

CHAPTER THIRTY-FOUR

MORE ABOUT THE MINISTRY OF JESUS

JOHN 4:1-30

1 WHEN THEREFORE THE LORD KNEW HOW THE PHARISEES HAD HEARD THAT JESUS MADE AND BAPTIZED MORE DISCIPLES THAN JOHN,

2 (THOUGH JESUS HIMSELF BAPTIZED NOT, BUT HIS DISCIPLES,)

3 HE LEFT JUDAEA, AND DEPARTED AGAIN INTO GALILEE.

4 AND HE MUST NEEDS GO THROUGH SAMARIA.

5 THEN COMETH HE TO A CITY OF SAMARIA, WHICH IS CALLED SYCHAR, NEAR TO THE PARCEL OF GROUND THAT JACOB GAVE TO HIS SON JOSEPH.

6 NOW JACOB'S WELL WAS THERE. JESUS THEREFORE, BEING WEARIED WITH HIS JOURNEY, SAT THUS ON THE WELL: AND IT WAS ABOUT THE SIXTH HOUR.

7 THERE COMETH A WOMAN OF SAMARIA TO DRAW WATER: JESUS SAITH UNTO HER, GIVE ME TO DRINK.

8 (FOR HIS DISCIPLES WERE GONE AWAY UNTO THE CITY TO BUY MEAT.)

9 THEN SAITH THE WOMAN OF SAMARIA UNTO HIM, HOW IS IT THAT THOU, BEING A JEW, ASKEST DRINK OF ME, WHICH AM A WOMAN OF SAMARIA? FOR THE JEWS HAVE NO DEALINGS WITH THE SAMARITANS.

10 JESUS ANSWERED AND SAID UNTO HER, IF THOU KNEWEST THE GIFT OF GOD, AND WHO IT IS THAT SAITH TO THEE, GIVE ME TO DRINK; THOU WOULDST HAVE ASKED OF HIM, AND HE WOULD HAVE GIVEN THEE LIVING WATER.

11 THE WOMAN SAITH UNTO HIM, SIR, THOU HAST NOTHING TO DRAW WITH, AND THE WELL IS DEEP: FROM WHENCE THEN HAST THOU THAT LIVING WATER?

12 ART THOU GREATER THAN OUR FATHER JACOB, WHICH GAVE US THE WELL, AND DRANK THEREOF HIMSELF, AND HIS CHILDREN, AND HIS CATTLE?

13 JESUS ANSWERED AND SAID UNTO HER, WHOSOEVER DRINKETH OF THIS WATER SHALL THIRST AGAIN:

14 BUT WHOSOEVER DRINKETH OF THE WATER THAT I SHALL GIVE HIM SHALL NEVER THIRST; BUT THE WATER THAT I SHALL GIVE HIM SHALL BE IN HIM A WELL OF WATER SPRINGING UP INTO EVERLASTING LIFE.

15 THE WOMAN SAITH UNTO HIM, SIR, GIVE ME THIS WATER, THAT I THIRST NOT, NEITHER COME HITHER TO DRAW.

16 JESUS SAITH UNTO HER, GO, CALL THY HUSBAND, AND COME HITHER.

17 THE WOMAN ANSWERED AND SAID, I HAVE NO HUSBAND. JESUS SAID UNTO HER, THOU HAST WELL SAID, I HAVE NO HUSBAND:

18 FOR THOU HAST HAD FIVE HUSBANDS; AND HE WHOM THOU NOW HAST IS NOT THY HUSBAND: IN THAT SAIDST THOU TRULY.

19 THE WOMAN SAITH UNTO HIM, SIR, I PERCEIVE THAT THOU ART A PROPHET.

20 OUR FATHERS WORSHIPPED IN THIS MOUNTAIN; AND YE SAY, THAT IN JERUSALEM IS THE PLACE WHERE MEN OUGHT TO WORSHIP.

21 JESUS SAITH UNTO HER, WOMAN, BELIEVE ME, THE HOUR COMETH, WHEN YE SHALL NEITHER IN THIS MOUNTAIN, NOR YET AT JERUSALEM, WORSHIP THE FATHER.

22 YE WORSHIP YE KNOW NOT WHAT: WE KNOW WHAT WE WORSHIP: FOR SALVATION IS OF THE JEWS.

23 BUT THE HOUR COMETH, AND NOW IS, WHEN THE TRUE WORSHIPPERS SHALL WORSHIP THE FATHER IN SPIRIT AND IN TRUTH: FOR THE FATHER SEEKETH SUCH TO WORSHIP HIM.

24 GOD IS A SPIRIT: AND THEY THAT WORSHIP HIM MUST WORSHIP HIM IN SPIRIT AND IN TRUTH.

25 THE WOMAN SAITH UNTO HIM, I KNOW THAT MESSIAS COMETH, WHICH IS CALLED CHRIST: WHEN HE IS COME, HE WILL TELL US ALL THINGS.

26 JESUS SAITH UNTO HER, I THAT SPEAK UNTO THEE AM HE.

27 AND UPON THIS CAME HIS DISCIPLES, AND MARVELLED THAT HE TALKED WITH THE WOMAN: YET NO MAN SAID, WHAT SEEKEST THOU? OR, WHY TALLEST THOU WITH HER?

28 THE WOMAN THEN LEFT HER WATERPOT, AND WENT HER WAY INTO THE CITY, AND SAITH TO THE MEN,

29 COME, SEE A MAN, WHICH TOLD ME ALL THINGS THAT EVER I DID: IS NOT THIS THE CHRIST?

30 THEN THEY WENT OUT OF THE CITY, AND CAME UNTO HIM.

JOHN 4:39-42

39 AND MANY OF THE SAMARITANS OF THAT CITY BELIEVED ON HIM FOR THE SAYING OF THE WOMAN, WHICH TESTIFIED, HE TOLD ME ALL THAT EVER I DID.

40 SO WHEN THE SAMARITANS WERE COME UNTO HIM, THEY BESOUGHT HIM THAT HE WOULD TARRY WITH THEM: AND HE ABODE THERE TWO DAYS.

41 AND MANY MORE BELIEVED BECAUSE OF HIS OWN WORD;

42 AND SAID UNTO THE WOMAN, NOW WE BELIEVE, NOT BECAUSE OF THY SAYING: FOR WE HAVE HEARD HIM OURSELVES, AND KNOW THAT THIS IS INDEED THE CHRIST, THE SAVIOUR OF THE WORLD.

The person in this situation was a Samaritan woman. Jesus was a Jew. Supposedly, Jews were to have nothing to do with Samaritans. Jesus was a man. Supposedly, Jewish men were considered superior to women, so they did not talk with them in public. The particular woman did not have a good reputation. She had to come to the well when the other women were not there. She was an outcast of all outcasts—lowest of the low. Yet, Jesus talked with her and directed her on how to move from a sensuous lifestyle to one of entering into the presence of God Almighty in Spirit and truth. Jesus did not condemn this woman for her many marriages or for her open involvement in adultery. Once she confessed her sin, Jesus ignored it and began to teach her how to worship. He met her where she was—one involved heavily in sin. He led her into the Kingdom of God. He

meets us all where we are. We do not have to become perfect before turning to Jesus. Just open up your heart and let Jesus come in. He will help you to worship in spirit and in truth.

Look back at verse four.

Jesus goes out of His way to reach a person in need. The word, Sychar, in verse five is talking about a place near the city of Shechem which means shoulder. Shoulders are to be leaned on for strength. Verse six tells us that Jesus had human needs. The sixth hour was an unusual time for people to be meeting at a well. Travelers traveled in the cool of the day and at night.

But not Jesus. He met this woman at the well on the sixth hour of the day. You see, it was the job of the women to draw water, but this job was to be done at the break of day or at sunset. Verse seven lets us know that this woman was to be considered the lowest of the low. By law Jesus was not supposed to talk with her. But from the natural standpoint, Jesus was thirsty.

The real reason that Jesus asked for water was to teach the woman how to worship God. Verse eight suggests that John was still with Jesus as Jesus talked with the woman. John probably had to tell the other disciples what had taken place while they were away. Verse nine makes it plain that the woman knew Jesus was not supposed to be talking with her. Jesus was breaking a tradition.

Do you have some traditions which need to be broken?

Jesus knew that His mission here on earth was to fulfill the Old Covenant and institute the New Testament. It just happened that He had gone out of His way so that this woman could be one of the first to experience this life-changing transformation. (If Jesus had not gone to this woman, she would never have been changed.) The same is true with us.

Verse ten explains the gift of God which is salvation.

JOHN 3:16

16 FOR GOD SO LOVED THE WORLD, THAT HE GAVE HIS ONLY BEGOTTEN SON, THAT WHOSOEVER BELIEVETH IN HIM SHOULD NOT PERISH, BUT HAVE EVERLASTING LIFE.

ROMANS 6:23

23 FOR THE WAGES OF SIN IS DEATH; BUT THE GIFT OF GOD IS ETERNAL LIFE THROUGH JESUS CHRIST OUR LORD.

ROMANS 8:32

32 HE THAT SPARED NOT HIS OWN SON, BUT DELIVERED HIM UP FOR US ALL, HOW SHALL HE NOT WITH HIM ALSO FREELY GIVE US ALL THINGS?

2 CORINTHIANS 9:15

15 THANKS BE UNTO GOD FOR HIS UNSPEAKABLE GIFT.

EPHESIANS 2:8

8 FOR BY GRACE ARE YE SAVED THROUGH FAITH; AND THAT NOT OF YOURSELVES: IT IS THE GIFT OF GOD:

As has already been indicated, salvation is the gift of God. In these verses, salvation is referred to as living water. Jesus was using the water as an object lesson since they were there at the well. Jesus often used natural things to teach spiritual lessons. He used this object lesson to stir up the woman's curiosity. He knew this would draw her out of the deep spiritual well that she was in. He had come to Samaria for that very reason. In verse eleven the woman probably was making a slur.

Have you ever talked smart, even argued with God? This woman was missing the point entirely that Jesus was making. He was trying to meet the greatest need in her life and she was not willing to receive at this point. We often fight against the thing that we need the most.

Most wells of that day really were cisterns. Rainwater was caught and stored in tanks that were often underground. This water often became stagnated and impure. It did not take long for these well to be unsuitable to sustain life. Even if Jacob's well had a running stream in it, it would only meet the need temporarily. The woman, in verse twelve, claimed Jacob as her forefather. This was true because Samaritan people were half Jews. Remember, full-blooded Jews did not associate with the Samaritans. If the woman had been as smart as she had thought, she would have recognized Jesus. Secondly, if she had known more about Jacob she would have known about him wrestling with the Son of God. She would have known that he had declared the Son of God to be far superior to him.

GENESIS 32:24-30

24 AND JACOB WAS LEFT ALONE; AND THERE WRESTLED A MAN WITH HIM UNTIL THE BREAKING OF THE DAY.

25 AND WHEN HE SAW THAT HE PREVAILED NOT AGAINST HIM, HE TOUCHED THE HOLLOW OF HIS THIGH; AND THE HOLLOW OF JACOB'S THIGH WAS OUT OF JOINT, AS HE WRESTLED WITH HIM.

