a Possessed Man

Scripture: Mark 5:1-20

1 They came to the other side of the sea, into the country of the Gerasenes.

2 When He got out of the boat, immediately a man from the tombs with an unclean spirit met Him,
3 and he had his dwelling among the tombs.

And no one was able to bind him anymore, even with a chain; 4 because he had often been bound with shackles and chains, and the chains had been torn

apart by him and the shackles broken in pieces, and no one was strong enough to subdue him.

5 Constantly, night and day, he was screaming among the tombs and in the mountains, and gashing himself with stones.

6 Seeing Jesus from a distance, he ran up and bowed down before Him;
7 and shouting with a loud voice, he said, "What business do we have with each other, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? I implore You by God, do not torment me!"

8 For He had been saying to him, "Come out of the man,

you unclean spirit!" 9 And He was asking him, "What is your name?" And he said to Him, "My name is Legion; for we are many."

10 And he began to implore Him earnestly not to send them out of the country. 11 Now there was a large herd of swine feeding nearby on the mountain. 12 The demons implored Him, saying, "Send us into the swine so that we may enter them."

13 Jesus gave them permission. And coming out, the unclean spirits entered the swine; and the herd rushed down the steep bank into the sea, about two thousand of them; and

they were drowned in the sea.

14 Their herdsmen ran away and reported it in the city and in the country. And the people came to see what it was that had happened.

15 They came to Jesus and observed the man who had been demon-possessed sitting down, clothed and in his right mind, the very man who had had the "legion"; and they became frightened.

16 Those who had seen it described to them how it had happened to the demon-possessed man, and all about the swine. 17 And they began to implore Him to leave their region.

18 As He was getting into the boat, the man who had been demon-possessed was imploring Him that he might accompany Him. 19 And He did not let him, but He said to him, "Go home to your people and report to them what great things the Lord has done for you, and how He had mercy on you."

20 And he went away and began to proclaim in Decapolis what great things Jesus had done for him; and everyone was amazed.

v6: The demons recognized the nearness of Jesus immediately, and ran up to implore Jesus to leave them alone.

v8: *Jesus ordered them to leave and they had to obey.*

v10: *They requested to not be sent “out” but allowed to go into the swine.*

v13: *Jesus granted this, but in so doing the swine rushed down the hill to the sea and were drowned.*

v15-17: *The townspeople were very frightened of Jesus, and implored him to leave them.*

v19-20: *The man was told to tell his people the great things the Lord had done for him. He proclaimed in Decapolis what great things Jesus had done.*

Who is Jesus that he can even command the demons?

Lesson 14 –

Jesus Feeds 5000 and Walks on Water

Scripture: Matthew
14:15-36

15 When it was evening, the disciples came to Him and said, "This place is desolate and the hour is already late; so send the crowds away, that they may go into the villages and buy food for themselves."

16 But Jesus said to them, "They do not need to go away; you give them something to eat!" 17 They said to Him, "We have here only five loaves and two

fish.” 18 And He said,
“Bring them here to Me.”

19 Ordering the people to sit down on the grass, He took the five loaves and the two fish, and looking up toward heaven, He blessed the food, and breaking the loaves He gave them to the disciples, and the disciples gave them to the crowds, 20 and they all ate and were satisfied.

They picked up what was left over of the broken pieces, twelve full baskets.

21 There were about five thousand men who ate, besides women and children.

Notice how precise the description of this event is in terms of the 5 loaves and 2 fish to start with, and 12 baskets left over. Also the number of men who ate, plus women and children.

This event is recorded in all four Gospels – Matthew, Mark, Luke and John.

Jesus continues to demonstrate to the disciples his authority, replacing their doubts with solid confidence in him.

22 Immediately He made the disciples get into the boat and go ahead of Him

to the other side, while He sent the crowds away.

23 After He had sent the crowds away, He went up on the mountain by Himself to pray; and when it was evening, He was there alone.

Prayer is talking with God. If Jesus felt the strong need to be in constant communication with the Father, how much more should we also be in prayer? Do you ever pray?

24 But the boat [the boat the disciples had taken] was already a long distance from the land, battered by the waves; for the wind was

contrary. 25 And in the fourth watch [about 3 a.m.] of the night He came to them, walking on the sea.

26 When the disciples saw Him walking on the sea, they were terrified, and said, "It is a ghost!" And they cried out in fear.

27 But immediately Jesus spoke to them, saying, "Take courage, it is I; do not be afraid."

In most of these miracles, the initial reaction of those who observe them is fear. Why do you think that is so?

28 Peter said to Him, "Lord, if it is You, command me to come to You on the water."

29 And He said, "Come!"

And Peter got out of the boat, and walked on the water and came toward Jesus.

30 But seeing the wind, he became frightened, and beginning to sink, he cried out, "Lord, save me!"

31 Immediately Jesus stretched out His hand and took hold of him, and said to him, "You of little faith, why did you doubt?"

Initially, Peter was able to walk on the water, but becoming afraid he began to sink. Jesus

related this to Peter's small faith which gave way to doubt.

Think about this: every time you sit down in a chair, are you afraid it will collapse under you? Probably not, because you sit down in dozens of chairs every day. You have faith and confidence they will hold you. Your faith is big. But, if you had never sat down in a chair before, you might be very afraid to try it for the first time.

God hears our prayers, builds our confidence and praises our faith in Him. Don't be afraid when he shows you a "new chair."

32 When they got into the boat, the wind stopped.

33 And those who were in the boat worshiped Him, saying, "You are certainly God's Son!"

34 When they had crossed over, they came to land at Gennesaret [also called the Gerasenes, where Jesus had cast out the demons].

35 And when the men of that place recognized Him, they sent word into all that surrounding district and brought to Him all who were sick; 36 and they implored Him that they might just touch the fringe of His cloak; and as many as touched it were cured.

Before, these men were fearful and asked Jesus to leave their country after he had cast out the demons. Now, thanks to the witness of the man who was healed, they welcome Jesus, and many are healed even by touching the fringe of his cloak. What does this say about their growth of faith in Jesus?

