

THE STORY OF JESUS

Part One: CHRIST'S LIFE PRIOR TO HIS MINISTRY

Part Two: MINISTRY OF JOHN THE BAPTIST

Part Three: BEGINNING OF JESUS' MINISTRY

Part Four: FIRST TO THE SECOND PASSEVER

Part Five: SECOND TO THE THIRD PASSEVER

Part Six: THIRD PASSEVER UNTIL JESUS' ARRIVAL AT BETHANY

Part Seven: LAST WEEK OF JESUS' MINISTRY

Part Eight: RESURRECTION OF JESUS

Part Nine: INVITATION, RESPONSE TO THE PROCLAMATION

Part One

CHRIST'S LIFE PRIOR TO HIS MINISTRY

1. John's Introduction
2. Birth of John the Baptist
3. Announcement to Mary
4. Mary Visits Elizabeth
5. The Birth of John the Baptist
6. Announcement to Joseph
7. The Birth of Jesus
8. Shepherds told of Jesus Birth
9. Naming of Jesus
10. Wise Men from the East
11. Flight into Egypt
12. Out of Egypt
13. The Boy Jesus Visits Jerusalem

Part Two

THE MINISTRY OF JOHN THE BAPTIST

14. John the Baptist
-

Part Three

BEGINNING OF JESUS' MINISTRY

15. Jesus Baptized by John
16. Tempted in the Wilderness
17. John's Testimony
18. Jesus First Disciples
19. First Miracle
20. Jesus at Capernaum

Part Four

FIRST TO THE SECOND PASSEVER

21. First Passover of Jesus Ministry
22. Jesus Cleanses the Temple
23. Nicodemus Visits Jesus by Night
24. First Ministry in Judæa
25. Jesus Goes to Galilee
26. Woman at the Well
27. Arrival in Galilee
28. The Second Miracle at Cana
29. Jesus' Temporary Residence
30. Jesus Calls Four Fishermen
31. Healing a Demoniac
32. Healing Peter's Mother-in-Law
33. Preaching Tour Through Galilee
34. Jesus Heals a Leper
35. Jesus Heals a Paralytic
36. The Call of Matthew

Part Five

SECOND PASSEVER TO THE THIRD

37. Jesus Heals on the Sabbath
38. Jesus Defends Disciples
39. Healing on the Sabbath
40. Jesus Heals Multitudes
41. Jesus Selects Twelve Apostles
42. The Sermon on the Mount
43. Introductory Statements
44. Beatitudes
45. Duties of Messiah's Subjects
46. Messianic Teaching
47. Almsgiving, Prayer, and Fasting
48. Heavenly Treasures
49. Law Concerning Judging
50. Concerning Prayer
51. The Golden Rule
52. The Two Ways
53. Two Builders
54. Healing the Centurion's Servant
55. Jesus Raises the Widow's Son
56. Question from Prison
57. Jesus' Feet Anointed

58. Journeying about Galilee
 59. Accusations of the Jews
 60. Sign Seekers
 61. The True Family
 62. Jesus Denounces the Pharisees
 63. His Approaching Passion
 64. Barren Fig-Tree
 65. First Parables
 - A. Introduction
 - B. Parable of the Sower
 - C. Parable of the Seed
 - D. Parable of the Weeds
 - E. Parables of the Mustard Seed
 - F. Parable of the Tares Explained
 - G. Parables of Treasure
 66. Jesus Stills the Storm
 67. Jesus Heals Two Demoniacs
 68. Matthew's Feast
 69. Jairus' Daughter
 70. Healing Blind Men
 71. Jesus Is Rejected
 72. The Twelve Sent Out
 73. Herod Antipas
 74. Withdrawal from Herod's Territory
 - A. Return of the Twelve Disciples
 - B. Feeding the Five Thousand
 - C. Jesus Walks on Water
 75. Peter's Confession
-

Part Six

THIRD PASSOVER UNTIL JESUS' ARRIVAL AT BETHANY

76. Scribes Criticize Jesus
77. Withdrawal From Herod's Territory
78. Phoenician Woman's Daughter
79. Avoiding Herod's Territory
80. Four Thousand Fed
81. Third Withdrawal from Herod's Territory
 - A. A Blind Man Healed
 - B. The Great Confession
 - C. Passion Foretold
 - D. The Transfiguration
 - E. Healing the Demoniac Boy
82. Return to Galilee
83. Tribute Money
84. Childlikeness

85. Forgiveness Between Brethren
86. Jesus' Brothers Advise Him
87. The Private Journey to Jerusalem
88. Sacrifice for Christ's Service
89. The Feast of Tabernacles
90. The Story of the Adulteress
91. Attempt to Stone Jesus
92. Man Born Blind
93. The Good Shepherd
94. Jesus Sends out Seventy
95. Parable of the Good Samaritan
96. Jesus the Guest of Martha and Mary
97. Prayer Taught
98. Woman Healed on the Sabbath
99. Jews Attempt to Stone Jesus
100. The Strait Gate
101. Sabbath Healing
102. Cost of Discipleship
103. Second Group of Parables
 - A. Introduction
 - B. The Lost Sheep
 - C. The Lost Coin
 - D. The Lost Son
 - E. The Unrighteous Steward
 - F. The Rich Man and Lazarus
 - G. Faith, and Service
104. Raising of Lazarus
105. The Sanhedrin's Decree
106. Ten Lepers
107. Parable of the Importunate Widow
108. Parable of the Pharisee and Publican
109. Jesus Teaches about Divorce
110. Jesus Blesses the Children
111. Peril of Riches
112. Foretelling His Passion
113. Bartimæus Healed
114. Zacchæus

Part Seven

LAST WEEK OF JESUS' MINISTRY

- 115. Jesus Arrives at Bethany
- 116. Jesus' Triumphal Entry
- 117. Temple Cleansed
- 118. Fig-Tree Withered
- 119. Third Group of Parables
 - A. Introduction
 - B. The Two Sons
 - C. The Wicked Husbandmen
 - D. The Marriage of the King's Son
- 120. Rulers Seek to Ensnare Jesus
 - A. Pharisees and Herodians
 - B. Sadducees and the Resurrection
 - C. The Great Commandment
 - D. Jesus' Question
- 121. Denunciation of Scribes and Pharisees
- 122. The Widow's Mites
- 123. He Shall Draw All Men to Him
- 124. Destruction of Jerusalem Foretold
- 125. The Second Coming of Christ
- 126. The Final Judgment
- 127. Judas Bargains for Jesus Death
- 128. Preparation for Passover
- 129. The Passover Meal
- 130. Judas' Betrayal Foretold
- 131. The Lord's Supper Instituted
- 132. Farewell Discourse to Disciples
- 133. The Lord's Prayer
- 134. Going to Gethsemane
- 135. Jesus Betrayed, Arrested, and Forsaken
- 136. Examination by Annas
- 137. Caiaphas and the Sanhedrin
- 138. Peter Denies the Lord
- 139. Jesus Formally Condemned
- 140. Jesus Before Pilate
- 141. Jesus Before Herod Antipas
- 142. Pilate Sentences Jesus
- 143. Suicide of Judas
- 144. The Crucifixion
 - A. On the Way to the Cross
 - B. Jesus Crucified
 - C. Three Hours of Darkness
 - D. Jesus Found to Be Dead

Part Eight

RESURRECTION OF JESUS

- 145. Angels Announce the Resurrection
 - 146. Appearances of the Risen Christ
 - 147. Guards Report to the Jewish Rulers
 - 148. Third and Fourth Appearances of Jesus
 - 149. Fifth Appearance of Jesus
 - 150. Sixth Appearance of Jesus
 - 151. Seventh Appearance of Jesus
 - 152. Eighth Appearance of Jesus
 - 153. The Great Commission
 - 154. Ninth and Tenth Appearances of Jesus
 - 155. The Ascension
 - 156. Our Lord Appears After His Ascension
-

Part Nine

INVITATION: RESPONSE TO THE PROCLAMATION

INTRODUCTION TO THE STORY OF JESUS

The Story of Jesus is the most amazing true story ever told. The story of the life of Jesus, as told by four separate biographers, weaves together into a harmonized story that has no match in any other literature. It is truly a miracle, as the harmonized accounts of the life of Jesus stand without contradiction or discrepancy.

The whole story combines the richness of the four separate biographies written by Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. The four combine to create a sum that is greater than its parts, and stands as testimony to the truthfulness of the accounts.

The central personality of the Story of Jesus is Jesus Christ. I invite you to read his story with a desire to glimpse the revelation of God himself deliberately and graciously revealing himself in ways that invite you to respond with faith and trust.

Before you start the story take a moment and introduce yourself to the four biographers whose accounts we are using to tell the harmonized version of the story of Jesus.

MATTHEW

As the first year of Jesus' public ministry came to a close the time was right for him to choose his final disciple.

Jesus had spent much of his time in Judea, and by the Jordan River near where John the Baptist was preaching the message that people should turn away from their sins and be baptized to show that they had changed their hearts.

One day, soldiers sent from King Herod came and arrested and imprisoned John the Baptist. After this event, Jesus went to a region in Galilee called Capernaum where he healed the sick and diseased, cast out demons, and performed many other miraculous works.

As Jesus was walking along the Galilean seashore and teaching those that kept coming up to be with him, he saw a tax collector sitting in his tax office. Jesus went up to him and said, Follow me.

The tax collector's name was Matthew (also called Levi) and as soon as Jesus called him he immediately left all his business behind and followed Jesus.

Later, Matthew celebrated his new friendship with Jesus by having a large celebration for Jesus at his home. The other disciples joined Jesus along with Matthew's friends and acquaintances, which included a large number of tax collectors and other people of low reputation.

When the religious leaders (Pharisees and teachers) saw Jesus eating and drinking with tax collectors and other outcasts of society they began to criticize Jesus and his disciples by asking, Why do you eat and drink with tax collectors and sinners?

When Jesus heard what they were saying he replied, It isn't people who are well who need a doctor, but those who are sick. Jesus went on to say, I haven't come to call the righteous; I have come to call sinners to repentance.

This incident in the story of Jesus is recorded in the book that Matthew wrote. This book is called the Gospel of Matthew, and is the first of four books that we will draw upon to tell the harmonized story of Jesus.

MARK

One day Jesus left his hometown of Nazareth and went to the Jordan River where John the Baptist was busy preaching that the Kingdom of Heaven was at hand and that men needed to repent and be baptized.

When Jesus asked John to baptize him, John the Baptist objected, I am the one that needs to be baptized by you, said John. Jesus reassured John that this is something he needed to do as a part of what God had already planned.

John then agreed to baptize Jesus. As Jesus came out of the water the Holy Spirit in the form of a dove came down from heaven and rested on Jesus. At the same time a voice thundered from heaven and said, This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased.

The very next day, Jesus passed by John the Baptist and two of John's disciples. John, seeing Jesus proclaimed, Behold the Lamb of God that takes away the sin of the world. John the Baptist's two disciples hearing this began to follow Jesus.

Jesus, seeing them following him, asked them, What are you looking for?

Teacher, they replied, Where are you staying? Come and see, answered Jesus.

The two men followed Jesus and spent the rest of the day with him. One of the men was a fisherman named Andrew. After spending just a short time with Jesus, Andrew became convinced that Jesus was the long awaited Messiah. He went and found his brother Simon and brought him to Jesus.

As soon as Jesus met Simon he looked at him with intensity and asked, You are Simon the son of John? You shall be called Peter (which means stone).

Peter became one of the most ardent disciples of Jesus and a personal witness to Jesus' miracles and his teachings. Peter became one of the leaders of the first Christian church in Jerusalem after Jesus' death and resurrection.

It was during that time that Peter became connected with a man named John Mark (simply known as Mark) Mark became Peter's personal secretary. Mark wrote the story of Jesus that is called the Gospel of Mark.

Most bible scholars agree that Peter was the authoritative source of that account. Although Mark was also an eyewitness to many of the events himself, not being one of the twelve disciples, but in the wider circle of Jesus' followers.

The Gospel of Mark is the second source that we will use to tell the harmonized story of Jesus.

LUKE

The third source we will use to tell the story of Jesus comes from the Gospel written by Luke.

Luke was a Greek physician. He did not witness the life of Jesus personally, but he did carefully compile everything he could learn about Jesus and his ministry from those who actually did witness the life and ministry of Jesus Christ.

Luke was an eyewitness to the growth of the church and the miracles that attended that growth, by the power of the Holy Spirit. And he was a friend and companion of Paul the apostle.

Each of the four “good news” accounts of Jesus was either written by men that actually knew and walked with Jesus, or were accounts based on personal firsthand testimonies of men that heard Jesus teach, witnessed his works and testified to the truthfulness of what they saw and heard.

JOHN

One day a fisherman named John was mending his nets by the Sea of Galilee when Jesus came by and called John to follow him. John left his fishing nets and for the next three years followed Jesus. During that time, he became one of Jesus’ closest companions, he listened to what Jesus said and saw firsthand most of the miracles that Jesus did.

It was during this time, hearing and seeing the works of Jesus, that John became convinced that Jesus was not just a man, but that Jesus was also God.

John is the fourth and final source we will use to tell the “harmonized” story of Jesus.

Part One

CHRIST'S LIFE PRIOR TO HIS MINISTRY

1. JOHN'S INTRODUCTION

The story of Jesus begins before he was born. How can this be you ask? The answer to this question is one of the most important and profound disclosures ever made to human kind. John the fisherman, and follower of Jesus, put it this way.

In the very beginning, before anything else existed, the Word (Jesus) existed. The Word (Jesus) was with God and the Word (Jesus) was God. All things were made by him. He was the Creator of all things.

2. BIRTH OF JOHN THE BAPTIST

Herod was king of Judea from around 40 BC to 4 BC. It was during this time that a Jewish priest named Zacharias and his wife Elizabeth had a child. What made this birth special was the fact that both Zacharias and his wife Elizabeth were very old and Elizabeth had never had children before. What made this birth even more extraordinary was the fact that the birth was foretold to Zacharias by an angel of the Lord, Gabriel.

The angel not only foretold the birth of John the Baptist, he also prophesied that John was going to be the forerunner to the Messiah in the spirit and power of the ancient prophet Elijah.

3. ANNOUNCEMENT TO MARY

When Elizabeth was six months pregnant with John the Baptist, the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a place called Nazareth, a city in Galilee. Gabriel visited a virgin who was engaged to be married to a man whose name was Joseph. The virgin's name was Mary.

Gabriel came to Mary and said, You are highly favored, the Lord is with you. But Mary was greatly troubled by this greeting, and wondered what it meant. The angel told her not to fear and again repeated that she had found favor with God.

Then Gabriel told Mary that she would conceive a son and that she was to call his name JESUS. Gabriel continued. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Most High. And the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David. And he shall reign over the house of Jacob and of his kingdom there shall be no end.

Mary asked the angel, How shall this be, seeing I have never had a physical relationship with a man? The angel answered and said to her, The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you, and the holy thing which is begotten shall be called the Son of God.

And take notice, Elizabeth your cousin, has also conceived a son in her old age and is six months pregnant.

For no word from God shall be without power. Then Mary said, Behold, the handmaid of the Lord; let it happen to me according to your word. Then the angel left.

4. MARY VISITS ELIZABETH

A week or so later Mary went hurriedly into the hill country, into a city in Judah. She went into the house of Zacharias and greeted Elizabeth. When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the baby inside her leaped in her womb and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit. She lifted up her voice with a loud cry and said, Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb. Why am I so honored that the mother of my Lord should visit me?

Mary then began to magnify the Lord and to rejoice in God her Savior.

Mary stayed with her cousin Elizabeth for about 3 months.

5. THE BIRTH OF JOHN THE BAPTIST

When Elizabeth's time came she delivered a boy and they called him John, as the angel had directed.

John's father had been struck dumb by the angel Gabriel because he had doubted the message regarding the birth of John. Once John was born his tongue was loosed and he blessed God and filled with the Holy Spirit he prophesied.

Zacharias said, Blessed be the Lord, the God of Israel; For he has come back to redeem his people. And he has raised up a horn of salvation for us in the house of his servant David.

And this child will be called a prophet of the Most High; he will go before the face of the Lord and make ready his ways, to give the knowledge of salvation to his people, to shine upon those that sit in darkness.

John grew up and became strong in spirit. He was in the desert places until the day his ministry began. And then he began to declare that the Messiah was coming.

6. ANNOUNCEMENT TO JOSEPH

Now the birth of Jesus Christ came about in this way. When his mother Mary who was engaged to Joseph, before their marriage was consummated by having physical relations, Mary was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit. And Joseph her husband, being the kind of man who would not stain his family name, but also not wanting to put Mary to shame in public, had decided to divorce her as quietly as he could. While Joseph was thinking about the best way to do this he was visited by an angel of the Lord in a dream.

This is what the angel told Joseph.

Joseph, son of David, don't be afraid to take Mary as your wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit. Mary will have a son and you will call his name JESUS. The one we have been waiting for to save his people from their sins.

This is all coming about so that the word that the Lord has spoken through the prophet (Isaiah) who said, Behold, a virgin shall be with child and she will have a son and they will call him Immanuel, which means, God with us.

Joseph woke up from his sleep and did as the angel of the Lord commanded him. He took Mary as his wife but he had no physical relations with her until after Jesus was born.

7. THE BIRTH OF JESUS

Now it was during this time that a decree was sent out from the Roman emperor Caesar Augustus that there should be a census for the entire world. Everyone was told to return to his own city. Joseph went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth to the city of David which is called Bethlehem because he was from the family of David.

Mary was ready to give birth and while they were in Bethlehem the day of Jesus' birth arrived. Mary delivered her firstborn son and wrapped the baby Jesus up in swaddling clothes and laid him in a manger because there was no room for them in the inn.

8. THE SHEPHERDS TOLD OF JESUS BIRTH

Nearby there were shepherds in the fields who were keeping the nightwatch over their flocks. And an angel of the Lord stood by them, and the glory of the Lord shone all around them.

The shepherds were very afraid. And the angel said to them, Don't be afraid; for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy which will be to all the people. For today in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord, has been born. And this will be the sign, you will find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes and lying in a manger.

Suddenly there was with the angel a great host of angels, all praising God and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among men in whom He is well pleased.

After the angels had left them and returned to heaven, the shepherds said to each other, Let's go to Bethlehem right now and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has made known to us. They immediately went and found both Mary and Joseph, and the babe lying in the manger.

And when they saw the baby Jesus, they made known what had been spoken to them about the child. And everyone that heard it wondered about the things the shepherds reported. But Mary kept all these sayings, pondering them in her heart.

Then the shepherds returned to their fields, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen.

9. NAMING OF JESUS

After eight days, having fulfilled the rite of circumcising the child and officially naming him JESUS, and after all the ceremonial laws concerning purification was complete; they brought Jesus to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord. This was all done according to the law of the Lord written by Moses.

There was a man in Jerusalem, whose name was Simeon. He was a righteous and devout man who was looking for the era of the Messiah to be ushered in. The Holy Spirit was upon him and had revealed to him that he would not die until he had seen the long awaited Messiah, the Lord's Christ.

Simeon had been inspired by the Spirit to go into the temple at the same time that Joseph and Mary brought the child Jesus into the temple in order to perform all the customs and duties that the law of Moses required.

And when Simeon saw Jesus he took him into his arms and blessed God, and said, Now let your servant depart in peace Lord, according to your word. For I have seen

with my own eyes your salvation, which you have prepared before the face of all peoples. A light of revelation to the Gentiles, and the glory of your people Israel.

Joseph and Mary were marveling at the things that Simeon was saying about the child Jesus. Then Simeon blessed the parents of Jesus and said to Mary, Behold, this child is going to cause the falling and the rising of many in Israel and many will resist the truth. Yes, and for a sword that shall pierce through your own soul and the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed.

And there was a very old woman named Anna, a prophetess of the tribe of Asher. Anna was very devoted to all the services of the temple and spent much of her time worshipping with fasting, and praying both night and day. And when she saw Jesus she spoke to him and gave thanks to God, and pointed Jesus out to all that were looking for the redemption of Jerusalem.

After Joseph and Mary had completed all the ceremonies and fulfilled all the laws required regarding their firstborn, they returned home.

10. WISE MEN FROM THE EAST

Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea during the time that Herod was king, wise men from the east came to Jerusalem. As soon as they entered Jerusalem they began asking, Where is the one that has been born King of the Jews? We have seen his star in the east and are come to worship him.

When King Herod heard about this he was troubled, and all Jerusalem was troubled also. Herod gathered all the chief priests and scribes of the people and asked them where the Christ would be born.

They told Herod that according to the prophets that the Christ would be born in Bethlehem of Judaea. They quoted the scripture that said, And you Bethlehem, land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah: For out of you shall come a governor, who shall be the shepherd of my people Israel.

Herod privately called the wise men to learn the exact time the star appeared. Then he sent them to Bethlehem to go and find out all they could about the young child. He also told them that when they found him they should bring all the information to him so that he could he could come and worship the child also.

The wise men listened to what Herod said and went their way. The star, which they saw in the east, went before them until it came and stood over the place where the young child was. And when they saw that the star had guided them to the right spot, they rejoiced with very great joy.

The wise men came into the house that the star had directed them to, and saw the young child with Mary his mother; and they fell down and worshipped him and opened up their treasures and offered him gifts of gold and frankincense and myrrh.

And being warned by God in a dream that they should not return to Herod, they returned to their own country by a different route.

After the wise men had left an angel appeared to Joseph in a dream, saying, Get up and take the young child and his mother, and flee to Egypt. You will stay in Egypt until I tell you to return: Herod is going to search for the child in order to destroy him.

11. FLIGHT INTO EGYPT

Joseph got up and took the young child and his mother and left for Egypt that very night. Joseph, Mary and the young child, Jesus stayed in Egypt until the death of Herod. This happened in order to fulfill the word spoken by the Lord through his prophets saying, Out of Egypt did I call my Son.

When Herod realized that he had been mocked by the wise men he went into a fit of rage and sent out his soldiers to kill all the male children in Bethlehem and the surrounding area who were two years old or under.

This fulfilled the prophecy that was spoken through Jeremiah saying, A voice was heard in Ramah. Weeping and great mourning, Rachel weeping for her children. And she would not be comforted because they are no more.

12. OUT OF EGYPT

But when Herod was dead, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream saying, Get up and take the young child and his mother, and go into the land of Israel. The ones that wanted to take the young child's life are dead. So Joseph did as the Lord commanded, left Egypt and came back into the land of Israel.

But when Joseph heard that Archelaus, the son of Herod, was ruling over Judaea, he became afraid. And being warned by God in a dream, he withdrew from Judaea and went to Galilee where he settled in a city called Nazareth.

This fulfilled the prophecy that said that the Messiah would be called a Nazarene.

And the child grew and increased in strength. And he was filled with wisdom and the grace of God was upon him.

13. THE BOY JESUS VISITS JERUSALEM

Every year Joseph and Mary went to Jerusalem to celebrate the feast of the Passover. And when Jesus was twelve years old he went up to Jerusalem with his parents to celebrate the custom of the feast.

And when the celebration was complete, Mary and Joseph began the trip home thinking that Jesus was in the crowd that was returning to Nazareth after the celebration. But Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem.

One day passed and Jesus' parents realized after searching all over for Jesus that he was not among them. They immediately returned to Jerusalem and after three days found him in the temple sitting in the midst of the teachers. Jesus was listening and asking questions. And everyone who heard Jesus was amazed at his understanding and his answers.

When Mary and Joseph saw Jesus they were astonished. Mary said to Jesus, why have you treated us this way, your father and I have been worried sick looking for you everywhere. And Jesus said to them, How is it that you were looking for me? Didn't you know that I must be in my Father's house?

Mary and Joseph did not understand what Jesus was saying to them. And they left together to return to Nazareth. And Jesus was subject to his parents. Mary kept all these sayings in her heart.

Jesus advanced in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men.

Not much else is known about the life of Jesus until John the Baptist begins his public ministry and Jesus bursts on the scene followed by signs, wonders and miracles.

POLITICAL AND RELIGIOUS BACKGROUND AT TIME OF JESUS MINISTRY

The political and religious background that surrounds the ministry of both John the Baptist and Jesus is as follows:

It was the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar, the emperor of Rome. Tiberius had distinguished himself as a citizen for his oratory skills, as a soldier and a public official. As emperor of Rome he was slothful, self indulgent, licentious, vindictive and cruel. He was a master at lying and he was very cunning.

Pontius Pilate was the governor of Judaea for 10 years. He had entered public life not for pure of lofty reasons but to advance his own career and serve his own selfish purposes. He was ruthless and murderous, with a reputation among the Jews he ruled as being tyrannical and tempestuous. He had a very low and corrupt character.

Herod (also called Antipas) was ruler of Galilee. Herod was first married to a daughter of King Aretas of Arabia; then he took Heroidas, his brothers' wife, as his own wife. This sinful act resulted in the death of John the Baptist and the overthrow and banishment of Herod and his unlawful wife.

Phillip, the half brother of Herod (Antipas), was ruler of the region of Ituraea. He was the only decent ruler from the line of Herod. He was known for his moderation and his justice.

Trachonitis and Lysanias were the rulers of Abilene, a region 18 miles from Damascus. History gives us no account of these men.

The High Priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas. Annas was the father in law of Caiaphas, and although Caiaphas was the official high priest of Israel, Annas who had been the former high priest still held power and authority. Caiaphas is the high priest that tore his clothes and declared Jesus worthy of death.

These are the prominent political and religious figures that were on the historical landscape at the time that John the Baptist and then Jesus began their public ministries.

SCRIBES

The word "scribe" is the English translation of the Greek word "Grammateis", which means "student of the scriptures." Scribes were men whose primary occupation was writing out copies of the Jewish Scriptures and teaching the people what the law said. Because they copied the Old Testament books, they were familiar with the Hebrew Scriptures and were respected in society for their literacy and knowledge. The scribes provided teaching that was the religious and moral backbone for the Jewish people during the time of Jesus. Because of their role, they were often addressed as, "Teacher."

They were trusted as professional interpreters and as ones who could judge individual cases as they related to Jewish law. Scribes were, therefore, also trusted as lawyers within Jewish society. As the scribes were the most learned individuals on the fine

details of following Jewish law, their duties also consisted of deciding on specific questions of the law in individual cases. Scribes had no authority in themselves, but rather they continually deferred to the authority of other scribes and traditions to support their positions. The scribes were some of Jesus' most adamant opponents. In their minds, the Messiah who the Old Testament Scriptures spoke about did not seem to match up with who Jesus was.

PHARISEES

The Pharisees were religious leaders in the Jewish society at the time of Jesus. They were religious fundamentalists who focused on strict observance of the Jewish laws, ceremonies and traditions. There were around 6,000 Pharisees during Jesus' time on earth. Pharisees were leaders in the local synagogue. Most every Jewish community had their own synagogue, while there was only one temple and it was in Jerusalem.

Pharisees strongly encouraged the Jewish people to pursue righteousness by closely following the Jewish laws and not compromising with the beliefs and ways of the Romans. The Pharisees openly opposed Jesus for many reasons. They were particularly appalled at his acts of healing people on the Sabbath and his blatant claims to divinity.

Jesus denounced them as being hypocrites. They often lived moral lives, full of good deeds, but it was all outward actions with no thought given to the heart or motives of the actions.

SADDUCEES

The Sadducees were Jewish religious leaders who were primarily from the upper-class, were much more sympathetic to the Romans and sought to maintain their aristocratic positions in society. They often disagreed with the Pharisees because the Sadducees rejected the oral traditions and much of the doctrine of the Pharisees.

The Sadducees were opposed to Jesus because there was the supposed threat that Jesus could potentially overthrow the Roman government, thus jeopardizing their positions of prestige. Sadducees lived primarily in Jerusalem and their lives were often focused around the happenings of the Jewish temple in Jerusalem. The Sanhedrin (the judicial council of the Jewish people) was comprised primarily of Sadducees.

LAWYERS

The lawyers in Jesus time were the scribes. Jewish scribes functioned not only to preserve the Scriptures by copying them and teaching them, but also by settling disputes and questions regarding the laws of Moses. See the definition of "scribe" for more information.

TEACHERS

The word "teacher" usually comes from the Hebrew word, "Rabbi". Teacher is the term that Jews used to address their religious leaders. Because scribes were the most educated in the scriptures and fulfilled the role of instructing others, they were often addressed as "teacher." Jesus was recognized as a Teacher who stood apart from other teachers. Most teachers would appeal to other teachers or famous scribes to support their statements, while Jesus spoke as one who had authority in himself.

Part Two

MINISTRY OF JOHN THE BAPTIST

14. JOHN THE BAPTIST

And the word of God came to John, the son of Zacharias, while he was in the wilderness. And the message John the Baptist was preaching was that men and women should repent because the kingdom of heaven is at hand.

John the Baptist was the person who Isaiah the prophet had spoken about as the one who would come in the spirit and power of Elijah to make the way ready for the Messiah. Isaiah the prophet said, Behold I send my messenger, before your face, who will prepare your way. The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Make ready the way of the Lord, Make his paths straight. Every valley shall be filled and every mountain and hill shall be brought low; and the crooked shall become straight, and the rough ways smooth. And all people will see the salvation of God.

John began baptizing in the wilderness and preaching repentance for the remission of sins. John wore clothing made from camel's hair and wore a leather belt around his waist. And to sustain himself he ate locusts and wild honey.

People came from everywhere to hear John preach. They came from the country of Judaea and from Jerusalem. They came from the region around the Jordan. And all who came to him confessing their sins, he baptized.

JOHN WARNS THE RELIGIOUS LEADERS

But when he saw many of the Pharisees and the Sadducees coming to his baptism, he spoke to the Pharisees and Sadducees so that the multitude of people around him could hear.

You offspring of vipers, who told you to flee from the wrath to come? Produce a manner of life that shows you really want to change, and don't think that just because you are descendents of Abraham that God will save you.

I tell you plainly that God is able to make children of Abraham from the stones that are around you. Right now the axe lies at the root of the trees; every tree that doesn't produce good fruit is cut down and cast into the fire.

People in the crowd around John asked, What must we do?

John answered them. Those of you that have two coats, give one to the person who has none. He that has an abundance of food, share it with those who have no food.

Publicans (tax collectors for Rome) that had come to John to be baptized, asked. What must we do? And John said to them, Don't steal money, but only collect the taxes that are due.

To the soldiers John said. Don't extort money by means of violence, and do not accuse anyone falsely or blackmail anyone. Be content with your wages.

John the Baptist's ministry created a great expectation. Many began to wonder if John might be the Christ.

John became aware of what they were thinking and told them that while he was baptizing with water to show repentance that one was going to come after him who would be mightier than him, whose shoes he was not worthy to stoop down and unloose.

John said, The one that is coming after me will baptize with the Holy Spirit and fire. The winnowing shovel is in his hand and he will completely clean the threshing floor. He will gather his grain into his vault, but the chaff he will burn up with a fire that will not go out.

With many other exhortations, John preached good tidings to the people.

Part Three

BEGINNING OF JESUS' MINISTRY

15. JESUS BAPTIZED BY JOHN

One day Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee, to the Jordan. He came to John to be baptized. But John did not want to baptize Jesus, and said to him, I am the one that needs to be baptized by you, and you are coming to be baptized by me?

Jesus answered John and said, Permit it to fulfill all righteousness.

Then John permitted it.

After all the others had been baptized it came time to baptize Jesus. After Jesus had been baptized, and before he was out of the Jordan River the heavens opened up and the Holy Spirit, descended in bodily form as a dove upon him, and a voice came out of the heavens saying, This is my beloved Son with whom I am well pleased.

Jesus was about thirty years old when he began to teach. And Jesus was full of the Holy Spirit as he left the Jordan.

16. TEMPTATED IN THE WILDERNESS

And immediately Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. And being led in the Spirit, he was in the wilderness with wild beasts, being tempted of Satan. Jesus ate nothing for forty days and forty nights, and he became hungry.

The devil said to him, If you are the Son of God, command these stones become bread. Jesus answered and said, It is written that man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes out of the mouth of God.

Then the devil led Jesus into Jerusalem and set him on the pinnacle of the temple and said to him, If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down, for it is written, He will put his angels in charge of keeping him safe and guarding him from harm.

The angels will not let you fall, they will hold you up with their hands so that you do not dash your foot against the stones. Jesus answered, It is written you shall not put the Lord your God to the test.

The devil took him to a very high mountain and led him up to the top where he showed him all the kingdoms of the world in all their glory in a split second. And he said to Jesus, I will give you authority over all these kingdoms and you can have their glory for yourself. These are mine to give to whomever I will. If you will fall down and worship me this will all be yours.

Then Jesus answered and said, Get away from me Satan, for it is written that you shall worship the Lord your God and him only shall you serve.

And when Satan had completed all his temptations, he left him for a season, and the angels came and ministered to Jesus.

JOHN CONFESSES THAT HE IS NOT THE CHRIST

The priests and the Levites came to the Jordan to ask John the Baptist who he was. John told them in no uncertain terms that he was not the Christ.

Are you Elijah?, they asked. John answered, I am not. Are you the prophet. No, answered John. Then who are you?

John answered, I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness, Make straight the way of the Lord.

Then they asked him, Why do you baptize if you not the Christ or Elijah? John answered them and said, I baptize with water, in the midst of you is standing someone who you do not know. He is the one for whom I am preparing the way. I am not even worthy to untie his shoes.

All of this was done in Bethany beyond the Jordan where John was baptizing.

17. JOHN'S TESTIMONY

The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him and said, Behold the Lamb of God that takes away the sin of the world! This is the one I was talking about when I said that a man was coming before me because he was before me. (John who was 6 month older than Jesus was confessing that Jesus was eternal and pre existed before anything else that was created.)

John then testified saying, I have seen the Spirit coming as a dove out of heaven and descending upon him. I did not recognize who Jesus was, but the one who sent me to baptize with water said to me, When you see the dove descending and abiding on him then you will know that he is the one who will baptize with the Holy Spirit. And I did see it with my own eyes and have given testimony to the fact that Jesus is the Son of God.