26 AND HE SAID, LET ME GO, FOR THE DAY BREAKETH. AND HE SAID, I WILL NOT LET THEE GO, EXCEPT THOU BLESS ME.

27 AND HE SAID UNTO HIM, WHAT IS THY NAME? AND HE SAID, JACOB.

28 AND HE SAID, THY NAME SHALL BE CALLED NO MORE JACOB, BUT ISRAEL: FOR AS A PRINCE HAST THOU POWER WITH GOD AND WITH MEN, AND HAST PREVAILED.

29 AND JACOB ASKED HIM, AND SAID, TELL ME, I PRAY THEE, THY NAME. AND HE SAID, WHEREFORE IS IT THAT THOU DOST ASK AFTER MY NAME? AND HE BLESSED HIM THERE.

30 AND JACOB CALLED THE NAME OF THE PLACE PENIEL: FOR I HAVE SEEN GOD FACE TO FACE, AND MY LIFE IS PRESERVED.

The woman was only thinking in the natural realm. Jacob, by giving them this well, had met a physical need. The woman was asking Jesus who He thought He was. She wanted to know what physical needs He could meet. Most people, including Christians, think only on the things that pertain to the five senses. If it does not look good, taste good, feel good, smell good, or sound pretty to the ears—forget it.

Jesus did not condemn her for thinking in the natural sense. He just drew her a little more out of the natural into the spiritual. In verse thirteen, Jesus let her know that the natural water would not truly satisfy her real thirst. Natural water or natural things leave you still empty—needing that void in your life to be filled.

Look at verse fourteen.

Jesus compares the old well with His new kind of well. He is comparing the Old Testament with the New Testament. Also He was comparing the woman's life while depending only on natural water with that which she could have after partaking of living water. Jacob's well was deep, but Jesus' well was an artesian well. The living water that He offers overflows out of the top, making it easily accessible for others. Just as Jesus went out of His way to give this woman eternal life, so must we do whatever is necessary to reach others.

Verse fifteen shows that the woman is still thinking in the natural. She was thinking that this prophet who was talking with her could save her from some hard work if He could give her water that would stop her from having to come to the well to draw water. It is obvious that this woman was totally misreading her call to worship.

In verse sixteen, we are told that Jesus did not force her to drink of the water that He was offering. What we see here is that Jesus knew the woman better than she knew herself. He knew exactly what to say to convict her of her sin. There is a great difference between condemnation and conviction. Jesus never condones sin, but he convicts the sinner rather than condemning the sinner. He loves the sinner so much that He was willing to give His life for this woman's salvation and for the salvation of all sinners. Jesus had challenged her guilty conscience. Sinners try to cover guilt, but down inside they are struggling with it. Jesus knew that He could take away both her guilt and her sin.

Verse seventeen is the door opener for Jesus to really reveal Himself to this lost woman so that she could learn how to worship God. In verse eighteen, we see that the woman had been somewhat honest, but not completely honest. She had been five times, but at the present time she was not married. We cannot hide anything from God; He is all-knowing. This woman was presently living with a man that was not her husband. The same is still happening today.

This is very interesting, In that particular day and time, there were five false gods that were worshipped in Samaria. Probably this woman had been involved in worshipping these false gods. Even if she had not, her fellow Samaritans had worshipped them. In a sense the Samaritans had been married to these gods.

Jesus had now made salvation available to this woman. He, the Son of God, the only one through whom mankind could be saved, was reaching out to this woman. She had been told about the true God, but she had not loved Him. She was at that very moment living with the true God, but was not married to Him. Jesus, spiritually speaking, was saying that He wanted to be this woman's spiritual husband.

Like so many of us, she backed away from the Lord. Look at verse nineteen. When He gets close, like Adam and Eve, we try to hide from Him because His presence exposes us for who we really are. This woman tried to change the subject. She acknowledged Him to be a man of God, but still she did not believe Him to be the Son of God. Jesus is more than a prophet. He is the only begotten Son of God.

PHILIPPIANS 2:6

6 WHO, BEING IN THE FORM OF GOD, THOUGHT IT NOT ROBBERY TO BE EQUAL WITH GOD:

HEBREWS 1:1-3

1 GOD, WHO AT SUNDRY TIMES AND IN DIVERS MANNERS SPAKE IN TIME PAST UNTO THE FATHERS BY THE PROPHETS,

2 HATH IN THESE LAST DAYS SPOKEN UNTO US BY HIS SON, WHOM HE HATH APPOINTED HEIR OF ALL THINGS, BY WHOM ALSO HE MADE THE WORLDS;

3 WHO BEING THE BRIGHTNESS OF HIS GLORY, AND THE EXPRESS IMAGE OF HIS PERSON, AND UPHOLDING ALL THINGS BY THE WORD OF HIS POWER, WHEN HE HAD BY HIMSELF PURGED OUR SINS, SAT DOWN ON THE RIGHT HAND OF THE MAJESTY ON HIGH;

John in chapter four, verse twenty reveals that the woman was beginning to move from thinking in the natural to thinking in the spiritual realm. This is like most all of us. We think in the natural, try natural solutions, and when nothing works we finally get around to the spiritual.

Jesus, in verse twenty-one said that the day was coming when worship could occur from any place at any time. It would not merely be in a mountain nor mere in a city, but any place any time. He knew that soon the veil of the temple would be torn in two, making it possible for everybody to have personal access to God. Notice the woman had talked about her "fathers" had worshipped in verse twenty, but Jesus was about to emphasize the object of worship rather than the place. He was in the process of directing the woman to worship God the Father.

In verse twenty-two, Jesus said that the woman had been ignorant of God. Lack of knowledge brings destruction.

HOSEA 4:6

6 MY PEOPLE ARE DESTROYED FOR LACK OF KNOWLEDGE: BECAUSE THOU HAST REJECTED KNOWLEDGE, I WILL ALSO REJECT THEE, THAT THOU SHALT BE NO PRIEST TO ME: SEEING THOU HAST FORGOTTEN THE LAW OF THY GOD, I WILL ALSO FORGET THY CHILDREN.

Jesus, a Jew, knew the plan of salvation. All of the Jews of His day should have known the plan of salvation. The writings of the prophets of old had foretold in minute detail the coming of the Messiah. The Old Covenant had shown that the Messiah and the plan of salvation would be inseparable. The Jews were supposed to have received the Messiah and then have shared Him with the Gentile nations. They did not do this, just as in many cases, the church of today is not doing this.

This Samaritan woman was a half Jew. She should have been taught who God is, but she had not been taught. Jesus that to her that the Samaritans were worshipping something they did not comprehend. Whereas, the Jews were worshipping what they had knowledge of and understood. After all, salvation was to come through the Jews.

The word “now” is used in verse twenty-three. God is a God of the now. He sees everything as one eternal present. There is no yesterday or tomorrow with God. Everything is in the now. If it is not now, it is not of God.

True worshippers are to worship in spirit and truth. Some people have a form of godliness but deny God’s power. This is not true worship. **TRUE WORSHIP IS ENTERING INTO THE PRESENCE OF GOD.** The best explanation of worship is illustrated when a dog licks its master’s hand. We are to worship in spirit. This means that we are to worship from our human spirit with the help of the Holy Spirit. Worshipping in truth is worshipping in reality, that is, being totally honest about one’s self as the light of the Word of God shines upon him.

Note God is not just seeking worshippers. The world is filled with worshippers. There is an innate characteristic in every human to worship someone or something. Even atheists worship. They worship themselves, declaring themselves to be their own gods. Uncivilized people have always recognized a need to worship. They just do not know who to worship. God is seeking worshippers who will worship Him.

Do you worship the true and living God? How do you worship Him? When was the last time that you entered into His presence and genuinely worshipped Him? What was it like to be in the presence of God?

JOHN 4:43

43 NOW AFTER TWO DAYS HE DEPARTED THENCE, AND WENT INTO GALILEE. JESUS STAYED TWO DAYS IN SAMARIA.

These were Gentiles. Could this be prophetic that the worship of the church will be two days or, perhaps, two thousand years?

JOHN 4:44-45

44 FOR JESUS HIMSELF TESTIFIED, THAT A PROPHET HATH NO HONOUR IN HIS OWN COUNTRY.

45 THEN WHEN HE WAS COME INTO GALILEE, THE GALILAEANS RECEIVED HIM, HAVING SEEN ALL THE THINGS THAT HE DID AT JERUSALEM AT THE FEAST: FOR THEY ALSO WENT UNTO THE FEAST.

LUKE 4:14

14 AND JESUS RETURNED IN THE POWER OF THE SPIRIT INTO GALILEE: AND THERE WENT OUT A FAME OF HIM THROUGH ALL THE REGION ROUND ABOUT.

JOHN 4:46

46 SO JESUS CAME AGAIN INTO CANA OF GALILEE, WHERE HE MADE THE WATER WINE. AND THERE WAS A CERTAIN NOBLEMAN, WHOSE SON WAS SICK AT CAPERNAUM.

The nobleman asked Jesus to come down to Capernaum. The man believed the words of Jesus and the boy was healed without Jesus actually going to the man's house.

LUKE 4:16-27

16 AND HE CAME TO NAZARETH, WHERE HE HAD BEEN BROUGHT UP: AND, AS HIS CUSTOM WAS, HE WENT INTO THE SYNAGOGUE ON THE SABBATH DAY, AND STOOD UP FOR TO READ.

17 AND THERE WAS DELIVERED UNTO HIM THE BOOK OF THE PROPHET ESAIAS. AND WHEN HE HAD OPENED THE BOOK, HE FOUND THE PLACE WHERE IT WAS WRITTEN,

18 THE SPIRIT OF THE LORD IS UPON ME, BECAUSE HE HATH ANOINTED ME TO PREACH THE GOSPEL TO THE POOR; HE HATH SENT ME TO HEAL THE BROKENHEARTED, TO PREACH DELIVERANCE TO THE CAPTIVES, AND RECOVERING OF SIGHT TO THE BLIND, TO SET AT LIBERTY THEM THAT ARE BRUISED,

19 TO PREACH THE ACCEPTABLE YEAR OF THE LORD.

20 AND HE CLOSED THE BOOK, AND HE GAVE IT AGAIN TO THE MINISTER, AND SAT DOWN. AND THE EYES OF ALL THEM THAT WERE IN THE SYNAGOGUE WERE FASTENED ON HIM.

21 AND HE BEGAN TO SAY UNTO THEM, THIS DAY IS THIS SCRIPTURE FULFILLED IN YOUR EARS.

22 AND ALL BARE HIM WITNESS, AND WONDERED AT THE GRACIOUS WORDS WHICH PROCEEDED OUT OF HIS MOUTH. AND THEY SAID, IS NOT THIS JOSEPH'S SON?