Lesson 15 –

Jesus Asks the
Disciples: Who Do You
Say That I Am?

Scripture: Matthew
16:13-21

13 Now when Jesus came into the district of Caesarea Philippi, He was asking His disciples, “Who do people say that the Son of Man is?”

Jesus demonstrated his power and authority on many occasions to his disciples, and several times they responded emotionally as to who he is. But this time was different.

*They are together and away
from the crowds and critics.*

14 And they said, "Some say John the Baptist; and others, Elijah; but still others, Jeremiah, or one of the prophets."

None of these responses capture the totality of Jesus' authority, teaching, compassion, miracles, service, humility, self-sacrifice, etc.

15 He said to them, "But who do you say that I am?"

16 Simon Peter answered, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God." 17 And Jesus said to him, "Blessed

are you, Simon Barjona [son of Jona], because flesh and blood did not reveal this to you, but My Father who is in heaven.

Peter doesn't wait for any discussion. As revealed to him by the Father, Peter declares "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God." What does this mean? Who do you say Jesus is?

18 "I also say to you that you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build My church; and the gates of Hades will not overpower it.

Jesus uses two different words here for “rock.” “Peter” is the masculine Greek word petros, which is a familiar name typically translated as “rock” or stone. Upon “this rock” is from the feminine Greek word petra, which would be much larger, like a rock formation or fortress. Thus Peter is a “rock” while the proclamation of Jesus as “the Christ” is “the rock foundation” on which Jesus will build his church.

19 “I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven; and whatever you bind on earth shall have been bound in heaven, and whatever

you loose on earth shall have been loosed in heaven.”

Jesus is defining the authority of Peter to open up new outreaches for the Church, and for the apostles to establish the structure and rules that the Church will follow. For example, in Acts 15:19, the Apostles determine that the Church can include Gentiles and not require them to convert to Judaism, but they must avoid practices which would be directly offensive to their Jewish Christian brothers.

20 Then He warned the disciples that they should

tell no one that He was the Christ.

21 From that time Jesus began to show His disciples that He must go to Jerusalem, and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised up on the third day.

Lesson 16 –

Jesus Reveals His 2nd
Coming & Transfiguration
Scripture: Mark 8:31-9:10

31 And He began to teach them that the Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders and the chief priests and the scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again. 32 And He was stating the matter plainly.

At this point, Jesus began to plainly tell the disciples the full story – that he would be rejected, killed and rise again.

And Peter took Him aside and began to rebuke Him.
33 But turning around and seeing His disciples, He rebuked Peter and said, "Get behind Me, Satan; for you are not setting your mind on God's interests, but man's."

Up to this time, the disciples thought Jesus was going to soon take his place as the ruling Messiah of Israel. Peter learned it is not always wise to rebuke the Son of God.

34 And He summoned the crowd with His disciples, and said to them, "If anyone wishes to come

after Me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross and follow Me.

35 For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake and the gospel's will save it.

36 For what does it profit a man to gain the whole world, and forfeit his soul?

37 For what will a man give in exchange for his soul?

38 For whoever is ashamed of Me and My words in this adulterous and sinful generation, the Son of Man will also be ashamed of him when He comes in the glory of His Father with the holy angels."

Jesus said to everyone: “If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross and follow Me.” This is a clear statement of our commitment to Christ.

What does it mean? How can we do this? Fortunately, Jesus gives us power through the Holy Spirit to make this possible.

1 And Jesus was saying to them, “Truly I say to you, there are some of those who are standing here who will not taste death until they see the kingdom of God after it has come with power.”

2 Six days later, Jesus took with Him Peter and James and John, and brought them up on a high mountain by themselves.

God is going to give the leaders of the disciples a view of the power of the Kingdom of God.

And He was transfigured before them; 3 and His garments became radiant and exceedingly white, as no launderer on earth can whiten them.

4 Elijah appeared to them along with Moses; and they were talking with Jesus.

This transfigured (changed in appearance) Jesus was a preview of the glory he now has today. He is discussing what is to come with Elijah, a leading prophet of the Old Testament, and Moses, who led Israel out of Egypt and recorded the Law.

Peter, James and John are completely awe struck!

5 Peter said to Jesus, "Rabbi, it is good for us to be here; let us make three tabernacles, one for You, and one for Moses, and one for Elijah." 6 For he did not know what to answer; for they became terrified.

7 Then a cloud formed, overshadowing them, and a voice came out of the cloud, "This is My beloved Son, listen to Him!" 8 All at once they looked around and saw no one with them anymore, except Jesus alone.

God the Father gave the disciples a strong message on the superiority of Jesus – and to be still!

9 As they were coming down from the mountain, He [Jesus] gave them orders not to relate to anyone what they had seen, until the Son of Man rose from the dead.

10 They seized upon that statement, discussing with one another what rising from the dead meant.

Lesson 17 –

The Jews Attempt to Stone Jesus for Blasphemy

Scripture: John 10:22-39

22 At that time the Feast of the Dedication took place at Jerusalem; 23 it was winter, and Jesus was walking in the temple in the portico of Solomon.

24 The Jews then gathered around Him, and were saying to Him, "How long will You keep us in suspense? If You are the Christ, tell us plainly."

25 Jesus answered them, "I told you, and you do not

believe; the works that I do in My Father's name, these testify of Me.

26 But you do not believe because you are not of My sheep. 27 My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me; 28 and I give eternal life to them, and they will never perish; and no one will snatch them out of My hand.

29 My Father, who has given them to Me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father's hand. 30 I and the Father are one."

Jesus says he gives eternal life, and those will never perish—no

one can snatch them out of his hand. He even goes farther—that they are given to him from the Father, and no one can snatch them out of the Father's hand.

“I and the Father are one.” In what way do you think that Jesus and the Father are one?

31 The Jews picked up stones again to stone Him.
32 Jesus answered them, “I showed you many good works from the Father; for which of them are you stoning Me?”