18. JESUS' FIRST DISCIPLES

The very next day John was standing with two of his disciples and he looked intently at Jesus as he walked by.

John said, Behold the Lamb of God! When the two disciples (Andrew and possibly John) heard this they followed Jesus.

Jesus turned and looked at them following and said to them. What are you looking for?

And they said to him, Teacher where are you staying? Jesus said to them, Come and you will see.

They went with Jesus and stayed with him, it was about four o'clock in the afternoon.

One of the two that followed Jesus was named Andrew, and he had a brother named Simon Peter. He went to find Peter, and told him that we have found the Messiah (the Christ). Then he brought Peter to Jesus.

Jesus looked at him and said, You shall be Simon (the name means "hearing") the son of John: You shall be call Cephas (Peter in Greek, and Stone in English)

JESUS FINDS PHILLIP

The next day Jesus decided to go into Galilee where he found Phillip. Jesus said to Phillip, Follow me. Philip was from Bethsaida, the same city where Andrew and Peter lived.

Phillip left Jesus to go and find his friend Nathanael in order to share the news with him that the Messiah had come, the one that Moses and the prophets wrote about. He told Nathanael that the one who all Israel was waiting for was Jesus, the son of Joseph. When Nathanael heard this he asked, Can anything good come out of Nazareth? Phillip answered and said, Come and see.

Jesus saw Nathanael coming toward him and said to him, Look, an Israelite in whom there is no deceit. Nathanael said to Jesus, How do you know me? Jesus answered and said to him, Before Phillip called you, when you were under the fig tree, I saw you.

Nathanael was stunned and said to Jesus, Teacher, you are the Son of God. You are the King of Israel.

Jesus answered and said to him, Because I said to you, I saw you under the fig tree you believe in me. you will see greater things than these. And then Jesus said, I tell you the truth, You will see the heavens opened, and the angels of God ascending and descending on the Son of man.

19. FIRST MIRACLE

Three days after Jesus called Phillip to come and follow him, there was a marriage in Cana of Galilee that was being attended by Mary, the mother of Jesus. Jesus had also been invited, and his disciples were in attendance as well.

Before the marriage festivities were over, they ran out of wine. Mary came to Jesus and told him that they had no more wine. Jesus said to her, Woman, what have I to do with you? My hour has not yet come.

Note -

Many people have misunderstood this part of the story of Jesus and have wondered why Jesus gave Mary the rebuke. The answer is instructive. Notice that Jesus did not call Mary his mother, but instead he called her Woman, a term of courteous respect. Jesus was simply making the point that when it came to miracles, he was not acting under the authority of his mother and would not submit in the spirit of obedience. This mild rebuke of Mary was meant to point us to the fact that Jesus operates under the authority of his Father in Heaven and that his parental duties were subordinate to divine duties. Jesus made the same point with Mary when he was only twelve years old and stayed in Jerusalem to be about his Fathers business in the temple, absent from the party returning to Nazareth.

It seems obvious that Mary had more in mind than just the gift of wine. She apparently

wanted Jesus to reveal himself as the Messiah. His primary manifestation of himself as the Messiah was in his Passion. The time for this manifestation had not yet come.

End Note

His mother said to the servants. Do whatever he tells you to do. Now there were six stone water pots that the Jews used for ceremonial washing of hands before they ate. Each water pot held between eighteen and twenty seven gallons of water.

Jesus told the servants to fill the water pots with water. They filled them to the brim. Jesus then told the servants to fill a cup from the water pot and take it to the ruler of the feast. They did as Jesus said. When the ruler of the feast tasted the water that had become wine, not knowing where it came from, he called the bridegroom and said to him, Usually the good wine is brought out first, and then after everyone has had a chance to drink freely, then the poorer quality wine is brought out. But you have kept the good wine for last.

This is the beginning of the signs that Jesus did in Cana of Galilee. And the signs and wonders he did manifested his glory. And Jesus' disciples believed in him.

20. JESUS AT CAPERNAUM

After this, Jesus and his disciples along, with his mother, went down to Capernaum. They stayed there for many days.

Part Four

FIRST TO THE SECOND PASSEVER

21. FIRST PASSEVER OF JESUS MINISTRY

It was time for the Passover of the Jews, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem and into the temple.

22. JESUS CLEANSSES THE TEMPLE

In the temple were those selling oxen and sheep and doves, and the money changers. Jesus made a whip of cords and he drove those who were selling livestock and changers of money out of the temple. He turned over the table of the money changers and he said to those who were selling doves, Take these away from here and do not make my Father's house a house of merchandise.

His disciples remembered that it was written, Zeal for God's house will consume me. The Jews came to Jesus and asked him to show them a sign to convince them that he had the authority to interfere with the order of the temple. Jesus answered them and said, Destroy this temple and in three days I will raise it up. The Jews answered back, It took forty six years to build this temple and you will raise it up in three days. But Jesus was not talking about the temple in Jerusalem, he was talking about the temple of his body.

Later, when Jesus was raised from the dead, his disciples remembered what he had said, and they believed the scripture, and the words which Jesus had spoken.

While Jesus was in Jerusalem at the Passover, during the feast, many believed in him as they witnessed the signs he performed. But Jesus, knew the hearts of men, did not trust them. He didn't need anyone to tell him what men where like, he knew what was inside the hearts of men.

23. NICODEMUS VISITS JESUS BY NIGHT

There was a Pharisee named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews, who came to visit Jesus by night. Nicodemus said to Jesus, Teacher, we know that you have come from God because no one can do the miracles that you are doing unless God is with him.

Jesus answered, Pay attention to the truth I am going to reveal to you. Unless a person is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of heaven.

Nicodemus said to him, How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter into his mothers womb a second time and be born?

Jesus answered again. Pay attention to the truth I am going to reveal to you. Unless you are born of water and the Spirit, you cannot enter the kingdom of God. Everything that is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the spirit is spirit.

Do not be amazed that I say, You must be born again. The wind blows wherever it will blow and you hear its sound, but you do not know where it came from or where it is going. So it is with everyone that is born of the Spirit.

How can this be? Answered Nicodemus. Jesus answered, Aren't you a teacher of Israel, and yet you do not understand these things. Pay attention to the truth I am going to reveal to you, I am speaking about things that I know and telling you things I have seen, but you will not believe my testimony. If I told you about earthly things and you don't believe them, how will you believe if I tell you about heavenly things?

Jesus continued, No one has ascended into heaven, except the one who descended out of heaven, the Son of man, who is in heaven. And just like Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, In the same way so must the Son of man be lifted up; that whoever believes in him may have eternal life.

For this is the way in which God loved the world, he gave his only begotten Son so that whoever believes in him will not perish but have eternal life. God did not send his Son into the world to judge the world but he sent him so that the world should be saved through him. He that believes in him is not judged: He that does not believe has been judged already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.

This is the judgment, light has come into the world, but men loved the darkness and avoided the light; because what they were doing was evil and wrong. Everyone that does evil hates the light and avoids the light because it shows that what they are doing is evil. But the person that approves and lives out the truth, comes to the light so that his works may be made known and so that everyone can see that their works are done through God.

24. FIRST MINISTRY IN JUDAEA

After this, Jesus and his disciples went into the land of Judaea where they stayed and began baptizing the baptism of repentance in preparation for the kingdom. John also continued to baptize in a place named Aenon near Salim, because there was a lot of water in that area. People came and were baptized, because John had not yet been arrested and put into prison.

Questions began to arise among John's disciples regarding purification. They came to John and said, the man (referring to Jesus) you testified about is also baptizing and everyone is going to him to be baptized. Jesus' disciples were the ones doing the baptizing, Jesus did not baptize anyone.

John answered his disciples and said, A man cannot receive anything unless it is given to him from heaven. You heard what I testified, I am not the Christ, but the one sent ahead of him. The man who has the bride is the bridegroom. The friend of the bridegroom, that stands by and hears him, is very glad to hear the bridegrooms voice. Therefore my joy is made full. He must increase, but I must decrease.

He that comes from above is above all, he that is on the earth is from the earth, and can only speak as a person on earth; he that comes from heaven is above all. What the man from heaven has seen and heard, he testifies about, and no one receives his testimony. The ones who receives his testimony is putting his trust in God and expressing that God is true.

The Father loves the Son and has given all things into his hand. He that believes in the Son has eternal life. But he that does not obey the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him.

25. JESUS GOES TO GALILEE

It was about this time that Herod the governor of Galilee, who had been reproved by John the Baptist for taking his brother's wife and for all the other evil things that he did, sent soldiers to arrest John and put him into prison.

After John was put into prison, and knowing that the Pharisees had heard that Jesus was baptizing more disciples than John (although Jesus himself baptized no one, only his disciples baptized), Jesus left Judaea and came into Galilee.

26. WOMAN AT THE WELL

In order to get to Galilee he needed to pass through Samaria. Jesus and his disciples came to a city in Samaria called Sychar, near a field that the Jacob had given to his son Joseph. Jacob's well was there. Jesus was tired from the journey, and he sat by the well.

He sent his disciples into town to buy food. While Jesus was sitting alone, a Samaritan woman came to draw some water from the well. Jesus said to her, Give me a drink. The Samaritan woman was surprised and asked him, How is that you who are a Jew would ask me, a Samaritan woman, for a drink. (The Jews did not associate with the Samaritans)

Jesus answered the woman and said to her, If you only knew the gift of God and who it is that is asking you for a drink, you would have asked him and he would have given you living water.

The woman said to Jesus, Sir, you have nothing to use to draw water out of the well, and the well is deep, where are going to get living water? Are you greater than our father Jacob, who gave us this well and drank from it himself, along with his sons and his cattle?

Jesus answered and said to her, Everyone that drinks this water will thirst again: but whoever drinks the water that I will give him will never be thirsty again. The water that I give him will become a well of water in him springing up to eternal life.

The woman said to him, Sir, give me this water so that I will never be thirsty again or need to come all this way to draw water from the well.

Jesus said to her, Go call your husband and both of you come back here. The woman answered, I do not have a husband. Jesus said to her, You have answered correctly that you do not have a husband, for you have had five husbands and the man you now living with is not your husband. You have told the truth.

The woman said to Jesus, I perceive that you are a prophet. Our fathers worshipped on this mountain; and you Jews say that Jerusalem is the proper place to worship.

Jesus said to her, Woman, believe me, the hour is coming, when neither this mountain, nor in Jerusalem shall be the place to worship the Father. You worship ignorantly: We worship intelligently, for salvation is from the Jews.

But the hour is coming, and now is here, when the true worshippers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; These are the kind of worshippers that the Father is seeking to worship Him. God is Spirit and those who worship him must worship him in spirit and truth.

The woman said to him, I know the Messiah, the one called Christ, is coming; when he comes, he will declare all things to us.

Jesus said to her, I, the one who is speaking to you, am he.

The disciples were coming back from town and they were amazed to see Jesus speaking to the woman. But no one said anything about it.

The woman left her water pot and went away to the city, and said to the towns people, Come see a man who told me all the things I ever did. Can this be the Christ?

People began leaving the city to find Jesus.

In the meantime, the disciples asked Jesus to eat. But he said to them, I have food to eat that you do not know about. The disciples began to ask one another, Did someone bring him something to eat?

Jesus said to them, My food is to do the will of him that sent me, and to accomplish his work. Do not say, Aren't there still four months before the harvest? I tell you, Lift up your eyes and look on the fields, they are white and ready for harvest. He that reaps the harvest receives a wage, and gathers the fruit; And that the one that sows the seed and he that reaps the harvest will rejoice together.

For here is a true saying, One sows and another reaps. I send you to reap where other have sown the seed, and you have become a part of their labor.

Many of the Samaritans believed in him because of the Samaritan woman who testified that Jesus had told her everything she ever did.

When the Samaritans found Jesus they asked him to come and stay with them. And he stayed with them for two days. Then many more believed because of his word. They said to the woman, Now we believe, not because of what you said. Now we believe because we have heard him for ourselves, and know that he is indeed the Savior of the world.

27. ARRIVAL IN GALILEE

After two days in the Samaritan city Sychar, Jesus returned to Galilee in the power of the Spirit. He testified that a prophet does not have honor in his own country.

When Jesus arrived in Galilee, he was received by the Galileans who had seen all the things that he had done when he was last in Jerusalem at the feast.

This is when Jesus began to preach the Gospel of God. He also told the people that the time prophesied about by all the prophets was being fulfilled, and that the kingdom of God was near.

Word of this spread throughout the entire region of Galilee. And he began to teach in their synagogues, receiving glory and honor from all.

28. THE SECOND MIRACLE AT CANA

He returned to Cana in Galilee, where he had turned the water into wine. And there was a nobleman in Capernaum whose son was sick. When he heard that Jesus was in the area where his son was sick, he found Jesus and begged him to come down and heal his son, who was at the point of death.

Jesus said to him, Unless you see signs and wonders you will not believe. The nobleman said, Sir, come down or else my child will die. Jesus said to him, Go your way: your son is alive and well. The man believed the word that Jesus said to him and went on his way.

As he was going down to see his son, his servants met him with news that his son was fully recovered. He asked his servants when his son had become well. They told him that it was yesterday at the seventh hour that the fever had left him. So the father knew that was at the very same hour that Jesus had told him that his son was alive and well.

The nobleman believed in Jesus, along with his entire household.

This was the second sign that Jesus did after he came out of Judaea into Galilee.

29. JESUS' TEMPORARY RESIDENCE

Jesus left Nazareth and made Capernaum his new headquarters. Capernaum is by the sea, within the borders of Zebulun and Naphtali. This fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah that said, The Land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, by the sea, beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles. The people who sat in darkness saw a great light, and to them who sat in the region and shadow of death, to them did light spring up.

30. JESUS CALLS FOUR FISHERMEN

As Jesus was walking along the sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers, Simon who is called Peter, and his brother Andrew, fishing with nets in the sea. And Jesus said to them, Come follow me, and I will make you fishers of men. And they followed Jesus.

As Jesus went a little further he saw two more brothers fishing, James the son of Zebedee and his brother John. They were both in the fishing boat with their father Zebedee, mending their nets. And Jesus called to them.

Great crowds had gathered around Jesus to hear him teach and preach the word of God as he was standing by the Sea of Galilee. Jesus saw a couple of empty boats near the shore. He got into one of the boats, which belonged to Simon, and asked him to shove the boat a little ways from the shore. Jesus sat in the boat and began teaching the crowd from his seat in the boat.

When Jesus was done teaching, he told Simon to get into the boat with his nets and head for the deeper waters to put down his nets to catch fish. Simon answered and said, Master we have worked hard all night and have been unable to catch any fish, but if you say so I will put the nets down as you wish.

As soon as Peter did as Jesus had requested and put down the nets, they were filled with a great multitude of fish. There were so many fish that the nets started to tear. They called for their partners in a nearby boat to come and help them. They came and filled up both boats with so many fish that the boats began to sink.

When Simon Peter saw this he fell down at Jesus' knees and said, Go away from me; for I am a sinful man, O Lord. He was filled with amazement, as was everyone else that witnessed all the fish that filled the boats.

James and John, sons of Zebedee, were partners with Simon in the fishing business. Jesus said to Simon, Don't be afraid: From now on you will catch men.

And as soon as they got the boats to shore, they immediately left their nets and their boats and their father Zebedee, and followed Jesus.

31. HEALING A DEMONIAK

Jesus and the four fishermen, whom he had called, came down to the city of Capernaum, a city in Galilee.

The next Sabbath, Jesus entered into the synagogue and began teaching. And the people there were astonished at this teaching, for he taught them with authority, not like the scribes taught. While Jesus was teaching, a man with a wicked, unclean spirit entered the synagogue and cried out with a loud voice saying; Ah! What have we to do with you, Jesus you Nazarene, have you come to destroy us? I know who you are; you're the Holy One of God.

Jesus rebuked the demon and told him not to say any more, then he told him to come out of the man. The demon threw the man down and caused the man to have convulsions and to cry with a loud voice, he then came out of him as Jesus had commanded, leaving him unhurt.

And everyone was amazed, and they began to ask each other questions. Who is this? What is this new teaching? With authority and power he commands even the unclean spirits to come out of a man and they obey him.

The news of this immediately spread. Rumors started concerning Jesus. Everywhere in the region of Galilee and the outlying areas they were talking about Jesus.

32. HEALING PETER'S MOTHER-IN-LAW

After Jesus had healed the demoniac, he left the synagogue and went into the house of Simon and Andrew. James and John were also with him.

When he entered the house he found that Simon's mother-in-law was sick with a very high fever. All the members of the household immediately asked Jesus to heal her.

So, Jesus went to the sick woman and stood over her, rebuked the fever and touched her hand. She immediately got up and the fever left her. Full of vigor she began serving Jesus and his disciples.

News of where Jesus was staying spread quickly. As the sun began to go down, people started bringing anyone who was sick or demon possessed to Jesus to be healed. And he healed them all.

This was a fulfillment of the prophecy in Isaiah that says, He himself took on our infirmities and he bore our diseases.

All the city was gathered outside of where Jesus was staying. And Jesus healed those that were sick with many kinds of diseases and he cast out demons.

The demons came out of their victims screaming and saying, You are the Son of God. But Jesus rebuked the demons and commanded them not to speak or declare that he was the Christ.

33. PREACHING TOUR THROUGH GALILEE

Early the next morning, Jesus got up and left the home of Simon Peter and headed for a deserted place where he prayed. Simon and those who were with him followed Jesus and when they found him they said, Everyone is looking for you. And Jesus said to them, Let's go into the next town where I can preach, for this is my mission.

The crowds looked for Jesus and when they found him they begged him not to leave their city. But Jesus said to them, I must preach the good news of the kingdom of God to the other cities also, this is why I was sent.

Jesus went all around Galilee teaching in their synagogues and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, casting out demons and healing all their sicknesses and diseases.

News of Jesus spread into all Syria, and they brought to Jesus all who were sick, ones suffering from all sorts of diseases, those tormented by demons and the epileptic and palsied. And he healed them.

A great crowd followed Jesus from Galilee, Decapolis, Jerusalem, Judaea and from beyond the Jordan.

34. JESUS HEALS A LEPER

While Jesus was in one of the cities a man full of leprosy came to him, and when he saw Jesus he cried out to him and knelt down in front of him and fell on his face and worshipped him, and petitioned Jesus saying, Lord, if you are willing, you can make me clean. Jesus was moved with compassion and stretched out his hand and touched him.

I am willing, said Jesus, you are made clean. And immediately the leprosy was gone and he was made clean. Jesus strictly told him, tell no man. Then Jesus sent him away, charging him not to say anything about what had happened, but to go to the priest and offer a sacrifice for cleansing, according to the law of Moses.

The man left Jesus and began to tell everyone what had happened to him and to spread the news of his deliverance from leprosy. This caused much excitement and great crowds came to hear Jesus and to be healed of their infirmities. The crowds became so large that Jesus could no longer enter openly into the city. So, Jesus withdrew to a place in the desert where he prayed. And people came to find Jesus from every part of the country.

35. JESUS HEALS A PARALYTIC

After a while, Jesus entered Capernaum and began teaching. The crowds discovered the house where Jesus was staying. The crowds trying to get into the house were so great that there was no room for anyone to even squeeze through a door. Jesus was teaching them the word of God. Pharisees and doctors of the law had come from every village of Galilee, Judaea and Jerusalem.

Jesus was displaying the Lord's power and many were being healed of all sorts of sickness and disease.

Four men had carried a man in a bed who was paralyzed, but they could not reach Jesus because of all the crowds. So they carried the man up the stairs to the rooftop where they uncovered the roof tiles and let the man down through the hole in the roof.

They let him down right in the middle of the crowd where Jesus was teaching and healing.

Jesus saw their faith and said to the paralyzed man, Man, be of good cheer, your sins are forgiven.

When some of the scribes and Pharisees who were sitting near Jesus heard what Jesus had said to the paralytic they began to reason in their minds and hearts and discussed among themselves what Jesus had said. How can he say something like this? He is a blasphemer. Who is this person speaking blasphemies? Who can forgive sins? Only God can forgive a man's sins.

And immediately, Jesus, knew in his spirit the way they were reasoning, and what they were saying, and knew their very thoughts, answered them and said, Why are you thinking evil thoughts in your hearts. What is easier, to say to the paralyzed man, Your sins be forgiven you, or to say, Stand up and take up your bed and walk?

So that you will know that the Son of man has the authority on earth to forgive sins, he said to the paralyzed man, Stand up and take your bed and go home.

The man immediately stood up and took his bed and walked in front of everyone. He left for his house, glorifying God. Everyone was amazed, and when the crowd saw what had happened, they were afraid. And then they were filled with excitement and began glorifying God who had given such authority to a man. They said, We have never seen anything like the strange things we have seen today. And they were filled with fear.

36. THE CALL OF MATTHEW

After the healing of the paralytic Jesus went to the seaside to walk along the shore. The crowds followed him and he taught them as he walked along the sea.

Jesus passed by and saw a man named Matthew the son of Alphaeus. Matthew was a tax collector and was sitting at his place of business. Jesus came by Matthew and said to him, Follow me. Matthew immediately left all his business and stood up and followed Jesus.

Part Five

SECOND PASSEVER TO THE THIRD

37. JESUS HEALS ON THE SABBATH DAY

The time of year had come for the feast of the Jews, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem.

There was in Jerusalem by the sheep gate a pool, which in Hebrew is called Bethesda. The pool had five covered porches, where there lay multitudes of sick, blind, lame and withered people. And there was a man who had been there for thirty eight years.

When Jesus saw him lying there he knew that he had been there for a long time. Jesus said to the man, Do you want to be healed? The sick man answered him, Sir, I don't have anyone to put me into the pool when the waters are stirred, someone always goes in ahead of me.

Jesus said to the man, Stand up, take up your bed and walk. Immediately the man was healed, and he took up his bed and walked.

Jesus healed this man on the Sabbath.

When the Jews saw the man carrying his bed they stopped him and told him that it was not lawful for him to carry his bed on the Sabbath. But the man answered them and said, The man who healed me told me to take up my bed and walk.

Who is this man who told you to take up your bed and walk? They asked. The healed man did not know who the man was, because Jesus had left the area.

Afterwards, Jesus found the man in the temple and said to him, Look, you are healed; do not sin anymore or else a worse thing will happen to you. The man went away and found the Jews and told them that it was Jesus who had healed him.

After learning this, the Jews began to persecute Jesus, because he did this work on the Sabbath. Jesus answered them and said, My Father is working even up until this moment, and I will work also.

The Jews took great insult at what Jesus had said and became determined to kill him. They were angry because he made himself equal to God, not just that he had healed a man on the Sabbath.

Jesus said to them, Listen carefully to the truth I am going to declare to you, The Son can do nothing by himself, but only what he sees the Father doing. Whatever the Father does, the Son will do the same. The Father loves the Son and shows him all the things that he does, and even greater works than what you have already seen will be done so that you will marvel.

Just as the Father raises the dead and gives them life, in the same way the Son will also give life to whoever he will. The Father is not going to judge any man, he has given the authority to judge to the Son, so that all may honor the Son, just as they honor the Father. The person that does not honor the Son, does not honor the Father who sent him.

Listen carefully to the truth I am going to declare to you. Whoever hears my word and believes in the Father who sent me has eternal life. This person does not come into judgment, but has passed from death to life.

Listen carefully to the truth I am going to declare to you, The hour is coming and, and now is here, when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God. Those who hear will live. Just as the Father has life in himself, in the same way he gave to the Son life in himself, and the Father has given the Son authority to execute judgment because he is the Son of man.

Don't be amazed at what I am saying to you: The hour is coming when all who are in the graves will hear his voice, and they will come out, those that have done good, to the resurrection of life; and those that have done evil to the resurrection of judgment.

By myself I can do nothing: I judge only according to what I hear from the Father. My judgment is right and perfect because it expresses the will of my Father, and my Father is the one that sent me to do his will, and it is his will I seek, not my own.

If I bear testimony of myself, then my testimony is not true. It is the Father that bears testimony, and I know that his testimony is true.

You have inquired of John the Baptist, and he has borne witness to the truth. But the testimony that I receive is not from a man. I am telling you these things so that you will be saved.

John the Baptist was like an oil lamp that burns and shines light, and you were willing to rejoice for a short time in his light. But the testimony that I have is greater and more convincing than that of John the Baptist; for the works that the Father has given me to accomplish, are the very works that I do, and they testify of me, and they prove that the Father has sent me.

The Father that sent me, has testified of me. But you have not heard his voice at anytime, nor have you seen his form. You do not have his word living in you, and this is evidenced by the fact that you do not believe the one that the Father has sent.

You search the scriptures, because you think that in them you will find eternal life, these are the very scriptures that testify and bear witness about me, but you will not come to me in order that you might have life.

I do not receive glory from people. I know you, and you do not have the love of God living in you.

I have come in my Father's name and you will not receive me: If someone else comes in their own name, you will receive them. How can you believe, when you receive glory from one another, but refuse to seek the glory that comes from God.

Don't think that it is necessary for me to bring accusation against you to my Father. There is already one that accuses you and his name is Moses, the one on whom you have set your hopes.

If you really believed Moses, then you would believe me, because he wrote about me. But since you do not believe what Moses wrote, how can you believe my words?

38. JESUS DEFENDS DISCIPLES

Jesus and his disciples were walking together on the Sabbath day through a grain field (probably on their way from Jerusalem to Galilee); and his disciples, who were hungry, began to pluck grain, rub it in their hands and eat it.

Some Pharisees saw the disciples eating the grain and said to Jesus, Look, your disciples are breaking the law of the Sabbath. Why are you doing what is unlawful to do on the Sabbath.

Jesus answered, Haven't you read what King David did when he and his companions were hungry. Remember how he came into the house of God, when Abiathar was the high priest, and took and ate the showbread and shared it with the entire company that was with him. Was it lawful for David or his company to eat the showbread which was reserved for the priests alone?

Have you not read in the law, that on the Sabbath day the priests in the temple engaged in chores and activities that were against the law for others. Were they guiltless?

I tell you this, said Jesus, Someone who is greater than the temple is here. If you really knew what it meant when God declared through the prophet, I desire mercy, not sacrifice; you would not have condemned the guiltless.

The Son of man is Lord of the Sabbath. Jesus continued to tell them, The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath: The Son of man is Lord even of the Sabbath.

39. HEALING ON THE SABBATH

On another Sabbath day, Jesus entered into a synagogue and began to teach. There was a man in the synagogue with a withered right hand. The scribes and the Pharisees watched to see if Jesus would heal him on the Sabbath, so that they would have something to bring as an accusation against him. So they asked Jesus, Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath day?

Jesus knew exactly what they were thinking and said to the man with the withered hand, Stand up and walk to the middle of the congregation. So the man did as Jesus said.

Jesus then began to speak to them, What man here who has one sheep that falls into a pit on the Sabbath day, will not grab that sheep and pull it up out of the pit? How much more valuable is a man than a sheep.

It is lawful to do good on the Sabbath day, said Jesus, and then asked, Is it lawful to do good on the Sabbath day, or to do harm? To save a life or to destroy a life?

The scribes and the Pharisees said nothing.

Jesus looked around at the congregation and became angry and grieved at the hardness of their hearts.

He said to the man in the midst of the assembly with the withered hand, Stretch out your hand. The man did as Jesus commanded, he stretched it out and it was restored, as whole as his other hand.

The scribes and the Pharisees were filled with anger and discussed with one another what they should do to Jesus. The Pharisees when out and immediately began conspiring with the secular powers under the authority of King Herod to figure out how they might destroy Jesus.

40. JESUS HEALS MULTITUDES

Jesus, knew what the scribes and Pharisees were conspiring to do against him, and he withdrew with his disciples to the Sea of Galilee.

Many followed him who were from Galilee, Judaea, Jerusalem, and Idumaea, including crowds that were from beyond the Jordan and also those around Trye and Sidon.

Jesus healed all those who were sick and diseased, but told them not to publish it in order that the scriptures would be fulfilled which were spoken by Isaiah the prophet who said, Look at my servant who I have chosen, my beloved in whom my soul is well pleased: I will put my Spirit on him, and he will declare judgment to the Gentiles. He will not strive, nor cry aloud; neither will anyone hear his voice in the streets. A bruised reed he will not break, and smoking wick he will not extinguish, until the authoritative announcement of the divine purpose and will, is sent out and has advanced to its final triumph.

And the Gentiles will hope in his name.

The crowds were literally falling all over Jesus, so he asked his disciples to arrange for him to have a boat waiting on shore so he could escape the press of the crowd. The demons were falling down before Jesus and crying, You are the Son of God. Jesus continued to tell them not to speak. The sick, and even those with plagues, pressed from every side in order to get close enough to Jesus to touch him.

41. JESUS SELECTS TWELVE APOSTLES

A while later Jesus went into the mountains to pray, and he continued to pray to God all night. When the morning came, he called his disciples; and called out the ones that he wanted to continue following him. And out of all the disciples he chose twelve.

Here are the names of the disciples that Jesus chose:

Simon who is called Peter

Andrew the brother of Simon

James the son of Zebedee (nicknamed sons of thunder)

John the brother of James (nicknamed sons of thunder)

Bartholomew

Thomas also called Didymus

Matthew the tax collector also called Levi

James the son of Alphaeus

Thaddaeus

Simon the Cananaean (the zealot)

Judas Iscariot (the one who betrayed Jesus)

42. SERMON ON THE MOUNT

Jesus came down the mountain with his disciples and found a level place. He was joined by a multitude of other disciples and a great number of people from all of Judaea and Jerusalem, and crowds from the sea coast of Tyre and Sidon who had come to hear him and to be healed of their diseases. And when Jesus saw the multitudes he healed those who were sick and diseased.

43. INTRODUCTORY STATEMENTS

After this, Jesus went up the mountain again and found a place to sit down. His disciples came to him. Jesus lifted his eyes and looked at the disciples and began to teach them. And this is what he taught.

44. BEATITUDES

Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are they who mourn: for they shall be comforted.

Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth.

Blessed are they who hunger and thirst for righteousness: for they shall be filled.

Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy.

Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God.

Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the sons of God

Blessed are they that have been persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are the poor: for theirs is the kingdom of God.

Blessed are you who hunger now, for they shall be filled.

Blessed are you that weep now: for they shall laugh.

Blessed are you, when men shall hate you, and when they exclude you from their company, and reproach you, and call out your name as evil, and persecute you, and say all kinds of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice in that day, and be exceeding glad, and leap for joy; for your reward is great in heaven, for this is the same way their fathers treated the prophets and persecuted the prophets that came before you.

But woe to you who are rich! For ye have received your consolation. Woe to you that are full now! For you shall be hungry. Woe to you that laugh now, for you shall mourn and weep.

Woe to you, when all men speak well of you! For this is the same way they treated the false prophets.

45. DUTIES OF MESSIAH'S SUBJECTS

You are the salt of the earth; but if a salt loses its flavor, how can it be made salty again? It is good for nothing and is cast out and trampled under the feet of men.

You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. Nor do men light a

lamp and put it under a pot. They put it on a lamp stand so that it can provide light for everyone in the house.

In the same way, you are to let your light shine before men; that they may see your good works and glorify your Father who is in heaven.

46. MESSIANIC TEACHING

Don't think that I came to destroy the law or the prophets. I did not come to destroy, I came to fulfill.

I tell you an important truth, Until heaven and earth pass away, not one small stroke of the pen, or the smallest letter in the alphabet will be removed from the law until all things are accomplished.

Whoever breaks even one of the least of the commandments, and teaches men to break them, will be called the least in the kingdom of heaven:

But, whoever teaches the law of God and also does it, will be called great in the kingdom of heaven.

Unless your righteousness is greater than the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, you will not even enter the kingdom of heaven.

You have heard it said for ages, You shall not kill; and whoever kills shall be in danger of the judgment. But I say to you that anyone who is angry with his brother shall be in danger of the judgment; and whoever says to his brother, Heretic, shall be in danger of the council; and whoever shall say "You fool" shall be in danger of hell fire.

If you are offering your gift at the altar, and while you are there you remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift at the altar and go find your brother and be reconciled, and then come offer your gift.

Agree with your adversary quickly, before he goes to the judge, or your adversary will take you in front of the judge, and the judge will turn you over to an officer of the court who will cast you into prison.

Truly I tell you this, you will not escape your punishment until you have paid the last cent you owe.

You have heard that it has been said, You shall not commit adultery. But I say to you, anyone that even looks at a woman with lust for her, has already committed adultery with her in his heart.

If your right eye causes you to stumble, pluck it out and throw it away. It is better that a part of your body perish than your whole body be cast into hell.

If your right hand causes you to do evil, cut it off and throw it away: It is better that you cut off a part of your body and throw it away, then your whole body be cast into hell.

It is said, Whoever divorces his wife, let him give her a writing of divorcement. But I say to you, anyone who divorces his wife, except for fornication, makes her an adulteress: And whoever marries her after she is divorced commits adultery.

Again, you have heard the old saying, You shall keep the oaths made to God. And so you swear oaths in which God is not mentioned, thinking that you can avoid keeping

your word. I say to you. Do not swear and oath at all; not by heaven, for it is the throne of God; not by earth, for it is the footstool of God; not by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the great King. Do not swear an oath by your head, for you cannot make one hair white or black.

Instead, let your speech be Yes and No. Anything more than this is of the evil one.

You have heard that it is said, An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth: But I tell you, do not resist the evil person. Whoever hits you on your right cheek, turn the other cheek to him. And if someone takes you to court to take away your coat, let him have your overcoat also.

If someone forces you to go a mile with him, go the second mile on your own.

Give to the person that asks you for something, and if someone wants to borrow something from you, let him borrow it.

You have heard that it is said, You shall love your neighbor, and hate your enemy. But I say to you who are listening, love your enemies, do good to them that hate you, bless them that curse you, and pray for them that persecute you and misuse you.

In this way, you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven. For he makes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on both the just and the unjust.

So, to the person who hits you on one cheek, offer the other; and to the person who takes away your coat, give him your overcoat also. Give to everyone that asks: and do not try and recover your property from someone that borrows it and does not return it.