23 AND HE SAID UNTO THEM, YE WILL SURELY SAY UNTO ME THIS PROVERB, PHYSICIAN, HEAL THYSELF: WHATSOEVER WE HAVE HEARD DONE IN CAPERNAUM, DO ALSO HERE IN THY COUNTRY.

24 AND HE SAID, VERILY I SAY UNTO YOU, NO PROPHET IS ACCEPTED IN HIS OWN COUNTRY.

**25 BUT I TELL YOU OF A TRUTH, MANY WIDOWS WERE IN ISRAEL IN THE DAYS OF ELIAS, WHEN THE HEAVEN WAS SHUT UP THREE YEARS AND SIX MONTHS, WHEN GREAT FAMINE WAS THROUGHOUT ALL THE LAND;
26 BUT UNTO NONE OF THEM WAS ELIAS SENT, SAVE UNTO SAREPTA, A CITY OF SIDON, UNTO A WOMAN THAT WAS A WIDOW.
27 AND MANY LEPERS WERE IN ISRAEL IN THE TIME OF ELISEUS THE PROPHET; AND NONE OF THEM WAS CLEANSED, SAVING NAAMAN THE SYRIAN.**

Have you ever tried to minister to someone and they refused to receive it? What is it like to be unappreciated when you are trying to help someone? These people refused to move beyond the natural.

LUKE 4:28-30

**28 AND ALL THEY IN THE SYNAGOGUE, WHEN THEY HEARD THESE THINGS, WERE FILLED WITH WRATH,
29 AND ROSE UP, AND THRUST HIM OUT OF THE CITY, AND LED HIM UNTO THE BROW OF THE HILL WHEREON THEIR CITY WAS BUILT, THAT THEY MIGHT CAST HIM DOWN HEADLONG.
30 BUT HE PASSING THROUGH THE MIDST OF THEM WENT HIS WAY,**

“Out of the city” emphasizes His excommunication by His hometown people, but the expression also seems to anticipate Jesus’ fate outside the city of Jerusalem. He who opens the kingdom to the Gentiles is Himself rejected as a Gentile and cast out.

JOHN 8:59

59 THEN TOOK THEY UP STONES TO CAST AT HIM: BUT JESUS HID HIMSELF, AND WENT OUT OF THE TEMPLE, GOING THROUGH THE MIDST OF THEM, AND SO PASSED BY.

LUKE 4:31-32

**31 AND CAME DOWN TO CAPERNAUM, A CITY OF GALILEE, AND TAUGHT THEM ON THE SABBATH DAYS.
32 AND THEY WERE ASTONISHED AT HIS DOCTRINE: FOR HIS WORD WAS WITH POWER.**

Unlike other teachers, who monotonously quoted former rabbis, Jesus taught with authority—a consciousness of His calling, backed by divine display and approval.

MATTHEW 4:13-16

**13 AND LEAVING NAZARETH, HE CAME AND DWELT IN CAPERNAUM, WHICH IS UPON THE SEA COAST, IN THE BORDERS OF ZABULON AND NEPHTHALIM:
14 THAT IT MIGHT BE FULFILLED WHICH WAS SPOKEN BY ESAIAS THE PROPHET, SAYING,
15 THE LAND OF ZABULON, AND THE LAND OF NEPHTHALIM, BY THE WAY OF THE SEA, BEYOND JORDAN, GALILEE OF THE GENTILES;**

16 THE PEOPLE WHICH SAT IN DARKNESS SAW GREAT LIGHT; AND TO THEM WHICH SAT IN THE REGION AND SHADOW OF DEATH LIGHT IS SPRUNG up.

He called them.

At this point, Jesus calls four disciples.

MATTHEW 4:18-22

18 AND JESUS, WALKING BY THE SEA OF GALILEE, SAW TWO BRETHERN, SIMON CALLED PETER, AND ANDREW HIS BROTHER, CASTING A NET INTO THE SEA: FOR THEY WERE FISHERS.

19 AND HE SAITH UNTO THEM, FOLLOW ME, AND I WILL MAKE YOU FISHERS OF MEN.

20 AND THEY STRAIGHTWAY LEFT THEIR NETS, AND FOLLOWED HIM.

21 AND GOING ON FROM THENCE, HE SAW OTHER TWO BRETHERN, JAMES THE SON OF ZEBEDEE, AND JOHN HIS BROTHER, IN A SHIP WITH ZEBEDEE THEIR FATHER, MENDING THEIR NETS; AND HE CALLED THEM.

22 AND THEY IMMEDIATELY LEFT THE SHIP AND THEIR FATHER, AND FOLLOWED HIM.

Jesus went to the place where the people were, even while they were working. Actually, these men had already met Jesus, but now they left their secular jobs to follow Him.

MARK 1:16-20

16 NOW AS HE WALKED BY THE SEA OF GALILEE, HE SAW SIMON AND ANDREW HIS BROTHER CASTING A NET INTO THE SEA: FOR THEY WERE FISHERS.

17 AND JESUS SAID UNTO THEM, COME YE AFTER ME, AND I WILL MAKE YOU TO BECOME FISHERS OF MEN.

18 AND STRAIGHTWAY THEY FORSOOK THEIR NETS, AND FOLLOWED HIM.

19 AND WHEN HE HAD GONE A LITTLE FURTHER THENCE, HE SAW JAMES THE SON OF ZEBEDEE, AND JOHN HIS BROTHER, WHO ALSO WERE IN THE SHIP MENDING THEIR NETS.

20 AND STRAIGHTWAY HE CALLED THEM: AND THEY LEFT THEIR FATHER ZEBEDEE IN THE SHIP WITH THE HIRED SERVANTS, AND WENT AFTER HIM.

MARK 1:16-20

16 NOW AS HE WALKED BY THE SEA OF GALILEE, HE SAW SIMON AND ANDREW HIS BROTHER CASTING A NET INTO THE SEA: FOR THEY WERE FISHERS.

17 AND JESUS SAID UNTO THEM, COME YE AFTER ME, AND I WILL MAKE YOU TO BECOME FISHERS OF MEN.

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19 AND WHEN HE HAD GONE A LITTLE FURTHER THENCE, HE SAW JAMES THE SON OF ZEBEDEE, AND JOHN HIS BROTHER, WHO ALSO WERE IN THE SHIP MENDING THEIR NETS.

20 AND STRAIGHTWAY HE CALLED THEM: AND THEY LEFT THEIR FATHER ZEBEDEE IN THE SHIP WITH THE HIRED SERVANTS, AND WENT AFTER HIM.

LUKE 5:4-11

4 NOW WHEN HE HAD LEFT SPEAKING, HE SAID UNTO SIMON, LAUNCH OUT INTO THE DEEP, AND LET DOWN YOUR NETS FOR A DRAUGHT.

5 AND SIMON ANSWERING SAID UNTO HIM, MASTER, WE HAVE TOILED ALL THE NIGHT, AND HAVE TAKEN NOTHING: NEVERTHELESS AT THY WORD I WILL LET DOWN THE NET.

6 AND WHEN THEY HAD THIS DONE, THEY INCLOSED A GREAT MULTITUDE OF FISHES: AND THEIR NET BRAKE.

7 AND THEY BECKONED UNTO THEIR PARTNERS, WHICH WERE IN THE OTHER SHIP, THAT THEY SHOULD COME AND HELP THEM. AND THEY CAME, AND FILLED BOTH THE SHIPS, SO THAT THEY BEGAN TO SINK.

8 WHEN SIMON PETER SAW IT, HE FELL DOWN AT JESUS' KNEES, SAYING, DEPART FROM ME; FOR I AM A SINFUL MAN, O LORD.

9 FOR HE WAS ASTONISHED, AND ALL THAT WERE WITH HIM, AT THE DRAUGHT OF THE FISHES WHICH THEY HAD TAKEN:

10 AND SO WAS ALSO JAMES, AND JOHN, THE SONS OF ZEBEDEE, WHICH WERE PARTNERS WITH SIMON. AND JESUS SAID UNTO SIMON, FEAR NOT; FROM HENCEFORTH THOU SHALT CATCH MEN.

11 AND WHEN THEY HAD BROUGHT THEIR SHIPS TO LAND, THEY FORSOOK ALL, AND FOLLOWED HIM.

Peter's doubts about Jesus' fishing abilities progress to doubt about himself. The first doubt is overcome by a miracle; the second doubt is overcome by a promise. The Greek word for "catch" means "to capture alive." Its tense suggests continuous action. From now on Peter and the others are to continuously capture people for the kingdom of God.

Jesus healing the demoniac is the next event.

MARK 1:23-28

23 AND THERE WAS IN THEIR SYNAGOGUE A MAN WITH AN UNCLEAN SPIRIT; AND HE CRIED OUT,

24 SAYING, LET US ALONE; WHAT HAVE WE TO DO WITH THEE, THOU JESUS OF NAZARETH? ART THOU COME TO DESTROY US? I KNOW THEE WHO THOU ART, THE HOLY ONE OF GOD.

25 AND JESUS REBUKED HIM, SAYING, HOLD THY PEACE, AND COME OUT OF HIM.

26 AND WHEN THE UNCLEAN SPIRIT HAD TORN HIM, AND CRIED WITH A LOUD VOICE, HE CAME OUT OF HIM.

27 AND THEY WERE ALL AMAZED, INSOMUCH THAT THEY QUESTIONED AMONG THEMSELVES, SAYING, WHAT THING IS THIS? WHAT NEW DOCTRINE IS THIS? FOR WITH AUTHORITY COMMANDETH HE EVEN THE UNCLEAN SPIRITS, AND THEY DO OBEY HIM.

28 AND IMMEDIATELY HIS FAME SPREAD ABROAD THROUGHOUT ALL THE REGION ROUND ABOUT GALILEE.

It is clear that both the writers of the Scripture and Jesus accepted the reality of demons. In fact, Jesus used His authority over them as a sign that He had brought the kingdom of God near. Futhermore, He gave to His followers authority over evil spirits.

MARK 1:23-28

23 AND THERE WAS IN THEIR SYNAGOGUE A MAN WITH AN UNCLEAN SPIRIT; AND HE CRIED OUT,

24 SAYING, LET US ALONE; WHAT HAVE WE TO DO WITH THEE, THOU JESUS OF NAZARETH? ART THOU COME TO DESTROY US? I KNOW THEE WHO THOU ART, THE HOLY ONE OF GOD.

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28 AND IMMEDIATELY HIS FAME SPREAD ABROAD THROUGHOUT ALL THE REGION ROUND ABOUT GALILEE.

LUKE 4:33-37

33 AND IN THE SYNAGOGUE THERE WAS A MAN, WHICH HAD A SPIRIT OF AN UNCLEAN DEVIL, AND CRIED OUT WITH A LOUD VOICE,

34 SAYING, LET US ALONE; WHAT HAVE WE TO DO WITH THEE, THOU JESUS OF NAZARETH? ART THOU COME TO DESTROY US? I KNOW THEE WHO THOU ART; THE HOLY ONE OF GOD.