33 The Jews answered Him, “For a good work we do not stone You, but for blasphemy; and because

You, being a man, make Yourself out to be God.”

Why did the Jews want to kill Jesus? Why were they blind to the works that Jesus did that testified to the truth of his statement, “I am the Son of God”?

³⁴ Jesus answered them, “Has it not been written in your Law, ‘I said, you are gods’? ³⁵ If he called them gods, to whom the word of God came (and the Scripture cannot be broken), ³⁶ do you say of Him, whom the Father sanctified and sent into the world, ‘You are

blaspheming,' because I said, 'I am the Son of God'?

37 If I do not do the works of My Father, do not believe Me; 38 but if I do them, though you do not believe Me, believe the works, so that you may know and understand that the Father is in Me, and I in the Father."

39 Therefore they were seeking again to seize Him, and He eluded their grasp.

Jesus is using the Jew's own logic against them. In Psalm 82:6-8, the Scriptures say that a mere man who has been given authority as a judge or magistrate by God can be

lawfully called a “god” by those they govern.

Jesus then challenges them to not only consider his words when he says “I am the Son of God,” but to base their judgment upon the evidence of the miraculous works he does. They accuse him of blasphemy, but is it blasphemy if the evidence proves it true?

Lesson 18 -

The Jewish Council Plots to Put Jesus to Death

Scripture: John 11:38-54

Jesus performed a most noteworthy miracle, raising a close friend and well-known citizen of Bethany named Lazarus from the dead. Our Scripture begins at the grave-site of Lazarus.

38 So Jesus, again being deeply moved within, came to the tomb. Now it was a cave, and a stone was lying against it.

39 Jesus said, "Remove the stone." Martha, the sister of the deceased, said to Him, "Lord, by this time there will be a stench, for he has been dead four days."

40 Jesus said to her, "Did I not say to you that if you believe, you will see the glory of God?"

41 So they removed the stone. Then Jesus raised His eyes, and said, "Father, I thank You that You have heard Me.

42 "I knew that You always hear Me; but because of the people standing around I said it, so that they may believe that You sent Me."

43 When He had said these things, He cried out with a loud voice, "Lazarus, come forth."

44 The man who had died came forth, bound hand and foot with wrappings, and his face was wrapped around with a cloth. Jesus said to them, "Unbind him, and let him go."

45 Therefore many of the Jews who came to Mary [Martha's sister] and saw what He had done, believed in Him.

46 But some of them went to the Pharisees and told them the things which Jesus had done.

47 Therefore the chief priests and the Pharisees convened a council, and were saying, "What are we doing? For this man is performing many signs.

48 If we let Him go on like this, all men will believe in Him, and the Romans will come and take away both our place and our nation."

49 But one of them, Caiaphas, who was high priest that year, said to them, "You know nothing at all, 50 nor do you take into account that it is expedient for you that one man die for the people, and that the whole nation not perish."

51 Now he did not say this on his own initiative, but

being high priest that year, he prophesied that Jesus was going to die for the nation, 52 and not for the nation only, but in order that He might also gather together into one the children of God who are scattered abroad.

53 So from that day on they planned together to kill Him.

54 Therefore Jesus no longer continued to walk publicly among the Jews, but went away from there to the country near the wilderness, into a city called Ephraim; and there He stayed with the disciples.

What was the real reason that the Jewish leaders decided to kill Jesus?

Why wouldn't they repent and get right with God?

Isn't it remarkable that Caiaphas was unconsciously prophesying about the true mission of Jesus?

Lesson 19 –

Jesus' Triumphal Entry to Jerusalem

Scripture: John 11:55-
12:2; 12:9-19

55 Now the Passover of the Jews was near, and many went up to Jerusalem out of the country before the Passover to purify themselves.

56 So they were seeking for Jesus, and were saying to one another as they stood in the temple, "What do you think; that He will not come to the feast at all?"

57 Now the chief priests and the Pharisees had given

orders that if anyone knew where He was, he was to report it, so that they might seize Him.

12:1 Jesus, therefore, six days before the Passover, came to Bethany where Lazarus was, whom Jesus had raised from the dead.

2 So they made Him a supper there, and Martha [Lazarus' sister] was serving; but Lazarus was one of those reclining at the table with Him.

12:9 The large crowd of the Jews then learned that He was there; and they came, not for Jesus' sake only, but that they might also see Lazarus, whom He raised

from the dead. 10 But the chief priests planned to put Lazarus to death also; 11 because on account of him many of the Jews were going away and were believing in Jesus.

12 On the next day the large crowd who had come to the feast, when they heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem, 13 took the branches of the palm trees and went out to meet Him, and began to shout, "Hosanna! Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord, even the King of Israel."

14 Jesus, finding a young donkey, sat on it; as it is written, 15 "Fear not,

daughter of Zion; behold, your King is coming, seated on a donkey's colt."

16 These things His disciples did not understand at the first; but when Jesus was glorified, then they remembered that these things were written of Him, and that they had done these things to Him.

17 So the people, who were with Him when He called Lazarus out of the tomb and raised him from the dead, continued to testify about Him.

18 For this reason also the people went and met Him, because they heard that He had performed this sign.

19 So the Pharisees said to one another, "You see that you are not doing any good; look, the world has gone after Him."

The crowds were excited to see Jesus arrive into Jerusalem, and celebrated with shouts of "hosanna" which means "save now" or "save us, we pray."

The people laid before Him their cloaks and the branches of palm trees, and hailed and praised Him as the "King who comes in the name of the Lord."

Jesus was openly declared by the people that He was their King and the Messiah.

But unfortunately, the praise the people lavished on Jesus was not because they recognized Him as their savior from sin.

They welcomed Him out of their desire for a messianic deliverer to lead them in revolt against Rome. When He failed in their expectations, the crowds turned on Him.

Within just a few days, their hosannas changed to cries of "Crucify Him!" Many of those who hailed Him as a hero would soon reject and abandon Him.