If you only love those who love you, what reward do you have? Even the tax collectors love their friends, and even the sinners love those that love them. If you only do good to those who do good to you, what reward do you have? Even the sinners do that.

If you lend to someone, expecting to receive it back, what reward to you have? Even sinners lend money expecting to get an equal amount or more back.

Love your enemies and do them good. Never lend expecting to get anything back, and your reward will be great and you will be the sons of the Most High. Keep in mind that God is kind to the unthankful and the evil.

If you give a kind greeting to your friends and relatives only, what is noteworthy about that? Everyone does that.

You are to be merciful, even as your Father is merciful. You are to be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect.

47. ALMSGIVING, PRAYER, AND FASTING

Be careful that you do not do your righteous acts only to be seen by men: If you do, you will have no reward from your Father who is in heaven.

When you give your gifts and tithes, do not sound a trumpet to announce your giving like the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, in order to be seen and receive glory from men. The truth you need to understand is that by giving in this way they have already received their reward.

Instead, when you give your gifts and tithes, do not let your left hand know what your

right hand is doing. Do your giving in secret and your heavenly Father who sees in secret will reward you.

And when you pray, don't imitate the hypocrites who love to stand and pray in the synagogues and on the prominent street corners in order that men will see and hear them. The truth about this is that they have already received their reward.

When you pray, go into a private place and shut the door in order that you might pray to your father who is in secret. Your heavenly Father, who sees all the secret and hidden things, will reward you.

When you pray do not use vain repetitions, like the Gentiles do: They have the mistaken idea that they will be heard because they repeat their prayers over and over and speak a lot of words. Don't be like them. Your Father knows what you need before you even ask him.

This the is way you should pray.

Our Father who is in heaven, hallowed be your name. May your kingdom come. May your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us the bread we need for today. And forgive us our debts in the same way that we forgive those that owe us anything. And bring us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.

For if you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive others their trespasses, your Father will not forgive your trespasses.

And when you fast, don't act like the hypocrites who put on a sad face and change their appearance in order to look glum and unkept, in order to be seen by men. The truth you need to understand is that they already have their reward.

When you fast, anoint your head and wash your face so that men will not notice that you are fasting. Your Father in heaven will know and he will reward you.

48. HEAVENLY TREASURES

Don't put away treasures for yourself here on earth, where moth and rust consume and where thieves break in and steal. Put away treasure for yourself in heaven, where there are no moths to consume and no rust to destroy, and no thieves to break in and steal. Where your treasure is, that is where your heart will be also.

The lamp of the body is the eye. If your eye is focused on eternal things then our whole body will be full of light. But if your eye is focused on evil things then your whole body will be full of darkness. And great is that darkness.

No one can serve two masters, for either he will hate one master and love the other; or he will be loyal to one master and despise the other. You cannot serve God and earthly riches.

The conclusion is this, do not be anxious about your life, what you eat or drink or the clothes you wear. Isn't life more than food, body and clothing?

Look at the birds in the sky, they do not plant or grow crops, nor do they gather provisions into barns. And your heavenly Father feeds them. Aren't you much more valuable than the birds?

Which of you by being anxious can add one minute to the length of his life? And why are you anxious about what you wear? Consider the lilies of the field and how they grow; they don't labor or sew clothing and yet even Solomon, in all his glory, was not dressed like one of these.

If God takes care of the clothing for the grass of the fields, which is here today and tomorrow is thrown in the oven, won't he be even more concerned to clothe you?

Do not be anxious, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? How will we be clothed? These are things that the Gentiles are seeking after.

Your heavenly Father knows that you have need of all these things.

But you should seek first his kingdom, and his righteousness; and all these things will be added to you. Do not be anxious about tomorrow; tomorrow will take care of itself.

There is enough trouble in one day without adding to it by borrowing trouble from tomorrow.

49. LAW CONCERNING JUDGING

Judge not so that you will not be judged. The judgments that you make will be the same judgments by which you are judged. Whatever judgment you measure out will be the same judgment you receive. Do not condemn others and you will not be condemned. Be merciful and you will receive mercy.

Give and it will be given to you; all that you need, pressed down, shaken together, running over. For whatever measuring cup you use to give to others, the same measuring cup will be used to give to you.

Jesus then told his disciples a parable.

He asked them, Can the blind lead the blind? Won't they both fall into a pit? The disciple is not greater than his teacher. And why are you looking at the small speck of saw dust in your brother's eye and not considering the huge timber beam that is in your own eye. How can you be of any help removing the speck from your brother's eye when you have a beam in your own eye. You hypocrite, remove the beam from your own eye so that you can see clearly to pick the speck out of your brothers eye.

Do not give things that are holy to vicious dogs, and do not cast your pearls before wild bores, for they will just trample them under feet and then turn on you to do you harm.

50. CONCERNING PRAYER

Ask and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock and it will be opened up to you. For everyone that asks, will receive; and the person that seeks, will find; and the one that knocks will have the door opened for him.

Who among you, if his son should ask him for a loaf of bread will give him a stone; or if he asks for a fish, will give him a snake?

If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give good gifts to those who ask him?

51. THE GOLDEN RULE

Treat others in all the ways you would like others to treat you. This is the teaching of the law and the prophets.

52. THE TWO WAYS

Enter in by the narrow gate. Wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction, and there are many that enter that gate. Narrow is the gate and straight is the way that leads to life, and there are few who find it.

Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly are ravening wolves.

By their fruits you will know them. Do men gather grapes from a thorn bush, or figs from thistles? In the same way, every good tree produces good fruit; but the corrupt tree produces evil fruit. The tree that produces corrupt fruit will be cut down and burned by fire.

Therefore, by their fruits you shall know them. The good man, out of the treasure of his heart, will produce what is good. The evil man will produce what is evil. Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks.

Not everyone that says to me, Lord, Lord, will enter into the kingdom of heaven, only those who do the will of my father who is in heaven.

Many will say to me in that day of final judgment, Lord, Lord didn't we prophecy in your name, and didn't we cast out demons in your name and do many mighty works?

And then I will confess to them, I never knew you: Go away from me you workers of lawlessness.

53. TWO BUILDERS

Why do you call me Lord, Lord, and do not do the things which I told you to do? Everyone who comes to me and hears my words and does them is like the builder who dug the foundation deep into the ground and laid its foundation on the solid rock. The rains came and the floods poured down and the winds blew and beat against the house, but the house remained solid because its foundation was build on the rock.\

Everyone that comes to me and hears my words and does not do them is like the builder who dug the foundation into the sand. The rains came and the floods poured down and the winds blew and beat against the house, and the house collapsed because its foundation was build on sand. And the collapse of the house was great.

After Jesus finished these teachings, the multitudes were astonished because he taught them as someone with authority, not as their scribes.

54. HEALING THE CENTURION'S SERVANT

After Jesus had finished preaching, teaching and speaking parables to the multitude, he went down the mountain and entered Capernaum. The multitudes followed him. And when he was entering the city he was greeted by a delegation of Jews who were petitioning for a centurion who had a servant who was sick and on the verge of dying. The Jews came to Jesus and asked him to heal the centurion's servant because he was

a man that loved the nation Israel and had even built a synagogue for the Jews with his own money.

Jesus agreed to go with them to heal the centurion's servant. But as he approached the centurion's home, the Centurion sent out some friends ahead of him to ask Jesus not to trouble himself by coming into his home. He then came to Jesus and said that he did not feel that he was worthy for Jesus to enter his home, nor was he worthy to meet Jesus himself. He asked Jesus to just say the word and his servant would be healed. The Centurion told Jesus that he himself was a man who had authority over soldiers and that soldiers obeyed him when he spoke.

When Jesus heard this he marveled at him, and turned to the multitude that followed him and said to them, Truly I say to you, I have not found faith this great, not even in Israel. And I tell you that many will come from the east and the west and will sit down with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven, but the sons of the kingdom, the Israelites, shall be cast into outer darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

Jesus said to the centurion, Go your way, it has been done just as you believed. And when the centurion returned to his house he found the servant healed and whole.

55. JESUS RAISES THE WIDOW'S SON

Soon after healing the centurion's servant, Jesus and his disciples and a great multitude went to a city called Nain. As he came near to the gate of the city, there was a funeral procession carrying a dead boy out of the city. The boy was the only son of a widow, and many of the people from the city were with her.

When the Lord saw her, he had compassion on her and said to her, Don't weep. He approached the coffin and those who were carrying the coffin stood still. Jesus said to the young man, I say to you, get up. And the boy that had been dead sat up and began to speak. And Jesus gave him to his mother. Everyone became filled with fear, and they glorified God, saying, A great prophet has appeared among us; and, God has visited his people.

The news of the dead boy being raised to life spread out to all of Judaea and the entire surrounding region.

56. QUESTION FROM PRISON

John the Baptist had been thrown into prison.

John's disciples kept him updated on what Jesus was teaching and the miracles that he was working.

John sent two of his disciples to ask Jesus, Are you the Messiah we have been expecting or should we be looking for someone else.

John's disciples found Jesus, and as they waited for an answer to take back to John the Baptist, Jesus cured many diseases, healed those with the plague, cast out demons and restored sight to the blind.

Jesus then answered the disciples of John by saying, Go and tell John the things you have seen and heard, the blind receive sight, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised to life, and the poor have good news preached to them.

Tell John, continued Jesus, blessed is the person who finds no reason to disbelieve in me.

And when the messengers from John had gone, Jesus began to teach the crowds regarding John the Baptist.

What did you go out in the wilderness to look at? A reed shaken by the wind? A man dressed in expensive clothes? Those who are finely dressed are in kings houses. What did you expect to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you that John the Baptist was much more than a prophet. He was the one the prophets wrote about when they said, Behold, I send my messenger before your face, and he will prepare the way ahead of you.

The truth that you need to understand is that of all born of women there has never been a prophet greater than John the Baptist, and yet the most humble and least important person in the coming kingdom is greater than he.

All the common people who heard this agreed with God's wisdom in sending John to baptize in order that men might repent and get ready for the kingdom.

All the Pharisees and lawyers rejected the whole idea that John's baptism was necessary or important.

Then Jesus taught them and said, This generation is like two groups of children sitting in the marketplace. One group called to the other to play with them, but the other group was sullen and stubborn and would not play. The one group said to the other, we played music but you would not dance: We wailed but you would not weep:

Jesus continued teaching; John the Baptist came neither eating or drinking and they say his has a demon. The Son of man has come eating and drinking, and you say, Look a gluttonous man and a drinker, a friend of tax collectors and sinners!

Jesus then began to speak about the cities in which he did most of his miracles.

Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you Bethsaida! If the mighty works that were done in your city had been done in Tyre and Sidon they would have repented in sack cloth and ashes long ago. When the day of judgment comes, Tyre and Sidon will be judged more lightly than you.

And will Capernaum be exalted to heaven? No, it will be cast down to hell. If the mighty works that had been done in Capernaum, had been done in Sodom, they would have repented and the city would be standing today. It will be more tolerable for the land of Sodom at the day of judgment than for you.

Jesus then stopped and prayed out loud to his heavenly Father and said, I thank you, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that you have hidden these things from the wise and the educated and that you revealed them to the pure and childlike. Yes Father, for this is what pleases you.

Jesus then continued; All things have been given to me by my Father. No one knows the Son except the Father; and no one knows the Father but the Son, and those to whom the Son decides to reveal him.

Come to me, all of you whose souls labor and are burdened down, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn about me: for I am gentle and lowly in heart; and you will find rest for your souls. My yoke is easy and my burden is light.

57. JESUS' FEET ANOINTED

One of the Pharisees, being desirous to meet Jesus, invited him to come to his home and eat with him. So Jesus accepted the invitation and went to the Pharisees home to eat a meal with him. A woman who was known as a sinner, found out that Jesus was in the house. She entered the house bringing with her an alabaster bottle of ointment perfume. She went to the end of the couch that Jesus was reclining on and stood weeping so that her tears wet Jesus feet. She then began to wipe Jesus feet with her hair, kissed his feet and anointed them with the perfumed oil.

When the Pharisee that had invited Jesus to dinner saw what was happening, he said to himself, If this man were a prophet he would have known that this is a sinful woman and would not allow her to touch him.

Jesus, knew what his host was thinking said, Simon (that was the Pharisees name) I have something to say to you. Simon answered back, Teacher, tell me what is on your mind.

Jesus said, A lender had two debtors: One owed him five hundred shillings and the other owed him fifty. Neither of the debtors was able to pay the lender back, so he forgave both debts. Now let me ask you a question, said Jesus. Which of the debtors will love the lender the most?

Simon answered and said, I suppose the one who was forgiven the most. Jesus said. You have given the right answer.

Then turning to the woman, he said to Simon. Do you see this woman? I came into your house and you gave me no water to wash my feet, but she has wetted my feet with her tears and wiped them with her hair. You did not give me a greeting kiss; but she, since the time I came into your house has not stopped kissing my feet. You did not anoint my head with oil, but she has anointed my feet with ointment.

I say to you, her sins, which are many, are forgiven because she loved much. But to whom little is forgiven, little love is shown.

And Jesus said to the woman, Your sins are forgiven.

Those who were at the table with Jesus began to say to each other, Who does he think he is, that he can forgive sins?

Jesus said to the woman, Your faith has saved you, go in peace.

58. JOURNEYING ABOUT GALILEE

After this, Jesus began preaching and bringing the good news of the kingdom of God to all the cities and villages in Galilee. His disciples were with him.

Jesus and his disciples were supported by Mary Magdalene, the woman who Jesus had healed of evil spirits, Joanna the wife of King Herod's steward, Susanna, and many others. They provided the disciples meals and help support their ministry.

As Jesus entered a home for a meal, the crowds flocked to him with such enthusiasm and so pressed in around Jesus that he could not even eat. Jesus' brothers and mother went to try and rescue Jesus. They lacked faith and believed that Jesus was being swept away by a religious zealotness that was putting his safety in danger.

But Jesus continued to heal and cast out demons. They brought a demon possessed man to Jesus that was both deaf and blind. Jesus healed him, and the man was restored to his right mind and began to speak and to see. The crowds were amazed and some began to say, Could this be the son of David?

59. ACCUSATIONS OF THE JEWS

When the scribes and the Pharisees heard this they said, This man casts out demons by the power of Beelzebub, the prince of demons. Others tried to get Jesus to perform a heavenly sign to show that the Pharisees were mistaken.

Jesus, understanding everything they were thinking, called them together and spoke this parable to them.

How can Satan cast out Satan? A city or a house divided against itself cannot stand. A kingdom that is divided against itself cannot stand. If Satan is divided against himself, then how will his kingdom stand. And if Satan has risen up against himself, he cannot stand but will come to an end. If I am casting out demons by the power of Beelzebub then by whose power are your disciples casting demons out. They will be your judge.

But if, by the power of the Holy Spirit of God, I cast out demons, then the kingdom of God has come upon you.

When a strong man, who is fully armed, guards his home and belongings, his home is safe. But if a stronger man comes and defeats him, he takes away the armor that he was trusting in, steals his goods and wrecks his home. This can only happen if the strong man is bound and defeated.

He that is not with me is against me, and the person who is not gathering with me is scattering.

The truth you need to understand is this. Every sin and blasphemy will be forgiven. But the blasphemy against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven. Anyone that speaks a word against the Son of man can be forgiven. But anyone that blasphemes against the Holy Spirit can never be forgiven and has committed an eternal sin. This is a sin that will not be forgiven in this world or in the world to come.

This was Jesus response to those who said he had an unclean spirit.

Jesus continued, Be honest, say that the tree is good and produces good fruit or say that the tree is corrupt and produces corrupt fruit. You children of snakes, how can you, being evil, speak good things. For out of the abundance of your heart your mouth speaks.

The good man, out of the good stored in him, produces good things. The evil man, out of the evil stored in him, produces evil things.

I tell you this, every careless word that a man speaks, he will give an account for it on the day of judgment. Your words will either justify you or they will condemn you.

60. SIGN SEEKERS

Again, the multitudes gathered together and came to Jesus. Some of the scribes and Pharisees questioned Jesus and asked for a miraculous sign.

But Jesus answered and said to them, This generation is evil, it looks for a sign. Only an evil and adulterous generation looks for signs. No sign will be given to you, except the sign of Jonah the prophet.

Jonah was in the belly of the great fish for three days and three nights. In the same way the Son of man will be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. Just like Jonah was a sign to the Ninevites, so will the Son of man be a sign to this generation.

The men of Nineveh will stand in judgment and condemn this generation, for they repented when Jonah preached to them: O look, someone greater than Jonah is here with you.

The queen of the south will rise up in judgment with this generation and condemn it. She came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon. And look, someone greater than Solomon is here with you.

When an unclean spirit goes out of a man he goes through desolate places and finds no rest. Then he says to himself, I will return to my old house that I left. And when he returns he finds the house empty and swept clean and decorated. He then goes and finds seven other evil spirits more evil than himself and they enter the house and become residents. The last state of the man is worse than the first. It is the same way with this generation.

While Jesus was speaking, a woman in the crowd lifted up her voice and said, Blessed is the womb from which you were born, and the breasts that nourished you.

Jesus answered her and said, Blessed are those that hear the word of God and obey it.

No one lights a lamp and puts it in his cellar, or under a pan, but on a lamp stand so that everyone that comes into his house can see the light. The lamp of your body is your eye: When your eyes are focused on the right thing your whole body is full of light. But when your eyes are focused on what is evil, your entire body is full of darkness. Look at yourselves and examine whether you are full of light or darkness.

61. THE TRUE FAMILY

While Jesus was still teaching the multitudes, his mother and his brothers stood outside the house where Jesus was, wanting to talk to him. Since the crowd was too thick to come into the house, they sent word through the crowd that they were calling him. There was a great number of people sitting around Jesus, and as the word was passed along, someone said to Jesus, Look, your mother and your brothers are looking for you, they are outside the building waiting to see you and they want to speak to you.

Jesus answered and said to the one who spoke, Who is my mother? And who are my brothers? My mother and my brothers are those who hear the words of God and do them. For whoever does the will of my Father in heaven is my brother, and sister and mother.

62. JESUS DENOUNCES THE PHARISEES

While Jesus was teaching, one of the Pharisees in the crowd asked him to come have dinner with him.

Jesus accepted the invitation and entered his home to sit down and have a meal.

When the Pharisee saw that Jesus did not wash his hands before sitting down to eat he was amazed. And Jesus said to him, You Pharisees clean the outside of the cup and plate, but the inward parts are full of greed and wickedness. You fools! Didn't the one who made the outside also make the inside? Give your inner life as an offering and everything is clean.

But woe to you Pharisees! You tithe with an exactness that is so precise that you give the tenth part of a seed or a herb. But you ignore doing justice to others and loving God. Those are the things you should be giving, and not the other.

Woe to you Pharisees! You love the important seats in the synagogues and fancy greetings in the marketplace. Woe to you! You are like tombs that have been whitewashed on the outside but are full of corruption and dead bones on the inside.

One of the lawyers who was listening, said to Jesus, Aren't you being rather hasty in your condemnation. And Jesus said to him. Woe to you lawyers also! You load up men with burdens too heavy to carry, while you will not lift a finger to carry your own burdens.

Woe to you! You decorate the tombs of the prophets that your fathers killed. So you are witnesses and agree with the works of your fathers. Your fathers killed the prophets and you decorate their tombs.

Jesus then summarized the words spoken by the prophets of old and said, I will send to them prophets and apostles; and some of them they will kill and persecute; The blood of the prophets, which was shed from the beginning of the world, will be required of this generation.

From the blood of Abel to the blood of Zacharia, who was killed between the altar and the sanctuary, yes I say to you, it will be required of this generation.

Woe to you lawyers! You took away the key to understanding scripture. You didn't even use the key to enter into the kingdom yourself and you make it difficult for others to enter also.

When Jesus was finished speaking, he left the building. The scribes and the Pharisees pressed hard against him to try and provoke him to say something that they could use against him.

63. HIS APPROACHING PASSION

In the meantime, the crowds continued to grow to many thousands. There were so many people that they could hardly move without stepping on someone.

With the crowds nearby, Jesus began teaching his disciples. Jesus told them, Beware of the yeast of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy. There is nothing that is now concealed that will not be revealed, and nothing is hidden that will not be made known. Remember that whatever you have said in darkness will be heard in the light, and things which you have spoken in the most secret place will be broadcast on the housetops.

I say to you my friends, Do not be afraid of those who kill the body, because that is all they can do. But I warn you to be afraid of him who has the power not only to kill the body but to cast the soul into hell. Fear him.

Aren't five sparrows worth about two cents? And not one of them is forgotten in the sight of God. Every hair of your head is numbered, Fear not: You are more valuable than many sparrows.

And I tell you this, everyone who acknowledges me before men, I will acknowledge him before the angels of God. But the person who denies me in the presence of men, he will be denied before the angels of God.

Everyone who speaks a word against the Son of man, will be forgiven. But if a person blasphemes the Holy Spirit, will not be forgiven.

When they bring you before the synagogue and the rulers and the authorities, do not be anxious about how you will answer their charges, or what you should say, for the Holy Spirit will teach you what to say at the time when you are required to speak.

One of the people in the multitude shouted out, Teacher tell my brother to divide the inheritance with me. But Jesus said to him, who made me a judge or a divider over you? And then he turned to the crowd and said, Pay attention and keep yourself from covetousness. A man's life is not measured by the number of things that he owns.

Jesus then told them a parable.

There was a rich man who had a tremendous harvest. And he said to himself, What should I do since I have no place to store all the harvest. And he said to himself, This is what I will do: I will pull down my barns and build bigger barns; And I will put all my grains and my goods in the new barns. And I will say to my soul, Soul you have much wealth laid up for many years to come, take your ease, eat drink and be merry.

But God said to him. You foolish man, this very night your soul is required of you; and the things that you have stored up for yourself, whose will they be?

This is just like the person who stores up treasure for himself but is not rich toward God.

And he said to his disciples, Listen to what I say. Do not be anxious about your life, as to what you are going to eat; or about your body, as to what you will wear. Life is more than food and clothing.

Think about the ravens, they do not plant or reap, they have no barns to store up grain, and yet God feeds them. How much more valuable are you than the birds. Who among you, by being anxious, can add one minute to the length of his life? You cannot affect even the smallest thing by being anxious, so why be anxious about everything else.

Think about the lilies of the field. They do not labor or make their own clothing, and yet Solomon and all his glory was not dressed like any of them.

If God clothes the grass of the field, which is here today and gone into the furnace tomorrow, how much more will he clothe you? Oh you of little faith.

Don't worry about what you are going to eat or drink, and don't be anxious in your minds about the future. For this is how the world responds to life. Seek the kingdom and all these other things will be taken care of.

Do not be afraid, little flock, for it is your Father's good will to give you the kingdom.

Sell what you have, and give gifts to God and his service. Make for yourselves purses which do not wear out, and a treasure in heaven that will never run out, where there is no thief that will steal it or moths that will consume it. For wherever your treasure is, there will your heart be also.

And be prepared to move quickly and keep your lamps burning. Keep alert like men who are waiting for the groom to return to the marriage feast, so that when he comes and knocks on the door you are ready to answer it and let him in quickly.

Blessed are the servants who the Lord finds waiting for his return. I tell you this truth, when he comes he will gather his faithful servants together and sit down to a meal with them and serve them.

Blessed are the servants who are ready for their Lord to come, even when he is least expected. So be ready, for he will come at a time when you don't think he is coming.

Peter then asked the Lord if these parables were for the disciples only or for everyone?

Jesus answered and said, Blessed is the wise steward who is found doing his master's will when he comes. That faithful servant will be put in charge of much more after the master returns.

But if a servant says in his heart, My Lord is going to be late coming, and he begins to mistreat the servants under him, and to eat and drink and becomes drunk without any regard for the Lord's coming. The Lord will come on a day that the servant does not expect and he will be punished severely. The servant who acts disobediently, out of ignorance, will receive a lesser punishment.

To everyone who has been given much, much shall be required.

I came to rouse men to spiritual conflict. And I have a baptism of suffering to be baptized with and I am distressed until it is accomplished. Do not think that I have come to give peace on the earth. No, but rather division.

In the future, five in one house will be divided; three will be of one mind and two of another. A father will be divided against his son, and a son against his father; mother against daughter and daughter against her mother; mother in law against her daughter in law, and the daughter in law against her mother in law.

Then Jesus spoke to the crowds and said, When you see a cloud rising in the west, you know that it is going to rain. And so it does. And when you see the south wind blowing, you say, There will be a scorching heat; And so it happens.

You hypocrites, you know how to interpret the weather and the sky; but you don't know how to interpret these present times?

64. BARREN FIG TREE

As Jesus was preaching about the signs of the times, there were some present who told Jesus about the Galilaeans, whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices.

Jesus heard this and said, Do you think that these Galilaeans were greater sinners than others? No, said Jesus, and unless you repent you will also perish.

And regarding those eighteen whom the tower of Siloam fell on and killed, do you

think they were greater sinners than all the rest of the men who live in Jerusalem. I tell you, No; but unless you repent you will also perish.

Then Jesus told this parable.

A man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard. The season for it to bear fruit came, but when the man examined the tree, he found no fruit. He said to the gardener in charge, I have come and examined this tree for three years and for three years it has not produced any figs. I want you to cut it down so that it stops blocking the light and taking up the space that the other fruit-bearing trees need.

The gardener said, Lord please leave it growing for another year. I will dig around it and fertilize it, and if still does not produce fruit, then I will cut it down.

65. FIRST PARABLES

A. INTRODUCTION

Jesus left the house he was staying in and went down to the seaside where he began to teach. A great multitude came to be with Jesus and hear him teach. The crowd was so great that Jesus got into a boat and pushed it a little ways offshore. Then Jesus sat in the boat while the crowd stood on the beach.

And Jesus began to teach them using parables.

B. PARABLE OF THE SOWER

Look, The sower went out to sow his seed, and as he sowed, some seeds fell along the path, and were trodden under foot, and the birds of the sky came and ate the seeds.

Some of the seeds fell among the thorns and grew up among the thorns. But the thorns choked out the plants so that they did not produce any fruit.

Some of the seeds fell on the good soil and grew and some produced one hundred fold, and some produced sixty fold and some produced thirty fold.

And Jesus cried out, Anyone that has ears to hear, let him hear.

When Jesus was alone, the twelve disciples came to him and asked him what the parables meant and why he was speaking in parables?

Jesus answered and told them that they would be told the mystery of the kingdom, but that the others who heard the parables would not understand them. Jesus told them that this was in fulfillment of the prophecy of Isaiah who said, By hearing you will hear, but you will not understand. For this people's heart is hardened and their ears are dull and their eyes have been closed. Because if they did hear, and see and understand with their hearts, they would repent and I would heal them.

But, blessed are your eyes, for they see; and your ears, for they hear.

This is a truth you need to understand. Many prophets and righteous men desired to see the things that you are seeing and to hear the things that you are hearing.

Now this is how you are to understand this parable and all the parables I teach.

Therefore hear the parable of the sower.

The seed is the word of God. The sower sows the word. The seeds that land on the way side and are eaten by the birds, are the words that are heard. After the words are heard then Satan immediately comes and snatches it away from them, so that it does not take root in their heart. Once the word is snatched away then they cannot believe and be saved.

The seed that is sown in the rocky place are like those who hear the word and believe it for a while; then difficulties and trials come because of the word, and they stumble and fall away.

The seed that is sown among the thorns is like the word that is heard and begins to take root, but the cares, deceitfulness of riches and the lusts of this world choke out its life.

The seed that is sown on the good ground are those with honest hearts, who hear the word and hold it fast and accept it. They produce fruit, some one hundred fold, some sixty and some thirty.

C. PARABLE OF THE SEED

And Jesus said, The kingdom of God is like a man who cast seed upon the earth; The man goes to sleep and rises again the next day, and the seed springs up and grows, but the man does not know how it grew.

The earth bears fruit with out any help from the man, it does it by itself. First the blade, then the ear, the full grain. But when the fruit is ripened, he takes a sickle and harvests the grain.

D. PARABLE OF THE WEEDS

Jesus told them another parable. The kingdom of heaven is like a man who sows good seed in his field. But as he slept the enemy came in and sowed weeds among the wheat, and then slipped away.

As soon as the blades of grain started showing, so did the weeds. The servants came and asked the owner of the field, Didn't you plant good seed? Why are weeds growing up among the wheat?

The man said, The enemy has done this.

The servants asked if they should go and gather up the weeds. The man said, No, you might destroy some of the good wheat. Let them grow together until the harvest, and at harvest time I will tell the reapers, Gather up the weeds and tie them in bundles and burn them. Then gather the wheat and put it into my barn.

E. PARABLES OF THE MUSTARD SEED

Jesus told them another parable. He said, To what can we compare the kingdom of God? What parable can explain its excellence?

The kingdom of heaven is like a grain of mustard seed, which a man took and planted in his field. A mustard seed is the smallest of seeds grown in the garden. But once it starts growing, it gets bigger and bigger, bigger than any of the other plants in the garden. Finally, it grows to the size of a tree and puts out large branches. The birds come and take refuge and find shade and make their homes in its branches.

In another parable, Jesus said that the kingdom of heaven is like the yeast that a woman hid in three measures of flour, and it was mixed into and permeated all of the dough.

Jesus told all these parables to the multitudes, and he only taught them in parables with no explanation. This was a fulfillment of the prophecies found in the Psalms that said, I will open my mouth in parable; I will say things hidden since the foundation of the world.

But to his own disciples he explained everything.

F. PARABLE OF THE WEEDS EXPLAINED

Jesus left the multitudes and came in the house where he was staying with his disciples. And the disciples came to Jesus and asked him to explain the parable of the weeds in the field.

Jesus told them that the one planting the good seed is the Son of man; the field is the world.

The good seed are the sons of the kingdom.

And the one who sows the weeds is the evil one, and the enemy who sowed them is the devil.

The harvest is the end of the world, and the reapers are angels.

The weeds that are gathered and burnt with fire is a picture of what it will be like at the end of the world. The Son of man will send out his angels, and they will gather all the things that are evil and cause people to stumble. And he will cast them into the furnace where there is weeping and gnashing of teeth.

Then the righteous who are left will shine out as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Anyone who has ears, let him hear these things.

G. PARABLES OF TREASURE

Jesus then went on to teach that the kingdom of heaven was like a treasure hidden in a field, which a man finds. And once he finds the treasure he sells everything that he has and buys the field.

The kingdom of heaven is also like a merchant who is looking for precious pearls. And when he finds one pearl of great value, he sells everything that he has and buys it.

The kingdom of heaven is also like a net that is cast into the sea, and it gathers every kind of fish. And when the net is pulled in the fishermen sit down and sort out the good fish they want to keep from the worthless ones. The good fish are put into one container, while the worthless ones are thrown away.

This is how it will be at the end of the world. The angels will come and separate the righteous from the wicked. The wicked will be cast into a furnace of fire where there is weeping and gnashing of teeth.

Then Jesus asks his disciples, Have you understood all these things? And they answered Yes.

66. JESUS STILLS THE STORM

Later on, when it was about sunset, there was a great crowd gathered around Jesus. Jesus got into a boat with his disciples and told them to take the boat to the other side of the sea.

As they were preparing to shove off and go to the other side of the lake, a scribe came up to Jesus and said, Teacher I will follow you wherever you go. And Jesus said to him, The foxes have dens and the birds of the sky have nests; but the Son of man has no place to lay his head.

After this, one of Jesus' disciples said to him, Allow me to go and bury my father.

But Jesus said to him, Follow me; and let the spiritually dead bury their own dead.

Jesus then entered the boat that his disciples had prepared and began to travel to the other side of the lake. They left the crowd on the shore and as the boat sailed off toward the other shore, Jesus fell asleep in the boat.

While Jesus slept a great wind storm came up on the lake. The waves began to beat against the boat and fill it up with water. The disciples became very afraid, to the point of thinking they would all be lost in the storm. But Jesus lay asleep at the back of the boat.

The disciples came to Jesus and woke him saying, Lord, we are perishing! And Jesus stood up and rebuked the wind and the sea and the raging water: He said to the sea, Peace, be still. And the storm ceased and there was a great calm.

And then Jesus said to his disciples, Why are you so fearful? Don't you have faith yet? O you of little faith.

And the disciples, still afraid, began to marvel, saying to one another. Who is this man that even the wind and the seas obey him?

67. JESUS HEALS TWO DEMONIACS

After the storm, they came to the other side of the lake to a region of the country called the Gadarenes. As Jesus and his disciples came out of the boat, they were met by some men who came out from the caves and from among the tombs.

These men had unclean, evil spirits that had great power over them, so great that even when these men had been bound with chains, they were able to break the chains. No man was strong enough to tame these men possessed by demons. They spent their time living among the tombs and crying out and doing harm to themselves by cutting themselves with stones. And they wore no clothes.

When they saw Jesus, they ran to him and fell down before him and worshipped him. They cried out with a loud voice and said, What do you want with me, Jesus, Son of the most High God?

As Jesus was commanding the unclean spirits to come out, they begged Jesus not to torment them. Jesus asked them, What is your name? My name is Legion, for we are many. The demons begged Jesus not to send them out of the country, and they begged Jesus not to send them to the abyss.

Now off in the distance was a great herd of pigs feeding on the hillside. The demons begged to enter the swine, saying, If you do cast us out send us into the herd of swine. Jesus told them, Go. And they came out of the men and entered into the herd of about two thousand pigs. And once this happened, the entire herd of pigs rushed down the steep cliffs and hurled themselves into the sea and drowned.

When the herdsman who kept the pigs saw what had happened they fled to the city and told everyone in the city and the country side what they had witnessed.

Those who lived in the city came to see what had happened and they came to Jesus and found the men who had been possessed by the unclean spirits sitting on the ground, clothed and in their right minds.

The herdsman told how the demons possessed the pigs and how the herd of pigs threw themselves into the sea and drowned. And they told the men from the city how those who had been filled with the unclean, evil spirits had been healed. And they were afraid.

And all the people of the city of Gadarenes began to ask Jesus to leave their country. They were full of fear.