35 AND JESUS REBUKED HIM, SAYING, HOLD THY PEACE, AND COME OUT OF HIM. AND WHEN THE DEVIL HAD THROWN HIM IN THE MIDST, HE CAME OUT OF HIM, AND HURT HIM NOT.

36 AND THEY WERE ALL AMAZED, AND SPAKE AMONG THEMSELVES, SAYING, WHAT A WORD IS THIS! FOR WITH AUTHORITY AND POWER HE COMMANDETH THE UNCLEAN SPIRITS, AND THEY COME OUT.

37 AND THE FAME OF HIM WENT OUT INTO EVERY PLACE OF THE COUNTRY ROUND ABOUT.

The next phase of Jesus' ministry included Peter's mother-in-law being healed.

MATTHEW 8:14-15

14 AND WHEN JESUS WAS COME INTO PETER'S HOUSE, HE SAW HIS WIFE'S MOTHER LAID, AND SICK OF A FEVER.

15 AND HE TOUCHED HER HAND, AND THE FEVER LEFT HER: AND SHE AROSE, AND MINISTERED UNTO THEM.

Jesus touched her hand. The cure was instant and complete. She arose and served Him.

MARK 1:29-31

29 AND FORTHWITH, WHEN THEY WERE COME OUT OF THE SYNAGOGUE, THEY ENTERED INTO THE HOUSE OF SIMON AND ANDREW, WITH JAMES AND JOHN.

30 BUT SIMON'S WIFE'S MOTHER LAY SICK OF A FEVER, AND ANON THEY TELL HIM OF HER.

31 AND HE CAME AND TOOK HER BY THE HAND, AND LIFTED HER UP; AND IMMEDIATELY THE FEVER LEFT HER, AND SHE MINISTERED UNTO THEM.

He lifted her up.

LUKE 4:38-39

38 AND HE AROSE OUT OF THE SYNAGOGUE, AND ENTERED INTO SIMON'S HOUSE. AND SIMON'S WIFE'S MOTHER WAS TAKEN WITH A GREAT FEVER; AND THEY BESOUGHT HIM FOR HER.

39 AND HE STOOD OVER HER, AND REBUKED THE FEVER; AND IT LEFT HER: AND IMMEDIATELY SHE AROSE AND MINISTERED UNTO THEM.

He stood over her.

Let's now look at Jesus' later Galilean ministry.

MATTHEW 4:23-5:1

23 AND JESUS WENT ABOUT ALL GALILEE, TEACHING IN THEIR SYNAGOGUES, AND PREACHING THE GOSPEL OF THE KINGDOM, AND HEALING ALL MANNER OF SICKNESS AND ALL MANNER OF DISEASE AMONG THE PEOPLE.

24 AND HIS FAME WENT THROUGHOUT ALL SYRIA: AND THEY BROUGHT UNTO HIM ALL SICK PEOPLE THAT WERE TAKEN WITH DIVERS DISEASES AND TORMENTS, AND THOSE WHICH WERE POSSESSED WITH DEVILS, AND THOSE WHICH WERE LUNATICK, AND THOSE THAT HAD THE PALSY; AND HE HEALED THEM.

25 AND THERE FOLLOWED HIM GREAT MULTITUDES OF PEOPLE FROM GALILEE, AND FROM DECAPOLIS, AND FROM JERUSALEM, AND FROM JUDAEA, AND FROM BEYOND JORDAN.

The Galilean ministry resulted in increasing popularity for Jesus. The leper healed is the next thing that happened in the life of Jesus.

MATTHEW 8:2-4

2 AND, BEHOLD, THERE CAME A LEPER AND WORSHIPPED HIM, SAYING, LORD, IF THOU WILT, THOU CANST MAKE ME CLEAN.

3 AND JESUS PUT FORTH HIS HAND, AND TOUCHED HIM, SAYING, I WILL; BE THOU CLEAN. AND IMMEDIATELY HIS LEPROSY WAS CLEANSED.

4 AND JESUS SAITH UNTO HIM, SEE THOU TELL NO MAN; BUT GO THY WAY, SHEW THYSELF TO THE PRIEST, AND OFFER THE GIFT THAT MOSES COMMANDED, FOR A TESTIMONY UNTO THEM.

Jesus touched the leper, exhibiting an authority over both disease and the Law, which prohibited such physical contact with a leper. He then instructed the leper to show himself to the priest, balancing His authority over the law with His commitment to it.

MARK 1:40-42

40 AND THERE CAME A LEPER TO HIM, BESEECHING HIM, AND KNEELING DOWN TO HIM, AND SAYING UNTO HIM, IF THOU WILT, THOU CANST MAKE ME CLEAN.

41 AND JESUS, MOVED WITH COMPASSION, PUT FORTH HIS HAND, AND TOUCHED HIM, AND SAITH UNTO HIM, I WILL; BE THOU CLEAN.

42 AND AS SOON AS HE HAD SPOKEN, IMMEDIATELY THE LEPROSY DEPARTED FROM HIM, AND HE WAS CLEANSED.

LUKE 5:12-13

12 AND IT CAME TO PASS, WHEN HE WAS IN A CERTAIN CITY, BEHOLD A MAN FULL OF LEPROSY: WHO SEEING JESUS FELL ON HIS FACE, AND BESOUGHT HIM, SAYING, LORD, IF THOU WILT, THOU CANST MAKE ME CLEAN.

13 AND HE PUT FORTH HIS HAND, AND TOUCHED HIM, SAYING, I WILL: BE THOU CLEAN. AND IMMEDIATELY THE LEPROSY DEPARTED FROM HIM.

Jesus then returns to Capernaum.

MARK 2:1-2

2:1 AND AGAIN HE ENTERED INTO CAPERNAUM, AFTER SOME DAYS; AND IT WAS NOISED THAT HE WAS IN THE HOUSE.

2 AND STRAIGHTWAY MANY WERE GATHERED TOGETHER, INSOMUCH THAT THERE WAS NO ROOM TO RECEIVE THEM, NO, NOT SO MUCH AS ABOUT THE DOOR: AND HE PREACHED THE WORD UNTO THEM.

The man who suffered with palsy is the next to be healed.

MATTHEW 9:2-8

2 AND, BEHOLD, THEY BROUGHT TO HIM A MAN SICK OF THE PALSY, LYING ON A BED: AND JESUS SEEING THEIR FAITH SAID UNTO THE SICK OF THE PALSY; SON, BE OF GOOD CHEER; THY SINS BE FORGIVEN THEE.

3 AND, BEHOLD, CERTAIN OF THE SCRIBES SAID WITHIN THEMSELVES, THIS MAN BLASPHEMETH.

4 AND JESUS KNOWING THEIR THOUGHTS SAID, WHEREFORE THINK YE EVIL IN YOUR HEARTS?

5 FOR WHETHER IS EASIER, TO SAY, THY SINS BE FORGIVEN THEE; OR TO SAY, ARISE, AND WALK?

6 BUT THAT YE MAY KNOW THAT THE SON OF MAN HATH POWER ON EARTH TO FORGIVE SINS,(THEN SAITH HE TO THE SICK OF THE PALSY,) ARISE, TAKE UP THY BED, AND GO UNTO THINE HOUSE.

7 AND HE AROSE, AND DEPARTED TO HIS HOUSE.

8 BUT WHEN THE MULTITUDES SAW IT, THEY MARVELLED, AND GLORIFIED GOD, WHICH HAD GIVEN SUCH POWER UNTO MEN.

Jesus had shown authority over disease, nature, and demons. Now He reveals His power over sin. The response of Jesus to the faith (here a confidence in God's providential power) of the paralytic's friends shows the effectiveness of faith on behalf of others. The charge of blasphemy would have been correct if Jesus had not been the Son of God. Among the many principles of this incident is the interconnection of this man's paralysis with his undisclosed sin. Having dealt with his sin, Jesus healed him and established His delegated authority and power to forgive sin.

MARK 2:2-12

2 AND STRAIGHTWAY MANY WERE GATHERED TOGETHER, INSOMUCH THAT THERE WAS NO ROOM TO RECEIVE THEM, NO, NOT SO MUCH AS ABOUT THE DOOR: AND HE PREACHED THE WORD UNTO THEM.

3 AND THEY COME UNTO HIM, BRINGING ONE SICK OF THE PALSY, WHICH WAS BORNE OF FOUR.

4 AND WHEN THEY COULD NOT COME NIGH UNTO HIM FOR THE PRESS, THEY UNCOVERED THE ROOF WHERE HE WAS: AND WHEN THEY HAD BROKEN IT UP, THEY LET DOWN THE BED WHEREIN THE SICK OF THE PALSY LAY.

5 WHEN JESUS SAW THEIR FAITH, HE SAID UNTO THE SICK OF THE PALSY, SON, THY SINS BE FORGIVEN THEE.

6 BUT THERE WERE CERTAIN OF THE SCRIBES SITTING THERE, AND REASONING IN THEIR HEARTS,

7 WHY DOTH THIS MAN THUS SPEAK BLASPHEMIES? WHO CAN FORGIVE SINS BUT GOD ONLY?

8 AND IMMEDIATELY WHEN JESUS PERCEIVED IN HIS SPIRIT THAT THEY SO REASONED WITHIN THEMSELVES, HE SAID UNTO THEM, WHY REASON YE THESE THINGS IN YOUR HEARTS?

9 WHETHER IS IT EASIER TO SAY TO THE SICK OF THE PALSY, THY SINS BE FORGIVEN THEE; OR TO SAY, ARISE, AND TAKE UP THY BED, AND WALK?

10 BUT THAT YE MAY KNOW THAT THE SON OF MAN HATH POWER ON EARTH TO FORGIVE SINS, (HE SAITH TO THE SICK OF THE PALSY,)

11 I SAY UNTO THEE, ARISE, AND TAKE UP THY BED, AND GO THY WAY INTO THINE HOUSE.

12 AND IMMEDIATELY HE AROSE, TOOK UP THE BED, AND WENT FORTH BEFORE THEM ALL; INSOMUCH THAT THEY WERE ALL AMAZED, AND GLORIFIED GOD, SAYING, WE NEVER SAW IT ON THIS FASHION.

The response of Jesus reflects the Jewish view that forgiveness of sins must precede physical healing. Whether or not this particular disease was the consequence of sin, Jesus went to the heart of the matter. Sin and disease are effects of evil, and Jesus reveals God's opposition to evil in any way it may manifest. His goal is to bring complete wholeness to people.

LUKE 5:18-26

18 AND, BEHOLD, MEN BROUGHT IN A BED A MAN WHICH WAS TAKEN WITH A PALSY: AND THEY SOUGHT MEANS TO BRING HIM IN, AND TO LAY HIM BEFORE HIM.

19 AND WHEN THEY COULD NOT FIND BY WHAT WAY THEY MIGHT BRING HIM IN BECAUSE OF THE MULTITUDE, THEY WENT UPON THE HOUSETOP, AND LET HIM DOWN THROUGH THE TILING WITH HIS COUCH INTO THE MIDST BEFORE JESUS.