Lesson 20 –

Jesus' Promise to Us

Scripture: John 14:1-20

1 "Do not let your heart be troubled; believe in God, believe also in Me.

2 In My Father's house are many dwelling places; if it were not so, I would have told you; for I go to prepare a place for you. 3 If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself, that where I am, there you may be also.

4 And you know the way where I am going."

Jesus is about to leave the disciples. Where he is going is heaven. He is going to prepare a place for the disciples and us.

He promises to receive us, that where he is, there we may be also. We know the way.

5 Thomas said to Him, "Lord, we do not know where You are going, how do we know the way?"

Thomas is obviously thinking of a physical place. Jesus is talking about a spiritual place.

6 Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me.

7 If you had known Me, you would have known My Father also; from now on you know Him, and have seen Him."

Belief in Jesus is the way to this spiritual place. No one comes to the Father except through Jesus.

8 Philip said to Him, "Lord, show us the Father, and it is enough for us." 9 Jesus said to him, "Have I been so long with you, and yet you have not come to know Me, Philip? He who has seen Me has seen the Father; how

can you say, 'Show us the Father'?

He who has seen Jesus has seen the Father.

10 Do you not believe that I am in the Father, and the Father is in Me? The words that I say to you I do not speak on My own initiative, but the Father abiding in Me does His works. 11 Believe Me that I am in the Father and the Father is in Me; otherwise believe because of the works themselves.

12 Truly, truly, I say to you, he who believes in Me, the works that I do, he will do also; and greater works

than these he will do;
because I go to the Father.

13 Whatever you ask in My name, that will I do, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son. 14 If you ask Me anything in My name, I will do it.

An honest prayer to Jesus in “his name” – asking for forgiveness and salvation – is surely answered.

15 “If you love Me, you will keep My commandments.

16 I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may be with you forever; 17 that is the

Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it does not see Him or know Him, but you know Him because He abides with you and will be in you.

This is the promise of the Holy Spirit, also called the Spirit of Christ, who indwells the believer forever to help, teach, lead and guide.

18 "I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you.

19 After a little while the world will no longer see Me, but you will see Me; because I live, you will live also. 20 In that day you will know that I am in My

Father, and you in Me, and I in you.

This is an amazing promise.

Imagine three envelopes. The outer one is marked "Father." Inside it is another envelope marked "Jesus." Inside that envelope is another one marked with your name. Finally, inside "your" envelope is a card marked "Holy Spirit (the Spirit of Christ)."

Consider now, that nothing can get to you that first doesn't have to go through the Father, the Son, and then finds the Holy Spirit dwelling within you!

Lesson 21 –

Jesus' Trial before the High Priest Caiaphas and the Sanhedrin

Scripture: Mark 14:53-65

Guided by Judas Iscariot, the Jews and Roman guards arrested Jesus at night, and took him to the Jewish ruling council, the Sanhedrin.

53 They led Jesus away to the high priest; and all the chief priests and the elders and the scribes gathered together. 54 Peter had followed Him at a distance, right into the courtyard of

the high priest; and he was sitting with the officers and warming himself at the fire.

55 Now the chief priests and the whole Council kept trying to obtain testimony against Jesus to put Him to death, and they were not finding any. 56 For many were giving false testimony against Him, but their testimony was not consistent.

57 Some stood up and began to give false testimony against Him, saying, 58 "We heard Him say, 'I will destroy this temple made with hands, and in three days I will build another made without hands.'" 59 Not even in this

respect was their testimony consistent.

60 The high priest stood up and came forward and questioned Jesus, saying, "Do You not answer? What is it that these men are testifying against You?" 61 But He kept silent and did not answer.

Jesus felt no compulsion to answer such spurious charges.

Again the high priest was questioning Him, and saying to Him, "Are You the Christ, the Son of the Blessed One?"

62 And Jesus said, "I am; and you shall see the Son of

Man sitting at the right hand of Power, and coming with the clouds of heaven.”

Finally the high priest asked Jesus plainly, “Are you the Christ, the Son of the Blessed One [God]?”

In Scripture, Jesus is often seen sitting at the right hand of the Father, and is coming back for believers in the clouds.

63 Tearing his clothes, the high priest said, “What further need do we have of witnesses? 64 You have heard the blasphemy; how does it seem to you?”

And they all condemned Him to be deserving of death.

65 Some began to spit at Him, and to blindfold Him, and to beat Him with their fists, and to say to Him, "Prophecy!" And the officers received Him with slaps in the face.

Lesson 22 –

Jesus' Trial before Pilate
the Roman Governor

Scripture: John 18:29-
38; 19:1-16

*Jesus was led before the Roman
Governor Pontius Pilate.*

29 Therefore Pilate went out to them and said, "What accusation do you bring against this Man?" 30 They answered and said to him, "If this Man were not an evildoer, we would not have delivered Him to you."

31 So Pilate said to them, "Take Him yourselves, and judge Him according to your

law." The Jews said to him, "We are not permitted to put anyone to death," 32 to fulfill the word of Jesus which He spoke, signifying by what kind of death He was about to die.

33 Therefore Pilate entered again into the Praetorium, and summoned Jesus and said to Him, "Are You the King of the Jews?"

34 Jesus answered, "Are you saying this on your own initiative, or did others tell you about Me?" 35 Pilate answered, "I am not a Jew, am I? Your own nation and the chief priests delivered You to me; what have You done?"

36 Jesus answered, "My kingdom is not of this world. If My kingdom were of this world, then My servants would be fighting so that I would not be handed over to the Jews; but as it is, My kingdom is not of this realm."

Pilate asks, "Are you the King of the Jews?" Jesus affirms it, but clarifies "My kingdom is not of this world." It is not of this world yet, as his Kingdom is only in heaven at this time. Recall the Lord's Prayer (Matthew 6:10) in which we pray for a future time when the Kingdom will be on earth as it is in heaven. This will occur when

Jesus returns at his second coming.

37 Therefore Pilate said to Him, "So You are a king?" Jesus answered, "You say correctly that I am a king. For this I have been born, and for this I have come into the world, to testify to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth hears My voice." 38 Pilate said to Him, "What is truth?"