Jesus and his disciples began to head toward the boat in order to leave the region. One of the men who had been possessed by the unclean spirits begged Jesus to let him come along with him. But Jesus told him that he could not come with him, but that he must return to his home and his friends and tell them the great things that God had done for him and how God had shown him great mercy.

The man went his way, declaring throughout the entire city the great thing that Jesus had done for him. And he began to proclaim in Decapolis the great things that Jesus had done for him. And everyone that heard it was amazed.

As Jesus crossed over the sea to the other side of the lake, a great multitude was waiting for him by the shore. They welcomed Jesus as he returned. They had been there all that time, waiting for Jesus to come back.

68. MATTHEW'S FEAST

And Matthew, who is also called Levi, was the last of the twelve disciples that Jesus had called while he was collecting taxes near the Sea of Galilee. Matthew made a great feast for Jesus at his house.

The other disciples joined Jesus, along with Matthew's old friends and acquaintances, which included a large number of tax collectors and other people of low reputation.

When the religious leaders (Pharisees and teachers) saw Jesus eating and drinking with tax collectors and other outcasts of society, they began to criticize Jesus and his disciples by asking, Why do you eat and drink with tax collectors and sinners?

When Jesus heard what they were saying he replied, It isn't people who are well that need a doctor, but those that are sick. Jesus went on to say, I haven't come to call the righteous; I have come to call sinners to repentance.

Go and learn what this means, Jesus told the Pharisees and teachers, I desire mercy and not sacrifice.

John's disciples and some of the Pharisees were fasting. And some of John's disciples came to Jesus to ask him why his disciples did not fast, like they did.

Jesus said to them, Do the friends of the bridegroom mourn (fast) as long as the bridegroom is with them? No. As long as the bridegroom is with them, they cannot fast. But the day will come when the bridegroom will be taken away from them, and then they will fast.

He also spoke this parable to the disciples of John. Jesus said, No one takes a piece of cloth from a new garment and sews it on an old garment. And no man puts new wine into old wineskins, or else the new wine would burst the skins and the wine would be spilled and lost. But they put new wine into new wine skins.

69. JAIRUS' DAUGHTER

While Jesus was speaking to the disciples of John the Baptist, a man named Jairus came up to Jesus and fell at his feet and began to worship him. Jairus was one of the rulers of the synagogue. Jairus begged Jesus to come and heal his twelve year old daughter, who was about to die.

Come and lay hands on her and she will live, Jairus begged, For she is at the point of death.

Jesus got up and started toward the home of Jairus. His disciples followed him. The multitudes also followed him and pressed him from every side.

There was a woman in the crowd who for twelve years had been afflicted by a disease that discharged blood making her unclean. She had spent everything she earned paying physicians to cure her but her disease only got worse.

She had heard about Jesus and said to herself, If only I can touch the border of his garment, I would be made whole. So she forced her way through the crowd and got behind Jesus and reached down and touched his garment, and she was immediately healed.

Jesus, knew what had happened, turned around and said, Who touched my garment? Everyone denied it.

Peter and the other disciples came to Jesus and said, The crowd is pressing you from all sides, what do you mean when you ask, who touched me? But Jesus answered and said, I know that someone touched me, because I felt the power go out from me.

And Jesus looked all around to find the person who had touched him. When the woman realized that she could no longer hide, she came to Jesus with fear and trembling and fell at Jesus feet and confessed that she was the one who had touched him. And she told Jesus and the entire crowd why she had touched Jesus and that she was healed immediately.

Jesus said to her, Daughter, be of good cheer; your faith has healed you. Go in peace and be healed. And the woman left, completely healed.

While Jesus was still speaking to the woman, someone came from the house of Jairus and said to him, Your daughter is dead, you do not need to trouble the teacher any further.

When Jesus heard this, he said, Don't be afraid, simply believe and the girl will be healed. When Jesus entered Jairus' house, he told everyone to stay out except for the father and mother of the dead girl and Peter, James and John.

When he entered the house, the funeral party was already there weeping and wailing, playing the flutes and making a lot of noise.

Jesus told them to stop all the commotion, and to stop the weeping and wailing. He told them that girl was not dead, just asleep. When the funeral party heard this they started laughing and mocking Jesus.

Jesus insisted they all leave, and finally they did. Jesus then took the father and mother and went into where the child was lying. And Jesus took the child's hand and spoke to her. He said, Little girl, I say to you, get up. And immediately her spirit returned and she got up and walked around. Jesus told them to bring her food to eat.

Her parents were stunned with amazement. But he told them not to tell anyone what they had witnessed. Never the less, Jesus' fame spread through all the country.

70. HEALING BLIND MEN

Jesus left the house of Jairus, and as he was leaving, two blind men followed him, crying out, Have mercy on us, son of David.

And when Jesus reached his destination the blind men were still following him. He said to them, Do you believe that I can give you sight? And they said, Yes, Lord.

Then he touched their eyes and said to them, Let it be done to you according to your faith. And their eyes were opened and they saw. And Jesus sternly told them not to tell anyone what he had healed them.

But instead of doing as Jesus had asked, they went and told everyone they met that Jesus had restored their sight.

As Jesus continued walking, they came to him with a man who was dumb and possessed by a demon. When Jesus cast out the demon, the man began to speak. The crowds that witnessed this marveled and said, This has never happened before in Israel. But the Pharisees refuted them by saying, He casts out demons by the prince of demons.

71. JESUS IS REJECTED

Jesus left the area of Galilee and returned to his hometown of Nazareth. His disciples followed him.

When the Sabbath came, Jesus entered the synagogue, as was his custom, and stood to read the scriptures. He was handed the book of the prophet Isaiah. He opened the book and found the place where it is written, The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he anointed me to preach good news to the poor, he has sent me to proclaim release to the captives, and recovery of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those that are oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor.

Jesus then closed the book and handed it back to the attendant and sat down. All eyes were fixed on Jesus as he said to them, Today this scripture has been fulfilled in your ears.

Everyone wondered at his teaching and the words of grace that he spoke. And as he taught them, those that heard were astonished at his wisdom. And they began to ask each other, Where did he get this power, and how does he do these mighty works?

Isn't this the son of the carpenter, Josephs, the son of Mary? Don't we know his brothers, James, Joses, Judas and Simon. And don't we know all his sisters?

Where did he get all these things? And they were offended.

Jesus said to them, I tell you this truth, a prophet is not without honor except in his own country and among his relatives. No prophet is acceptable in his own country.

Try and understand the truth I am about to share with you. In the days of Elijah when the heavens were shut up and it did not rain for three and a half years, and a great famine was upon all the land, Elijah was not sent to anyone from his home country.

He was sent to a widow from Zaraphath, in the land of Sidon, and she was saved from the famine by the miracle from God.

And although there were many lepers in Israel at the time of this tribulation, only one leper was healed by Elijah. And he was Naaman, a man from Syria.

When they heard this, they became furious and filled with anger. They rose up against Jesus and led him to the edge of the hill upon which their city was built, with the intention of throwing him down the cliff to his death. But Jesus simply passed through the middle of them and went on his way.

And Jesus did very few mighty works in Nazareth, because of their lack of faith and unbelief. He did lay hands and heal a few sick folks.

And Jesus marveled at their unbelief.

And Jesus left Nazareth and came down to Capernaum, a city in Galilee.

72. THE TWELVE SENT OUT

And Jesus went all around the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all kinds of diseases and all kinds of sickness.

But when he saw the crowds, he was moved with compassion for them, because they were distressed and scattered, like sheep without a shepherd.

Jesus said to his disciples, The harvest is huge, but the harvesters are few. Pray to the Lord of the harvest and ask him to send laborers into his harvest.

Jesus called his twelve together and began to send them out two by two. He told them to heal the sick and to preach the good news of the kingdom.

He told them that they should take nothing for the journey, except a staff. They were not to take bread or money. Instead they were to go out in sandaled feet without even an extra coat.

He told them not to go to the Gentiles, and not to go to the cities of Samaria, but instead to concentrate on the lost sheep of the house of Israel.

As they went out, they were to preach that the kingdom of heaven is at hand, heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse the lepers, and cast out demons. Jesus reminded them that they had received freely and they were to give freely.

And Jesus told them that when they went to a city, to find someone worthy and stay with them. And if the house was worthy, to salute it with a proclamation of peace. If it was not worthy, then no peace would be upon the house.

Wherever you go, said Jesus, stay in one house until you leave the city. If they do not receive you and your preaching, then shake off the dust that is under your feet as a testimony against them.

The truth you need to understand is that it will be better for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment, than for the city that rejects your testimony that the kingdom of God is near.

I am sending you out as sheep among wolves; be wise as serpents and as harmless as doves. But beware of men, for they will deliver you over to the courts, and they will whip you in their synagogues. You will be brought before governors and kings for my sake, as a testimony to the Gentiles.

But when they deliver you up, do not be anxious, and do not worry about what you are going to say. You will be given the words to say by the Spirit of God, when the time comes.

Brother will deliver brother up to death, and a father will deliver up his own child, and children will rise up against their parents and cause them to be put to death for my name sake.

He that endures to the end will be saved.

When they persecute you in one city, flee to the next. I tell you this truth, you will not have gone through all the cities of Israel, before the Son of man comes.

If they have called me the master of the house of Beelzebub, you cannot expect better treatment.

Do not be afraid of them. There is nothing covered that will not be revealed. Everything that is hidden will be known. What I tell you in the darkness, speak it in the light.

Do not be afraid of those who can kill the body but not the soul. Fear God who can cast body and soul into hell.

He who does not take his cross and follow after me is not worthy of me. He who finds his life will lose it; and he who loses his life for my sake will find it.

He who receives you receives me. And he who receives me, receives the one who sent me.

If a person receives a prophet in the name of the prophet, he will receive a prophet's reward. If you receive a righteous man in the name of a righteous man, you will receive the reward of a righteous man.

The disciples departed and went out throughout the villages and preached that men should repent, preaching the good news. And they cast out demons, and anointed the sick with oil and they were healed.

After Jesus gave his disciples these instructions, he left to preach and teach in the cities.

73. HEROD ANTIPAS

About this time, king Herod Antipas, the tetrarch, heard about all the things that Jesus was doing. And he became very perplexed because some thought it was John the Baptist risen from the dead. Others thought that Jesus was Elijah or some other prophet.

So, when Herod started hearing these things, he began to ask if John the Baptist, who he beheaded, had risen from the dead.

Herod had arrested John and put him in prison for the sake of Herodias. Herodias had been the wife of his brother Phillip. John the Baptist had spoken up and said that it was not lawful or right for Herod to take his brother's wife.

Herodias hated John the Baptist and was looking for a way to kill him. But Herod feared John and spent time talking with him.

Herodias got her chance to destroy John on Herod's birthday. All the highest ranking people in the land were invited. When it came time for entertainment Herodias had her daughter dance for Herod, and he was very pleased.

Herod promised her with an oath in front of everyone that he would give her anything she wanted, up to half his kingdom. She conspired with her mother and asked Herod for the head of John the Baptist on a platter.

Herod was very grieved at this, but because he was afraid of losing face and for the sake of his oath, he commanded that John's head be cut off and brought to the party on a platter.

One of Herod's soldiers went to the prison where John was, beheaded him and put his head on a platter and gave it to the girl who then gave it to her mother Herodias.

The disciples of John collected his body and buried it and then went and told Jesus what had happened.

74. WITHDRAWS FROM HEROD'S TERRITORY

A. RETURN OF THE TWELVE DISCIPLES

All the apostles (twelve disciples) came back together after having been sent out by Jesus to preach the coming of the kingdom. And they told Jesus all the things that they had seen and done. They told him how the sick were healed and the demons cast out. They shared what they taught and preached regarding the kingdom.

When John the Baptist's disciples told Jesus about the death of John, Jesus gathered his disciples and withdrew to the other side of the Sea of Galilee to a city named Bethsaida.

B. FEEDING THE FIVE THOUSAND

But when the multitude heard that Jesus was crossing the lake, they followed him. Many others ran from all the surrounding cities to find Jesus. And when Jesus saw the crowds, he had pity on them and he welcomed them. Jesus taught them and healed all their diseases.

Later on, he and his disciples went up into the mountain, and Jesus sat with them. The time for the feast of the Passover was near.

As the day wore on and it got later and later, the disciples came to Jesus and said, Send the multitudes away, it is getting late and they need to leave so that they can go into the villages and towns nearby to buy food and find lodging.

But Jesus said to them, There is no reason for them to go away. Jesus lifted his eyes and looked over a great multitude of people all coming to him. He said to Phillip, Where can we buy bread enough for all these people to eat?

Jesus already knew what he was going to do, but said this to test Philip. Philip answered and said, Even if everyone only had a small piece of bread it would cost thousands of dollars to feed them.

But Jesus answered and said to his disciples, Give them food to eat. And they asked him, Do you want us to go and spend thousands of dollars on bread?

Jesus asked them, How many loaves of bread do you have? Simon Peter's brother said to Jesus, There is a young lad that has five barley loaves and two fish. But there are about five thousand men to feed, what good would a couple loaves of bread and two fish do?

Jesus told them to bring him the five loaves and two fish. When they had done this, Jesus commanded all the people to sit down on the grass in groups of fifty.

Then Jesus took the five loaves and the two fishes and looking up to heaven, he blessed it and broke the loaves. And he gave the loaves to the disciples to distribute to the crowd. And he did the same with the fishes.

And everyone ate until they were filled.

And once they were all full, he told his disciples to gather up everything that was left over. So they gathered up all the remaining loaves and fish, and it filled twelve baskets.

There were five thousand men not including women and children who ate their fill of barley loaves and fishes that day.

When the people saw this miracle they said, This is truly the Messiah who has come into the world.

C. JESUS WALKS ON WATER

Jesus knew that they were going to come and take him by force to make him king. He told his disciples to get into the boat and go ahead of him to the shore on the other side of Bethsaida. He then sent the multitude away.

After Jesus had sent his disciples and the multitudes away, he went up into the mountain to pray. The evening came, and Jesus was all alone.

The disciples went down to the sea and got into the boat to go to Capernaum (Bethsaida was a suburb of Capernaum). And as the evening came, a great wind blew up. They were about three and a half miles across the lake, about half way to where Jesus had told them to go.

Jesus looked across the lake and saw that his disciples were in trouble, trying to row the boat against the wind. And Jesus walked on the water toward the disciples.

And when the disciples saw Jesus walking on the water, coming in their direction, they were very afraid. They thought it was a ghost, they cried out with fear.

But Jesus spoke to them and said, Take heart, it is I, do not be afraid. They started preparing for Jesus to enter the boat. But Simon Peter said to Jesus, If it is you, then ask me to come meet you on the water. And Jesus said, Come. And Peter went over the side of the boat and walked on the water toward Jesus. But when he saw the force of the wind, he was afraid and began to sink.

He cried out, Lord save me. Immediately Jesus stretched out his hand and took hold of Peter. He said to Peter, Oh you of little faith, why did you doubt?

And Jesus and Peter went into the boat, and immediately the wind stopped blowing. And the disciples were amazed and began worshipping him, saying, It is the truth, you are the Son of God.

And when they had crossed over the lake, they came to the land of Genessaret, where they moored their boat on shore.

As soon as Jesus and his disciples left the boat, the people recognized who he was and began sending word around the entire region that Jesus was there. Jesus went about healing the sick, and many asked Jesus if they could touch the border of his garment, and all who did were made whole.

75. PETER'S CONFESSION

The day after Jesus had feed the five thousand, the crowds that had been on the other side of the shore realized that Jesus had gone away. They began looking for him, and once they figured out where he had gone, they got into their own boats and rowed across the lake to Capernaum to find him.

When they found Jesus on the other side of the shore, they asked him, Teacher why did you come here?

Jesus answered them and said, I am going to tell you an important truth that you need to understand. You are looking for me not because you saw a miracle, but because you ate loaves of bread and your hunger was satisfied. Don't work for the food that spoils but for the food that gives life for eternity, which only the Son of man can give you. For I am the only one the Father has commissioned to give eternal life.

They answered Jesus and asked, What must we do in order to earn this food that gives life for eternity?

Jesus answered and said to them. The work you can do to please God is to believe on the one whom God has sent.

They said to him, What sign are you going to do so that we will believe in you? What

wonders will you work? Our fathers ate manna in the wilderness, just as it is written, He gave them bread out of heaven to eat.

Jesus said to them, I am going to tell you a very important truth, It was not Moses that gave you the bread out of heaven, but my Father gives you the true bread out of heaven. The bread of God is the one which comes down out of heaven and gives life to the world.

They said to Jesus, Lord, give us this bread always.

Jesus said to them, I am the bread of life; he who comes to me will not hunger, and he who believes on me will never thirst.

But I say to you, You have seen me and you still do not believe in me. All those who the Father gives to me will come to me. And he who comes to me I will never turn away.

For I have come down from heaven, not to do my own will, but to do the will of him who sent me. And this is the will of him who sent me, that I loose none of all he has given to me, but that I will raise them up at the last day.

For this is the will of my Father, that everyone who looks to the Son, and believes on him, will have eternal life; and I will raise him up in the last day.

The Jews began to start grumbling about Jesus because he said he was the bread of life that came down from heaven. And they said, Isn't this Jesus, the son of Joseph. Don't we know his father and mother. How can he say he came down from heaven.

Jesus answered them and said. Stop grumbling among yourselves. No one can come to me, unless the Father who sent me draws him; and I will raise him up in the last day. It is written in the prophets, And they will all be taught by God. Every one who has heard from the Father, and has learned, comes to me. Not that any one has seen the Father, except he who is from God; he has seen the Father.

I am going to tell you a very important truth, He who believes in me has eternal life. I am the bread of life.

Your fathers ate manna in the wilderness, but they all eventually died.

I am the living bread that comes down from heaven and once a man eats it he will never die, but live forever. The bread that I give is my flesh, given for the life of the world.

The Jews began to discuss what these mysterious words meant. How can a man give us his flesh to eat?

Jesus said to them, Again, I tell you a very important truth, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of man and drink my blood, you will not have life.

He who eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day. For my body is true food and my blood is true drink. The person who eats my flesh and drinks my blood remains in me, and I in him.

I live because the living Father sent me. The same is true for the person who partakes of me; he will live because of me. This is the true bread which comes down from

heaven. Unlike the bread your fathers ate in the wilderness and died, the person who eats this bread will live forever.

These are the things that Jesus taught in the synagogue while he was in Capernaum.

Many of the followers of Jesus (not the twelve), when they heard this teaching were offended. This is hard to take. Who can listen to this? They asked each other.

Jesus, knew what they were grumbling about, and said to them, Does this cause you to stumble? What would happen if you saw the Son of man ascend to where he came from?

It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh is of no profit. The words which I have spoken to you are spirit and life. But there are some of you who do not believe. (For Jesus knew from the very beginning who didn't believe and who would reject him.) And Jesus said to them, This is the reason that I told you that no one can come to me unless the Father reveals the truth to him and draws him to me.

After this, many of his disciples (not the twelve) went back to their homes and stopped following him.

Jesus called his twelve disciples together and asked them, Do you want to go away too?

Simon Peter answered him, Lord, to whom would we go? You are the one with the words of eternal life. And we believe in you and know that you are the Holy One of God.

Jesus answered them, Did not I choose all twelve of you, and one of you is a devil? He was speaking of Judas, the son of Simon Iscariot, for he was the one of the twelve who would betray Jesus.

Part Six

THIRD PASSOVER UNTIL JESUS' ARRIVAL AT BETHANY

76. SCRIBES CRITICIZE JESUS

After this, Jesus returned to Galilee where he continued his ministry, but he did not return to Judaea, because the Jews were determined to kill him.

A group of Pharisees came from Jerusalem and gathered together with some scribes and began to question Jesus. They had seen some of Jesus disciples eat their food with unwashed hands. They considered this a defilement and rebellion against the tradition of the elders.

The Pharisees and the scribes asked Jesus, Why don't your disciples follow the traditions of the elders. Why do they eat their food with defiled, unwashed hands?

Jesus answered them and said. Why do you disobey the commandment of God, because of your traditions? You hypocrites. The prophet Isaiah was right about you when he said, This people honors me with their lips, but their heart is far from me. They worship me in vain, teaching instead the precepts and principles of men. You push away the commandments of God and hold fast the traditions of men. You would rather obey man than obey God.

For God, through Moses, said, Honor your father and your mother, And let anyone who speaks evil of his father or mother be put to death. But you have undone the clear intention of Gods law with your own traditions.

You refuse to support your parents in their old age by calling the money that should be used for your parents a special gift to God. That allows you to keep the gift for yourself instead of using it to support your parents. In this way you insult God and create a tradition that undoes Gods purpose that you should support your parents in their old age.

And this is just one example of the ways you subvert the true intentions of Gods commands with your own traditions.

Jesus called the crowds of people to himself and began to teach them.

Jesus said to them, Every one of you listen to me and pay attention to what I am going to tell you so that you will have understanding. It is not what goes into a man's mouth that corrupts or defiles him, it is what comes out of his mouth that corrupts and defiles. There is nothing outside a man that can be ingested and cause corruption, but only the things that come out of his mouth defile him.

Jesus then entered into the home he was staying at. His disciples came to him and said, Did you know that you greatly offended the Pharisees by what you said.

Jesus answered them and said, Every plant that my heavenly Father has not planted will be rooted up. Leave the Pharisees alone; they are blind guides. And the blind guides and the blind who they lead will both fall into a pit.

And Peter answered and said to Jesus, Tell us the meaning of what you said to the Pharisees.

And Jesus said, You don't understand that it is not the outside things that defile a man but the things that are in his heart? If a man eats some meat, it goes into his stomach and through his digestive system and is then flushed out of his system. It does not go through the heart of a man.

It is what comes out of a man that makes him unclean, and they are:

evil thoughts,
fornications,
theft,
murders,
adulteries,
covetousness,
wickedness,
deceit,
sensuality,
and envious eye,
lying,
temper tantrums,
pride,

All these evil things are produced from inside a man; eating with unwashed hands does not defile a man.

77. WITHDRAWS FROM HEROD'S TERRITORY

Then Jesus left Galilee and withdrew into the borders of Tyre and Sidon

78. PHOENICIAN WOMAN'S DAUGHTER

Jesus found a house to stay in so that he could escape the public eye. But his fame was too great and it soon became known to the people in the region where Jesus was staying.

Almost immediately, a Canaanite woman, whose daughter had an unclean spirit, heard that Jesus was nearby, and came and found him.

She said to Jesus, Have mercy on me, O Lord, son of David. My daughter is grievously tormented by a demon. But Jesus didn't say a word to her.

The woman was a Greek, a Syrophenician by race.

The woman kept begging Jesus to cast the demon out of her daughter. Finally the disciples came to Jesus and complained that she was making a nuisance out of herself and creating a disturbance every where they went.

Jesus said to the disciples, I was sent to the house of Israel.

But the woman came and fell down at Jesus feet and worshipped him saying, Lord help me.

Jesus answered and said to her. Let the children first be filled, for it is not becoming to take the children's food and cast it to the dogs.

But she answered and said to him, Yes Lord; but the dogs under the table eat the children's crumbs even while the children eat.

Jesus said to her, Woman, your faith is great; let it be done as you wish. The demon has gone out of your daughter.

And the woman returned home and found her daughter lying on her bed, completely healed.

79. AVOIDING OF HEROD'S TERRITORY

And Jesus left the border region of Tyre and came through Sidon to the Sea of Galilee; He went through the middle of the borders of Decapolis and up into the mountain where he sat down.

80. FOUR THOUSAND FED

And they brought to Jesus a man who was deaf and spoke with an impediment. They asked Jesus to lay hands on him. Jesus took him away from the crowd which had gathered around Jesus, and Jesus put his fingers into the man's ears and spat and touched his tongue. Looking up to heaven Jesus sighed and said in Aramiac, Be opened.

The man's ears were immediately opened, and the speech impediment was healed and the man spoke plainly. He told the man not to tell anyone what had happened. But the man went away and told everyone he met.

Everyone was astonished and began to say, he can even make the deaf to hear and the dumb to speak.

And more people came to Jesus bringing those who were lame, blind, dumb, maimed, and many others with diseases came and lay at Jesus feet, and he healed them all.

When the crowds saw the lame walking and the blind seeing, and the deaf hearing, they glorified the God of Israel.

The crowd that came to Jesus had grown to about four thousand men. And they stayed with Jesus for three days.

On the third day, Jesus spoke to his disciples and told them that he had compassion on the crowds. Jesus knew that they had not eaten in three days and he did not want to send them back to their homes until they had eaten and regained some of their strength. Jesus did not want them to faint from hunger on their journey back home, for some had traveled a great distance.

The disciples asked Jesus where they were going get enough bread to feed such a large crowd, since they were in a desert area with no provisions nearby.

Jesus asked his disciples how many loaves of bread they had. The disciples answered that they had seven loaves and a few small fish: Jesus took the loaves, gave thanks and broke the bread into pieces and gave it to his disciples to distribute to the multitude. Jesus took the few small fish and blessed them, and gave them to the disciples to give to the multitude.

Everyone ate until they were full. The disciples then gathered up all the bread and fish that remained, and there were seven baskets full.

After this miracle of feeding the four thousand, he sent the multitudes away to their homes.

81. THIRD WITHDRAWAL FROM HEROD'S TERRITORY

A. A BLIND MAN HEALED

Jesus went immediately into the boat with his disciples and went to the borders of Magadan, which is in Dalmanutha.

The Pharisees and Sadducees found Jesus and began to question him. They wanted Jesus to show them a sign from heaven.

Jesus was deeply grieved in his spirit at their unbelief.

Jesus answered them and said, Why is this generation looking for a sign?

When it is evening you look at the sky and see that it is red, and you predict good weather. In the morning you look at the sky and see that it red and lowering and you predict foul weather.

You know how to discern the face of the sky and yet you cannot see the signs of the times.

An evil and adulterous generation looks for a sign, And the truth is that no sign will be given to this generation except the sign of Jonah.

So Jesus left that area and went to the boat and sailed to the other side of the Sea of Galilee with his disciples.

The disciples forgot to bring any bread along for the trip. When they mentioned it to Jesus he said, Beware of the yeast of the Pharisees and the Sadducees. And beware of the yeast of Herod.

The disciples, not quiet understanding what Jesus was talking about, wondered if he was saying these things to them because they forgot to bring bread.

Jesus knew what they were thinking and said to them, You have so little faith, why are you worrying about not having any bread? Don't you understand yet?

Don't you remember the five loaves and the five thousand it fed, with an abundance left over?

Don't you recall the seven loaves and the four thousand it fed with an abundance left over?

Why is it that you do not understand that what I am telling you is not about bread. Have your hearts been hardened? Do you have eyes and yet do not see? Do you have ears that do not hear? Don't you remember anything?

Then the disciples understood that Jesus was not talking about bread, but that he was warning them to beware of the teaching of the Pharisees and Sadducees.

Once they landed on shore, Jesus and his disciples went to Bethsaida (Not the suburb

of Capernaum but Bethsaida Julias, which is a town on the east side of the Jordan river near where it flows into the sea of Galilee.)

A blind man was brought to Jesus for healing. Jesus took the blind man's hand and took him outside the village. Jesus then spit into his eyes and laid his hands on his eyes, and asked, Do you see yet? The man looked up and said, I see men, but they look like walking trees. Then Jesus laid his hands on his eyes again and when the man opened his eyes everything became perfectly clear.

Jesus then sent the man to his home, giving him instructions not to enter the village.

B. THE GREAT CONFESSION

Jesus went out with his disciples into the villages of Caesarea Philippi. Now as Jesus was on his way to the village of Caesarea, having spent time in prayer with his disciples, he asked, Who do men say that I am?

And his disciples answered, Some say that you are John the Baptist, others say you are Elijah, others say that you are Jeremiah or one of the other old time prophets come back to life.

And then Jesus asked them, But who do you think I am?

And Simon Peter answered Jesus and said, You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.

And Jesus answered and said to him, Blessed are you Simon, son of Jonah: For flesh and blood did not reveal this to you, but my Father who is in heaven.

And I tell you that your name is Peter (petros - a small loose stone), and upon this Rock (petra - bedrock or foundation stone) I will build my church and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.

I will give to you the keys of the kingdom of heaven and whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven; and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.

He then told his disciples not to tell anyone that he was the Christ.

C. PASSION FORETOLD

From that time on Jesus began to show his disciples, and teach his disciples that he was going to suffer many things. He shared with them that he must go up to Jerusalem and be rejected and be tormented by the elders, chief priests and scribes. He told them that he was going to be killed, and that he would rise again on the third day. He told them all of this openly.

Peter took Jesus aside and began to rebuke him, telling him that the things Jesus was predicting would never happen.

Jesus turned around so that all his disciples could hear him and he rebuked Peter saying, Get behind me, Satan! You are a stumbling block to me. You are not thinking about this the way God does. You are talking about things that concern men.

After this, Jesus called the multitude along with his disciples together and began to speak to them.

Jesus said, If anyone would follow after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me.

For whoever would save his life will lose it, and whoever would lose his life for my sake and the sake of the gospel, will save it.

What does it profit a man if he gains the entire world but forfeits his own life? What can a person exchange for his life?

Whoever in this adulterous and sinful generation is ashamed of me and my words, the Son of man will also be ashamed of him when he comes with the holy angels, in his own glory and the glory of the Father.

And he said to them, The truth is that some of you who stand here will be alive to see the kingdom of God coming with power.

D. THE TRANSFIGURATION

About six days after later, Jesus took Peter, James and John to a high mountain where they could be by themselves and pray. And while they were praying, the clothes that Jesus was wearing became white and dazzling, and he was transfigured before them. And his face shone like the sun and his clothes became white as light.

And before long two more men appeared with Jesus, they were Moses and Elijah, and they began talking with Jesus. The two men also had a glorious appearance and they began speaking about the death of Jesus and what he was going to accomplish in Jerusalem.

The three disciples saw this and were amazed and afraid. Peter not knowing what he was really saying, said, lets built three tabernacles, one for you, one for Moses and the other for Elijah.

While Peter was still speaking a bright cloud came over them and they were very afraid. A voice came out of the cloud saying, This is my beloved Son, and I am very pleased with him; listen to him.

The disciples fell on the faces with fear. Jesus touched each one of them and told them to stand up and not be afraid.

And then suddenly they looked around, and everyone was gone except for Jesus and themselves.

As they traveled down the mountain he told his three disciples that they should not tell anyone about this until after he had risen from the dead. So they kept this to themselves, but wondered what Jesus meant when he said he would rise from the dead.

Later his disciples asked him why the scribes kept saying that Elijah must come before the Messiah.

Jesus answered than and said, Yes it is true that Elijah must come first to restore all things. But I tell you that Elijah has already come and they did not recognize him. Then the disciples understood that he was talking about John the Baptist.

E. HEALING THE DEMONIAK BOY

The very next day after coming down off the mountain, Jesus saw a multitude of people. He saw that the scribes were questioning his disciples.

When the crowd saw Jesus, they were amazed because Jesus' face was shining.

And Jesus asked the multitude and his disciples, what questions did the scribes ask?

And one of the men from the multitude came to Jesus and knelt before him and said, Teacher, I have brought my son, who has an evil spirit that keeps him from talking; he also has epilepsy and is suffering greatly. The evil spirit he has takes him and throws him down, and he gnashes his teeth and he foams at the mouth. He is badly bruised from all the abuse and is full of sores.

I brought the boy to your disciples but they could not cast out the evil spirit.

Jesus answered and said, Oh faithless and perverse generation, how long will I be with you? How long must I put up with you? Bring your son to me.

And they brought the boy to Jesus and when the boy saw Jesus, the demon threw him to the ground and he began thrashing about doing injury to himself and foaming at the mouth.

And Jesus asked the father, How long has your son been like this? The father replied, Since he was a young child. Sometimes the unclean spirit throws him into the fire and sometimes he throws him into water. If you can do anything for him, please have compassion on us and help us.

And Jesus answered, If I Can! All things are possible to the one who believes. Immediately the father of the child cried out to Jesus, I believe, please help my unbelief!

And when Jesus saw that people were running from everywhere to join the multitude he rebuked the unclean spirit, and said to him, You deaf and dumb spirit, I command you to come out of him and do not enter him again.

The unclean spirit caused a great deal of torment as he obstinately came out of the boy, and the boy lay still on the ground as if he were dead.

Jesus took the boy by the hand and raised him up and he was healed. And Jesus gave the boy to his father.

And they were all astonished at the majesty of God.

Afterwards, Jesus went to the house where he was staying. His disciples came to him and asked him privately, How come we could not cast out the unclean spirit? And Jesus said to them, Because of your little faith. Listen to this truth and pay attention, for if you had faith as a grain of mustard seed you will say to this mountain, move to another place and it will move. If you have faith, nothing will be impossible for you.

And then he said to them, This kind of demon can only come out with prayer.

82. RETURN TO GALILEE

On his way to Capernaum, Jesus passed through Galilee. He tried to keep his trip anonymous, seeking rest from the crowds.

He began to teach his disciples and said to them, The Son of man will be delivered up into the hands of men.

While the multitudes were marveling at all the things that Jesus was doing, he said to his disciples, Let these words really sink into your mind, for the Son of man will be delivered up into the hands of men. And they will kill him, and after he is dead for three days, he will rise again.

And the disciples were grieved by what Jesus was telling them.

They did not really understand what Jesus was telling them, because it was hidden from them by God, and they were afraid to ask Jesus about it.

83. TRIBUTE MONEY

And when Jesus and his disciples arrived in Capernaum the people collecting the temple tax came to Peter and asked, Doesn't the teacher pay the temple tax?

Peter answered, Yes.

When they came into the house where they were staying, Jesus asked Peter, What do you think, Simon? Who do the kings of the earth receive their tax, toll or tribute from? From their sons or from strangers?

Peter answered, From strangers? Then Jesus said, So the sons are free. But in order not to cause them to stumble, go to the sea and cast a line with a hook on it, and then open the mouth of the first fish you catch. In it you will find enough to pay the temple tax. Take it and give it to those who are collecting the tax.