20 AND WHEN HE SAW THEIR FAITH, HE SAID UNTO HIM, MAN, THY SINS ARE FORGIVEN THEE.

21 AND THE SCRIBES AND THE PHARISEES BEGAN TO REASON, SAYING, WHO IS THIS WHICH SPEAKETH BLASPHEMIES? WHO CAN FORGIVE SINS, BUT GOD ALONE?

22 BUT WHEN JESUS PERCEIVED THEIR THOUGHTS, HE ANSWERING SAID UNTO THEM, WHAT REASON YE IN YOUR HEARTS?

23 WHETHER IS EASIER, TO SAY, THY SINS BE FORGIVEN THEE; OR TO SAY, RISE UP AND WALK?

24 BUT THAT YE MAY KNOW THAT THE SON OF MAN HATH POWER UPON EARTH TO FORGIVE SINS, (HE SAID UNTO THE SICK OF THE PALSY,) I SAY UNTO THEE, ARISE, AND TAKE UP THY COUCH, AND GO INTO THINE HOUSE.

25 AND IMMEDIATELY HE ROSE UP BEFORE THEM, AND TOOK UP THAT WHEREON HE LAY, AND DEPARTED TO HIS OWN HOUSE, GLORIFYING GOD.

26 AND THEY WERE ALL AMAZED, AND THEY GLORIFIED GOD, AND WERE FILLED WITH FEAR, SAYING, WE HAVE SEEN STRANGE THINGS TO DAY.

Now Jesus calls Matthew.

MATTHEW 9:9-13

9 AND AS JESUS PASSED FORTH FROM THENCE, HE SAW A MAN, NAMED MATTHEW, SITTING AT THE RECEIPT OF CUSTOM: AND HE SAITH UNTO HIM, FOLLOW ME. AND HE AROSE, AND FOLLOWED HIM.

10 AND IT CAME TO PASS, AS JESUS SAT AT MEAT IN THE HOUSE, BEHOLD, MANY PUBLICANS AND SINNERS CAME AND SAT DOWN WITH HIM AND HIS DISCIPLES.

11 AND WHEN THE PHARISEES SAW IT, THEY SAID UNTO HIS DISCIPLES, WHY EATETH YOUR MASTER WITH PUBLICANS AND SINNERS?

12 BUT WHEN JESUS HEARD THAT, HE SAID UNTO THEM, THEY THAT BE WHOLE NEED NOT A PHYSICIAN, BUT THEY THAT ARE SICK.

13 BUT GO YE AND LEARN WHAT THAT MEANETH, I WILL HAVE MERCY, AND NOT SACRIFICE: FOR I AM NOT COME TO CALL THE RIGHTEOUS, BUT SINNERS TO REPENTANCE.

In having fellowship with publicly acknowledged sinners, Jesus defied accepted social custom. Jesus demonstrated His authority over man-made customs that disregarded the laws of God.

MARK 2:13-17

13 AND HE WENT FORTH AGAIN BY THE SEA SIDE; AND ALL THE MULTITUDE RESORTED UNTO HIM, AND HE TAUGHT THEM.

14 AND AS HE PASSED BY, HE SAW LEVI THE SON OF ALPHAEUS SITTING AT THE RECEIPT OF CUSTOM, AND SAID UNTO HIM, FOLLOW ME. AND HE AROSE AND FOLLOWED HIM.

15 AND IT CAME TO PASS, THAT, AS JESUS SAT AT MEAT IN HIS HOUSE, MANY PUBLICANS AND SINNERS SAT ALSO TOGETHER WITH JESUS AND HIS DISCIPLES: FOR THERE WERE MANY, AND THEY FOLLOWED HIM.

16 AND WHEN THE SCRIBES AND PHARISEES SAW HIM EAT WITH PUBLICANS AND SINNERS, THEY SAID UNTO HIS DISCIPLES, HOW IS IT THAT HE EATETH AND DRINKETH WITH PUBLICANS AND SINNERS?

17 WHEN JESUS HEARD IT, HE SAITH UNTO THEM, THEY THAT ARE WHOLE HAVE NO NEED OF THE PHYSICIAN, BUT THEY THAT ARE SICK: I CAME NOT TO CALL THE RIGHTEOUS, BUT SINNERS TO REPENTANCE.

Jesus continued to organize His following by summoning a tax collector, a man held in public contempt because of his vocation. Levi was his given name, and Matthew, meaning “Gift of God” became his apostolic name. Tax collectors and sinners are often grouped together, and signify those people who by vocation or morality place themselves outside the society of God’s covenant people. For Jesus to have fellowship with such people would bring Him into conflict with the Pharisees. By consorting with persons labeled as sinners, Jesus had crossed over the Jewish boundary lines. Tax collectors and sinners were not even to be taught the statutes of God since their vocation and life-style made them ritually unclean.

Jesus likens Himself to a physician who goes where there is genuine need. It is just as absurd for Jesus to refuse to deal with publicly acknowledged sinners as it is for a doctor to refuse to treat the sick.

LUKE 5:27-28

27 AND AFTER THESE THINGS HE WENT FORTH, AND SAW A PUBLICAN, NAMED LEVI, SITTING AT THE RECEIPT OF CUSTOM: AND HE SAID UNTO HIM, FOLLOW ME.

28 AND HE LEFT ALL, ROSE UP, AND FOLLOWED HIM.

Jesus defends the disciples with a parable.

MATTHEW 9:14-17

14 THEN CAME TO HIM THE DISCIPLES OF JOHN, SAYING, WHY DO WE AND THE PHARISEES FAST OFT, BUT THY DISCIPLES FAST NOT?

15 AND JESUS SAID UNTO THEM, CAN THE CHILDREN OF THE BRIDECHAMBER MOURN, AS LONG AS THE BRIDEGROOM IS WITH THEM? BUT THE DAYS WILL COME, WHEN THE BRIDEGROOM SHALL BE TAKEN FROM THEM, AND THEN SHALL THEY FAST.

16 NO MAN PUTTETH A PIECE OF NEW CLOTH UNTO AN OLD GARMENT, FOR THAT WHICH IS PUT IN TO FILL IT UP TAKETH FROM THE GARMENT, AND THE RENT IS MADE WORSE.

17 NEITHER DO MEN PUT NEW WINE INTO OLD BOTTLES: ELSE THE BOTTLES BREAK, AND THE WINE RUNNETH OUT, AND THE BOTTLES PERISH: BUT THEY PUT NEW WINE INTO NEW BOTTLES, AND BOTH ARE PRESERVED.

The response of Jesus to the question of fasting shows His authority over religious observances and, at the same time reveals the relationship of Christianity to Judaism. Fasting suggests mourning. The presence of Jesus with His disciples, which inaugurated the kingdom of heaven, is an occasion for joyful celebration. The present is a time of joy and celebration while the bridegroom is with them.

Jesus' rhetorical response further demonstrates the error of mechanical fasts, which fail to discern God's specific directive. The old forms of Judaism could not contain the spiritual freshness of the gospel. Grace cannot be sewed onto nor poured into the system of legalism.

Rather than patching up a brittle, worn-out, and obsolete system, Jesus came to offer a new life imparted by faith in Him.

MATTHEW 2:18-22

18 IN RAMA WAS THERE A VOICE HEARD, LAMENTATION, AND WEEPING, AND GREAT MOURNING, RACHEL WEEPING FOR HER CHILDREN, AND WOULD NOT BE COMFORTED, BECAUSE THEY ARE NOT.

19 BUT WHEN HEROD WAS DEAD, BEHOLD, AN ANGEL OF THE LORD APPEARETH IN A DREAM TO JOSEPH IN EGYPT,

20 SAYING, ARISE, AND TAKE THE YOUNG CHILD AND HIS MOTHER, AND GO INTO THE LAND OF ISRAEL: FOR THEY ARE DEAD WHICH SOUGHT THE YOUNG CHILD'S LIFE.

21 AND HE AROSE, AND TOOK THE YOUNG CHILD AND HIS MOTHER, AND CAME INTO THE LAND OF ISRAEL.

22 BUT WHEN HE HEARD THAT ARCHELAUS DID REIGN IN JUDAEA IN THE ROOM OF HIS FATHER HEROD, HE WAS AFRAID TO GO THITHER: NOTWITHSTANDING, BEING WARNED OF GOD IN A DREAM, HE TURNED ASIDE INTO THE PARTS OF GALILEE:

In verse 20, Jesus alludes to His coming death. To try to tack the new gospel of Jesus to the old legalistic system of Judaism would be like patching an old garment with a new, unshrunk cloth.

The whole garment will be ruined by the first wash. The joy of the new message cannot be contained within Jewish legalism any more than fermenting wine can be held in bottles of old wineskins.

LUKE 5:33-39

33 AND THEY SAID UNTO HIM, WHY DO THE DISCIPLES OF JOHN FAST OFTEN, AND MAKE PRAYERS, AND LIKEWISE THE DISCIPLES OF THE PHARISEES; BUT THINE EAT AND DRINK?

34 AND HE SAID UNTO THEM, CAN YE MAKE THE CHILDREN OF THE BRIDECHAMBER FAST, WHILE THE BRIDEGROOM IS WITH THEM?

35 BUT THE DAYS WILL COME, WHEN THE BRIDEGROOM SHALL BE TAKEN AWAY FROM THEM, AND THEN SHALL THEY FAST IN THOSE DAYS.

36 AND HE SPAKE ALSO A PARABLE UNTO THEM; NO MAN PUTTETH A PIECE OF A NEW GARMENT UPON AN OLD; IF OTHERWISE, THEN BOTH THE NEW MAKETH A RENT, AND THE PIECE THAT WAS TAKEN OUT OF THE NEW AGREETH NOT WITH THE OLD.

37 AND NO MAN PUTTETH NEW WINE INTO OLD BOTTLES; ELSE THE NEW WINE WILL BURST THE BOTTLES, AND BE SPILLED, AND THE BOTTLES SHALL PERISH.

38 BUT NEW WINE MUST BE PUT INTO NEW BOTTLES; AND BOTH ARE PRESERVED.

39 NO MAN ALSO HAVING DRUNK OLD WINE STRAIGHTWAY DESIRETH NEW: FOR HE SAITH, THE OLD IS BETTER.

Jesus sadly describes people who are satisfied with the old legalistic system and who are reluctant to accept the gospel.

JOHN 5:1-47

1 AFTER THIS THERE WAS A FEAST OF THE JEWS; AND JESUS WENT UP TO JERUSALEM.

2 NOW THERE IS AT JERUSALEM BY THE SHEEP MARKET A POOL, WHICH IS CALLED IN THE HEBREW TONGUE BETHESDA, HAVING FIVE PORCHES.

3 IN THESE LAY A GREAT MULTITUDE OF IMPOTENT FOLK, OF BLIND, HALT, WITHERED, WAITING FOR THE MOVING OF THE WATER.

4 FOR AN ANGEL WENT DOWN AT A CERTAIN SEASON INTO THE POOL, AND TROUBLED THE WATER: WHOSOEVER THEN FIRST AFTER THE TROUBLING OF THE WATER STEPPED IN WAS MADE WHOLE OF WHATSOEVER DISEASE HE HAD.