19:1 Pilate then took Jesus and scourged Him. 2 And the soldiers twisted together a crown of thorns and put it on His head, and put a purple robe on Him; 3 and they began to come up to Him and say, "Hail,

King of the Jews!” and to give Him slaps in the face.

4 Pilate came out again and said to them, “Behold, I am bringing Him out to you so that you may know that I find no guilt in Him.”

5 Jesus then came out, wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe. Pilate said to them, “Behold, the Man!”

6 So when the chief priests and the officers saw Him, they cried out saying, “Crucify, crucify!” Pilate said to them, “Take Him yourselves and crucify Him, for I find no guilt in Him.”

7 The Jews answered him, “We have a law, and by that

law He ought to die because He made Himself out to be the Son of God.”

8 Therefore when Pilate heard this statement, he was even more afraid; 9 and he entered into the Praetorium again and said to Jesus, “Where are You from?” But Jesus gave him no answer. 10 So Pilate said to Him, “You do not speak to me? Do You not know that I have authority to release You, and I have authority to crucify You?”

When Pilate heard the statement that Jesus claimed to be the Son of God, he became more afraid. Where are you from? he asks. But Jesus is

silent. “Don’t you know I have the authority to crucify you?” he threatens.

11 Jesus answered, “You would have no authority over Me, unless it had been given you from above; for this reason he who delivered Me to you has the greater sin.”

The Son of God has his authority given from the Father, even to forgive sin.

12 As a result of this Pilate made efforts to release Him, but the Jews cried out saying, “If you release this Man, you are no friend of

Caesar; everyone who makes himself out to be a king opposes Caesar.”

13 Therefore when Pilate heard these words, he brought Jesus out, and sat down on the judgment seat at a place called The Pavement, but in Hebrew, Gabbatha. 14 Now it was the day of preparation for the Passover; it was about the sixth hour. And he said to the Jews, “Behold, your King!”

15 So they cried out, “Away with Him, away with Him, crucify Him!” Pilate said to them, “Shall I crucify your King?” The chief priests answered, “We have no king but Caesar.”

16 So he then handed Him
over to them to be crucified.

Lesson 23 –

The Crucifixion

Scripture: Matthew 27;
John 19; Luke 23; John
25-27; Mark 15; Psalm
22; Luke 23; (New King
James Version)

Matthew 27:27-31

27 Then the soldiers of the governor took Jesus into the Praetorium and gathered the whole garrison around Him.

28 And they stripped Him and put a scarlet robe on Him.

29 When they had twisted a crown of thorns, they put it on His head, and a reed in

His right hand. And they bowed the knee before Him and mocked Him, saying, "Hail, King of the Jews!"
30 Then they spat on Him, and took the reed and struck Him on the head.
31 And when they had mocked Him, they took the robe off Him, put His own clothes on Him, and led Him away to be crucified.

John 19:17-25

17 And He, bearing His cross, went out to a place called the Place of a Skull, which is called in Hebrew, Golgotha, 18 where they crucified Him, and two others with Him, one on either side, and Jesus in the center.

19 Now Pilate wrote a title and put it on the cross. And the writing was: JESUS OF NAZARETH, THE KING OF THE JEWS.

20 Then many of the Jews read this title, for the place where Jesus was crucified was near the city; and it was written in Hebrew, Greek, and Latin.

21 Therefore the chief priests of the Jews said to Pilate, "Do not write, 'The King of the Jews,' but, 'He said, "I am the King of the Jews." ' "

22 Pilate answered, "What I have written, I have written."

23 Then the soldiers, when they had crucified Jesus, took His garments and

made four parts, to each soldier a part, and also the tunic. Now the tunic was without seam, woven from the top in one piece.

24 They said therefore among themselves, "Let us not tear it, but cast lots for it, whose it shall be," that the Scripture might be fulfilled which says: "They divided My garments among them, And for My clothing they cast lots."

25 Therefore the soldiers did these things.

Pilate had been intimidated by the Jews on the sentence of "crucify him," but he got the last word in this sign which was actually prophetic. What do you

think of Pilate? Was he an honest judge?

Luke 23:35-37, 34a

35 And the people stood looking on. But even the rulers with them sneered, saying, "He saved others; let Him save Himself if He is the Christ, the chosen of God."

36 The soldiers also mocked Him, coming and offering Him sour wine, 37 and saying, "If You are the King of the Jews, save Yourself."

34a Then Jesus said, "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they do."

These were the first words spoken by Jesus on the cross. Who do you think he wanted to be forgiven? Pilate? The Council? The Jews? All of us who have sinned and seek a savior?

Luke 23:39-43

39 Then one of the criminals who were hanged blasphemed Him, saying, "If You are the Christ, save Yourself and us."

40 But the other, answering, rebuked him, saying, "Do you not even fear God, seeing you are under the same condemnation?"

41 And we indeed justly, for we receive the due reward of our deeds; but this Man has done nothing wrong.”

42 Then he said to Jesus, “Lord, remember me when You come into Your kingdom.” 43 And Jesus said to him, “Assuredly, I say to you, today you will be with Me in Paradise.”

Who was this man? Note that he called Jesus “Lord.”

Remember me when You come into Your Kingdom,” he said.

He obviously believed that Jesus would be coming back to reign. Jesus assured him that he would indeed be with him today in

Paradise. For the thief on the cross, this was the last chance he would have to call out to Jesus for salvation. He was the only one desperate enough among all those people to do so. Who else should have asked for help from Jesus?

John 19:25-27

25 Now there stood by the cross of Jesus His mother, and His mother's sister, [and] Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene. 26 When Jesus therefore saw His mother, and the disciple whom He loved standing by, He said to His mother, "Woman, behold your son!" 27 Then

He said to the disciple,
“Behold your mother!” And
from that hour that disciple
took her to his own home.