84. CHILDLIKENESS

The disciples began to argue with each other about who was going to be the greatest in the kingdom. Jesus knew what they were arguing about and he asked them, On the way here, were you talking among yourselves about who would be the greatest? But they kept silent.

Jesus sat down and called the twelve to come and sit around him. He then began to teach them by saying, If a man would be first, he will be last of all and the servant of all.

Later on that day, the disciples came to Jesus and asked, Who, then, is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?

Jesus called over a small child and set him by his side while he sat in the middle of the disciples. Jesus then took the child into his arms and said, Unless you change and become as a little child you will not enter the kingdom of heaven. Whoever humbles himself as this little child, that person is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven.

Jesus continued, Whoever receives a little child in my name, receives me. And anyone who receives me, does not only receive me but also receives the one who sent me. The one who is the least among you, is the one who is great.

And John answered and said, Master, we saw someone casting out demons in your name and we told him to stop, because he was not one of us.

Jesus said to them, Don't stop him. No one who is doing mighty works in my name will be quick to speak evil of me. The person who is not against us is for us.

Whoever gives you a cup of water to drink because you belong to me, truly, he will not lose his reward. Whoever causes one of these little ones that believes in me to stumble, it would be better for him if a great millstone were hung around his neck and he was thrown into the sea to sink to the bottom.

The wickedness of man makes sin inevitable, but that does not remove the responsibility from the person that causes others to sin.

If your hand causes you to stumble, cut it off. It is better for you to enter into life maimed, than to have two hands and go into hell.

And if your foot causes you to sin, cut it off. It is better for you to enter into life limping on one leg than to have both your feet, and to be cast into hell.

And if your eye causes you to sin, pluck it out: Better to enter into life with only sight in one eye than to have two eyes and enter into hell. And in hell the worm never dies, and the fire never goes out.

For everyone is salted with salt, but if the salt has lost its saltiness then how will it be seasoned? Have salt in yourselves and be at peace with one another.

See that you do not despise these little ones.

What do you think? If a man has a hundred sheep and one of them goes astray, won't he leave the ninety nine and go find the missing sheep. And when he finds the lost sheep won't he be happier about finding it than the ninety nine sheep that had not gone astray. It is the will of your Father in heaven that not one of these little ones should perish.

85. FORGIVENESS BETWEEN BRETHREN

If your brother sins against you, go to him and show him his fault, between you and him alone. If he listens, you have gained a brother. But if he will not listen then take one or two more witnesses with you, so that the matter is made clear. If he still refuses to hear then take the matter to the church. If he refuses to hear the church, then leave him alone and stop having any dealing with him and treat him like an outsider.

The important truth that you need to understand is that whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.

Again I tell you, If any two of you will agree on earth regarding anything that you ask, it will be done for you by my Father who is in heaven. Where two or three have gathered together in my name, I am among them.

Then Peter came and asked, Lord, how often should I forgive my brother when he sins against me? Should I forgive him seven times?

Jesus said to Peter, Not seven times, but seventy times seven times.

The kingdom of heaven is like a king who called upon all of his servants to account

for the debts they owed him. One of the servants that was brought to the king owed one and a half million dollars. Because the servant could not pay the debt, the king commanded that the servant's land and property all be sold and that he and his family be sold as slaves in order to settle the debt.

The servant fell down and worshipped the king, and begged him to have patience with him, promising to pay it all. The king was moved with compassion and released him from bondage and forgave him the entire debt.

That very day, the servant who had been forgiven the large debt went out and found another fellow servant that owed him five hundred dollars. He grabbed the servant by the throat and told him that he must pay what he owed.

The fellow servant fell down and begged the man to have patience with him, and he would pay what he owed. But instead of showing him mercy he had the fellow servant thrown into prison until he paid what he owed.

When the other servants saw how their fellow servant had been treated they were very upset, and they went to the king and told him everything that the unforgiving servant had done.

The king then summoned the unforgiving servant and said to him, You wicked servant, I forgave you the all the debt you owed because you pleaded with me to do so. Shouldn't you have had mercy on your fellow servant, just as I had mercy on you?

The king became very angry with the wicked servant and had him delivered up to the tormentors until he could pay all that was due.

Then Jesus said, Your heavenly Father will treat you the same way if you do not forgive your brother from your hearts.

86. JESUS' BROTHERS ADVISE HIM

The feast of the tabernacles was at hand. Jesus' brothers came to him and said to him, Leave this place and go to Judaea so that your disciples also can see the works that you do. For no man does anything in secret while he seeks to be known openly. If you are going to do these things, make yourself known to the world.

Even his own brothers did not believe in him.

Jesus said to them, My time has not yet come, but your time is always ready. The world cannot hate you, but it hates me because I testify that its works are evil. You go up to the feast: I will not go up to the feast because until the right time. After saying these things he stayed in Galilee.

87. THE PRIVATE JOURNEY TO JERUSALEM

After his brothers had left for Jerusalem to go to the feast, Jesus also went, not publicly, but in secret.

The time had come to pass when Jesus was about to embrace his final mission on earth. Jesus set his face toward Jerusalem and sent messengers ahead to the village of the Samaritans to make things ready for him. But when Jesus arrived in Samaria he was not welcomed or received.

When James and John saw how their Lord was treated, they asked if they could call down fire from heaven on them. Jesus rebuked them for this, and went on to the next village.

88. SACRIFICE FOR CHRIST'S SERVICE

And as they went on their way through Samaria to Jerusalem a man came up to them and said that he would follow Jesus wherever he went. Jesus turned to the man and said, The foxes have holes and the birds of the sky have nests, but the Son of man has no where to lay his head.

And Jesus said to another, Follow me. The man replied, I will follow you, but first let me say goodbye to my relatives. But Jesus said to him, If a man puts his hand to the plow, and looks back he is not fit for the kingdom of God.

89. THE FEAST OF TABERNACLES

The Jews from Jerusalem who were at the Feast of the Tabernacles kept looking for Jesus. Where is he they asked? There was a lot of murmuring and rumors among the multitudes about Jesus.

Some said, He is a good man; others said, No, he leads the people astray.

But no one spoke openly about Jesus for fear of the Jews of Jerusalem.

During the middle of the feast, Jesus went up into the temple and taught. The Jews from Jerusalem were amazed. How is this man so learned and wise since he has had no formal education?

Jesus answered them and said, the teaching is not mine, it comes from the one who sent me. The person who speaks for himself is looking for his own glory, but he who seeks the glory of the one who sent him, is a man of truth and no unrighteousness is in him.

Didn't Moses give you the law, and yet none of you keep the law? Why do you want to kill me?

The multitude answered, You have a demon. Who is trying to kill you?

Jesus answered and said to them, I did one work and you all marvel because of it. Moses gave you circumcision, and you circumcise a man on the Sabbath.

If a man is circumcised on the Sabbath so the law of Moses is not broken then why are you infuriated with me for making a man completely whole on the Sabbath?

Stop judging things by their appearance, but judge by what is right.

Some of the people in Jerusalem said, Isn't this the man they are trying to kill. Look, he speaks openly and they don't say anything to him. Could it be that the rulers know that he is the Christ?

How is it that we know where this man comes from: but when the Christ comes, no one will know where he came from.

Jesus taught in the temple and said, You know me and you know where I came from: I have not come of myself but the one who sent me is true, and you do not know him;

because I am from him, and he sent me.

They tried to capture Jesus, but no one could lay a hand on him, because his time had not yet come.

Many in the multitude believed in Jesus, and they said, When the Christ comes, will he do more signs than this man has done?

The Pharisees heard what the crowds were saying about Jesus, and they sent the officers to capture him.

Jesus, knew that his time was short and said, I am only going to be with you a little while longer, and then I will go to the one who sent me. You will look for me, but you will not find me. Where I am going you cannot come.

The Jews from Jerusalem said to themselves, Where will this man go that we cannot find him? Will he go to the be with the Jews that live among the Greeks, and teach the Greeks?

What does he mean when he says, You will look for me but you will not find me; and where I am going you cannot come?

Now on the last day of the great feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If anyone thirsts, let him come to me and drink. The person who believes in me, as the scriptures say, from within him will flow rivers of living water.

Jesus spoke these things of the Holy Spirit, which those who believe in him were going to receive. For the Holy Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified.

Some of the multitude, when they heard Jesus, said, This is truly a prophet.

Others said, This is the Christ.

But some said, What, does the Christ come from Galilee? Doesn't the scripture say that the Christ is going to come from the seed of David and from Bethlehem, the village where David lived?

So there was a division among the people because of Jesus.

Some wanted to arrest him; but no man laid a finger on him.

When the officers that had been sent to arrest Jesus returned empty handed to the chief priests and the Pharisees they were asked, Why didn't you bring him to us? The officers said, We have never heard a man speak like this man. The Pharisees answered them and said, Have you also been led astray? Have any of the rulers believed in him? Have any of the Pharisees believed in him? The crowd is ignorant of the law and under a curse.

Nicodemus (the ruler who came to Jesus by night) said to them, Does our law judge a man before it hears the case and learns the facts?

They answered Nicodemus, Are you also from Galilee? Search the scriptures and you will find that no prophet arises out of Galilee.

90. THE STORY OF THE ADULTERESS

The assembly of chief priests and Pharisees broke up and went home. But Jesus went to the Mount of Olives. And early the next morning he came to the temple again, and all the people came to him and he sat down and began to teach them.

The scribes and the Pharisees brought a woman who had just been caught in the act of adultery and put her in the middle of the group that Jesus was teaching.

The law of Moses commands us to stone adulterers, what do you say about it? They asked Jesus.

Jesus stooped down and with his finger he wrote on the ground. They continued the taunt Jesus with the question.

Jesus stood up and said to them, He that is without sin among you, let him be the first one to throw a stone at her.

Again Jesus stooped down and continued writing on the ground. The scribes and Pharisees, after hearing Jesus' answer, were silent and left Jesus, starting with the oldest and ending with the youngest.

Then Jesus stood up and asked the woman, Where are the ones who accuse you? Does no man condemn you? And she said, No man, sir. And then Jesus said, Neither do I condemn you; go your way; from now on sin no more.

91. ATTEMPT TO STONE JESUS

Jesus continued to teach in the temple in Jerusalem. Jesus said, I am the light of the world, whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.

The Pharisees said to him, You are testifying about yourself; your testimony is not true.

Jesus answered, Even if I do bear witness of myself, my testimony is true, for I know where I came from and I know where I am going. But you do not know where I came from or where I am going. You judge superficially and according to appearances. I judge no man, but if I do judge, my judgment is true; for I am not alone, the Father has sent me.

In your law, it is written that the witness of two men is true. I am the one that bears witness of myself and the Father that sent me also bears witness of me.

They said to him, Where is your Father?

Jesus answered, You do not know me or my Father: If you knew me you would know the Father also.

Jesus spoke these words in the treasury where the chests for offerings were placed, in the most public part of the temple. And no one came to arrest him because his hour had not yet come.

Jesus continued by saying, I will go away and you will look for me but you will die in your sin. Where I am going, you cannot come.

The Jews began asking among themselves, Will he kill himself? Is that what he means when he says, Where I am going, you cannot come?

Jesus said to them, You are from below; I am from above. You are of this world; I am not of this world. This is what I have to say to you. Unless you believe that I am who I say that I am, you will die in your sins.

Then they asked Jesus, Who are you? Jesus said to them, I have told you who I am from the beginning. I have many things to say and to judge concerning you. He who sent me is true and the things which I heard from him are the things I am telling the world.

They understood that Jesus was speaking of God the Father. Jesus said to them, When you have lifted up the Son of man, then you will know that I am he, and that I do nothing of myself, but I only do what the Father has taught me. The one that has sent me has not left me alone, and I always do the things that please him.

As Jesus spoke these words, many believed him.

Jesus said to the Jews from Jerusalem who had believed him, If you remain in my word, then you are truly my disciples and you will know the truth and the truth will make you free. They answered Jesus, We are Abraham's seed, and have never been in bondage to any man. What do you mean when you saying, You will be made free?

Jesus answered them, I am going to tell you a very important truth so pay attention, Every one that commits sin is in slave to sin. The slave does not live in the house forever, but the son lives forever. So if the Son shall make you free, you will be free indeed.

I know you are Abraham's seed, yet you are trying to kill me because my words have not changed your hearts. I speak about things that I have seen with my Father, and you do the things that you have heard from your father.

They answered Jesus, Our father is Abraham.

Jesus said to them, If you really were Abraham's children, you would do the works of Abraham. But now you are looking for a way to kill me, a man who has told you the truth which I have heard from God. Abraham would not act this way. You do the works of your Father.

They said to him, We were not born out of an act of fornication, we have one Father, even God.

Jesus said to them, If God really was your Father then you would love me, for I came from God. I have not come on my own, but God sent me. Why don't you understand the words that I am saying? It is because you cannot hear my word.

You are from your father, the devil, and the lusts of your father is what it is your will to do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and never did what was true because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie it is his nature, for he is a liar and the father of lies.

And because I tell you the truth, you do not believe me. Which one of you can convict me of sin? I tell you the truth, why is it that you do not believe me? The person who is of God hears the words of God: The reason you cannot hear these words is because you are not of God.

The Jews of Jerusalem answered and said to him, Aren't we right about you when we say that you are a Samaritan and have a demon?

Jesus answered, I do not have a demon. I honor my Father, and you dishonor me. I am not seeking my own glory.

I am going to tell you an important truth, so you need to pay attention. If a man cherishes and obeys my words, he will never see death.

The Jews said to Jesus, Now we know you have a demon. Abraham is dead and so are all the prophets: And you say that if a man keeps your word he will never taste death. Are you greater than our father Abraham, who died, and the prophets who died. Who are you making yourself out to be?

Jesus answered, If I glorify myself, my glory is nothing. It is my Father who glorifies me; the same one who you say is your God. You do not know him, but I do. If I said I did not know him I would be a liar like you are liars: But I know him and I keep his word.

Your Father Abraham rejoiced to see my day; and he saw it by faith and was glad.

The Jews said to him, You are not even fifty years old and you have seen Abraham.

Jesus said to them, I am going to tell you a truth that is very important, pay attention! Before Abraham was born, I AM.

The Jews took up stones and threw them at Jesus, but Jesus hid himself from them and went out of the temple.

92. MAN BORN BLIND

As Jesus passed by, he saw a man that had been blind from his birth. His disciples who were with him asked, Teacher, whose sin caused this man to be born blind, his own or his parents.

Jesus answered, Neither. He was born blind so that the works of God could be displayed in him. We must do the work of him that sent me while it is daytime. The night is coming when no man can work.

When I am in the world, I am the light of the world.

After Jesus had said these things he spat on the ground and made clay and anointed the man's eyes with it. And then he told the man to go to the pool of Siloam.

The man did as Jesus said and came away seeing.

The neighbors of the blind man who had known him for a long time and had seen him often begging for a living, said, Isn't this the blind man that sat and begged?

Others said, It is.

While others said, No, he just looks like that man.

But the man himself declared, I am the man.

They asked him, How is it that you can now see?

He answered them and said, The man called Jesus made clay and anointed my eyes and told me to go wash at the pool of Siloam. I did what Jesus said, and now I can see.

And the people asked, where is Jesus?

The man answered, I do not know.

The people brought the blind man to the Pharisees to see how they would respond to the man who had been born blind.

Jesus did this miracle on the Sabbath day.

So the Pharisees asked the man how he had received his sight. He told them the same story he had told his neighbors. He told them how Jesus had made clay, put it on his eyes and then told him to go wash in the pool of Siloam. And how he went and washed, and immediately received his sight back.

When they heard this, some of the Pharisees said, This man is not from God because he does not keep the Sabbath day.

Others said, How is it that a man who is a sinner can do such miracles? And there was a division among the Pharisees.

So they questioned the blind man again. Tell us how this happened and who it was that opened your eyes?

The man who had been blind said, He is a prophet.

The Jews did not believe that the man had actually received his sight. So they called his parents and asked them how he had received his sight.

They asked, Is this your son who was born blind? How is it that he can now see?

His parent answered, Yes this is our son, and he was born blind. But we don't know how he has received his sight. He is old enough, ask him yourself.

The parents feared the Jews because they knew that they had already agreed among themselves that anyone who confessed that Jesus was the Christ would be thrown out of the synagogue. That is why they told the Pharisees to ask their son how he had received his sight.

So the Pharisees called a second time for the man who had been born blind. They said to him, Give glory to God, not Jesus, because we know he is a sinner.

The man answered, Whether he is a sinner or not I do not know, but I do know one thing, I was blind and now I can see.

They said to him, What did he do to you?

The man answered, I have told you over and over what he did. Do you want to hear it again. Would you like to become one of his disciples?

The Pharisees, after hearing this, reviled the man and said, You are his disciple; but we are disciples of Moses. We know that God spoke to Moses, we don't know who this man is.

The man answered them and said, Why, here is a real mystery. He opened my eyes and yet you do not know who he is. We know that God does not listen to sinners, but if anyone is a true worshipper of God and does his will, he will listen to that man.

Since the world began I have never heard of a man that was born blind who had his eyes opened and received his sight. If Jesus were not from God, he could do nothing.

They answered him and said. You were born into sin and you presume to teach us? And they threw him out.

Jesus heard that they had thrown him out of the assembly and he went and found him. Jesus said to the man, Do you believe in the Son of God? He answered and said, Who is he Lord, that I might believe in him?

Jesus said to the man, You have both seen him and he is the one who is speaking to you right now.

The man said, Lord, I believe. And the man worshipped him.

Jesus summed it all up by saying, Judgment came into this world so that those who could not see can now see, and those who can see have become blind.

There were Pharisees nearby who heard what Jesus said. They asked Jesus, Are you saying that we are blind?

Jesus answered, If you were blind, you would have no sin. But because you say that you see, your sin remains.

93. THE GOOD SHEPHERD

Jesus continued to teach the Pharisees who were questioning him.

I am going to tell you a truth and it is very important and you need to pay attention. The person who does not enter the sheepfold by the door, but instead climbs in by some other way, is a thief and a robber.

But the one who enters in by the door, he is the shepherd of the sheep. The gatekeeper opens the door to the shepherd from the inside, and when the sheep hear the shepherd's voice as he calls his own sheep by name, they follow. They recognize the shepherd's voice and they follow him. They will not follow a stranger but will flee from him, because they do not recognize his voice.

Jesus spoke to them in parables but they did not understand what he was saying to them.

I am going to tell you a very important truth and you need to pay attention. I am the door to the sheep. Everyone who came before me are thieves and robbers, and the sheep did not hear them. I am the door, if anyone enters in through me, he will be saved, and will go in and out, and will find pasture.

The thief only comes to steal and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that you might have life, and have it more abundantly.

I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays his life down for the sheep. The hired hand will not lay his life down for his sheep. If the wolf comes, the hired hand runs away and lets the sheep be scattered and killed. He runs because he does not care about the sheep, he is just a hired hand.

I am the good shepherd, and I know my own, and they know me. Just like the Father knows me, and I know the Father; I lay down my life for the sheep.

And I have other sheep who are not of this fold: I must be their shepherd also. They will hear my voice and they will follow me. They will all become one flock with one shepherd.

The Father loves me because I lay down my life, so that I can take it up again. No one is going to take it away from me, but will lay it down myself. I have the power to lay it down and I have the power to take it up again. This commandment I received from my Father.

These words caused a division among the Jews of Jerusalem. Many said, He has a demon or he is insane, why are you listening to him.

Others said, These are not the words of a demon. Can a demon open the eyes of the blind?

94. JESUS SENDS OUT SEVENTY

Now after this, Jesus appointed seventy messengers in addition to the twelve disciples. He sent them two by two into every city and place that he was going to visit.

He told them, The harvest is great but the laborers are few. Pray that the Lord of the harvest would send out laborers into the harvest.

Go on your way; Look, I am sending you out like lambs in the midst of wolves. Do not carry any money, or extra shoes, and don't talk to anyone on the way.

Whatever house you enter, first say, Peace be to this house. And if you are received then your peace will rest upon that house. If you are not received, then there will be no blessing on that house.

Stay in the same house, and eat and drink what they give you, for a laborer is worthy of his hire. Do not go from house to house.

Whatever city you enter, receive whatever they put in front of you and eat what you are served. Heal the sick and tell them, The kingdom of God is very near to you.

If you go into a city and are not received, then go into the city streets and shake the dust off your feet as a testimony against them. And then tell them that the kingdom of God is very near.

I tell you that it would be more tolerable for Sodom in the day of judgment than for that city.

Woe to you, Chorazin!

Woe to you Bethsaida! If the mighty works that were done in you were done in Tyre and Sidon they would have repented, sitting in sackcloth and ashes.

And what about Capernaum, will it be exalted to the heavens? Or will it be brought down to hell.

The person who hears you is hearing me; and the person who rejects you is rejecting me. And the person who rejects me, rejects the one who sent me.

The seventy went out and did as Jesus had commanded them. And when they returned to Jesus, they were full of joy.

Lord, they said, even the demons are subject to us in your name.

Jesus said to them, I saw Satan falling as lightning from heaven. Look, I have given you the authority to tread on serpents and scorpions, and to trample over all the power of the enemy. Nothing can hurt you.

But do not be happy that the spirits are subject to you, but rejoice that your names are written in heaven.

In the same hour, Jesus rejoiced in the Holy Spirit and said, I thank you Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that you have hidden these things from the wise and educated, and have revealed them to babes. Yes, Father, for this was well pleasing to you.

All things have been given to me by my Father, and no one knows who the Son is, except the Father and whoever the Son reveals himself to.

And turning to the disciples he said privately, Blessed are the eyes that see the things that you see. I tell you this, many prophets and kings have desired to see the things that you have seen, and they didn't see them; and to hear the things that you have heard and they did not hear them.

95. PARABLE OF THE GOOD SAMARITAN

There was a lawyer who stood up and tried to put on trial the skill of Jesus to answer a difficult question.

Teacher, he said, What shall I do to inherit eternal life?

Jesus answered him, What is written in the law? How do you read it?

The man answered and said, You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength, and with all your mind. And you should love your neighbor as you love yourself.

Jesus said to him, You have answered correctly, Do this and you will live.

But trying to justify himself, he said to Jesus, And who is my neighbor?

Jesus answered the man and said, A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and he was attacked by robbers who stripped him and beat him, leaving him half dead.

By chance, a priest was going down the same way and when he saw the man he walked on the other side of the road and passed him by.

A little later a Levite, also traveling down the road, saw the man and moved to the other side of the road and passed him by.

But a Samaritan, who was traveling down the same road, saw the injured man and had compassion on him. He bound up his wounds, and poured oil and wine on them. He then put the man on his donkey and brought him to the closest inn, and took care of him.

The following day he took out a day's wage from his purse and gave it to the innkeeper with instructions to take care of the man. He also told him that if he needed more than a day's wage to take care of the man that he would repay him on his next trip.

Which of the three, asked Jesus, proved to be the neighbor to the man who was attacked by the robbers?

The lawyer replied, The one who showed him mercy.

Then Jesus said to him, You go and do the same.

96. JESUS THE GUEST OF MARTHA AND MARY

As Jesus and his disciples went on their way, he entered the village of Bethany. A woman named Martha received him into her house. She had a sister named Mary, who sat at the feet of Jesus to hear him teach.

Martha was very busy serving. She came to Jesus and said, Lord doesn't it bother you that Mary has left me alone to serve?

Jesus answered and said, Martha, Martha, you are anxious and troubled about many things, but one thing is the most important: Mary has chosen what is important, and I will not take it away from her.

97. PRAYER TAUGHT

Jesus and his disciples were praying in a certain place and after the prayer one of the disciples said to the Jesus, Lord teach us to pray, just like John the Baptist taught his disciples.

And Jesus said to them, When you pray, say, Father, Holy be your name, may your kingdom come. Give us today our daily bread, and forgive us our sins; for we also forgive everyone that is indebted to us. And bring us not into temptation.

Then Jesus said to them, Which one of you who has a friend, would go to him at midnight and say to him, Friend, lend me three loaves of bread. A friend of mine has just arrived from a journey and I do not have anything to feed him.

Would the friend answer, Don't bother me now, all my children are in bed and it is too late. I cannot get up and help you?

I tell you this, even though he would not get up and help you because of your friendship, he would get up just to get rid of the nuisance and noise you caused at the midnight hour.

I say to you, Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. For everyone who knocks, it will be opened to them.

If a son asks for a loaf of bread will the father give him a stone? Or if he asks for a fish, will he give him a serpent? Or if he asks for an egg will he give him a scorpion?

If you, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them who ask him?

98. WOMAN HEALED ON THE SABBATH

Jesus was teaching in the synagogue on the Sabbath day. And there was a woman who had been suffering for eighteen years from an infirmity which left her twisted so badly that she could not even stand up straight.

Jesus saw the woman, called her over and said. Woman you are set free from your infirmity. He laid hands on her and she was immediately healed. She was able to stand up straight, and she began glorifying God.

The ruler of the synagogue became indignant at Jesus because he had healed on the Sabbath day. And the ruler said to the crowd, there are six days in which to do your work and you can be healed on any one of those days, but not on the Sabbath.

Jesus answered him and said, You hypocrites, Doesn't each one of you lead your ox or your donkey to water on the Sabbath. And shouldn't this woman, a daughter of Abraham whom Satan had bound for eighteen years, be freed from her bondage on the day of the Sabbath.

As Jesus said these things, his adversaries were put to shame, and the whole crowd rejoiced because of all the glorious things that Jesus did.

Jesus began to teach them and said, What is the kingdom of God like? What should I compare it to? It is like the grain of the mustard seed, which a man took and threw into his garden and it grew, and became like a tree: and the birds of the sky made homes in its branches.

What else can I compare the kingdom of heaven to. It is like yeast, which a woman hid in three measure of flour, until it permeated all of the dough.

99. THE JEWS ATTEMPT TO STONE JESUS

It was the time of the feast of dedication at Jerusalem. It was winter; and Jesus walked in the temple in Solomon's porch.

The Jews came around him and said to him, How much longer will you hold us in suspense. If you are the Christ, tell us plainly.

Jesus answered them, I told you and you did not believe. The works that I do in my Father's name, they testify to who I am. But you don't believe because you are not my sheep.

My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me. And I give them eternal life and they will never perish, and no one can snatch them out of my Father's hand.

I and my Father are one.

Hearing this, the Jews took up stones and tried to stone him to death.

Jesus asked them, Many good works I have shown you from the Father; for which of these good works are you going to stone me?

The Jews answered Jesus saying, We will not stone you for one of your good works, but for blasphemy; because you, being a man, make yourself out to be God.

Jesus answered them, Isn't it written in your law, I said, You are gods? If he called them gods, the ones to whom the word of God came (and the scriptures are always true), Are you going to say to the one the Father sanctified and sent into the world, You are blaspheming; because I said, I am the Son of God.

If I do not do the works of my Father, don't believe me. But if I do the works of my

Father, then even though you do not believe my testimony, believe me because of my works. Then you will know and understand the Father is in me and I am in the Father.

The Jews put down their stones and decided to arrest Jesus instead, but Jesus left without them being able to put a hand on him.

Jesus went to the area where John the Baptist had started baptizing, and he stayed there.

Many came to Jesus and said, John the Baptist did no miracles, but everything he spoke about Jesus is true. And many came to believe on Jesus.

100. THE STRAIT GATE

And Jesus went on his way through the cities and villages, teaching and making his way back to Jerusalem.

And someone said to him, are there only a few that are saved?

Jesus said to them, Strive to enter in by the narrow door, for many, I say to you, will seek to enter in and will not be able. Once the master of the house has risen up and has shut the door many will stand on the outside and knock on the door, saying, Lord, open up to us. And the Master will say, I do not know who you are.

Then they will say, We ate and drank in your presence, and you taught in our streets. And the Master will say, I tell you, I do not know you; go away from me all of you who do evil.

There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when you see Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and all the prophets in the kingdom of God, but you are kept out.

They will come from the east and the west and from the north and the south, and they will all sit down in the kingdom of God. The last will be first and the first will be last.

During the same hour that Jesus was teaching this, a group of Pharisees came to Jesus saying, Get out of here, for Herod wants to kill you.

And Jesus said to them, Go and say to that fox, Look I cast out demons and perform many healings today and tomorrow, and the third day I am perfected. I must go on doing what I am doing until the time comes for me to suffer martyrdom in Jerusalem.

Oh Jerusalem, Jerusalem, you kill the prophets and stone them that are sent to you! How often I would have gathered your inhabitants together, even as a hen gathers her brood under her wing, but you would not!

Look, your temple is left desolate, I tell you, You will not see me until you say, Blessed is he that comes in the name of the Lord.

101. SABBATH HEALING

And the time came when Jesus went into one the rulers of the Pharisees home to eat bread on the Sabbath day. And they were watching him to see what he would do.

And a man with the dropsy came and stood before Jesus.

Jesus knew what the Pharisees were thinking, said, Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath, or not.

The Pharisees didn't say a word.

Jesus then healed the man.

Then he said to the Pharisees, Which one of you who's ox or donkey fell into a well on the Sabbath day would not immediately pull him out?

They couldn't answer him.

When Jesus saw how the Pharisees honored themselves by taking the chief seats. He told them a parable.

Jesus said, When you are invited to a marriage feast, don't sit in the place of honor, or someone who is more important than you will come in and you will be asked to move to one of the lesser seats.

But instead, find the lowest seat you can and take it so that when the host comes he will invite you to take a better seat next to the host, and you will receive honor from everyone there.

Everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted.

And then he said to the Pharisee who had invited him to eat with them, When you make a dinner or a supper, don't call your friends, or your brothers, or your relatives or your rich neighbors: They can all pay you back with the same hospitality.

When you make a feast, invite the poor, the injured, the lame and the blind: And you will be blessed because they do not have any way to repay you. You will receive a reward in the resurrection of the just.

One of the guests at the meal with Jesus, after hearing what Jesus said, exclaimed, Blessed is the person that eats bread in the kingdom of God.

But Jesus answered him and said, A man made a great supper, and he invited many to come. He sent his servants out to ask his friends to come because the feast was just about ready.

But the friends began to make excuses as to why they could not come.

One invited guest said, I have just purchased a field and I need to go see it, please excuse me from coming.

Another invited guest said I have just purchased five yoke of oxen, I need to go and try them out, please excuse me.

And another said, I have just gotten married and I cannot come.

When the servant came to his master and told him how his invited guests had replied, he became very angry. He said to his servant. Go quickly into the streets and lanes of the city and bring in the poor, the maimed and the blind.

After that had been done there was still room at the feast. So the servant was sent to find guests in the highways and hedges, until the man's house was full.

The Master of the feast said, none of those men that were first invited will ever taste my feast.

102 COST OF DISCIPLESHIP

A great multitude followed Jesus. So Jesus turned around and said to them, If any man comes to me and does not hate his own father and mother and wife and children and brothers and sister, and even his own life, cannot be my disciple.

Whoever does not bear his own cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple. Which of you wanting to build a tower, does not first sit down and count the cost to make sure he has enough money to complete it? Otherwise after he has laid the foundation, and runs out of money to finish the project, everyone will mock him. They will say, the man began to build, and he was not able to finish.

What king goes to war against another king without first sitting down and considering the odds of winning the battle. If he only has ten thousand soldiers and his enemy has twenty thousand, perhaps he should send an ambassador to make peace.

If you do not renounce everything that you have, you cannot be my disciple. Salt is only good as long as it has flavor. If salt loses its flavor, how will it be seasoned? It is not good for anything and will be thrown into the trash heap.

He that has ears to hear, let him hear.

103. SECOND GROUP OF PARABLES

A. INTRODUCTION

Now all the tax-collectors and sinners were coming to see and hear Jesus. But the scribes and Pharisees were offended by the company that Jesus kept, and said, This man hangs around with sinners and eats with them.

B. THE LOST SHEEP

Jesus spoke to them in a parable and said, Who among you who has one hundred sheep, and if one of them gets lost, does not leave the ninety nine and go looking for the lost sheep until he finds it.

And when he finds that sheep he carries it on his shoulders, rejoicing.

When he comes home, he calls his friends and neighbors together and rejoices with them. He says, I have found the sheep that was lost.

I tell you, that in heaven there is great joy over one sinner who repents, more than the ninety-nine righteous persons who do not need repentance.

C. THE LOST COIN

There was a woman with ten pieces of silver. If she loses one of the silver coins, won't she look for it diligently until she finds it? And when she has found it she will call her friends and neighbors together and ask them to rejoice with her because she found the valuable coin that was lost.

I tell you there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repents.

D. THE LOST SON

A man had two sons. The younger son said to his father, give me my inheritance. And the father did as the son requested and divided his inheritance and gave his portion to the youngest son.

A couple days later, the young son gathered all his things together and took a journey into a faraway country.

When he arrived in the far country he spent his entire inheritance on wild living. And after he had spent everything he had, there came a mighty famine in the land, and the son began to go hungry.

So he joined himself to one of the citizens of the country who sent him into his pasture to feed the pigs. And the son was so hungry that he started thinking about eating the husks that were being feed to the pigs. No one would help him.

After a while, he came to his senses and said, My father's hired hands have bread to spare and lack of nothing, and I am here dying of hunger. I will get up and go to my father's house and tell him that I have sinned against heaven and in his sight. I will tell him that I am not worthy to be his son, and beg him to hire me on as a servant.

So he got up and went to his father. And while he was off in the distance, a ways from his father house, his father saw him and was moved with compassion for him. He ran and met him, and hugged and kissed him.

The son said to the father, I have sinned against heaven and in your sight, I am not worthy to be called you son.

But the father interrupted the son and said to his servants, bring out the finest clothes and dress my son, put a ring on his hand and new shoes on his feet. And pick out the finest calf and kill it and make a feast.

Let's celebrate, for this was my son who was dead, and he is now alive. He was lost and now he is found.

And they had a celebration.

But the oldest son was in the field, and when he came near the house and heard the music and saw the dancing, he called one of the servants aside to find out what was happening. And the servant told him.

The older brother became angry and would not go into join the celebration. His father came out to talk with him and asked him to join the celebration, but he would not.

He said to his father, I have served you faithfully for all these years and never disobeyed any of your rules. You never gave me a baby goat, much less a calf, that I might have a celebration with my friends.