5 AND A CERTAIN MAN WAS THERE, WHICH HAD AN INFIRMITY THIRTY AND EIGHT YEARS.

6 WHEN JESUS SAW HIM LIE, AND KNEW THAT HE HAD BEEN NOW A LONG TIME IN THAT CASE, HE SAITH UNTO HIM, WILT THOU BE MADE WHOLE?

7 THE IMPOTENT MAN ANSWERED HIM, SIR, I HAVE NO MAN, WHEN THE WATER IS TROUBLED, TO PUT ME INTO THE POOL: BUT WHILE I AM COMING, ANOTHER STEPPETH DOWN BEFORE ME.

8 JESUS SAITH UNTO HIM, RISE, TAKE UP THY BED, AND WALK.

9 AND IMMEDIATELY THE MAN WAS MADE WHOLE, AND TOOK UP HIS BED, AND WALKED: AND ON THE SAME DAY WAS THE SABBATH.

10 THE JEWS THEREFORE SAID UNTO HIM THAT WAS CURED, IT IS THE SABBATH DAY: IT IS NOT LAWFUL FOR THEE TO CARRY THY BED.

11 HE ANSWERED THEM, HE THAT MADE ME WHOLE, THE SAME SAID UNTO ME, TAKE UP THY BED, AND WALK.

12 THEN ASKED THEY HIM, WHAT MAN IS THAT WHICH SAID UNTO THEE, TAKE UP THY BED, AND WALK?

13 AND HE THAT WAS HEALED WIST NOT WHO IT WAS: FOR JESUS HAD CONVEYED HIMSELF AWAY, A MULTITUDE BEING IN THAT PLACE.

14 AFTERWARD JESUS FINDETH HIM IN THE TEMPLE, AND SAID UNTO HIM, BEHOLD, THOU ART MADE WHOLE: SIN NO MORE, LEST A WORSE THING COME UNTO THEE.

15 THE MAN DEPARTED, AND TOLD THE JEWS THAT IT WAS JESUS, WHICH HAD MADE HIM WHOLE.

16 AND THEREFORE DID THE JEWS PERSECUTE JESUS, AND SOUGHT TO SLAY HIM, BECAUSE HE HAD DONE THESE THINGS ON THE SABBATH DAY.

17 BUT JESUS ANSWERED THEM, MY FATHER WORKETH HITHERTO, AND I WORK.

18 THEREFORE THE JEWS SOUGHT THE MORE TO KILL HIM, BECAUSE HE NOT ONLY HAD BROKEN THE SABBATH, BUT SAID ALSO THAT GOD WAS HIS FATHER, MAKING HIMSELF EQUAL WITH GOD.

19 THEN ANSWERED JESUS AND SAID UNTO THEM, VERILY, VERILY, I SAY UNTO YOU, THE SON CAN DO NOTHING OF HIMSELF, BUT WHAT HE SEETH THE FATHER DO: FOR WHAT THINGS SOEVER HE DOETH, THESE ALSO DOETH THE SON LIKEWISE.

20 FOR THE FATHER LOVETH THE SON, AND SHEWETH HIM ALL THINGS THAT HIMSELF DOETH: AND HE WILL SHEW HIM GREATER WORKS THAN THESE, THAT YE MAY MARVEL.

21 FOR AS THE FATHER RAISETH UP THE DEAD, AND QUICKENETH THEM; EVEN SO THE SON QUICKENETH WHOM HE WILL.

22 FOR THE FATHER JUDGETH NO MAN, BUT HATH COMMITTED ALL JUDGMENT UNTO THE SON:

23 THAT ALL MEN SHOULD HONOUR THE SON, EVEN AS THEY HONOUR THE FATHER. HE THAT HONoureth NOT THE SON HONoureth NOT THE FATHER WHICH HATH SENT HIM.

24 VERILY, VERILY, I SAY UNTO YOU, HE THAT HEARETH MY WORD, AND BELIEVETH ON HIM THAT SENT ME, HATH EVERLASTING LIFE, AND SHALL NOT COME INTO CONDEMNATION; BUT IS PASSED FROM DEATH UNTO LIFE.

25 VERILY, VERILY, I SAY UNTO YOU, THE HOUR IS COMING, AND NOW IS, WHEN THE DEAD SHALL HEAR THE VOICE OF THE SON OF GOD: AND THEY THAT HEAR SHALL LIVE.

26 FOR AS THE FATHER HATH LIFE IN HIMSELF; SO HATH HE GIVEN TO THE SON TO HAVE LIFE IN HIMSELF;

27 AND HATH GIVEN HIM AUTHORITY TO EXECUTE JUDGMENT ALSO, BECAUSE HE IS THE SON OF MAN.

28 MARVEL NOT AT THIS: FOR THE HOUR IS COMING, IN THE WHICH ALL THAT ARE IN THE GRAVES SHALL HEAR HIS VOICE,
29 AND SHALL COME FORTH; THEY THAT HAVE DONE GOOD, UNTO THE RESURRECTION OF LIFE; AND THEY THAT HAVE DONE EVIL, UNTO THE RESURRECTION OF DAMNATION.
30 I CAN OF MINE OWN SELF DO NOTHING: AS I HEAR, I JUDGE: AND MY JUDGMENT IS JUST; BECAUSE I SEEK NOT MINE OWN WILL, BUT THE WILL OF THE FATHER WHICH HATH SENT ME.
31 IF I BEAR WITNESS OF MYSELF, MY WITNESS IS NOT TRUE.
32 THERE IS ANOTHER THAT BEARETH WITNESS OF ME; AND I KNOW THAT THE WITNESS WHICH HE WITNESSETH OF ME IS TRUE.
33 YE SENT UNTO JOHN, AND HE BARE WITNESS UNTO THE TRUTH.
34 BUT I RECEIVE NOT TESTIMONY FROM MAN: BUT THESE THINGS I SAY, THAT YE MIGHT BE SAVED.
35 HE WAS A BURNING AND A SHINING LIGHT: AND YE WERE WILLING FOR A SEASON TO REJOICE IN HIS LIGHT.
36 BUT I HAVE GREATER WITNESS THAN THAT OF JOHN: FOR THE WORKS WHICH THE FATHER HATH GIVEN ME TO FINISH, THE SAME WORKS THAT I DO, BEAR WITNESS OF ME, THAT THE FATHER HATH SENT ME.
37 AND THE FATHER HIMSELF, WHICH HATH SENT ME, HATH BORNE WITNESS OF ME. YE HAVE NEITHER HEARD HIS VOICE AT ANY TIME, NOR SEEN HIS SHAPE.
38 AND YE HAVE NOT HIS WORD ABIDING IN YOU: FOR WHOM HE HATH SENT, HIM YE BELIEVE NOT.
39 SEARCH THE SCRIPTURES; FOR IN THEM YE THINK YE HAVE ETERNAL LIFE: AND THEY ARE THEY WHICH TESTIFY OF ME.
40 AND YE WILL NOT COME TO ME, THAT YE MIGHT HAVE LIFE.
41 I RECEIVE NOT HONOUR FROM MEN.
42 BUT I KNOW YOU, THAT YE HAVE NOT THE LOVE OF GOD IN YOU.
43 I AM COME IN MY FATHER'S NAME, AND YE RECEIVE ME NOT: IF ANOTHER SHALL COME IN HIS OWN NAME, HIM YE WILL RECEIVE.
44 HOW CAN YE BELIEVE, WHICH RECEIVE HONOUR ONE OF ANOTHER, AND SEEK NOT THE HONOUR THAT COMETH FROM GOD ONLY?
45 DO NOT THINK THAT I WILL ACCUSE YOU TO THE FATHER: THERE IS ONE THAT ACCUSETH YOU, EVEN MOSES, IN WHOM YE TRUST.
46 FOR HAD YE BELIEVED MOSES, YE WOULD HAVE BELIEVED ME: FOR HE WROTE OF ME.
47 BUT IF YE BELIEVE NOT HIS WRITINGS, HOW SHALL YE BELIEVE MY WORDS?

John did not identify this particular feast, and it is impossible to determine which one it was. Literally, the gate mentioned in verse means “pertaining to sheep.” Based on a later Christian tradition, the incorrectly rendered it “sheep market.” Bethesda is the Hebrew word literally meaning “Place of Outpouring,” or “House of Grace.” Today the pool is identified with practical certainty as the double pool at the Church of St. Anne. Except for the duration of the man’s illness, John’s emphasis is not much on the medical details of the

case. The emphasis is on the supernatural cure, its consequences, and its testimony to Christ's life-giving power. The statements may reflect a popular tradition associated with the pool that the bubbling of the waters which some scholars feel was caused by an intermittent spring, was supernaturally caused by an angel. Irrespective of the source of the waters being stirred, the testimony of God's healing grace was nonetheless present. If Jesus healing on the Sabbath evoked the wrath of the Jewish religious leaders, His claim to equality with God earned Him their charge of blasphemy and its necessary death sentence.

From this point on, Jesus was on a collision course with the authorities. Jesus in no way acted independently of the Father. On the contrary, He understood that, because He and the Father were one, He did only what His Father showed Him. Jesus' authority, then, was not usurped, but derived from the Father's authority. Conversely, one cannot honor the Father apart from honoring the Son. Jesus addresses the entire discourse of His relationship to the Father to those who accused Him of blasphemy. In the discourse Jesus' love even for His enemies is made crystal clear. While His desire is for them to be saved, their problem is not that they cannot believe but that they are unwilling to accept His offer of life.

Now, let's look at Jesus' discourse on the Sabbath. The growing opposition to the ministry of Jesus by the religious leaders finds its fullest expression in the observance of the Sabbath, the most sacred institution among the Jews.

MATTHEW 12:1-8

1 AT THAT TIME JESUS WENT ON THE SABBATH DAY THROUGH THE CORN; AND HIS DISCIPLES WERE AN HUNGRED, AND BEGAN TO PLUCK THE EARS OF CORN, AND TO EAT.

2 BUT WHEN THE PHARISEES SAW IT, THEY SAID UNTO HIM, BEHOLD, THY DISCIPLES DO THAT WHICH IS NOT LAWFUL TO DO UPON THE SABBATH DAY.

3 BUT HE SAID UNTO THEM, HAVE YE NOT READ WHAT DAVID DID, WHEN HE WAS AN HUNGRED, AND THEY THAT WERE WITH HIM;

4 HOW HE ENTERED INTO THE HOUSE OF GOD, AND DID EAT THE SHEWBREAD, WHICH WAS NOT LAWFUL FOR HIM TO EAT, NEITHER FOR THEM WHICH WERE WITH HIM, BUT ONLY FOR THE PRIESTS?

5 OR HAVE YE NOT READ IN THE LAW, HOW THAT ON THE SABBATH DAYS THE PRIESTS IN THE TEMPLE PROFANE THE SABBATH, AND ARE BLAMELESS?