*This third thing that Jesus said
was to take care of his mother
by appointing her into the care
of the disciple John. What does
this tell you about Jesus’
priorities?*

Mark 15:33-36

33 Now when the sixth hour
had come, there was
darkness over the whole
land until the ninth hour.

34 And at the ninth hour
Jesus cried out with a loud
voice, saying, “Eloi, Eloi,
lama sabachthani?” which is

translated, "My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?"

35 Some of those who stood by, when they heard that, said, "Look, He is calling for Elijah!" 36 Then someone ran and filled a sponge full of sour wine, put it on a reed, and offered it to Him to drink, saying, "Let Him alone; let us see if Elijah will come to take Him down."

About the sixth hour, or noon, a supernatural darkness falls over the land lasting three hours. In Scripture, "light" is a symbol of salvation, and darkness is a symbol of divine judgement.

What was God judging? Our sin. Who was bearing our sin and suffering and dying under this judgement? Jesus.

A part of this judgement was the complete separation of Jesus from the Father. Since before time, Jesus had always been a part of the triune God. And now, complete separation. Jesus is quoting the Scripture from memory, a Psalm of David written 600 years before as a prophesy of what is happening now. Here it is in part...

Psalm 22:

1 My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me? Why are You so far from helping

Me, And from the words of
My groaning?

2 O My God, I cry in the
daytime, but You do not
hear; And in the night
season, and am not silent.

6 But I am a worm, and no
man; A reproach of men,
and despised by the people.

7 All those who see Me
ridicule Me; They shoot out
the lip, they shake the
head, saying,

8 "He trusted in the Lord, let
Him rescue Him; Let Him
deliver Him, since He
delights in Him!"

12 Many bulls have
surrounded Me; Strong bulls
of Bashan have encircled
Me. 13 They gape at Me with

their mouths, Like a raging
and roaring lion. 14 I am
poured out like water, And
all My bones are out of
joint; My heart is like wax;
It has melted within Me.

15 My strength is dried up
like a potsherd, And My
tongue clings to My jaws;
You have brought Me to the
dust of death.

16 For dogs have
surrounded Me; The
congregation of the wicked
has enclosed Me. They
pierced My hands and My
feet; 17 I can count all My
bones. They look and stare
at Me.

18 They divide My garments
among them, And for My

clothing they cast lots. 19
But You, O Lord, do not be
far from Me; O My Strength,
hasten to help Me!

20 Deliver Me from the
sword, My precious life from
the power of the dog.

21 Save Me from the lion's
mouth And from the horns
of the wild oxen!

John 19:28-30

28 After this, Jesus, knowing
that all things were now
accomplished, that the
Scripture might be fulfilled,
said, "I thirst!" 29 Now a
vessel full of sour wine was
sitting there; and they filled
a sponge with sour wine,
put it on hyssop, and put it
to His mouth.

30 So when Jesus had received the sour wine, He said, "It is finished!" And bowing His head, He gave up His spirit.

What was finished? The suffering and humiliation at the hands of sinful mankind. The payment for all our sins and the appeasement of God's wrath and judgement against us. The completion of every prophesy of the Scriptures about the life and death of the Messiah. It was completely finished, so Jesus could now finally give up His spirit.

Luke 23:47-49

47 So when the centurion saw what had happened, he glorified God, saying, "Certainly this was a righteous Man!" 48 And the whole crowd who came together to that sight, seeing what had been done, beat their breasts and returned.

49 But all His acquaintances, and the women who followed Him from Galilee, stood at a distance, watching these things.

John 19:31-42

31 Therefore, because it was the Preparation Day, that the bodies should not remain on the cross on the

Sabbath (for that Sabbath was a high day), the Jews asked Pilate that their legs might be broken, and that they might be taken away.

32 Then the soldiers came and broke the legs of the first and of the other who was crucified with Him. 33 But when they came to Jesus and saw that He was already dead, they did not break His legs.

To speed up death, those crucified might have their legs broken so they would die quickly, because they would no longer be able to breathe by raising themselves up on the nails through their feet.

34 But one of the soldiers pierced His side with a spear, and immediately blood and water came out. 35 And he who has seen has testified, and his testimony is true; and he knows that he is telling the truth, so that you may believe. 36 For these things were done that the Scripture should be fulfilled, "Not one of His bones shall be broken."

And again another Scripture says, "They shall look on Him whom they pierced."

The disciple John was a personal witness of these events, and confirms to us that Scripture prophecy was completely fulfilled apart from any human

38 After this, Joseph of Arimathea, being a disciple of Jesus, but secretly, for fear of the Jews, asked Pilate that he might take away the body of Jesus; and Pilate gave him permission. So he came and took the body of Jesus.

39 And Nicodemus, who at first came to Jesus by night, also came, bringing a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about a hundred pounds. 40 Then they took the body of Jesus, and bound it in strips of linen with the spices, as the custom of the Jews is to bury.

41 Now in the place where He was crucified there was a garden, and in the garden a new tomb in which no one had yet been laid. 42 So there they laid Jesus, because of the Jews' Preparation Day, for the tomb was nearby.

Jesus was in the grave for part of Friday, all of Saturday (the Sabbath) and part of Sunday. As reckoned by Jewish custom, he was considered to have been in the grave for three days.

Lesson 24 –

The Resurrection of Jesus

Scripture: John Chapter
20 New King James Version

1 Now the first day of the week Mary Magdalene went to the tomb early, while it was still dark, and saw that the stone had been taken away from the tomb.

2 Then she ran and came to Simon Peter, and to the other disciple, whom Jesus loved, and said to them, "They have taken away the Lord out of the tomb, and we do not know where they have laid Him."

Mary Magdalene was a follower of Jesus from Magdala, a city near Capernaum on the Sea of Galilee. Jesus freed her from seven demons as reported in Luke 8:2. In his writing, the disciple John humbly refers to himself as the “other disciple” or the “disciple whom Jesus loved.”

3 Peter therefore went out, and the other disciple, and were going to the tomb.
4 So they both ran together, and the other disciple outran Peter and came to the tomb first.
5 And he, stooping down and looking in, saw the linen cloths lying there; yet

he did not go in.