But your son, who has wasted his inheritance and spent his money on prostitutes, has been given a party. You have killed a calf for him and made a feast.

The father said, You are always with me and everything I have belongs to you. But it was good to have a celebration for you younger brother: Your brother was dead and is now alive. He was lost but now he is found.

E. THE UNRIGHTEOUS STEWARD

And Jesus said to his disciples, There was a rich man who had a steward. This steward was accused of wasting his goods. And the rich man called in the steward, and asked about the rumors he was hearing.

And he required an accounting, and told the steward that he could no longer manage his affairs.

The steward said to himself, what should I do, since my job of managing this rich mans estate is going to be taken away. I am not strong enough to get a job digging up fields and I am too ashamed to beg.

I know what I will do while I still have authority over my masters financial matters, thought the steward.

Then he called on each person that owed his rich employer money and asked them how much they owed?

He went to one debtor and asked, what do you owe? The man replied, I owe 450 gallons of olive oil. The steward said, here I will reduce the debt to 225 gallons of olive oil.

He came to another person that owed his master and asked, what do you owe? The man replied, I owe a barn full of wheat. The steward said, I will reduce the debt to a half barn full of wheat.

The steward did this with all his master debtors, putting all of them in debt to him.

When the rich man discovered what his dishonest steward had done he commended the unrighteous steward for his shrewdness;

For the sons of this world are wiser than the sons of light.

Then Jesus said to them, Use the resources you have been given in such a way that you will have a reward in the future, for this world will fail you.

He who is faithful in a very little is faithful also in much: and he who is unrighteous in a very little is unrighteous in much.

If you have not been faithful in the temporal and the transitory, who is going to trust you with true lasting riches? If you have been unfaithful using someone else's possessions, who is going to trust you with your own?

No servant can serve two masters for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will hold to one and despise the other.

You cannot serve God and material possessions.

The Pharisees, who loved money, scoffed at the teaching of Jesus.

And Jesus continued teaching them.

Jesus said, You justify yourselves in the sight of men; but God knows your hearts; Don't you understand that those things that are exalted by men are an abomination in the sight of God.

For everyone who divorces his wife and marries another, commits adultery: And the person who marries the one who has been divorced from the husband, commits adultery.

F. THE RICH MAN AND LAZARUS

There was a rich man, and he was clothed in the purple robes and wore the finest linen, eating sumptuous meals every day.

And a beggar named Lazarus was laying at the gate of the rich mans resort, full of sores. The beggar was hoping to eat some of the crumbs that fell from the rich man's table. While he lay at the gate in his misery the dogs would come and lick his sores.

One day the beggar died and the angels carried him into Abraham's bosom.

The rich man also died and was buried, and found himself in Hell. As he was being tormented, he lifted his eyes and saw Abraham off in the distance, and Lazarus in his bosom.

And the tormented man cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus that he may dip the tip of his finger into the water and cool my tongue. I am in anguish in this flame.

But Abraham said, Son, remember that you in your lifetime received good things, and Lazarus received evil things; But here, he is comforted and you are in anguish.

And besides, there is a great gulf between us that neither one of us can bridge.

And he said, I beg you Father Abraham to let Lazarus go to my father's house and tell my five brothers about this place so they can avoid this place of torment.

Abraham said, Your brothers have Moses and the prophets.

The tormented man said, No, Father Abraham: If one goes to them from the dead, they will repent.

Abraham answered him, If they do not listen to Moses and the prophets, they will not be persuaded by someone who has risen from the dead.

G. FAITH, AND SERVICE

Jesus said to his disciples, Temptations to sin are sure to come, but woe to him through whom they come!

It would be better if a great weight was tied around his neck, and then be thrown into the sea, rather than be the one who causes one of these little ones to stumble.

Be careful yourselves. If your brother sin, rebuke him, and if he repents, then forgive him. If he sins against you seven times and comes to you for forgiveness, you shall forgive him.

And the apostles said to the Lord, Increase our faith.

And the Lord said, if you had faith as a grain of mustard seed, you might say to this sycamore tree, Lift yourself up from your roots and plant yourself in the sea, and it would obey you.

Which one of you who has a servant plowing or keeping your sheep, when he is comes in from the field will invite him to sit down and eat?

Isn't it more likely that you will tell him to prepare your meal and serve you until your have finished eating, and then after that he can have his meal?

Do you thank the servant because he does the things that you command him to do?

In the same way after you have done all that is commanded, don't think you deserve a reward. All you have done is your duty.

104. RAISING OF LAZARUS

A friend of Jesus was sick. His name was Lazarus. He lived in Bethany with his sisters Mary and Martha. It was Mary who had anointed the Lord with ointment and wiped his feet with her hair.

Mary and Martha sent word to Jesus that their brother Lazarus, who Jesus loved, was sick to the point of death.

When Jesus heard it he said, this sickness has come about so that God and his Son will be glorified.

Jesus loved Mary and Martha and their brother Lazarus.

Jesus stayed two more days where he was. Then after two days he said to his disciples, lets go back to Judaea.

The disciples said to him, Teacher, the Jews who live in that region want to stone you, and you want to go back there?

Jesus answered, Are there not twelve hours in the day? If a man walks in the day light he doesn't stumble because he sees the light of this world. But if a man walks in the night, he stumbles because the light is not in him.

Jesus said these things to his disciples after he told them that their friend Lazarus had fallen asleep: I will go and wake him up. His disciples said, If he is asleep then perhaps the fever is gone.

Jesus was saying that Lazarus was dead, but the disciples thought he was saying that Lazarus was restfully sleeping.

Finally Jesus said to his disciples, Lazarus is dead. And I am glad for your sakes that I was not there, so that you may believe. Let's go to him.

Thomas, who is also called Didymus. said to his fellow-disciples, Let's go so that we may die with him.

So when Jesus came to Bethany, to the house of Mary and Martha, he found that Lazarus had been in the tomb for four days.

Now Bethany was less than a mile from Jerusalem. Many of the Jews had come to Martha and Mary, to console them over the death of their brother.

When Martha heard that Jesus was coming, she went to met him. But Mary stayed in the house.

Martha said to Jesus, Lord, if you had been here my brother would not have died. But even now I know that what you ask God to do, He will do.

Jesus said to her, Your brother will rise again. Martha said to him, I know that he will rise again in the resurrection at the last day. Jesus said to her, I am the resurrection, and the life. He who believes in me, even if he dies, he will live, and whoever lives and believes in me will never die. Do you believe this?

Martha said to him, Yes, Lord. I believe that you are the Christ, the Son of God, the one sent into this world from God.

After she said this she went and called Mary her sister secretly, saying, The Teacher is here and is looking for you.

Mary got up quickly and went to Jesus. Jesus was not yet in Bethany, but waiting at the same place that Martha had left him.

The Jews that were consoling Mary and Martha in their homes, saw Mary get up quickly and leave they supposed that she was going to the tomb to weep, and they followed her.

When Mary came to where Jesus was she fell at his feet and said to him, Lord if you had been here, my brother would not have died.

When Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews also who had come along with her weeping, groaned in his spirit and was troubled and asked, Where have you laid him?

They said to him, Lord, come and see.

Jesus wept.

The Jews said, Look how he loved him! But others said, If he could open the eyes of the blind couldn't he have prevented Lazarus from dying?

After groaning, Jesus came up to the tomb that was in a cave with a stone lying against the opening.

Martha said, Lord, the body is decayed since it has been dead for four days.

Jesus said to her, Didn't I tell you that if you believed you would see the glory of God?

So at Jesus' instruction they took away the stone from in front of the tomb.

Jesus lifted up his eyes and said, Father, I thank you that you hear me. I know you always hear me but I want the people who are here to believe that you sent me.

And then Jesus with a loud voice said, Lazarus come out.

Lazarus came out of the tomb, his hands and feet were bound with grave-clothes, and his face was covered by a napkin. Jesus said to them, Unwrap him and let him go.

Many of the Jews who had come to comfort Mary and her sister Martha, saw Jesus raise Lazarus from the dead and believed in him.

Others went out and told the Pharisees what Jesus had done.

105. THE SANHEDRIN'S DECREE

The chief priests and the Pharisees gathered a council. They asked, What should we do? This man does many signs and miracles and if we let him continue, then everyone will believe in him. Then the Romans will come and take away our positions of authority and our nation.

But the high priest, Caiaphas, said to them, Don't you know anything at all. Don't you think it is better for one man to die than for the entire nation to perish.

Caiaphas did not realize it but he was not speaking this by himself. Since he was the high priest that year, he was actually prophesying that Jesus was going to die for the nation: And not for the nation of Israel only, but also for all the children of God who are scattered abroad.

So from that day forward they began scheming how they might put Jesus to death.

Jesus, knowing this, did not walk openly among the Jews, but left for a city called Ephraim, near the wilderness. And there he stayed with his disciples.

106. TEN LEPERS

Later on Jesus decided to return to Jerusalem. As he was passing along the borders of Samaria and Galilee he entered into a village where he was met by ten lepers.

The lepers kept their distance from Jesus but they did yell to him with a loud voice saying, Jesus, have mercy on us.

When he saw them, he said to them, Go and show yourselves to the priests.

And they were all cleansed.

One of the ten lepers, when he saw that he was healed, returned to Jesus and fell down on his face before him and gave him thanks and glorified God. He was a Samaritan.

Jesus answered him and said, Didn't I cleanse ten of you, where are the other nine? Why did they not return to give glory to God?

And Jesus said to the leper that had returned, Go your way, your faith has healed you.

Later, the Pharisees approached Jesus and asked when the kingdom of God was going to come so that men could see it, since he had been promising that it was at hand for nearly three years.

Jesus answered, The kingdom of God is not coming in the way you are looking for it to come. No one is going to come to you and say, look there is the kingdom of God, or come with me and let's go look at the kingdom of God. The kingdom of God is within you.

Then he said to his disciples, It will not be very long before you will desire to see the Son of man, but you will not see him. They will say to you, come see him here, or come see him there, but do not believe them or follow after them.

When the lightning flashes, it lights up the entire sky, and everyone sees it. This is the way it will be when the Son of man comes in glory.

First, I must suffer many things and be rejected by this generation. And just like in the

days of Noah, they ate and drank, and married right up to the day that Noah entered into the ark, and then the flood came, and destroyed them all.

And just like the days of Lot, they ate and drank, and bought and sold; they planted and they built. But the day that Lot left Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven and destroyed them all.

This is what it will be like just before the Son of man is revealed.

In that day that is coming, there will be no time to gather up all your possessions or to finish the job you are doing.

Remember Lot's wife.

Whoever seeks to gain his life will lose it; but whoever loses his life will preserve it.

I tell you, in that night one will be taken and another left.

Two men will be sleeping and one will be taken and another will be left.

Two women will be cooking a meal and one will be taken and the other will be left.

And they asked Jesus, Where is this going to happen? Jesus answered, Everywhere there are wicked men.

107. PARABLE OF THE IMPORTUNATE WIDOW

Jesus then spoke a parable to them in order to encourage them to pray and not become weary.

There was, in a city, a judge who neither feared God or man. And there was a widow who was trying to get a settlement with someone who had stolen from her. The widow kept coming to the judge and asking for justice.

The judge finally said to himself, even though I do not fear God, or have any regard for men, I will still give her justice because if I do not she will continue to disturb me with her persistent pleas.

If an unjust judge will render a just verdict, how much more will God avenge his elect, who make petition to him both day and night.

But remember that God is patient and sometimes it seems like he is delaying his justice. That is because God is merciful, even to his enemies.

But when the day comes that the chance to repent ends, then justice will come suddenly and the opportunity for mercy will be over.

When the Son of man comes will he find faith on the earth?

108. PARABLE OF THE PHARISEE AND PUBLICAN

Then Jesus spoke a parable to those who were trusting in themselves and were impressed with their own righteousness.

Jesus said, Two men went up into the temple to pray. One was a Pharisee and the other was a tax collector.

The Pharisee stood and prayed, having himself as the object of his own prayers.

God, I thank you that I am not like the rest of men, swindlers, unjust, adulterers, or even tax collectors. I fast twice a week. I give my tithes faithfully.

The tax collector, standing far away from the temple, would not even lift his eyes to heaven, but struck his chest and said, God be merciful to me, a sinner.

I tell you that the tax collector went home justified. The Pharisee did not.

Everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he that humbles himself will be exalted.

109. JESUS TEACHES ABOUT DIVORCE

After Jesus had finished this teaching, he left from Galilee. He came to the borders of Judaea and beyond the Jordan River.

And the multitudes gathered together around him and he taught them and healed them.

And Pharisees came to Jesus and asked him if it was lawful for a man to divorce his wife for any reason.

They were testing him to try and find fault with his answer.

Jesus answered them by asking, What did Moses command you?

They replied, Moses required that we write a certificate of divorce and send her away.

Jesus answered and said to them, Have you not read that God made them male and female from the beginning? And for this reason a man will leave his own father and mother and join himself to his wife, and the two will become one. They are no longer two, but one flesh.

What God has joined together let no man break apart.

They answered Jesus, Then why did Moses command us to give a certificate of divorce, and send her away?

Jesus answered them by saying, Moses, because of the hardness of your hearts, wrote you this commandment and tolerated you putting away your wives. But that is not the way it was supposed to be. From the beginning of creation, God made them male and female.

Later on the disciples of Jesus came to him and asked him to explain the matter of marriage and divorce.

Jesus told them, Whoever puts his wife away, except for sexual immorality, and marries another woman, commits adultery against her.

His disciples said to him. If that is the way it is then it is not a good idea to marry. Jesus said to them, I am going to tell you something that is not for everyone, but for only for those who can receive it.

There are eunuchs that were born that way, and those who have been made eunuchs by the violence of men. But there are also eunuchs who have made themselves eunuch for the sake of the kingdom of heaven.

He that is able to receive it, let him receive it.

110. JESUS BLESSES THE CHILDREN

And mothers began bringing their little children to Jesus so that he would lay his hands on them and pray over them.

When the disciples saw this, they rebuked them and told them to stop.

When Jesus saw that his disciples were trying to stop the children from coming to him, he became indignant and called to his disciples and said, Do not stop the little children from coming to me. Don't you understand that the kingdom of heaven is made up of the childlike?

Listen carefully to this truth, Whoever does not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, will never enter into the kingdom.

Then Jesus took the children in his arms and laid his hands on them and blessed them.

Jesus then began his journey again.

111. PERIL OF RICHES

As Jesus continued his journey a very rich ruler came running up to Jesus and kneeled before him and asked him, Good Teacher, what good thing can I do to inherit eternal life?

Jesus said to him, Why are you calling me good? There is none good, except God.

Why are you using the word "good"?

If you want to enter into life, keep the commandments.

The rich young ruler asked, Which commandments?

Jesus said to him, You know the commandments:

Do not commit adultery,

Do not kill,

Do not steal,

Do not bear false witness,

Do not defraud,

Honor your father and your mother,

Love your neighbor as you love yourself.

The man answered, Teacher, I have kept all these commandments since I was a child, what am I missing?

And Jesus, when he heard it, looked at him and loved him, and said to him,

One thing is missing, if you want to inherit eternal life, go sell everything that you have and distribute it to the poor and you will have treasure in heaven. And then come and follow me.

When the man heard this he became discouraged and depressed and full of sorrow, for he was very rich and had great possessions.

Jesus saw his demeanor change and looked around at his disciples and said, How difficult it is for a rich man to enter in the kingdom of God.

And the disciples were amazed at these words.

Jesus answered again and said, Children, it is very hard for those who trust in riches to enter into the kingdom of God! It is easier for a camel to go through a needle's eye, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God.

The disciples were astonished and said to Jesus, Then who can be saved?

Jesus looked at them and said, With men this is impossible, but not with God. For all things are possible with God. The things that are impossible with man are possible with God.

Then Peter said. We have left everything to follow you, what are we going to get out of it?

Then Jesus said to him. Listen carefully to this truth, When I come in my glory and sit on my throne, you will sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.

Everyone that has left houses or children or lands for my sake, and for the sake of the gospel, will receive his reward in the world to come.

Many of the last will be first and the first will be last. For the kingdom of heaven is like a man managing his house, who goes out early in the morning to hire laborers. And he agrees to pay these laborers fifty dollars a day, and sends them into his vineyards to work.

Later that day he sees men standing around in the marketplace with nothing to do. And he says to them, Go into my vineyard and work and I will pay you a fair wage.

After this, even later in the day, he went and found some other men who had nothing to do, and he told them to go into his vineyard and work.

At the end of the day, he paid all the workers the same amount, fifty dollars.

But those who had been working all day complained bitterly, saying, these men who only worked in the vineyard for one hour are receiving the same wages as those of us who worked all day under the hot sun.

The man replied and said, Friend I have not done anything wrong. Didn't I give you what I agreed to pay you? Take what is yours and go your way and do not be angry with me.

It is my will to give to the last, just like I have given to you. Are you going to be jealous because I am good?

The last will be first and the first will be last.

112. FORETELLING HIS PASSION

And Jesus and his disciples were going up to Jerusalem. His disciples, aware of the dangers awaiting Jesus, were amazed that he was returning to Jerusalem.

Jesus took his disciples aside and began to tell them what was going to happen to him when he got to Jerusalem.

He told them that he was going to be delivered over to the chief priests and that they would condemn him to death. He told them that he would be mocked by the Gentiles, and scourged and crucified.

He told them that after they spat on him and whipped him, he would be killed.

He told them that he would rise again after three days.

He told them that all of this would fulfill all that was written by the prophets.

They did not understand anything that he told them. It was hidden from them.

After this, the mother of James and John the sons of Zebedee came and worshiped Jesus. She wanted Jesus to do something for her.

Jesus asked her, What do you want me to do for you?

She answered, Command that my two sons sit on your right and left side, in your kingdom.

Jesus answered and said to her, You do not know what you are asking. Are you able to drink the cup that I am about to drink? Or be baptized with the baptism that I am going to be baptized with?

And James and John said, We are able.

Jesus said to them, The cup that I drink you will drink someday. And someday you will be baptized with the baptism that I am going to be baptized with. But to sit at my right and left hand, that is not for me to determine. My Father has made preparations for that and it is out of my hands.

And when the other ten disciples heard what James and John were asking they became indignant and angry with James and John.

Jesus called them together and said to them, You know how the Gentiles lord it over you. You have seen how the world exercises authority. But this is not what it is going to be like with those who belong to me.

The one who wants to become great, let him become your servant. And the one who wants to be first, let him become the servant of all.

The Son of man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.

113. BARTIMÆUS HEALED

As Jesus came near to the city of Jericho, a blind man sat by the way side begging. He heard the multitude and asked what all the commotion was about. He was told that Jesus of Nazareth would soon be passing by.

And Jesus and his disciples came to Jericho with his disciples, and a great multitude followed him.

The blind beggar, Bartimæus, was sitting by the way side along with another blind

man. And when he heard Jesus coming near, he cried out with a loud voice, Lord, son of David, have mercy on me.

Many in the multitude rebuked Bartimaeus, telling him to be quiet, which made him yell even louder. Lord have mercy on us!

Jesus heard Bartimaeus and stood still, commanding him to be brought forward.

And they called Bartimaeus and told him to be of good cheer because Jesus was calling for him.

Bartimaeus, threw his coat on the ground and sprang to his feet and came to Jesus.

What can I do for you? Asked Jesus.

Bartimaeus said, Lord, I want to receive my sight.

Jesus was moved with compassion and touched his eyes, and said, Receive your sight, your faith has made you whole.

Immediately he received his sight and began following Jesus along the way, glorifying God.

All the people who saw this began to praise God.

114. ZACCHÆUS

Jesus entered into Jericho and began to pass through the city. There was a man named Zacchaeus; he was a chief tax collector, and he was very rich.

He wanted to see Jesus, but he could not because of the crowds and because he was a very short man.

So Zacchaeus ran and climbed a sycamore tree in order to get a glimpse of Jesus.

Jesus passed right under the tree that Zacchaeus was in and looked up. Then Jesus said, Zacchaeus, hurry up and come down here, for today I am going to stay in your home.

Zacchaeus quickly slid down the tree and made preparations to receive Jesus into his home. And he did it with joy in his heart.

And when the crowds heard and saw what Jesus was doing, they murmured, saying, He is going to stay with a man who is a sinner.

And Zacchaeus stood and said to Jesus, Behold, Lord, half my goods I am going to give to the poor, and if I have cheated any man, I will restore fourfold.

Jesus said to him. Today salvation has come to your house. For the Son of man came to seek and to save that which was lost.

There was a great expectancy among the crowds that the kingdom of God was about to immediately appear.

As Jesus came close to entering Jerusalem he told them this parable.

A nobleman went to a far country, to take over a kingdom, and then to return. He called ten of his servants and gave them one hundred dollars each and told them to do business with the money until he returned.

The citizens of the town he was going to rule sent an ambassador to him saying, We do not want you to rule over us.

And after he ruled the kingdom, he came back and commanded that the ten servants he had given the one hundred dollars to should give an account for the money they had been entrusted with.

The first came and said, I turned your one hundred into one thousand dollars.

And the nobleman said, well done, you are a good servant, because you were found faithful with very little, you will now have authority over ten cities.

The second came and said, I turned your one hundred dollars into five hundred dollars.

And the nobleman said, well done well, you will rule over five cities.

Another servant came and said Lord, here is your one hundred dollars. I kept it safely in a napkin. For I feared you because you are a very austere man, you take up what you have not laid down, and you reap where you have not sown.

The nobleman said to him, Out of your own mouth you judge yourself. You knew that I was an austere man, taking up things that I had not laid down and reaping where I did not sow. Why didn't you put the one hundred dollars in the bank where it would at least draw some interest?

And he told his guards to take away the one hundred dollars from the wicked servant and give it to the good servant who had earned one thousand dollars.

And then he said to them, Everyone who makes use of what has been given to them, they will increase.

But those who do nothing with what they have been given, even the little they have been given will be taken away.

Then he called for the enemies who sent an ambassador, to say that they did not want him to rule over them, to be brought forward and killed in front of him.

And after Jesus had told this parable he began leading the crowd up to Jerusalem.

Part Seven
LAST WEEK OF JESUS' MINISTRY

115. JESUS ARRIVES AT BETHANY

The Passover of the Jews was very near. Many went up to Jerusalem before the Passover in order to purify themselves.

The people were looking for Jesus and wondering out loud if he would come to the feast.

They knew that the religious leaders were actively looking for the opportunity to arrest him.

Six days before the Passover, Jesus arrived in Bethany.

Bethany was where Jesus had raised Lazarus from the dead and was less than a mile from Jerusalem.

When Jesus was in Bethany, they made a supper for him in the house of Simon the leper. Martha served the dinner, and Lazarus (whom Jesus raised from the dead) was in attendance.

While Jesus was sitting for the meal Mary Magdelene carried an alabaster jar of exceedingly costly perfume and broke it and poured it over the head of Jesus.

She then anointed his feet with the expensive perfume and wiped it with her hair (this is the second time that Mary had done this).

The house was filled with the smell of the expensive ointment.

But Judas Iscariot, one of the disciples and the one who would betray Jesus, said, Why wasn't this ointment sold for five thousand dollars, and the money given to the poor.

Others at the party also began to criticize Mary.

Jesus hearing this said, Leave her alone. She is pouring this ointment upon my body in preparation for my burial.

The poor you have with you always, and you can do good to them whenever you want.

The truth is that where ever the good news is preached throughout the entire world, the thing that Mary has done today will be spoken about in memorial to her.

The common people learned where Jesus was and they came to see Jesus, and also to see Lazarus who Jesus had raised from the dead.

But the chief priest were conspiring how to put Lazarus to death.

They hated Lazarus and wanted to destroy him because on account of him, many had believed on Jesus.

116. JESUS' TRIUMPHAL ENTRY

The very next day it came to pass, that as Jesus came near to Bethphage and Bethany at the Mount of Olives, he sent two of his disciples on a mission.

He told his two disciples to go in a nearby village and there they would find a donkey.

And if anyone asks what you are doing with the donkey, just tell them that the Lord has need of him and will send him back very shortly.

Now this happened so that it might be fulfilled which was spoken through the prophet saying, Tell the daughter of Zion (poetical name for the city of Jerusalem), Look, your King comes to you, meek, and riding upon a donkey, and upon a colt, the foal of a donkey.

The two disciples left and did as Jesus had commanded.

And as they took the donkey and the colt, the owner asked, Why are you taking the donkey and the colt?

They said to them what Jesus had told them to say, and he let them take the donkey and the colt.

They brought the donkey and the colt to Jesus and put their coats on the back of the colt, and Jesus sat on the colt.

A great multitude had come to the feast and when they heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem, they took the branches from palm trees and went to meet him.

When they saw Jesus coming, they began to cry out, Hosanna, Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord, even the King of Israel.

The Pharisees, seeing this, said among themselves, Look we cannot stop this man, the world has gone after him.

As Jesus went to Jerusalem riding on the back of the colt of a donkey, a very large multitude spread their garments in his path, other spread branches in his path.

As he was coming, and at the descent of the Mount of Olives, the entire multitude of disciples began to rejoice and praise God with a loud voice for all the mighty works which they had seen.

The multitude that went before Jesus, cried, Hosanna to the Son of David.

Blessed is the King who comes in the name of the Lord. Peace in heaven, and glory in the highest.

But some of the Pharisees who were in the multitude came to Jesus and told him to rebuke his disciples.

Jesus said to them, I tell you that if they keep silent, the stones will cry out.

And when Jesus came very near the city of Jerusalem, he wept over it, saying, If you had know what this day might have meant. But now it is hidden from your eyes.

Then Jesus said, The day is coming when they will encircle you with embankments and keep you surrounded from every side. And Jerusalem will be dashed to the ground, and her children with her.

And they will not leave one stone upon another because you didn't realize that you have been given a special period of grace.

Jesus entered Jerusalem, and all the city was stirred up and was asking, Who is he? The crowd said, He is the prophet Jesus, from Nazareth of Galilee.

Jesus entered the temple of God. And the blind came into the temple and he restored their sight.

But when the chief priest and scribes saw the wonderful things that he did, and they heard the children in the temple who were crying, Hosanna to the Son of David; they were very displeased.

They said to Jesus, Don't you hear what they are saying?

Jesus answered, Haven't you read, Out of the mouth of babes and nursing infants you have prepared praise?

It was sunset, and Jesus inspected the temple and then left for Bethany, where he and his twelve disciples would spend the night.

117. TEMPLE CLEANSED

The following day (Monday following the triumphal entry) in the morning, as he was returning to Jerusalem, Jesus saw a fig tree by the side of the road.

The fig tree had leaves, which was an indication that it should also have fruit. When fig trees are barren they have no leaves.

All but one variety of fig tree's were out of season, making the prospect of finding a fig all the more delicious. Jesus went to the tree and inspected it for fruit. When Jesus found nothing but leaves he cursed the tree and said, No one will ever again eat fruit from this tree.

The fig tree immediately withered away.

After they arrived in Jerusalem, Jesus entered into the temple and began turning over the tables on all the moneychangers and those selling doves for sacrifice.

And Jesus would not allow anyone to carry goods through the temple.

And Jesus taught them and said, Isn't it written that my house will be called a house of prayer for all the nations? Why are you making it a den of robbers?

The chief priest and scribes heard what Jesus said and they wanted to destroy him, but they feared him.

Jesus began daily teaching in the temple. But the religious leaders and men in authority began to plot ways to kill him.

The common people hung on each word that Jesus taught, and were astonished at his teaching.

118. FIG TREE WITHERED

Every day Jesus went to the temple to teach and every night he returned to the mount of Olives, where he lodged.

All the people came early in the morning to hear him.

As the disciples were going into Jerusalem with Jesus to listen to him teach in the temple they passed the fig tree that Jesus had cursed. And it was completely dead, both root and branch.

When the disciples saw it they marveled and asked, How did the fig tree wither and die so quickly?

Peter remembered that Jesus had cursed the fig tree, and told the other disciples that this was the reason it had withered.

And Jesus, said. Have faith in God. I tell you this truth, if you have faith and do not doubt, you could not only do what has been done to this fig tree, but you could say to this mountain, Be taken up and cast into the sea.

If you believe it in your heart and do not doubt, what you say will be done. Ask believing in prayer and you will have it.

Whenever you stand praying, forgive those that you have something against so that your heavenly father will forgive your sins.

119. THIRD GROUP OF PARABLES

A. INTRODUCTION

And on one of the days that Jesus came to Jerusalem and was preaching and teaching, the chief priests and scribes came to Jesus and said, Tell us, by what authority do you do these things? Who gave you this authority?

And Jesus answered them and said. I want to ask you a question and if you answer it, I will give you the answer to the question that you are asking.

Then Jesus asked, Where did John the Baptist get his authority to baptize? Was it from heaven, or from men? Answer me.

The chief priests and scribes reasoned among themselves and said, If we say that John the Baptist got his authority from heaven, then he will ask us why we did not believe John's testimony about Jesus.

But if we say that John got his authority from men, then the people will turn on us because they believe that John the Baptist was a prophet sent by God.

So they answered Jesus and said, We do not know.

Jesus said to them, Neither will I tell you by what authority I do these things.

B. THE TWO SONS

Then Jesus asked those who were standing nearby. Tell me what you think?

A man had two sons. He told the first son to go work all day in the vineyard. The son said, I will not! But afterwards he changed his mind and spent the day working in the vineyard

The man also told his second son to go and work in the vineyard. The son said that he would, but he didn't.

Which one of these two did the will of the father?

They answered him, the first.

Jesus said to them, The truth is that the tax collectors and the harlots will go into the kingdom rather than you.

John came to you in the way of righteousness, and you did not believe him. Even when you saw his authority you did not repent and believe.

C. THE WICKED HUSBANDMEN

Then Jesus began to speak to the people (not the rulers) in parables.

Hear another parable:

There was a man who was the head of a household who planted a vineyard and put a hedge around it and dug a pit for the winepress in it, and built a tower. He then leased it out to a tenant, and then left and went into another country where he stayed for a long time.

And when the season was right he sent one of his servants to go and receive the rent payment from the vineyard.

Instead of paying him the tenants took the servant, beat him and sent him away empty handed.

He then sent another servant, who the tenants treated even worse than the first servant.

He sent a third servant, who the tenants killed.

The man sent more servants, but every servant the man sent was either killed, stoned or beaten by the tenants.

Finally the Lord of the vineyard sent his son. Surely they will respect the son of the Lord of the vineyard.

When the tenants saw the son coming they reasoned that if they killed the son they could steal his inheritance and take the vineyard for themselves.

And so they took the Lord's son and they cast him out of the vineyard and killed him.

When the Lord of the vineyard comes, what will he do to the tenants?

Some of the people answered, He will utterly destroy them and all who serve him and lease the vineyard out to another.

Some of the other people answered, God forbid!

Jesus looked at them and said, What is written? Have you never heard the scripture, The stone which the builders rejected was made the head corner stone. This was from the Lord, and it is marvelous in our eyes?

I tell you, the kingdom of God will be taken from you and given to a nation that produces fruit. And everyone who falls on this stone will be broken in pieces, and anyone the stone falls on will be pulverized into dust.

When the Pharisees heard Jesus teach this, they immediately tried to arrest him. They understood that he had told the parable against them.

But the fear of the people, who thought Jesus was a prophet kept the Pharisees from carrying out their plans to arrest Jesus.

The religious leaders left Jesus and went away.

D. THE MARRIAGE OF THE KING'S SON

Jesus told them another parable.

The kingdom of heaven is like a marriage feast that a king made for his son.

He sent his servant out to call all of those who had received an invitation, to tell them that it was time to come to the feast. But the invited guests made light of it, and they ridiculed the servants and beat them and killed them.

The king became very angry and sent out his army to destroy the murderers and burn down their cities.

Then he said to his servants, the marriage feast is ready, but those who were invited are not worthy to come. Go into the highways and the byways, and tell everyone you find to come and be my guest at the marriage feast.

The servants went out and they found both good and bad, and all were invited and came to the wedding feast.

But when the king entered into the wedding hall he saw one guest who did not have on a wedding garment. He said to him, Friend, how did you get here without a wedding garment? The man was speechless.

The king said to his servants, Bind him hand and foot and cast him into the outer darkness where there is weeping and gnashing of teeth.

For many are called, but few are chosen.

120. JEWISH RULERS SEEK TO ENSNARE JESUS

A. PHARISEES AND HERODIANS

The Pharisees began to plot together how they might trap Jesus with his own words. And they sent out some of the younger Pharisees, thinking Jesus would be more likely to answer their questions since they looked like students.

They came and found Jesus and said to him, I know you teach only what is true and pleasing to God. Tell us then, is it lawful for us to give tribute to Caesar, or not?

Jesus knew they were being wicked and crafty and knew the hypocrisy that was in their heart and so he said to them, Why are you trying to put me on trial, you hypocrites.

Show me the tribute money. Bring me a coin. And once Jesus had the coin he asked, Whose image and name is on the coin?

The Pharisees answered, Caesar.

Then Jesus said, give to Caesar the things that belong to Caesar and give to God the things that belong to God.

The Pharisees were not able to find any fault with the answer and marveled greatly at his answer. Then they became silent and left.

B. SADDUCEES AND THE RESURRECTION

One day, some of the Sadducees (Sadducees do not believe in the resurrection) came to Jesus and said, Teacher, Moses wrote that if a man's brother dies and has no children that the brother should take his wife and have children together.

And if the second brother dies, then the third brother should take his wife and have children.

If there were seven brothers and each died without having any children by the same wife and then finally the wife dies, whose wife will she be after the resurrection?

Jesus answered and said to them, You have made a mistake, you do not know the scriptures, nor do you know the power of God?

The sons of this world marry and take wives. But those who are worthy to be in the heavenly kingdom, once they rise from the dead in the resurrection, will not marry or take wives. They cannot die anymore, and they will be like the angels.

As far as the resurrection of the dead, Moses even showed that the dead are raised when at the burning bush he called the Lord, the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

Haven't you read the book of Moses?

God is not the God of the dead, he is the God of the living. Your way of thinking is flawed.