6 BUT I SAY UNTO YOU, THAT IN THIS PLACE IS ONE GREATER THAN THE TEMPLE.

7 BUT IF YE HAD KNOWN WHAT THIS MEANETH, I WILL HAVE MERCY, AND NOT SACRIFICE, YE WOULD NOT HAVE CONDEMNED THE GUILTLESS.

8 FOR THE SON OF MAN IS LORD EVEN OF THE SABBATH DAY.

In verse three, Jesus supports His disciples' action by His appeal to David's example.

1 SAMUEL 21:1-6

1 THEN CAME DAVID TO NOB TO AHIMELECH THE PRIEST: AND AHIMELECH WAS AFRAID AT THE MEETING OF DAVID, AND SAID UNTO HIM, WHY ART THOU ALONE, AND NO MAN WITH THEE?

2 AND DAVID SAID UNTO AHIMELECH THE PRIEST, THE KING HATH COMMANDED ME A BUSINESS, AND HATH SAID UNTO ME, LET NO MAN KNOW ANY THING OF THE BUSINESS WHEREABOUT I SEND THEE, AND WHAT I HAVE COMMANDED THEE: AND I HAVE APPOINTED MY SERVANTS TO SUCH AND SUCH A PLACE.

3 NOW THEREFORE WHAT IS UNDER THINE HAND? GIVE ME FIVE LOAVES OF BREAD IN MINE HAND, OR WHAT THERE IS PRESENT.

4 AND THE PRIEST ANSWERED DAVID, AND SAID, THERE IS NO COMMON BREAD UNDER MINE HAND, BUT THERE IS HALLOWED BREAD; IF THE YOUNG MEN HAVE KEPT THEMSELVES AT LEAST FROM WOMEN.

5 AND DAVID ANSWERED THE PRIEST, AND SAID UNTO HIM, OF A TRUTH WOMEN HAVE BEEN KEPT FROM US ABOUT THESE THREE DAYS, SINCE I CAME OUT, AND THE VESSELS OF THE YOUNG MEN ARE HOLY, AND THE BREAD IS IN A MANNER COMMON, YEA, THOUGH IT WERE SANCTIFIED THIS DAY IN THE VESSEL.

6 SO THE PRIEST GAVE HIM HALLOWED BREAD: FOR THERE WAS NO BREAD THERE BUT THE SHEWBREAD, THAT WAS TAKEN FROM BEFORE THE LORD, TO PUT HOT BREAD IN THE DAY WHEN IT WAS TAKEN AWAY.

Jesus verified that normal Sabbath regulations may need to yield to human need.

LUKE 6:3-5

3 AND JESUS ANSWERING THEM SAID, HAVE YE NOT READ SO MUCH AS THIS, WHAT DAVID DID, WHEN HIMSELF WAS AN HUNGRED, AND THEY WHICH WERE WITH HIM;

4 HOW HE WENT INTO THE HOUSE OF GOD, AND DID TAKE AND EAT THE SHEWBREAD, AND GAVE ALSO TO THEM THAT WERE WITH HIM; WHICH IT IS NOT LAWFUL TO EAT BUT FOR THE PRIESTS ALONE?

5 AND HE SAID UNTO THEM, THAT THE SON OF MAN IS LORD ALSO OF THE SABBATH.

Look back to verses four and five of Matthew chapter twelve. These verses show that human need takes precedence over a strict interpretation of the Law. Sometimes, the Law misses its broadest intent.

MATTHEW 12:4-5

4 HOW HE ENTERED INTO THE HOUSE OF GOD, AND DID EAT THE SHEWBREAD, WHICH WAS NOT LAWFUL FOR HIM TO EAT, NEITHER FOR THEM WHICH WERE WITH HIM, BUT ONLY FOR THE PRIESTS?

5 OR HAVE YE NOT READ IN THE LAW, HOW THAT ON THE SABBATH DAYS THE PRIESTS IN THE TEMPLE PROFANE THE SABBATH, AND ARE BLAMELESS?

In verses six through eight, Jesus was claiming deity by being greater than the temple and Lord even of the Sabbath.

MATTHEW 12:6-8

6 BUT I SAY UNTO YOU, THAT IN THIS PLACE IS ONE GREATER THAN THE TEMPLE.

7 BUT IF YE HAD KNOWN WHAT THIS MEANETH, I WILL HAVE MERCY, AND NOT SACRIFICE, YE WOULD NOT HAVE CONDEMNED THE GUILTLESS.

8 FOR THE SON OF MAN IS LORD EVEN OF THE SABBATH DAY.

Since He gave the Sabbath, He can do with it what He wills.

MARK 2:23-28

23 AND IT CAME TO PASS, THAT HE WENT THROUGH THE CORN FIELDS ON THE SABBATH DAY; AND HIS DISCIPLES BEGAN, AS THEY WENT, TO PLUCK THE EARS OF CORN.

24 AND THE PHARISEES SAID UNTO HIM, BEHOLD, WHY DO THEY ON THE SABBATH DAY THAT WHICH IS NOT LAWFUL?

25 AND HE SAID UNTO THEM, HAVE YE NEVER READ WHAT DAVID DID, WHEN HE HAD NEED, AND WAS AN HUNGRED, HE, AND THEY THAT WERE WITH HIM?

26 HOW HE WENT INTO THE HOUSE OF GOD IN THE DAYS OF ABIATHAR THE HIGH PRIEST, AND DID EAT THE SHEWBREAD, WHICH IS NOT LAWFUL TO EAT BUT FOR THE PRIESTS, AND GAVE ALSO TO THEM WHICH WERE WITH HIM?

27 AND HE SAID UNTO THEM, THE SABBATH WAS MADE FOR MAN, AND NOT MAN FOR THE SABBATH: 28 THEREFORE THE SON OF MAN IS LORD ALSO OF THE SABBATH.

Jesus and His disciple were not guilty of violating any scriptural law governing the Sabbath, but only the Pharisaic interpretation of it. Jesus establishes two new positive principles in verses twenty-seven and twenty-eight. First, God intended the Sabbath to be for the spiritual and physical benefit of His people. It was never intended to be an impossible burden in striving to observe narrow man-made rules. This attitude is in direct contrast to that of the religious authorities, many of whom taught that the only reason God created man was so He would have someone to observe the Sabbath. The second principle is the claim of deity in which Jesus declares Himself to be equal to the Father.

Next Jesus heals the withered hand.

MATTHEW 12:9-13

9 AND WHEN HE WAS DEPARTED THENCE, HE WENT INTO THEIR SYNAGOGUE:

10 AND, BEHOLD, THERE WAS A MAN WHICH HAD HIS HAND WITHERED. AND THEY ASKED HIM, SAYING, IS IT LAWFUL TO HEAL ON THE SABBATH DAYS? THAT THEY MIGHT ACCUSE HIM.

11 AND HE SAID UNTO THEM, WHAT MAN SHALL THERE BE AMONG YOU, THAT SHALL HAVE ONE SHEEP, AND IF IT FALL INTO A PIT ON THE SABBATH DAY, WILL HE NOT LAY HOLD ON IT, AND LIFT IT OUT?

12 HOW MUCH THEN IS A MAN BETTER THAN A SHEEP? WHEREFORE IT IS LAWFUL TO DO WELL ON THE SABBATH DAYS.

13 THEN SAITH HE TO THE MAN, STRETCH FORTH THINE HAND. AND HE STRETCHED IT FORTH; AND IT WAS RESTORED WHOLE, LIKE AS THE OTHER.

Healing was not allowed on the Sabbath except when there was danger to life. Even then, measures could be taken only to prevent the condition from getting worse; nothing could be done to improve it. Jesus countered this obvious fallacy, saying it is indeed lawful to do good on the Sabbath.

MARK 3:1-5

1 AND HE ENTERED AGAIN INTO THE SYNAGOGUE; AND THERE WAS A MAN THERE WHICH HAD A WITHERED HAND.

2 AND THEY WATCHED HIM, WHETHER HE WOULD HEAL HIM ON THE SABBATH DAY; THAT THEY MIGHT ACCUSE HIM.

3 AND HE SAITH UNTO THE MAN WHICH HAD THE WITHERED HAND, STAND FORTH.

4 AND HE SAITH UNTO THEM, IS IT LAWFUL TO DO GOOD ON THE SABBATH DAYS, OR TO DO EVIL? TO SAVE LIFE, OR TO KILL? BUT THEY HELD THEIR PEACE.

5 AND WHEN HE HAD LOOKED ROUND ABOUT ON THEM WITH ANGER, BEING GRIEVED FOR THE HARDNESS OF THEIR HEARTS, HE SAITH UNTO THE MAN, STRETCH FORTH THINE HAND. AND HE STRETCHED IT OUT: AND HIS HAND WAS RESTORED WHOLE AS THE OTHER.

Jesus is aware of their inner thoughts before the physical healing.

Look back at Mark 2:8.

MARK 2:8

8 AND IMMEDIATELY WHEN JESUS PERCEIVED IN HIS SPIRIT THAT THEY SO REASONED WITHIN THEMSELVES, HE SAID UNTO THEM, WHY REASON YE THESE THINGS IN YOUR HEARTS?

Jesus proceeds, though grieved by their hardness of their hearts. Note the two imperatives—step forth and stretch out your hand. The miracle was deliberate and aggressive.

LUKE 6:1-5

1 AND IT CAME TO PASS ON THE SECOND SABBATH AFTER THE FIRST, THAT HE WENT THROUGH THE CORN FIELDS; AND HIS DISCIPLES PLUCKED THE EARS OF CORN, AND DID EAT, RUBBING THEM IN THEIR HANDS.

2 AND CERTAIN OF THE PHARISEES SAID UNTO THEM, WHY DO YE THAT WHICH IS NOT LAWFUL TO DO ON THE SABBATH DAYS?

3 AND JESUS ANSWERING THEM SAID, HAVE YE NOT READ SO MUCH AS THIS, WHAT DAVID DID, WHEN HIMSELF WAS AN HUNGRED, AND THEY WHICH WERE WITH HIM;

4 HOW HE WENT INTO THE HOUSE OF GOD, AND DID TAKE AND EAT THE SHEWBREAD, AND GAVE ALSO TO THEM THAT WERE WITH HIM; WHICH IT IS NOT LAWFUL TO EAT BUT FOR THE PRIESTS ALONE?

5 AND HE SAID UNTO THEM, THAT THE SON OF MAN IS LORD ALSO OF THE SABBATH.

LUKE 6:6-10

6 AND IT CAME TO PASS ALSO ON ANOTHER SABBATH, THAT HE ENTERED INTO THE SYNAGOGUE AND TAUGHT: AND THERE WAS A MAN WHOSE RIGHT HAND WAS WITHERED.

7 AND THE SCRIBES AND PHARISEES WATCHED HIM, WHETHER HE WOULD HEAL ON THE SABBATH DAY; THAT THEY MIGHT FIND AN ACCUSATION AGAINST HIM.

8 BUT HE KNEW THEIR THOUGHTS, AND SAID TO THE MAN WHICH HAD THE WITHERED HAND, RISE UP, AND STAND FORTH IN THE MIDST. AND HE AROSE AND STOOD FORTH.