6 Then Simon Peter came, following him, and went into the tomb; and he saw the linen cloths lying there, 7 and the handkerchief [cloth] that had been around His head, not lying with the linen cloths, but folded together in a place by itself.

8 Then the other disciple, who came to the tomb first, went in also; and he saw and believed.

9 For as yet they did not know the Scripture, that He must rise again from the dead.

10 Then the disciples went away again to their own homes.

The idea that Jesus had risen from the dead was so remarkable that they didn't understand it at first.

11 But Mary stood outside by the tomb weeping, and as she wept she stooped down and looked into the tomb.

12 And she saw two angels in white sitting, one at the head and the other at the feet, where the body of Jesus had lain.

13 Then they said to her, "Woman, why are you weeping?" She said to them, "Because they have taken away my Lord, and I

do not know where they have laid Him.”

Mary, like Peter and John, was confused about what had happened. She assumed that someone else had taken Jesus' body away. The two "men" in the tomb were not recognized by her as angels at this moment.

14 Now when she had said this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing there, and did not know that it was Jesus.

15 Jesus said to her, “Woman, why are you weeping? Whom are you seeking?” She, supposing Him to be the gardener,

said to Him, "Sir, if You have carried Him away, tell me where You have laid Him, and I will take Him away."

16 Jesus said to her, "Mary!" She turned and said to Him, "Rabboni!" (which is to say, Teacher).

Turning back toward the tomb entrance, teary-eyed Mary supposed she was addressing the gardener. But when he spoke her name, she knew her Lord's voice.

Jesus taught that his sheep know his voice, "My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me" (John 10:27).

17 Jesus said to her, “Do not cling to Me, for I have not yet ascended to My Father; but go to My brethren and say to them, ‘I am ascending to My Father and your Father, and to My God and your God.’ ”

18 Mary Magdalene came and told the disciples that she had seen the Lord, and that He had spoken these things to her.

One interpretation of Jesus' statement is that he had not yet ascended to the Father, when he would be given a fully “resurrected” body.

19 Then, the same day at evening, being the first day of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled, for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood in the midst, and said to them, "Peace be with you."

20 When He had said this, He showed them His hands and His side. Then the disciples were glad when they saw the Lord.

Jesus' resurrected body was significantly different than his human body. He was able to pass through the shut and locked door. The wounds of his crucifixion were still visible and

could be felt. He was able to consume food as a mortal body does.

21 So Jesus said to them again, "Peace to you! As the Father has sent Me, I also send you."

22 And when He had said this, He breathed on them, and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit.

23 If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained."

Jesus makes two strong points to the "locked in" disciples: The first "Peace to You" statement

was for them to observe his resurrected body and fully believe he was alive. The second “Peace to You” was to send them out as his witnesses. “As the Father has sent Me, I also send you.”

He breathes on them to give them wisdom, power and protection through the Holy Spirit, and he gives them authority to forgive others in his name, or to let them remain in their sin.

“Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life, but whoever rejects the Son will not see life, for God’s wrath remains on him” (John 3:36)

24 Now Thomas, called the Twin, one of the twelve, was not with them when Jesus came. 25 The other disciples therefore said to him, "We have seen the Lord." So he said to them, "Unless I see in His hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and put my hand into His side, I will not believe."

26 And after eight days His disciples were again inside, and Thomas with them. Jesus came, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, "Peace to you!"

27 Then He said to Thomas, "Reach your finger here,

and look at My hands; and reach your hand here, and put it into My side. Do not be unbelieving, but believing.”

Thomas is often called “Doubting Thomas” because of his previous statement that he wouldn’t believe unless he saw for himself. But Jesus graciously showed his wounds just as he had for the others.

28 And Thomas answered and said to Him, “My Lord and my God!”

This is a strong testimony—that an eye witness as careful as

*Thomas calls Jesus both his Lord
and his God!*

29 Jesus said to him,
“Thomas, because you have
seen Me, you have believed.
Blessed are those who have
not seen and yet have
believed.”

*You and I are even more blessed
than Thomas!*

30 And truly Jesus did many
other signs in the presence
of His disciples, which are
not written in this book;
31 but these are written that
you may believe that Jesus
is the Christ, the Son of
God, and that believing you

may have life in His name.

Verse 31 sums up nicely why the disciple John wrote this Gospel:

So we might believe Jesus is Christ.

That he is the Son of God.

And that believing we may have life in His name.

Lesson 25 –

The Disciple John's Review of Who Jesus Is from Pre-incarnation to Crucifixion

Scripture: John 1:1-18

New King James Version

The Eternal Word

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

2 He was in the beginning with God.

3 All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made.

4 In Him was life, and the life was the light of men.

5 And the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it.

The disciple John presents a summary of who Jesus is from the beginning until now. He identifies Jesus as the “Word” of God the Father. According to the first book of the Bible, Genesis, God speaks into existence the universe, the world and all that is in the world. His Word is identified by John as Jesus.

John the Baptist's Witness: The True Light

6 There was a man sent from God, whose name was John [the Baptist]. 7 This man came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all through him might believe. 8 He was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness of that Light. 9 That was the true Light which gives light to every man coming into the world.

The Light of the world is Jesus.

10 He was in the world, and the world was made through Him, and the world did not know Him.

This Scripture says that although the world was made by Jesus, the world did not recognize him. He didn't come as a mighty King, but rather as the "lamb of God." What was his mission, that he should come disguised as a simple teacher?

11 He came to His own, and His own did not receive Him.

He came to his own first, meaning the Jews. Why do you think they didn't receive him?

12 But as many as received Him, to them He gave the

right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name: 13 who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

Who did receive him? Have you received him? What is given to you? What do you have to do to receive Him?

The Word Becomes Flesh

14 And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.

Throughout the New Testament we have read about many glorious things Jesus did. Which do you recall the most?