When the multitude heard Jesus teach this, they were astonished. And some of the scribes, said to Jesus, You have answered well.

C. THE GREAT COMMANDMENT

When the Pharisees heard that Jesus had silenced the Sadducees, they had a meeting. One of them who was a lawyer, went to Jesus with a question.

He asked, Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the law?

Jesus said, The first is, Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is one: And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all of your soul and with all of your mind and with all of your strength.

This the first and greatest commandment.

The second it connected to it, You shall love your neighbor as you love yourself.

There are no other commandments greater than these. On these two commandments, the entire law and all the prophets rest.

The scribe who was a lawyer said, Teacher you have answered well.

Then the scribe continued, To love the Lord with all your heart, and with all your

understanding and with all your strength and to love your neighbor as yourself is more important than all the burnt offerings and sacrifices.

When Jesus heard the lawyer's answer he said, You are not far from the kingdom of God.

After that no one dared to ask Jesus any more questions.

D. JESUS' QUESTION

Now the Pharisees were gathered together as Jesus taught in the temple, and he asked them a question.

Jesus asked, What do you think about the Christ? Whose son is he?

They answered, He is the Son of David.

He said to them, How come you call him the son of David when David himself under the influence of the Holy Spirit calls him Lord. For David himself said, The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit at my right hand until I put your enemies under your feet. If David himself called him Lord, how is he his son?

No one was able to answer Jesus.

No one dared from that time forward to ask Jesus any more questions.

The common people heard Jesus gladly.

121. DENUNCIATION OF SCRIBES AND PHARISEES

Then Jesus spoke to all his disciples and to all the multitudes. He spoke so that everyone could hear what he had to say.

Beware of the scribes and the Pharisees. When they speak for Moses, do as they say, but do not do what they do.

They bind heavy burdens to heavy to carry and lay them on men's shoulders, while they themselves will not lift a finger to keep the very commandments that they ask others to do.

They do their works to be seen by men. They like to be seen keeping the law and make themselves conspicuous whenever they do a good work.

They love to wear the clothing of rulers and kings, and they love to sit in the seats of honor at all events. They love the greetings they receive in the marketplace and they love to be called, Master.

They take advantage of the widows and figure out ways to profit from the duties they have. They make a pretense of long prayers;

These will receive greater condemnation.

But do not desire to be called, Teacher, for only one is your teacher. And do not call any man your father except your earthly father and your Father who is in heaven. And do not let them call you, Master, for only one is your Master, that is Christ.

He who would be the greatest among you let him be the servant of all. Whoever exalts

himself will be humbled and whoever humbles himself will be exalted.

Woe to you scribes and Pharisees. You shut the doors to the kingdom to others and do not even try to enter into the kingdom yourself.

Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, you are hypocrites! For you go sailing around the world to make one convert, and when you make a convert you turn him into twice the son of hell that you are yourselves.

You are the blind leading the blind.

You say, If anyone swears an oath by the temple, it means nothing.

But if you swear an oath by the gold in the temple then you are under obligation to keep the oath.

You fools and blind men. Which is greater, the gold, or the temple that sanctifies the gold?

All oaths are binding no matter what you swear the oath by, because it all belongs to God.

Woe to you scribes and Pharisees, you are hypocrites! You tithe the outward things but you leave out the important things like justice and mercy and faith.

You strain a gnat, and yet you will willingly swallow a camel!

Woe to you scribes and Pharisees, you are hypocrites! You clean the outside of the cup and the platter, but within you are full of extortion and self-indulgence.

You blind Pharisees, clean the inside of the cup and platter, and the outside will become clean also.

Woe to you scribes and Pharisees, you are hypocrites! You are like white-washed tombs, which outwardly appear beautiful, but inwardly are full of dead men's bones and all uncleanness.

You appear outwardly to be righteous, but inwardly you are full of hypocrisy and wickedness.

Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, you are hypocrites! You decorate the tombs of the prophets and yet your fathers are the ones who killed the prophets.

And by your own testimonies you also would have killed the prophets.

How are you going to escape the judgment of hell?

Jerusalem, Jerusalem, how often I would have gathered your children together, even as a hen gathers her chicks under her wing, but you would not stand for it.

Look, your house is going to be left desolate. For I say to you, you will not see me again, until the day you say, Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.

122. THE WIDOW'S MITES

Jesus sat down in the temple area near the treasury. He watched as the people cast their gifts into the treasury. He watched the rich give valuable gifts.

Then Jesus saw a widow put two cents into the treasury.

When Jesus saw this, he called his disciples together and said, I tell you the truth. This poor widow has put more into the treasury than everyone else. Everyone else gave out of their abundance, but she has given out of her poverty. And she has given all she had.

123. HE SHALL DRAW ALL MEN TO HIM

There were Greek converts who had come up to the feast to worship. And they came to Philip, who was from Bethsaida of Galilee, and asked to see Jesus.

Philip went and told Andrew, and together they went and told Jesus.

Jesus answered, The hour has come for the Son of man to be glorified.

Listen carefully to the truth I am about to tell you, for if a grain of wheat does not fall into the ground, it remains like it is; but if the wheat falls to the earth and dies, it bears much fruit.

He who loves his life will lose it, and he who loses his life in this world will keep it for eternal life.

If anyone serves me, let him follow me. Where I am, there the servant will be also. If any man serves me, the Father will honor him.

What should I say? Save me from this hour?

But this is why I came into the world.

Rather, Father, glorify your name.

After Jesus said this there was a voice out of heaven saying, I have both glorified it and I will glorify it again.

The multitude that was standing near Jesus, heard it and said that it had thundered.

Others said, An angel has spoken to him.

Jesus answered and said, This voice has come for your sakes not mine.

Now is judgment come to the world.

Now shall the prince of this world be cast out.

Then Jesus said, If I am lifted up from the earth, I will draw all men to myself. He said this to signify what sort of death he should die.

The multitude answered him, We have heard that the Christ abides forever, so why are you saying, The Son of man must be lifted up? Who is the Son of man?

Jesus said to them, The light is going to be with you for only a little while longer. Walk while you have light, so that the darkness does not overtake you.

While you have the light, believe in the light, that you may become sons of light.

After speaking these things Jesus left them and hid himself from them.

Even though he had done many signs and miracles among them, they still did not believe in him. This was a fulfillment of the words of the prophet Isaiah when he said, Who has believed our testimony? And who has had the mighty works of God revealed to him?

This was the reason they could not believe, as Isaiah said, He has blinded their eyes, and he has hardened their hearts.

Some of the Pharisees believed in Jesus but were afraid to confess it publicly because they feared that they would be expelled from the synagogue.

They loved the glory that came from man more than they loved the glory that came from God.

And Jesus cried out and said, He who believes in me, does not believe in me only, but also in the one who has sent me. I am come as light into the world so that whoever believes in me will not live in darkness.

If any man hears my words and does not keep them, I do not judge him, for I came not to judge the world but to save the world. The person who rejects me and does not receive my sayings, he has something that judges him. The word that I speak will judge him in the last day.

For I did not speak from myself; but the Father who sent me told me what to say and what to speak. And I know that his commandment is life eternal. The words that I speak are the words he has told me to speak.

124. DESTRUCTION OF JERUSALEM FORETOLD

Jesus went out from the temple for the last time, he would never return. As he was going by the temple buildings, one of the disciples came to Jesus and said, Look at the majesty of these buildings, the stone work is marvelous and the adornments are spectacular.

Jesus answered and said, You see these buildings? The truth is that in the days to come there will not be one stone left upon another. It will all be thrown down.

Later, as Jesus sat on the mount of Olives, on the side near the temple, the disciples Peter, James, John and Andrew came to Jesus privately and said, Teacher, tell us when will these things happen? What will be the sign of your coming, and of the end of the world?

And Jesus said. Beware that no one leads you astray: For many will come using my name and will tell you that the time to set up the eternal kingdom has arrived. Do not follow after them.

You will hear of wars and disturbances, and rumors of wars. Do not let this trouble you or make you afraid.

These things must happen before I come, but the end is not yet.

Nation will rise up against nation, and kingdom against kingdom.

There will be earthquakes all over the world, and all over the world there will be famines and earthquakes; and there will be terrors and great signs from heaven.

All these are just the beginning of birth pains.

But before all these things happen, they will lay hands on you and persecute you, they will deliver you up to the synagogues and prisons, and bring you before kings and governors for my name's sake.

They will deliver you up to councils and to tribulation, and they will kill you. You will be beaten in the synagogues and hated of all nations for my name's sake.

You will stand before kings and give testimony for my name's sake.

And the gospel must first be preached to all the nations. And when they lead you to judgment and deliver you up, do not be anxious ahead of time about what you will say.

Settle it in your hearts not to meditate beforehand on how to answer. I will give you a wise words to say that your adversaries will not be able to withstand.

And whatever is given to you in that hour to say, you can say it, but it is not you that speaks, it is the Holy Spirit.

Many will stumble and betray you, and hate you. And many false prophets will rise and lead many astray.

And because iniquity will come to its full fruition, the love of many will grow cold. Even parents will deliver up their own sons and daughters, and friends.

And brother will deliver up brother to death, and children will rise up against their parents and cause them to be put to death.

You will be hated of all men for my namesake.

But he who endures to the end will be saved. In your patience you will win your souls.

And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in the whole world for a testimony to all the nations; and then the end will come

But when you see Jerusalem encompassed with armies, then know that her desolation is at hand.

When you see the abomination of desolation, which was spoken of through Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place where he should not be (let him that reads this understand), then let them that are in Judaea flee to the mountains, and don't let those who are in the middle of Jerusalem depart; and don't let those who are in the country enter into Jerusalem.

Don't waste your time trying to collect your property or goods for these are the days of vengeance, so that all that is written may be fulfilled.

And woe to those who are pregnant and to those with small children. For there is going to be great distress upon the land and wrath to this people.

They will fall by the edge of the sword, and will be led captive into all nations, and Jerusalem will be trodden down by the Gentiles.

Pray that your flight not be in the winter, or on the Sabbath.

For in those days there will be great tribulation, such as there has not been since the beginning of the world.

Unless those days were shortened no human would have been saved. But for the sake of the elect, the ones God has chosen, he has shortened those days.

And if any man says to you, go here to see the Christ, or go there, do not believe him. For there will arise false Christ's and false prophets, and they will show great signs and wonders; so as to lead the elect astray, if possible.

Be warned ahead of time, I have told you all these things so that you will not be deceived. If they tell you, Look, he is in the wilderness, do not go looking for him.

Or if they say, Look, he is in the inner chambers; do not believe it.

For as the lightning comes out of the east, and is seen in the west; so it will be with the coming of the Son of man.

125. THE SECOND COMING OF CHRIST

But in those days the sun will become dark, and the moon will not give her light, and the stars will be shaken, and the powers of the heaven will be shaken.

And there will be signs in the sun and moon and stars, and upon the earth distress of nations, in the there will be great agitation in the oceans that will cause men to be perplexed.

Men will faint with fear because of the things coming on the world; for the powers of the heaven will be shaken.

And then will appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven; and all the tribes of the earth will mourn.

And then they will see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with great power and glory.

He will send out his angels with the great sound of the trumpet, and they will gather together his elect from everywhere in the universe.

But when these things begin to come to pass, look up, and lift your head, because your redemption is coming near.

And he spoke a parable to them.

Learn the parable of the fig tree. When her branches become tender and puts out leaves, you know that summer is near. In the same way, when you see all these things coming to pass, know that the kingdom of God is near, even knocking at the door.

This is the truth you need to understand. This generation will not pass away until all these things are fulfilled.

Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away.

But the day and the hour this is going to happen, only the Father knows.

It will be like the days of Noah when the Son of man comes.

In those days there was eating and drinking and marrying, until Noah entered into the ark. No one knew what was happening until the flood came and swept them away.

It will be like this when the Son of man comes.

Two men will be in the field, one will be taken and the other will be left behind.

Two women will be grinding at the mill; one will be taken and the other will be left.

Watch with anticipation, because you do not know the day your Lord is going to come.

If the head of the house knew when the thief was going to arrive, he would have been prepared for his coming and prevented his house from being broken into. Be ready, for his coming will be unexpected.

Beware that you don't let your hearts become filled with the concerns and cares of this world, or become careless in how you live your life, the day will come like a net enclosing a flock of birds. And it will come on everyone.

Blessed is the wise and faithful servant, whom his lord will find doing his business when he comes.

An evil servant says in his heart, My Lord is going to be late. And he begins to misuse his position and mistreat those under him, and lives an evil life full of self indulgence.

When the master does come, that servant will have his position and authority given to someone else. And he will go where all the hypocrites go, where there will be gnashing of teeth and weeping without end.

Watch and pray so that you might escape all these things and stand before the Son of man. Only the godly are able to stand in his presence.

Watch and pray for you do not know when the Lord is going to come.

126. THE FINAL JUDGMENT

The kingdom of heaven will be like ten virgins who went out to meet the bridegroom.

Five of them were foolish and five of them were wise.

The foolish virgins took lamps without oil in them. The wise virgins took plenty of oil.

While the bridegroom delayed his coming all the virgins nodded off and went to sleep.

At midnight the cry went out in the land.

Look the bridegroom! Come out and meet him.

All the virgins arose and trimmed their lamps. But the foolish virgins said to the wise, Give us your oil, our lamps are going out.

The wise virgins responded, But then there may not be enough for us; go and buy some more oil for yourselves.

While the foolish virgins were out trying to find oil, the bridegroom came and the wedding party entered the house and the doors were shut and locked.

After a little time, the five foolish virgins arrived and knocked on the door. Lord, Lord open to us.

But the Lord answered and said, The truth is that I do not know you.

Be watchful because you do not know the day or the hour of your Lord's coming.

It is like when a man goes to another country, but before he goes he calls his servants together and gives them talents, one five, another two and yet another one, in order to invest and make a profit while he is gone.

The one given five talents, traded, and made five more talents.

The one given two talents, traded and made two more.

But the one given one talent, hid the Lord's money in the earth.

Then one day the Lord returned and called his three servants together for a reckoning with them.

He received back the five talents and then another five from the first servant. Well done you good and faithful servant, You have been faithful with a little now I will put you in charge of a lot. Enter into the joy of your Lord.

He received back the two talents and then another two from the second servant. Well done you good and faithful servant. You have been faithful over a few things, now I will put you over many things. Enter into the joy of your Lord.

He then received back the one talent from the third servant, but no more.

I knew that you were a hard man, said the third servant, reaping where you did not sow and gathering where you did not scatter.

I was afraid and so I went and hid the talent in the ground.

The Lord answered, You wicked and lazy servant, you knew that I reaped where I did not sow and gathered where I had not scattered, you should have put the talent into the bank to make interest.

Take this wicked servant away and give what he had to the first servant who has the ten talents.

For the one who has will be given more and he will have an abundance.

But the one who does not have, even the little he has will be taken away.

He cast the unprofitable servant into outer darkness, where there was weeping and gnashing of teeth.

When the Son of man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, he will sit on the throne of glory and gather the nations before him.

He will separate them one from another, like a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats.

He will put the sheep on one side and the goats on the other side.

Then the King will say to the ones on his right side. Come, you who are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you since the beginning of the world.

I was hungry and you gave me something to eat. I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink.

I was a stranger and you took me in.

I was naked and you clothed me.

I was sick and you visited me.

I was in prison, and you came to me.

Then the righteous will answer him, saying, Lord, when were you hungry and we fed you?

Or thirsty and we gave you drink?

When did we see you as a stranger and take you in?

Or naked and cloth you?

And when did we see you sick or in prison and come to you?

The King answered, Here is a truth that you really need to understand, As you did it to the least of my brothers, you did it to me.

Then the King will say to the ones on his left hand, Depart from me, you cursed ones, enter into the fire which is prepared for the devil and his angels.

I was hungry and you gave me nothing to eat.

I was thirsty and you gave me nothing to drink.

I was a stranger and you didn't take me in.

I was naked and you didn't cloth me.

I was sick and you didn't visit me.

I was in prison, and you didn't come to me.

Here is a truth that you tragically missed. As you didn't do it to the least of my brothers, you didn't do it to me.

The wicked will go away into eternal punishment. But the righteous will go into eternal life.

127. JUDAS BARGAINS FOR JESUS DEATH

Then Jesus said to his disciples, You know that in two days it will be Passover, and the Son of man is going to be delivered up to be crucified.

The chief priests and elders gathered together to hold court with the high priest Caiaphas. And they began planning how they would arrest Jesus without creating a crisis with the people, and then put him to death.

They feared the people.

Satan entered into Judas Iscariot, who was one of the twelve disciples.

Judas went to meet with the chief priests and captains to discuss how he might deliver Jesus up to them.

Judas asked, What will you pay me to deliver Jesus up to you?

When the chief priests heard that Judas was willing to give up Jesus, they were glad. They agreed to pay Judas thirty pieces of silver.

Judas agreed, and from that time on he looked for an opportunity to deliver Jesus up to the Jewish leaders, when there were no crowds around.

128. PREPARATION FOR PASSOVER

The days of unleavened bread came. It was the day that the Passover lamb must be sacrificed.

The disciples came to Jesus and said, Where will we go to eat the Passover meal?

Jesus sent Peter and John to make ready the Passover meal.

He said to them, Go into the city, and when you have entered you will meet a man who is carrying a pitcher of water. Follow him into the house that he enters. And when they ask you why you are there, tell them that the Teacher says, My time is at hand; where will I eat the Passover with my disciples?

And he will show you a large upper room that is furnished and ready. Go to the upper room and make things ready for us.

The disciples went into the city, and found the man who Jesus described, and made ready the Passover.

When the evening came, Jesus and the twelve disciples came to the upper room.

Jesus sat down with his twelve disciples. He said to them, I desire to eat this Passover with you before I begin my suffering.

And Jesus received the cup and gave thanks and said, Take this cup and distribute it among yourselves. For I say to you, I will not drink from the fruit of the vine again until the kingdom of God shall come.

An argument started among them as to which one of them was going to be considered greatest in the coming kingdom. They misunderstood Jesus and thought that he was just about to set up his earthy kingdom.

Jesus said to them, The kings of the Gentiles have lordship over others, and those who have authority over others are called Benefactors.

But it will not be that way with you.

He that is greater among you let him take the place of the youngest; and the one who is chief among you, let him be the one who serves.

Who is greater, the one who is served the meal or the one who serves it? Isn't it the one who sits at the meal?

But I am in the midst of you, as one who serves.

You have continued with me in my trials. And I will have appointments for you in the kingdom, just as the Father has appointed me, that you may eat and drink at my table in the kingdom; and you will sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel.

129. THE PASSOVER MEAL

Before the feast of the Passover, Jesus knew that his hour had come that he should leave this world and go to the Father.

Now Jesus loved his own who were in the world and he loved them to the end.

And during the supper Jesus knew that Satan had already entered Judas Iscariot and that he was plotting to betray him.

Jesus rose up from the supper and laid his garments aside and put a towel around his waist. Then he poured water into the basin and began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe them with the towel that girded his waist.

When he came to Peter, Peter asked, Lord are you planning to wash my feet?

Jesus answered him, You do not understand what I am doing, but you will later.

Peter said to Jesus, You will never wash my feet.

Jesus answered him, If I do not wash your feet, then you have nothing to do with me.

Peter said to the Lord, Then do not just wash my feet, but wash my head and my hands as well as my feet.

Jesus said to Peter, He who is bathed does not need anything washed but his feet. But is clean completely, and you are clean. But not all of you are clean.

So Jesus washed their feet and then put his garment back on and returned to the table and sat with them.

And then Jesus said to them, Do you understand what I have just done to you?

You call me Lord and Teacher, and just as I have washed your feet you should also wash each others feet. I have given you an example of how you are to treat each other, just as I have done to you.

I want to tell you and important truth that you really need to understand. I tell you that a servant is not greater than his Lord; nor is the one who is sent greater than the one who sent him.

If you understand these things, then you are blessed when you do them.

I do not speak to all of you. I know the ones I have chosen.

But in order that scripture be fulfilled, He who eats my bread lifts up his heel against me.

I am telling you this before it happens so that when it does happen, you will believe that I am he.

The truth you really need to understand and pay attention to is that anyone who receives me also receives the one who sent me.

130. JUDAS' BETRAYAL FORETOLD

After Jesus said this as he was eating, he became troubled in his spirit and testified, Truly, truly, I tell you that one of you will betray me, someone who is eating with me right now.

The disciples looked at one another, upset and wondering who he was talking about.

They became very agitated and sorrowful. Each one asked the Lord, Is it me?

And he answered and said to them, It is one of the twelve, He who dips his hand with me in the dish, the same is the one who will betray me.

I am going to do what the Father has sent me to do, as it is written in scripture, but woe to the man who betrays the Son of man.

It would be better if he had not been born.

One of the disciples, the one who Jesus loved very much, was reclining on Jesus' bosom. Peter beckoned to him, and told him to ask the Lord who it was that was going to betray him.

And the disciple leaned back and asked the Lord, Who is it?

Jesus answered, It is the one I will give this bread to when I have dipped it. So Jesus dipped the bread and gave it to Judas Iscariot.

Judas answered the Lord and said, It is I, Teacher?

Jesus said to him, It is as you say.

And Satan immediately entered into Judas.

And Jesus said to Judas, Go quickly and do what you are going to do.

Nobody knew what Jesus meant when he told Judas this. They supposed that Judas, who was in charge of the purse, was being sent on a mission to buy something needed for the rest of the feast.

Judas went out into the night.

After Judas was gone, Jesus said, Now the Son of man is glorified, and God is glorified in him.

Little children, I am only going to be with you a little while longer. You will seek me, but as I said to the Jews, you will not find me or be able to go where I am going.

I give you a new commandment, that you love one another; just as I have loved you, so love each other. This is the way that men will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.

Then Jesus said. This night all will be offended in me, just as it is written, I will smite the shepherd and the sheep will be scattered abroad.

But after I am raised up, I will go before you into Galilee.

Simon Peter, said to him, Lord, wherever you go I will follow you. I will lay down my life for you.

Jesus answered Peter, Will you lay down your life for me? Simon, Simon, behold Satan has asked for you that he might sift you like wheat. But I have prayed for you that your faith does not fail. Here is what I want you to do. Once you have repented, establish your brothers.

Peter protested, Lord I am ready to go to prison for you. I am willing to die for you. If all fall away because of you, I will never fall away.

Jesus said to Peter, The truth you need to understand is that before the rooster crows tomorrow morning you will have denied me three times.

Peter became agitated and vehemently said that even if he would die, he would not deny him. The other disciples joined in and said the same thing.

Jesus said to them, When I sent you out without purse and without wallet or shoes, did you lack anything?

They answered, Nothing.

And he said to them, But now, he who has money, let him take it and sell it and buy a sword. For I say to you, that what is written will be fulfilled in me: And he was counted with the transgressors. For these things written about me are being fulfilled.

And they said, Lord, we have two swords, is that enough?

131. THE LORD'S SUPPER INSTITUTED

As they were eating, it was the same night that the Lord was betrayed, and he took the bread and after he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to his disciples and said, Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you: Do this in remembrance of me.

And he took the cup in a similar manner after the supper, and he gave thanks, and said to them, Drink all of it, for this is my blood of the covenant which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins.

Do this in remembrance of me, for as often as you eat this bread, and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes again.

But I will not drink anymore of the fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom.

And they all drank of it.

132. FAREWELL DISCOURSE TO DISCIPLES

Don't let your hearts be troubled. Believe in God and believe also in me. In my Father's house there are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and will receive you to myself so that where I am you will also be.

And where I go, you know the way.

Thomas said to the Lord, We do not know where you are going and how can we know the way?

Jesus said to him, I am the way, and the truth and the life, no one comes to the Father, except through me.

If you knew me, you would know that my Father has sent me. And from now on you do know him, and have seen him.

Phillip answered and said, Show us the Father and that will be enough for us.

Jesus said to them, Have I been with you all this time and you do not recognize me or know who I am? How can you say, Show us the Father?

Don't you believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me. The words which I speak to you are not my own, they are the words of the Father who is in me. Believe me that I am in the Father, and the Father is in me, or else believe for the sake of the works that I have done.

This is the truth you really need to understand. He who believes in me will also do the works that I do, and greater works than these he will do, because I go to the Father. And whatever you ask in my name, the Father will do it for you, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son. Ask anything in my name and I will do it.

And I will pray to the Father, and he will give you another Comforter, that he may be with you forever. He is the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, for it cannot see him or know him. He will abide in you, and will live in you.

I will not leave you as orphans: I will come to you. In a little while the world will see me no more, but you will see me. Because I live, you will live also.

In that day (Pentecost or the period that began on that day), you will know that I am in my Father, and you are in me, and I am in you.

He who has my commandments, and keeps them, he is the one who loves me. He who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I will love him and reveal myself to him.

Judas, (Not Judas Iscariot, who had left) said to the Lord, What is going to happen, that you will manifest yourself to us, and not to the world?

Jesus answered and said to him, If a man loves me, he will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home in him.

The person who does not love me or keep my words, is also not keeping the words of the Father who sent me.

I am telling you these things while I am still with you. But the Comforter, the Holy Spirit, who the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things.

The Holy Spirit will bring to your memory all the things that I have said to you.

Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you, not as the world gives peace. Do not let your hearts be troubled, neither let them be fearful.

You have heard how I said to you, I go away, and I come to you. If you loved me, you would rejoice, because I am going back to my Father, for the Father is greater than I.

I have told you all of these things so that when they happen you will remember that I have told you, and you will believe.

I am not going to be speaking much with you from now on, for the prince of this world is coming, and he has no right or reason to exercise power over me.

But in order that the world may know that I love the Father, and am doing as the Father has commanded, I will willingly give my life up.

Then Jesus said, Arise, let us go.

(Some believe that what Jesus taught next happened as they left the upper room and walked to Gethsemane. But it is more likely that these words were spoken while they were preparing to leave.)

I am the true vine and my Father is the gardener. Every branch in me that does not produce fruit is cut off and taken away. Every branch that produces fruit, he prunes so that it will bear more fruit.

You are already clean because of the word that I have spoken to you.

Abide in me and I will abide in you. A branch cannot produce fruit by itself; it must be attached to the vine. You cannot produce fruit, unless you abide in me.

I am the vine and you are the branches. He who abides in me, and I in him, produces much fruit: Apart from me you can't do anything.

If a man does not abide in me, he is thrown away like a branch, becomes withered and they will gather the withered branches up and cast them into the fire where they will be burned.

If you had known me, you would have known my Father also. From now on you know him and have seen him.

My Father is glorified if you produce much fruit, revealing yourself to be my disciples.

Just like the Father loves me, I will love you. Abide in my love. If you keep my commandments you will abide in my love, just like I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love.

I have told you these things so that my joy will be in you and your joy will be made full.

This is my commandment, Love one another, just as I have loved you. Greater love has no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.

You are my friends if you do the things that I command you. I will no longer call you my servants, because a servant does not know what his Lord does. But I have called you friends, for all the things that I heard from the Father, I have revealed to you.

You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and produce fruit, and that your fruit would last. Whatever you ask of the Father in my name, he will give it to you.

All these things I command you to do, so that you will have love for one another. If the world hates you, know that it has also hated me before it hated you.

If you were of the world, the world would love you, because the world loves its own. But you are not of this world, for I have chosen you out of the world; therefore the world hates you.

Remember the words that I said to you. A servant is not greater than his Lord. If they persecuted me, they will also persecute you.

If I had not come and spoken to them, they would have had no sin: But now they have no excuse for their sin. He who hates me, hates the Father. This is happening so that the scriptures will be fulfilled that say, They hated me without cause.

When the Comforter has come, who I will send from the Father; that is, the Spirit of Truth, he will bear witness of me. You also will bear witness of me because you have been with me from the beginning.

I have spoken these things to you so that you do not stumble. They will persecute you, and the time is coming when they will kill you and think they are doing God a service.

They will do these things because they do not know the Father, or me. But I have told you these things so that you will remember them when I am gone.

I am going to go to be with the one who sent me. And none of you are asking me, Where are you going? Because I have told you that I am leaving, you have become sorrowful.

But I tell you the truth, it is expedient for you that I go away. If I do not go away, the Comforter will not come to you. But if I do go, I will send him to you.

When the Comforter comes, he will convict the world of sin and of righteousness and of judgment, because they do not believe in me.

Of righteousness because I go to the Father, and you will see me no more.

Of judgment because the prince of this world has been judged.

I have many more things to tell you, but you cannot understand them now.

But when the Holy Spirit comes, the Spirit of Truth, he will guide you in all truth.

He will not speak about himself, he will speak the things that he hears, and will tell you things that are to come. He will glorify me, because he will take what is mine and declare it to you.

Whatever the Father has is mine. That is why I said, He will take what is mine and declare it to you.

I am only going to be with you a little while longer, and then you will see me no more.

Some of the disciples said to one another, What is this that he keeps saying to us, A little while and we will see him no more, and then a little while and you will see me, because I go to the Father. What is this, little while. We do not understand what he is saying

Jesus perceived what they wanted to ask him and said, Why are you asking yourself about the “little while and you will not see me and then a little while and you will see me?”

I am going to tell you a truth that you need to grasp and understand. You will weep and lament, but the world will rejoice: You will be very sorrowful, but your sorrow will be turned to joy.

When a woman is about to give birth, she is in pain and sorrow, but once the child is born, she is full of joy and no longer remembers her anguish.

You have sorrow now, but you will see me again and your heart will be filled with a joy that can never be taken away.

When the Spirit comes, he will make all things clear to you.

And remember the important truth that I keep telling you. If you ask anything of my Father, he will give it to you in my name. Until now you have asked nothing in my name, but ask and you will receive, that your joy may be full.

I have spoken these things to you in the dark, saying, the hour is coming when I will not speak to you in dark sayings, but will tell you plainly about the Father.

In that day, you will ask in my name, and I will pray to the Father for you. The Father loves you because you love me, and have believed that I came from the Father.

I came from the Father to the world and now I am going to leave the world and return to the Father.

His disciples said, Now he is speaking plainly and not in dark sayings. Now we know that you know all things, and do not need any man to help you, and we believe that you came from God.

Jesus answered, Do you believe now? Look, the hour is coming, in fact it is here, when you will all be scattered, everyman for himself, and you will leave me alone: And yet I am not alone, because the Father is with me.

I have told you these things in order for you to have peace. In the world you will have tribulation, but be of good cheer for I have overcome the world.

133. THE LORD'S PRAYER

These are the words that Jesus spoke as he lifted up his eyes to heaven and said,

Father, the hour has come. Glorify your Son, so that the Son may glorify you. Even as you have given me authority over all people, so that all the ones you have given me, I should give eternal life.

And this is eternal life, that they should know you, the only true God, and the one you sent.

I glorified you on earth, and have accomplished the work that you gave me to do. And now Father, glorify me with your own glory which you had before the world existed.

I manifested your name to the men you gave me out of this world. They belong to you, and you gave them to me.

They have kept your word. Now they know that all things you have given me, are from you. The words that you gave me, I have given to them. And they have received them, and they know that the truth came from you and they believe that you sent me.

I pray for them. I do not pray for the world, but for those that you have given me, for they are yours.

I am not going to be in the world anymore, but I am coming to be with you.

They are in the world.

Holy Father, keep them in your name which you gave me, that they may be one, even as we are one.

While I was with them I kept them in your name, I guarded them and not one of them has perished, except the son of perishing, in order that the scriptures might be fulfilled.

But now I am coming to you, and I am speaking these things in the world so that they may have my joy made full in themselves.

I have given them your word, and the world has hated them, because they are not of this world, even as I am not of the world.

I do not pray that you would take them from the world, but that you would keep them from the evil one.

They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. Sanctify them with your truth. Your word is truth.

Just as you sent me into the world, I have sent them into the world. And for their sakes I sanctify myself, so that they will also be sanctified in truth.

I not only pray for these, but also I pray for all those who will believe in me through their word: That they may all be one, even as you Father are in me, and I am in you. I pray that they may be in us, that the world may believe that you sent me.

And the glory which you have given to me, I have given to them, that they may be one even as we are one.

I in them and you in me, so they may be perfected into one. So that the world will know that you sent me and love them, even as you love me.

Father, I desire that the ones you have given to me be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory, which you have given to me. For you loved me before the foundation of the world.

O righteous Father, the world did not know you, but I know you. And those who you have given me, they know that you sent me. I have made your name known to them, and will make it known, so that the love that you love me with may be in them, and I in them.

134. GOING TO GETHSEMANE

When Jesus had spoken these words they went out (from the upper room) and went over the brook of Kidron, into the mount of Olives.

He and his disciples entered into a garden and came to a place called Gethsemane. And when they had come to this place he sat the disciples down and asked them to pray. He told them to pray that they would not fall into temptation.

Then he took Peter, and the two sons of Zebedee, James and John, and moved about a stones throw from the other disciples, and he began to be greatly amazed and sorrowful and very troubled.

He knelt down and fell on his face, and prayed that if it were possible that the hour might pass away from him. He said, Abba, my Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass away from me. All things are possible with you. If you are willing, remove this cup from me. Nevertheless, not what I want, but what you want. Not my will, but your will be done.

And there appeared unto him an angel from heaven, strengthening him. And being in an agony, he prayed more earnestly, and his sweat became, as it were, great drops of blood falling down on the ground.

And when he rose up from his prayer, he came to where his disciples were and found them sleeping.

Jesus said to them, Why are you sleeping? Rise up and pray that you do not enter into temptation.

Watch and pray, the spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak.

And Jesus went the second time to pray, saying the same words he had said before, My Father, if this cannot pass away, unless I drink it, your will be done.

And Jesus came again and found them sleeping, for their eyes were very heavy. And they did not know what to say to Jesus.

Jesus left the third time to pray. And he prayed as he had the first two times, and when he returned to the disciples, they were asleep.

Jesus said to the disciples, So far as I am concerned you can continue to sleep for now, take your rest: for the time for you to be of comfort and assistance has passed.

But as far as you are concerned, Look, the hour has come and the Son of man is about to be betrayed into the hands of sinners. Get up and let's be going. Look, the one who is going to betray me is here.

135. JESUS BETRAYED, ARRESTED, AND FORSAKEN

Now Judas, who betrayed Jesus, knew the place where Jesus and his disciples met.

Judas and a band of soldiers and officers from the chief priests and Pharisees came with lanterns, torches and weapons.

Jesus, knew all the things that were going to happen to him.

He went up to Judas and his band of soldiers and said to them, Who are you looking for?

They answered him, Jesus of Nazareth.

Jesus said to them, I am he.

And when Jesus spoke, Judas and the band of soldiers fell backwards on to the ground.

Again Jesus asked, Who do you seek?

They answered, Jesus of Nazareth.

When Jesus spoke, they again fell backwards on to the ground.

Again he asked them, Who are you looking for?

And again they said, Jesus of Nazareth.

I told you that I am he, if it is me you are looking then let my disciples go on their way.

This was so that the word might be fulfilled which he spoke, Of those you have given me, I have not lost one.

Now the one who betrayed Jesus had given them a token saying, Whoever I kiss, that is Jesus.

Jesus said to Judas, Are you going to betray the Son of man with a kiss?

Judas came to Jesus and kissed him.

Jesus said to him, Friend, do what you have come for.

Then they came and took hold of Jesus, and arrested him. And while they were surrounding Jesus, one of Jesus disciples said, Lord shall we strike them with a sword?

Simon took the sword that he had and struck the servant of the high priest, and cut off his ear.

But Jesus answered and said to them, Do not interfere with those arresting me. Then Jesus touched the servant's ear and it was healed. The servant's name was Malchus.

Then Jesus said to Peter, Put your sword in its sheath. Those who take the sword will perish by the sword. The cup which the Father has given me, shall I not drink it?

Don't you realize that I could even now ask the Father and he would send twelve legions of angels? But then how would the scriptures be fulfilled. This is how it must be.

As Jesus was taken to the temple, the multitudes and the chief priests and the captains of the temple all came against Jesus.

Jesus said, Are you coming against me like you would a robber, with swords and clubs to seize me? When I sat daily with you in the temple teaching, you didn't stretch out your hands against me or arrest me.

But this is your hour, and the hour for the power of darkness.

This is all happened so that the scriptures and the prophets would be fulfilled.

Then all the disciples left Jesus and fled. One of the friends of Jesus and the disciples, thought to be Mark, followed Jesus with just a linen cloth covering him, and they took hold of him, but he fled naked leaving them holding the linen cloth.

136. EXAMINATION BY ANNAS

So the band and the chief captain and the officers of the Jews seized Jesus and bound him and lead him to Annas, who was the father in law of Caiaphas, the high priest that year.

Caiaphas was the one who had given counsel to the Jews, that it was better that one man should die for the people.

The high priest (Annas had been the high priest previous to Caiaphas, and was still called a high priest) asked Jesus about his disciples and his teaching.

Jesus answered him and said, I have spoken openly to the world, teaching in the synagogues where all the Jews come together. I have not taught anything in secret. Why are you asking me this? Ask those who heard me what I taught, they know the things I said.

And when Jesus said this, the officer standing by struck Jesus with his hand, saying, Is that the way you answer the high priest?

Jesus answered him, If I have spoken evil, bear witness of the evil. But if I have answered well, then why did you strike me?

137. CAIAPHAS AND THE SANHEDRIN

Annas sent Jesus, bound, to Caiaphas, the high priest. And all the chief priests and elders and scribes came together in the house of Caiaphas.

Now the chief priests and the whole council looked for false witnesses against Jesus so that they could put him to death. Many false witnesses came, but none agreed, and they could find nothing wrong with Jesus.

One said, Jesus said that he could destroy the temple of God that is made with hands, and build another not made with hands in three days.

But none of the witnesses agreed.

And finally the high priest stood up in the midst of Jesus and said to him, Aren't you going to answer any of the charges that these witnesses are bringing against you?

Jesus was silent and did not answer.

Again, the high priest asked him, Are you the Christ, the Son of the Blessed? I adjure you by the living God, tell us whether or not you are the Christ, the Son of God.

Jesus said to the high priest, You have said I am. Nevertheless I say to you, in the future you will see the Son of man sitting at the right hand of Power, and coming in the clouds of heaven.

The high priest tore his clothes and said, He has spoken blasphemy. What further witnesses do we need? You have heard his blasphemy. What do you think?

They answered, He is worthy of death. And they all condemned him to be worthy of death.

The men who held Jesus mocked him and beat him. And some began to spit on him and to cover his face and ask, Who struck you? They hit him with their hands, and did many other reviling things to him.

138. PETER DENIES THE LORD

Simon Peter had followed Jesus and so did another disciple. Now that disciple was known to the high priest's household, and they entered into the court of the high priest.

Peter followed along and was standing at the door outside the court of the high priest. The other disciple went and spoke to the woman who kept the door, and she let Peter inside.

The maid, who kept the door said to Peter, Aren't you one of Jesus disciples. Peter replied, I am not. And Peter entered in.

Now the servants and the officers were standing by a fire of coals that they had going, warming themselves because it was cold. Peter sat with them and as he was sitting there warming himself by the light of the fire, another servant girl came by and looked directly at Peter and said, You were with Jesus the Galilean.

Peter denied it before all of them, saying, I don't know what you are talking about. Woman, I do not know him.

Those who were with Peter by the fire said to him, Aren't you one of his disciples?

Peter said, I am not!

Then he went out into the porch, and the rooster crowed.

After a little while longer another said, I am sure this man was with Jesus, for he is a Galilaean. But Peter said, Man, I don't know what you are talking about. And again they came to Peter and said, Your accent gives you away, you're a Galilaean and a disciple of Jesus.

And the rooster crowed the second time.

Then Peter began to curse and to swear, I don't know this man who you are talking about. And as soon as he said it, while he was still speaking, they brought the Lord out of the house and he turned and looked at Peter.

Then Peter remembered how the Lord had told him that before the rooster crows twice you will deny me three times.

And Peter left, and as he thought about what he had done, he wept bitterly.

139. JESUS FORMALLY CONDEMNED

Now when the morning came, the assembly of the elders gathered together, both chief priests and scribes, and they led Jesus to the council.

If you are the Christ, tell us.

Jesus said to them, If I tell you, you will not believe.

But in the future the Son of man will be seated at the right hand of the power of God. And they said, Are you the Son of God?

And Jesus said, You say it because I am.

And they said, We do not need any witnesses, we have heard it out of his own mouth.

And the whole company of them rose up and bound Jesus and led him away from Caiaphas into the Praetorium and brought him before Pilate, the governor.

It was early in the morning.

140. JESUS BEFORE PILATE

And the Jews would not enter into the Praetorium, because they believed it would defile them and disqualify them from keeping the Passover.

So Pontius Pilate went out to them and said, What accusation do you bring against this man?

They answered and said to him, If this man was not an evildoer we would not have brought him to you.

Pilate said to them, Take him and judge him yourself according to your law.

The Jews said to Pilate, It is not lawful for us to put a man to death. This happened so that the word of Jesus might be fulfilled, which he spoke signifying by the manner of death by which he would die.

And they began to accuse him, saying, We found this man perverting our nation and forbidding us to give tribute to Caesar, and saying that he is the Christ, a king.

Pilate entered into the Praetorium and called Jesus.

Jesus stood before the governor who asked him, Are you the King of the Jews?

Jesus, answering him, said, Are you saying this yourself or did others tell you about me?

Pilate answered, Am I also a Jew? Your own nation and your chief priests have delivered you up to me. What have you done?

Jesus answered, My kingdom is not of this world. If my kingdom was of this world, then my servants would fight to keep me from being delivered up to the Jews.

Pilate said to him, Are you a king then? Jesus answered, You say that I am a king, for this purpose I have been born and for this purpose I have come into the world, that I should bear witness to the truth. Every one who is of the truth hears my voice.

Pilate said to him, What is truth?

And after he said this, he went out to the Jews and said to the chief priests and the crowds, I find no fault in this man, no crime in him.

Then the chief priests accused Jesus of many things. Jesus did not answer back.

Pilate again asked Jesus, Listen to all the things they are accusing you of. Don't you have anything to say for yourself.

Jesus would not say a word, and Pilate was amazed.

But the chief priests became even more urgent, saying, He stirs up the people, teaching throughout all Judaea, from Galilee to Jerusalem.

141. JESUS BEFORE HEROD ANTIPAS

When Pilate heard this he asked, Is Jesus a Galilaean. He knew that this was Herod Antipas' jurisdiction. When the answer came back, yes, Pilate sent Jesus to Herod who was in Jerusalem for the festival.

Now when Herod saw Jesus, he was very glad, for he had been wanting to see Jesus for a long time. Herod had heard about all the mighty works that Jesus did, and hoped to see a miracle.

Herod questioned Jesus at length, but Jesus would not answer him.

The chief priests and the scribes also stood before Herod accusing Jesus vehemently.

Herod and his soldiers began mocking Jesus and clothing him in gorgeous apparel, but finding nothing wrong with him, they returned him to Pilate.

Pilate and Herod, who had been bitter enemies, became friends that day.

142. PILATE SENTENCES JESUS

Now it was the custom at the feast of Passover that the authorities would release a prisoner. And there was one notable prisoner, a murderer and a rebel against Rome named Barabbas.

And the multitude went up to Pilate and began demanding their annual gift of a released prisoner. Pilate saw this as an opportunity to escape his difficulties over Jesus.

And when they had gathered together, Pilate asked them would you like me to release Jesus, the King of the Jews? I have examined him and I can find no fault in him.

Herod cannot find anything wrong with him either. According to your custom, I will chastise Jesus and then release him.

Or I can release Barabbas. Which would you like me to release to you, Barabbas, a murderer and a rebel or Jesus?

But they cried out all together, saying, Away with this man, release Barabbas.

While Pilate was sitting in the judgment seat, a message came from his wife. The message said, I have had terrible dreams regarding this man Jesus, you must release him and have nothing further to do with him.

The chief priests and the elders stirred up the multitude so that they should demand the release of Barabbas and destroy Jesus.

They cried out again saying, Not his man, but Barabbas. Pilate spoke to them again trying to persuade them that he should release Jesus.

The crowds would hear none of it and began shouting, Crucify, crucify him.

They all said, Let him be crucified.

Pilate tried the third time, asking them, What evil has this man done? I can find nothing in him that deserves death: I will chastise him and release him.

But the crowds just became more agitated, saying, Crucify him. Let him be crucified.

Then Pilate took Jesus and scourged him.

And the soldiers forced a crown of thorns on his head and put a purple robe around his neck. They came to him and said, Hail, King of the Jews! And they struck him with their hands.

Pilate hoped that the crowd would be satisfied with the humiliation and punishment of Jesus. He had Jesus brought out in front of the people wearing a crown of thorns and a purple robe. Pilate said to them, Behold, the man!

When the chief priests and the officers saw him, they cried out, Crucify him, crucify him.

Pilate said, Take him and crucify him yourselves, for I can find no crime in him.

The Jews answered him, We have a law that he should die, because he made himself out to be the Son of God.

When Pilate heard this he was even more afraid and went into the Praetorium again, taking Jesus with him.

He questioned Jesus. Where did you come from? But Jesus did not give him an answer. Pilate said to him, don't you know that I have the power to release you or to crucify you?

Jesus answered, You would have no power against me, except it was given to you from above. Therefore, he who delivered me up to you has the greater sin.

Hearing this Pilate sought even more to release Jesus.

But the Jews cried out saying, If you release him then you are no friend of Caesar's. Everyone who makes himself a king is in opposition to Caesar.

When Pilate heard these words he brought Jesus out and sat him down on the judgment seat at a place called The Pavement, (in Hebrew it was called, Gabbatha.)

It was the Preparation of the Passover, about the sixth hour. And he said to the Jews, Behold your King.

They cried, Away with him, away with him. Crucify him!

Pilate asked, Shall I crucify your King? The chief priests cried out, We have no king but Caesar.

Finally, Pilate gave up since the harder he tried to release Jesus the more agitated the crowd became in their determination to have Christ crucified.

Pilate took water and washed his hands before the people. He said, I am innocent of the blood of this righteous man. And the people answered and said, His blood be on us, and on our children.

Pilate then released Barabbas and turned Jesus over to them, to be crucified.

The soldiers of Pilate, led Jesus away to the Praetorium court where they gathered other soldiers. And when they had gathered a band of soldiers together, they stripped Jesus and clothed him again in purple robes, and again they placed the crown of thorns on his head and began mocking him.

They knelt down to him and saluted him, saying, Hail, King of the Jews! And they spat on him and struck his head with a stick, and bowed their knees as if they were worshipping him.

143. SUICIDE OF JUDAS

Judas, who had betrayed Jesus, when he saw that Jesus had been condemned, changed his mind and brought back the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and elders, and said, I have sinned, I betrayed innocent blood.

But they said to him, What does that have to do with us?

Judas cast down the thirty pieces of silver and went away and hanged himself. And then his body fell to the ground and his bowels burst and gushed out.

The chief priests took the silver, and said, It is not lawful to put this money into the treasury, since it is blood money.

They met together and decided to buy a potter's field, in which to bury foreigners.

When they did this, they fulfilled the prophecy of Jeremiah who said, And they took the thirty pieces of silver, the price of him, whom some of the children of Israel had set, and they bought a potter's field, as the Lord appointed me.

This field became known to all those that lived in Jerusalem as Akeldama, which means, The field of blood.

144. THE CRUCIFIXION

A. ON THE WAY TO THE CROSS

And after the Roman soldiers had mocked Jesus, and took off his purple robe and put his own garments back on, They led him out to be crucified, and he went, carrying his own cross for himself.

As they made their way to the place where Jesus was to be crucified, the Roman soldiers found a man named Simon of Cyrene (the father of Alexander and Rufus) and compelled him to carry the cross of Jesus.

And a great multitude followed and all the woman wailed and lamented.

Jesus turned to them and said, Daughters of Jerusalem, do not weep for me, weep for yourself and for your children. The day is coming when they will say, Blessed are the barren and the wombs that never bore children. Then they will say to mountains, Fall on us, and to the hills, Cover us. For if they do these things when the tree is green, what will they do when it is dry.

There were two others who were criminals being put to death at the same time as Jesus. And they brought them to the place which is called in Hebrew, Golgotha: This means, The place of the skull.

And when they had come to the place, they offered Jesus wine to drink, mingled with gall: When Jesus tasted it, he would not drink it.

B. JESUS CRUCIFIED

It was the third hour and they crucified him.

There were two others, both robbers and criminals, one on the right side and one of the left side of Jesus.

Jesus hung on a cross in the middle.

And Jesus said, Father, forgive them for they do not know what they are doing.

The soldiers had taken Jesus' garments and divided them between the four of them. When they came to his coat, which was woven from top to bottom and had no seams, they said, Let's not tear it apart, but cast lots to see which one of us will keep it.

When they did this, they fulfilled the scripture that said, They parted my garments among them, and upon my vesture did they cast lots.

Pilate wrote a title that he put above the cross. It said, **THIS IS JESUS OF NAZARETH, THE KING OF THE JEWS.**

It was written in Hebrew, Latin and Greek. And all the Jews who were in the city near the place where Jesus was crucified read the title.

The chief priests and the Jews of Jerusalem went to Pilate and said, Do not write that he is the King of the Jews, but write that he says he is the king of the Jews.

Pilate answered, I have written what I have written.

The people stood looking, and as they passed by they wagged their heads, saying, Ha! Here is the one that is going to destroy the temple and raise it up in three days. Save yourself if you are the Son of God, and come down from the cross.

In like manner, the chief priests and the rulers scoffed and mocked him along with the scribes and the elders saying, He saved others, but he cannot save himself. If this is the Christ of God, his chosen, let him come down from the cross and we will see it and believe in him. He trusted God, let God deliver him if he wants to, for he said, I am the Son of God.

The soldiers also mocked him, offering him vinegar and saying, If you are the King of the Jews, save yourself.

The robbers that were being crucified with Jesus also reproached him. One of the criminals railed at him saying, Are you not the Christ? Save yourself and us.

The other robber who was also being crucified with Jesus said to his fellow criminal, Don't you fear God, seeing that you are under the same condemnation. And we deserve this punishment for the things that we have done, but this man has done nothing wrong.

And then he said to Jesus, Remember me when you come into your kingdom.

And Jesus said to him, The truth is, today you will be with me in Paradise.

The mother of Jesus and her sister, along with Mary the wife of Clopas and Mary Magdalene were standing by the cross.

When Jesus saw his mother and the disciple whom he loved standing by, he said to his mother, Woman, look, your son! And he said to the disciple, Behold, here is your mother!

From that hour on, the disciple took Mary into his own home.

C. THREE HOURS OF DARKNESS

Now it was about the sixth hour when darkness came over the whole land, and it lasted until the ninth hour.

About the ninth hour, Jesus cried with a loud voice saying, Eli, Eli, lam sabachthani? Which translated means, My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?

And some who stood by, when they heard it said, He is calling for Elijah.

After this, Jesus, knew that all things were finished and that the scriptures had been accomplished, said, I thirst.

There was a vessel full of vinegar, and one of them ran and took a sponge and filled it with vinegar and put it on a hyssop reed and brought it to his mouth.

The rest of those standing around the cross said, Let's see if Elijah comes to save him.

And when Jesus had received the vinegar, he cried again with a loud voice and said, It is finished. Into your hands I commend my spirit.

And having said these words, he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.

And immediately the veil of the temple was torn into two pieces, in the middle from top to bottom.

And the earth shook and the rocks cracked in pieces, and the tombs were opened and many bodies of the saints that had died were raised, and they came out of the tombs and walked into Jerusalem and appeared to many.

When the centurion, who stood watching Jesus saw him give up his spirit, and felt and saw the earthquake, and everything else that was happening, he was fearful. He glorified God, saying, Certainly this was a righteous man. This was the Son of God.

And the crowd that came together to view the sight of Jesus dead on the cross, went home beating their breasts in sorrow.

And all his acquaintances were there at the cross, and many women who had followed Jesus from Galilee, including Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James and Joses and Salome. They had ministered to Jesus and the disciples.

D. JESUS FOUND TO BE DEAD

Because the Sabbath of the Passover week was approaching and the Jews did not want any bodies hanging on the cross on that Sabbath, they asked Pilate to break their legs and dispose of the bodies.

The soldiers came and broke the legs of the first criminal, but when he came to Jesus he saw that he was already dead. So they did not break his legs. But to be sure that Jesus was dead they took a spear and pierced his side. Blood and water poured from his wound.

They fulfilled the scripture that said, Not a bone of his body will be broken. And again, They will look on him who they pierced.

Joseph of Arimathaea, who was a rich man, and also a good and righteous man, had not consented to what the chief priests and rulers of Israel had done. He was also looking for the kingdom of God, and was a secret disciple of Jesus, fearing the Jews.

He boldly went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus.

Pilate was amazed that Jesus was already dead and called the centurion in charge to ask how long Jesus had been dead.

The centurion verified that Jesus was dead, and told Pilate the details of his death. Pilate then gave the body of Jesus to Joseph of Arimathaea.

Nicodemus, who had come to Jesus by night, had also come to help with the dead body of Jesus. He brought with him about a hundred pounds of myrrh and aloes. Joseph brought linen cloth.

Joseph took down the body of Jesus and wrapped him in linen cloth with spices, which was the burial custom of the Jews.

Now, near the place where Jesus was crucified, there was a garden, and in the garden there was a new tomb that had been carved out of the rock. No one had been buried in this tomb before.

They laid Jesus in the tomb and rolled a great stone up against the door of the tomb, and left.

The women who had come from Galilee followed after Joseph and his party and saw the place where Jesus' body was laid. Mary Magdalene was there, and the other Mary.

They returned to where they were staying to prepare spices and ointments for burial. But they rested on the Sabbath day.

The chief priests and Pharisees gathered together and came to Pilate. They said to Pilate, Sir, we remember that this deceiver said while he was still alive that he would rise again after three days. Command that the tomb be guarded until the third day, so that one of his disciples does not come and steal the body and say to the people that Jesus is risen from the dead, which would make matters worse.

Pilate said to them, I will give you a squadron of guards so that you can go and make the tomb as secure.

So they went and secured the tomb where Jesus had been laid, sealing the stone and posting guards around it.

Part Eight
RESURRECTION OF JESUS

145. ANGELS ANNOUNCE THE RESURRECTION

But when the Sabbath was past, on the first day of the week, early in the morning, they came to anoint the body of Jesus. Mary Magdalene and the other Mary had prepared spices and were coming to prepare the dead body of Jesus for final burial.

Before they approached the tomb, there was a great earthquake, and an angel of the Lord descended from heaven and came and rolled away the stone, and sat upon it.

The angel's appearance was like lightning and his clothing was white as snow. The Roman guards were paralyzed with fear, and became like dead men.

Mary Magdalene and the other Mary and others, came to the place where Jesus had been buried. It was early Sunday morning. And when they came to the place, the stone was rolled away and the Roman guards were gone. And when they entered the tomb, the Lord's body was not there.

Mary Magdalene ran to find Simon Peter and the other disciple who Jesus loved, and when she found them she said, They have taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we do not know where they have laid him.

While Mary was going to get Peter and John, two angels appearing as young men, in dazzling apparel appeared to those who were still at the tomb.

They were very frightened and bowed down their faces to the earth.

The angel said to the women, Don't be afraid; we know that you are looking for Jesus, the Nazarene, who has been crucified.

Why are you looking for the living among the dead? He is not here, but he is risen, just like he said he would.

Don't you remember what he told you when he was in Galilee, telling you that the Son of man was going to be delivered up into the hands of sinful men and be crucified and rise again on the third day.

They remembered the words of Jesus.

Come, look at the place where they laid him! See the place where the Lord lay.

Now, go quickly and tell his disciples and Peter, He is risen from the dead and he is going to meet you into Galilee. You will see him there.

And they departed quickly and fled from the tomb, with fear and with great joy. They ran to bring word to the disciples. They did not tell anyone they met on the way about what had happened, because they were trembling and astonished.

Peter and John ran to the tomb. John outran Peter and arrived first. He stooped down and looked at the linen cloth that was lying in place.

Peter ran right into the tomb and saw the linen cloths lying by themselves, and the napkin that had been upon his head was rolled up in a place by itself.

Then the other disciple entered the tomb and saw and believed that Jesus had risen from the dead.

The disciples went home wondering about all that had happened.

146. APPEARANCES OF THE RISEN CHRIST

Now after Peter and John had gone home to ponder what they had seen, Mary Magdalene returned to the garden where Jesus had been buried.

Mary was standing outside the tomb weeping. As she wept, she stooped down and looked into the tomb. She saw two angels in white, one at the head and the other at the foot of where Jesus had been laid.

Jesus then came up to Mary and said to her, Woman, why are you weeping? She said to him, not recognizing him because of her sorrow and thinking he was the gardener, They have taken away my Lord and I do not know where they have laid him.

She then turned around and saw Jesus plainly and recognized him and said to him in Hebrew, Rabboni, which means, Teacher.

Jesus said to her, Do not touch me, for I have not yet ascended to the Father. Go to my brothers and say to them, I am ascending to my Father and your Father, and my God and your God.

Mary Magdalene went and told some of the disciples, I have seen the Lord, he is alive. But they disbelieved her.

Then Jesus met them (Mary Magdalene and the others that had come to anoint Jesus' body), saying, Rejoice! And they came and took hold of his feet and worshipped him.

Then Jesus said to them, Do not fear, go tell my brothers who are going to Galilee that they will soon see me.

The ones who had seen Jesus were Mary Magdalene, and Joanna, and Mary the mother of James and the other women who were with them.

They told the disciples, but they did not believe. They thought it was idle talk.

147. GUARDS REPORT TO THE JEWISH RULERS

Now while the group of women were going to tell the disciples, some of the soldiers who had been guarding the tomb went to the chief priest and told them all the things that had happened.

And when they were assembled and had considered the matter, they gave money to the soldiers and told them to report that the disciples of Jesus had stolen the body of Jesus while they slept.

If news of this gets to the governor's ear, we will persuade him to overlook the offense.

They took the money and did as they were told. And the report spread among the Jews and is still reported to this day.

148. THIRD AND FOURTH APPEARANCES OF JESUS

After this, Jesus appeared to two men as they walked on their way to the village of Emmaus. A village about three quarters of a mile from Jerusalem.

And as these two men were talking to each other, Jesus walked up to them. Jesus hid who he was.

And Jesus said to them, What are you talking about as you walk? And they stood still, looking sad.

One of the men, whose name was Cleopas, answered and said to him, Are you the only one in Jerusalem who does not know what has happened in the past couple of days?

Jesus said, What things?

And they answered, The things concerning Jesus the Nazarene, who was a prophet, mighty in word and deed before God and all the people.

And how the chief priests and our rulers delivered him up to be condemned to death, and crucified him. But we hoped that he was the one that was going to redeem Israel.

And besides all this, it is now the third day since these things came to pass. And some women of our company amazed us, having gone to the tomb and finding it empty. They saw a vision of angels who said that Jesus was alive.

And some of those who were with us went to the tomb and found it empty like the women said.

And then Jesus said to them. O foolish men, and slow of heart to believe in all that the prophets have spoken. Wasn't it written that the Christ should suffer all these things, and enter into his glory.

And then, beginning from Moses and including all the prophets, he interpreted to them all the scriptures and all the things concerning himself.

And as they came near their village, Jesus began to walk further, and they stopped him and said, Stay with us, for it is getting dark and the day is almost over.

And Jesus went with them and stayed with them. And when it came time for the meal, he sat down to eat with them and he took bread and blessed it and gave it to them. And at that moment their eyes were opened and they saw it was Jesus, and Jesus instantly vanished from their sight.

And they said to one another, Didn't our hearts burn within us, while he spoke to us on the road and opened the scriptures to us.

And they got up that very hour and returned to Jerusalem and found the eleven together and those who were with them. (about one hundred and twenty)

And they told the disciples and the others how Jesus had made himself known to them, but the disciples did not believe.

149. FIFTH APPEARANCE OF JESUS

While the men from Emmaus were still speaking, Jesus appeared to the disciples as they sat eating together.

The disciples were in fear of the Jews and had locked the doors into the place where they were staying. So when they saw Jesus they became terrified and afraid, thinking that he was a spirit.

Jesus scolded them for their unbelief and hardness of heart for not believing the eyewitnesses who had already reported his resurrection.

Why are you troubled and why do you have questions come up in your minds, said Jesus. See my hands and my feet. It is me. Touch me for yourselves and convince yourselves that I am not a spirit. Does a spirit have flesh and bones, as you see that I have.

Then Jesus showed them the wounds in his hands and his feet and his side.

While they were still in shock and suffering from a combination of fear and joy, Jesus asked them, Do you have anything to eat?

They gave Jesus a piece of boiled fish, and he took it and ate it in front of them.

The disciples were glad when they saw the Lord.

Jesus said to them, Peace be with you. Just as the Father has sent me, in the same way, I send you. And when he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, Receive the Holy Spirit. Whoever's sins you forgive, they are forgiven, and whoever you withhold forgiveness from is not forgiven.

But Thomas, one of the twelve, called Didymus, was not with them when Jesus came.

When the other disciples told Thomas that they had seen the Lord, he did not believe it but said, Unless I see the nail prints on his hands and put my hand into the wound in his side, I will not believe.

150. SIXTH APPEARANCE OF JESUS

After eight days, the disciples were together again in a room that had been bolted from the inside for fear of the Jews. This time Thomas was with them.

Jesus appeared to them and stood in the middle of them, and said, Peace be with you.

Then he said to Thomas, Look at my hands and touch my wounds, take your hand and put it into my side. Don't be faithless but believe.

Thomas answered and said to Jesus, My Lord and my God.

Jesus said to him, Because you have seen me, you believe. Blessed are those who have not seen me and yet have believed.

Jesus did many other signs in their presence, which are not written in this book.

But these things are written that you might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that by believing you may have life in his name.

151. SEVENTH APPEARANCE OF JESUS

After this, Jesus appeared to them again at the sea of Tiberias.

Peter had decided to go fishing and the other disciples followed along. They went into a boat and fished all night, but caught nothing.

When the morning came, they saw a man standing on the beach. The disciples did not immediately recognize that it was Jesus.

Jesus said to them, Children do you have anything to eat?

They answered, No.

And Jesus said to them, Cast your net on the right side of the boat and you will find some. They did as Jesus said, and the nets were so full that they could not lift them into the boat.

John said to Peter, it is the Lord!

When Peter knew it was Jesus, he wrapped his coat around himself and jumped into the sea and swam for shore.

The other disciples stayed in the boat and made their way to shore dragging the nets full of fish.

When they got to land they saw that Jesus had started a fire and the coals were burning, and fish was cooking and there was bread.

Jesus said to them. Bring some of the fish you have caught. Peter went and pulled the nets full of fish onto the shore. They had caught one hundred and fifty three large fish, but the nets had not broken.

Come and have breakfast, said Jesus. Jesus gave them bread and fish.

This was the third time that Jesus had appeared to the disciples after he had risen from the dead.

After eating breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, Simon, son of John, do you love me better than fishing.

He answered, You know that I love you.

Jesus said to him, Feed my lambs.

Again the second time, Jesus asked Peter, Peter do you love me more than this fishing business?

Peter answered, Yes, Lord, you know that I love you.

Then Jesus said to him, Take care of my sheep.

Then Jesus said to Peter the third time, Peter, son of John, Do you love me?

And Peter replied, Lord you know all things, you know that I love you.

Jesus said to him, Feed my sheep.

Truly, truly I tell you, when you were young, you walked where you wanted to walk. But when you are old, you will stretch out your hands and someone else will carry you where you do not want to go.

Jesus was telling Peter ahead of time how his death would glorify God.

And after Jesus said this, he said to him, Follow me.

Peter, turning around and seeing John, asked Jesus, And what will happen to John.

Jesus said to Peter, If I willed that John live until I come again, what business is that of yours.

Even though Jesus did not say that John would not die, the rumor got started among the other disciples that he would not die.

There are many other things that Jesus did, which if they should all be written would fill the world with books.

152. EIGHTH APPEARANCE OF JESUS

The eleven disciples went into Galilee, up on the mountain where the Lord had said that he would meet them. And they were joined by five hundred other friends and relatives of Jesus.

Jesus appeared to them all, and they worshipped him, but a few doubted.

153. THE GREAT COMMISSION

And Jesus came to them and spoke to them saying.

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

And he said to them, Go into the world and preach the gospel to the whole creation. And make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all the things I have commanded you.

He who believes and is baptized will be saved, but he who disbelieves will be condemned.

This it is written that the Christ should suffer, and rise again from the dead on the third day, and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name to all the nations, starting in Jerusalem.

And these signs will accompany those who believe: In my name they will cast out demons, they will speak with new tongues, they will take up serpents, and drink deadly things, and it will not hurt them. They will lay hands on the sick and they will be healed.

I am with you always, even to the end of the world.

154. NINTH AND TENTH APPEARANCES OF JESUS

Jesus also appeared to James. He showed himself to be alive to the apostles over the space of forty days and with many proofs and spoke to them about the kingdom of God.

He told them not to leave Jerusalem, but to wait for the promise of the Father, which he said, he had heard from him.

Jesus reminded them that John baptized with water, But you will be baptized in the Holy Spirit not many days from now.

And he said to them, These are my words which I spoke to you while I was with you,

that all things written in the law of Moses and the prophets and the psalms concerning me needed to be fulfilled.

Then he opened their minds so that they would understand the scriptures.

He showed them where it was written that Christ should suffer and rise again from the dead on the third day, and that repentance and remission of sins would be preached in his name to all the nations, starting with Jerusalem.

Then Jesus told them, I send you out with the promises of my Father. But stay in the city until you are clothed with power from on high.

They asked the Lord, Is this the time you are going to restore the kingdom of Israel?

Jesus said to them, It is not for you to know the time or seasons that the Father has set within his own authority.

But you will receive power, when the Holy Spirit is come upon you: and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in Judaea and Samaria, and to the uttermost part of the earth.

155. THE ASCENSION

After the Lord had spoken to them, he led them out to the mount called Olivet. And he blessed them, and then he was carried into heaven. They watched him ascend into a cloud and sit at the right hand of God. And they worshipped him.

And while they were still looking into heaven, two angels in human form, stood by them in white apparel.

And they said to them, You men of Galilee, why are you standing here looking into heaven? Jesus, who was received up into heaven will come again in the same way that you saw him go.

Then they returned to Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, with great joy.

And they were constantly in the temple, blessing God. And they went out and preached everywhere, the Lord working with them and confirming the word by the signs that followed.

Praise God!

156. OUR LORD APPEARS AFTER HIS ASCENSION

And last of all, as to a child born late, he appeared to me also. (the apostle Paul)

Part Nine

INVITATION – RESPONSE TO THE PROCLAMATION

Jesus began his ministry here on earth by choosing twelve disciples.

Jesus is still calling disciples. He wants you to know the story of his life so you will believe it, and put your trust in him as savior.

It is not by chance that you have read his story.

It is not an accident that you may at this very moment be considering the claims he made to be the Son of God.

Can you see yourself as one of the characters in the story of Jesus?

Jesus wants you to realize that just as Lazarus was physically dead, so you also are spiritually dead in your sins.

He wants you to know that he stands ready to call you out of that place of death and give you real life.

Jesus wants you to see yourself as the man born blind. He stands ready to give you true sight.

Jesus wants you to see the deeper meaning of why he miraculously fed the five thousand people - that is, that he is the true bread of life.

He wants you to believe in him so that you will never be hungry or thirsty again.

Jesus wants you to look at the cross on which he was crucified and ask the question. "Was it for me, Jesus, that you hung there and died? Was it my sins that caused you all that pain?"

Jesus wants you to consider the empty tomb and ask yourself another simple question: "Who but God has the power to rise from the dead?"

The same God who came to earth and lived the sinless life that you could never live, and die the death that you deserved to die, wants more from you than just to consider his story. He has arranged this encounter so that you might believe in him and have eternal life.

If you would like to know more, please send us an email with your questions.