15 John [the Baptist] bore witness of Him and cried out, saying, "This was He of whom I said, 'He who comes after me is preferred before me, for He was before me.' "

16 And of His fullness we have all received, and grace for grace. 17 For the law was given through Moses, but grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.

We receive Jesus when we put our faith in him, believing that he is God the Son, come into the world to save us from our sin. Grace is often defined as “God’s Riches at Christ’s Expense”—a free gift offered to those who will receive it.

The Law of God as written down by Moses showed us how perfect and holy God is, and how deeply sinful we are.

Jesus paid the penalty we deserve for our sin, and restores us as children of God. He further gives us the Holy Spirit, who changes us from within so that by “grace” we can walk

more and more in the manner that Jesus did.

18 No one has seen God at any time. The only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, He has declared Him.

God the Father is spirit. Jesus was sent and born in the flesh to declare Him to us. Jesus was raised from the dead with a resurrected body, and we ourselves will receive such a body someday to live with him forever. Free from sin, disease, sickness and death.

What Salvation Means:

1. We have all sinned and done things that are displeasing to God.

Romans 3:10-12 NKJV – “As it is written: “There is none righteous, no, not one; There is none who understands; There is none who seeks after God. They have all turned aside; They have together become unprofitable; There is none who does good, no, not one.”

2. Because of our sin, we deserve to be punished with eternal separation from God.

Romans 6:23 NKJV – For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

3. Jesus died on a cross to pay the penalty for our sins, taking the punishment that we deserved.

1 Corinthians 15:3-6 NKJV – “For I delivered to you first of all that which I also received: that

Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures, and that He was seen by Cephas, then by the twelve. After that He was seen by over five hundred brethren at once, of whom the greater part remain to the present, but some have fallen asleep.

4. God grants forgiveness and salvation to those who place their faith in Jesus, which means trusting his death as full payment for our sins.

Ephesians 2:8-9 NKJV – For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast.

The Holy Spirit comes to live forever within us at the moment of faith, assuring everlasting life. The Spirit teaches us God's Word and empowers us to live according to it.

Ephesians 1:13-14 NKJV – In Him you also trusted, after you

heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also, having believed, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, who is the guarantee of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, to the praise of His glory.

John 1:12-13 NKJV – *But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name: who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.*

6. The Christian Life is a new way of living in concert with Jesus and under the tutelage of the Holy Spirit.

Galatians 2:20 NKJV – I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.

You Can Have Confidence in Your Salvation:

If you've trusted Jesus alone as your Savior, you can have confidence that you will spend eternity with God in heaven!

1. Jesus Hears Your Prayer for Salvation.

1 John 5:13-15 NKJV –Now this is the confidence that we have in Him, that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us. And if we know that He hears us, whatever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we have asked of Him.

2. God is not wanting anyone to perish, and is waiting for you to come home.

2 Peter 3:9 NKJV – The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance.

3. As an example, pray this prayer and mean it in your heart. Jesus is alive and ready to listen to you now. Here's what you could say to Him:.

“Jesus, I’m sorry for the way I’ve treated you. Please forgive me. I reject my life of rebellion against God. I believe you are the Son of God who came to this earth to save me from a life that I have lived apart from You. Please save me, and give me a new heart that is holy and acceptable. I believe that I am now in You, and You are now in me by your Spirit. Change me from the inside out. I mean this. Though I will surely fail sometimes, I believe that You will never fail me. Thank you. I pray this in your name. Amen.”

If you've prayed this prayer, please visit our website at www.calledtobefree.com for additional Bible studies. May God bless you!

Ten Remarkable Things Written about Jesus in the Bible:

All things were created by Him.

“For by him [Jesus] all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things were created by him and for him.” Colossians 1:16 (NIV)

Jesus was equal with God, but humbled himself.

“Who [Jesus], being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death—even death on a cross!” Philippians 2:6-8 (NIV)

Jesus' resurrection was witnessed by more than 500 people at one time.

“For what I [Paul] received I passed on to you as of first importance: that Christ died for our sins according to the

Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures, and that he appeared to Peter, and then to the Twelve. After that, he appeared to more than five hundred of the brothers at the same time, most of whom are still living, though some have fallen asleep. Then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles, and last of all he appeared to me also, as to one abnormally born.”
1 Corinthians 15: 3-8 (NIV)

Forgiveness for sins and receiving the Holy Spirit are promised in the name of Jesus.

“Peter replied, “Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off—for all whom the Lord our God will call.” Acts 2:38-39 (NIV)

Salvation is found through no one else but Jesus.

“Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them: “Rulers and elders of the people! If we are being called to account today for an act of kindness shown to a cripple and are asked how

he was healed, then know this, you and all the people of Israel: It is by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified but whom God raised from the dead, that this man stands before you healed. He [Jesus] is the stone you builders rejected, which has become the capstone. Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to men by which we must be saved.” Acts 4: 8-15 (NIV)

Salvation is by making the living Jesus your Lord.

“The word is near you; it is in your mouth and in your

heart, that is, the word of faith we are proclaiming: That if you confess with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved." Romans 10:6-10 (NIV)

Jesus' prayer unites believers.

"My prayer is not for them alone. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message, that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May

they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me.” John 17: 20-21 (NIV)

At the name of Jesus every knee will bow, in heaven, hell and on earth.

“Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus

Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.”

Philippians

2:9-11 (NIV)

All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to Jesus.

“Then the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain where Jesus had told them to go. When they saw him, they worshiped him; but some doubted.

Then Jesus came to them and said, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me.

Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And

surely I am with you
always, to the very end of
the age.” Matthew 28:16-21
(NIV)

Jesus is the exact representation of God's being and now sits at his right hand.

“In the past God spoke to
our forefathers through the
prophets at many times and
in various ways, but in
these last days he has
spoken to us by his Son,
whom he appointed heir of
all things, and through
whom he made the
universe. The Son is the
radiance of God's glory and
the exact representation of
his being, sustaining all

things by his powerful word.
After he had provided
purification for sins, he sat
down at the right hand of
the Majesty in heaven.”
Hebrews 1:1-3 (NIV)

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