9 THEN SAID JESUS UNTO THEM, I WILL ASK YOU ONE THING; IS IT LAWFUL ON THE SABBATH DAYS TO DO GOOD, OR TO DO EVIL? TO SAVE LIFE, OR TO DESTROY IT?

10 AND LOOKING ROUND ABOUT UPON THEM ALL, HE SAID UNTO THE MAN, STRETCH FORTH THY HAND. AND HE DID SO: AND HIS HAND WAS RESTORED WHOLE AS THE OTHER.

The Pharisees oppose Jesus.

MATTHEW 12:14

14 THEN THE PHARISEES WENT OUT, AND HELD A COUNCIL AGAINST HIM, HOW THEY MIGHT DESTROY HIM.

Many were then healed near Galilee.

MATTHEW 12:15

15 BUT WHEN JESUS KNEW IT, HE WITHDREW HIMSELF FROM THENCE: AND GREAT MULTITUDES FOLLOWED HIM, AND HE HEALED THEM ALL;

This is a fulfillment of Isaiah 42.

ISAIAH 42:1-4.

1 BEHOLD MY SERVANT, WHOM I UPHOLD; MINE ELECT, IN WHOM MY SOUL DELIGHTETH; I HAVE PUT MY SPIRIT UPON HIM: HE SHALL BRING FORTH JUDGMENT TO THE GENTILES.

2 HE SHALL NOT CRY, NOR LIFT UP, NOR CAUSE HIS VOICE TO BE HEARD IN THE STREET.

**3 A BRUISED REED SHALL HE NOT BREAK, AND THE SMOKING FLAX SHALL HE NOT QUENCH: HE SHALL BRING FORTH JUDGMENT UNTO TRUTH.
4 HE SHALL NOT FAIL NOR BE DISCOURAGED, TILL HE HAVE SET JUDGMENT IN THE EARTH: AND THE ISLES SHALL WAIT FOR HIS LAW.**

MARK 3:7-12

**7 BUT JESUS WITHDREW HIMSELF WITH HIS DISCIPLES TO THE SEA: AND A GREAT MULTITUDE FROM GALILEE FOLLOWED HIM, AND FROM JUDAEA,
8 AND FROM JERUSALEM, AND FROM IDUMAEA, AND FROM BEYOND JORDAN; AND THEY ABOUT TYRE AND SIDON, A GREAT MULTITUDE, WHEN THEY HAD HEARD WHAT GREAT THINGS HE DID, CAME UNTO HIM.
9 AND HE SPAKE TO HIS DISCIPLES, THAT A SMALL SHIP SHOULD WAIT ON HIM BECAUSE OF THE MULTITUDE, LEST THEY SHOULD THROG HIM.
10 FOR HE HAD HEALED MANY; INSOMUCH THAT THEY PRESSED UPON HIM FOR TO TOUCH HIM, AS MANY AS HAD PLAGUES.
11 AND UNCLEAN SPIRITS, WHEN THEY SAW HIM, FELL DOWN BEFORE HIM, AND CRIED, SAYING, THOU ART THE SON OF GOD.
12 AND HE STRAITLY CHARGED THEM THAT THEY SHOULD NOT MAKE HIM KNOWN.**

The word “followed” in verse 7 means that the people were on the same road with Him. It may well be that they were following Him because they, too, were disciples. The geographical references emphasize both the immense popularity of Jesus and the extreme need of the people.

This reference is general and probably embraces an extended period of time. Only those who have experienced God’s grace can sincerely testify concerning the person and work of Christ.

The twelve were ordained next.

MATTHEW 10:1-4

**1 AND WHEN HE HAD CALLED UNTO HIM HIS TWELVE DISCIPLES, HE GAVE THEM POWER AGAINST UNCLEAN SPIRITS, TO CAST THEM OUT, AND TO HEAL ALL MANNER OF SICKNESS AND ALL MANNER OF DISEASE.
2 NOW THE NAMES OF THE TWELVE APOSTLES ARE THESE; THE FIRST, SIMON, WHO IS CALLED PETER, AND ANDREW HIS BROTHER; JAMES THE SON OF ZEBEDEE, AND JOHN HIS BROTHER;
3 PHILIP, AND BARTHOLOMEW; THOMAS, AND MATTHEW THE PUBLICAN; JAMES THE SON OF ALPHAEUS, AND LEBBAEUS, WHOSE SURNAME WAS THADDAEUS;
4 SIMON THE CANAANITE, AND JUDAS ISCARIOT, WHO ALSO BETRAYED HIM.**

Jesus bestows upon His twelve disciples the delegated power that He Himself possessed, that is, “authority” to advance the messianic ministry through exorcism healing.

MARK 3:13-19

13 AND HE GOETH UP INTO A MOUNTAIN, AND CALLETH UNTO HIM WHOM HE WOULD: AND THEY CAME UNTO HIM.

14 AND HE ORDAINED TWELVE, THAT THEY SHOULD BE WITH HIM, AND THAT HE MIGHT SEND THEM FORTH TO PREACH,

15 AND TO HAVE POWER TO HEAL SICKNESSES, AND TO CAST OUT DEVILS:

16 AND SIMON HE SURNAMED PETER;

17 AND JAMES THE SON OF ZEBEDEE, AND JOHN THE BROTHER OF JAMES; AND HE SURNAMED THEM BOANERGES, WHICH IS, THE SONS OF THUNDER:

18 AND ANDREW, AND PHILIP, AND BARTHOLOMEW, AND MATTHEW, AND THOMAS, AND JAMES THE SON OF ALPHAEUS, AND THADDAEUS, AND SIMON THE CANAANITE,

19 AND JUDAS ISCARIOT, WHICH ALSO BETRAYED HIM: AND THEY WENT INTO AN HOUSE.

The word “ordained” in verse 12 could have been translated “appointed.” The Greek verb means “to make someone into something.”

Jesus selects the twelve from the larger group, to form His closest following. The purpose of the appointment is that they might be with Him in order to learn from Him and then go out in divine power to extend His work.

LUKE 6:12-16

12 AND IT CAME TO PASS IN THOSE DAYS, THAT HE WENT OUT INTO A MOUNTAIN TO PRAY, AND CONTINUED ALL NIGHT IN PRAYER TO GOD.

13 AND WHEN IT WAS DAY, HE CALLED UNTO HIM HIS DISCIPLES: AND OF THEM HE CHOSE TWELVE, WHOM ALSO HE NAMED APOSTLES;

14 SIMON, (WHOM HE ALSO NAMED PETER,) AND ANDREW HIS BROTHER, JAMES AND JOHN, PHILIP AND BARTHOLOMEW,

15 MATTHEW AND THOMAS, JAMES THE SON OF ALPHAEUS, AND SIMON CALLED ZELOTES,

16 AND JUDAS THE BROTHER OF JAMES, AND JUDAS ISCARIOT, WHICH ALSO WAS THE TRAITOR.

Note that Jesus prayed before critical events. The Sermon on the Mount is next. The text for this message is found in both Matthew, chapters 5-7 and Luke 6:20-49. In line with his purpose, Luke omits much material of particular interest to the Jews. The location of the mountain is uncertain, but it was likely in the vicinity of Capernaum. Following the custom of the rabbis, Jesus sat while teaching. The disciples included a wider audience than the 12 disciples.

Beginning with Matthew, chapter five, verse 3, each Beatitude includes a pronouncement of blessing, a description of the ones considered blessed, and an explanation for the blessing.

MATTHEW 5:3

3 BLESSED ARE THE POOR IN SPIRIT: FOR THEIRS IS THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN.

The poor in spirit are those who recognize their spiritual poverty and, casting aside all self-dependence, seek God's grace.

MATTHEW 5:4

4 BLESSED ARE THEY THAT MOURN: FOR THEY SHALL BE COMFORTED.

Those who mourn are not necessarily people in bereavement, but those who experience the sorrow of repentance.

LUKE 6:20-22

20 AND HE LIFTED UP HIS EYES ON HIS DISCIPLES, AND SAID, BLESSED BE YE POOR: FOR YOURS IS THE KINGDOM OF GOD.

21 BLESSED ARE YE THAT HUNGER NOW: FOR YE SHALL BE FILLED. BLESSED ARE YE THAT WEEP NOW: FOR YE SHALL LAUGH.

22 BLESSED ARE YE, WHEN MEN SHALL HATE YOU, AND WHEN THEY SHALL SEPARATE YOU FROM THEIR COMPANY, AND SHALL REPROACH YOU, AND CAST OUT YOUR NAME AS EVIL, FOR THE SON OF MAN'S SAKE.

There are spiritual implications in the terms—poor, hunger, weep, and hate. Jesus does not commend poverty, hunger, sorrow, and reproach in themselves. These suffering bring blessings only when they are endured through discipleship for the Son of Man's sake. Therefore, poverty of spirit, hungering after righteousness, weeping over one's sins, and social ostracism for the sake of Christ are sources of blessing.

The term "poor" denotes the humble poor whose trust is in God's help in the midst of their poverty. There is a clear contrast in several of these Beatitudes between present lot and future reward. Each of the four blessings corresponds by way of contrast to each of the woes.

There is continuity of suffering and persecution between Jesus' disciples' suffering for following the Son of Man, and the prophets' suffering for proclaiming God's message.

LUKE 6:23

23 REJOICE YE IN THAT DAY, AND LEAP FOR JOY: FOR, BEHOLD, YOUR REWARD IS GREAT IN HEAVEN: FOR IN THE LIKE MANNER DID THEIR FATHERS UNTO THE PROPHETS.

In contrast, consolation is promised in the present age and the coming age when situations will be reversed.

MATTHEW 5:5

5 BLESSED ARE THE MEEK: FOR THEY SHALL INHERIT THE EARTH.

In verse 5, “meek” does not connote weakness, but rather controlled discipline.

MATTHEW 5:6-9

6 BLESSED ARE THEY WHICH DO HUNGER AND THIRST AFTER RIGHTEOUSNESS: FOR THEY SHALL BE FILLED.

7 BLESSED ARE THE MERCIFUL: FOR THEY SHALL OBTAIN MERCY.

8 BLESSED ARE THE PURE IN HEART: FOR THEY SHALL SEE GOD.

9 BLESSED ARE THE PEACEMAKERS: FOR THEY SHALL BE CALLED THE CHILDREN OF GOD.

Verse 9 states that God is the supreme Peacemaker, and His sons follow His example.

MATTHEW 5:10

10 BLESSED ARE THEY WHICH ARE PERSECUTED FOR RIGHTEOUSNESS' SAKE: FOR THEIRS IS THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN.

This verse gives the cause of persecution. It is loyalty to righteousness which Jesus make specific in verse 11.

MATTHEW 5:11-16

11 BLESSED ARE YE, WHEN MEN SHALL REVILE YOU, AND PERSECUTE YOU, AND SHALL SAY ALL MANNER OF EVIL AGAINST YOU FALSELY, FOR MY SAKE.

12 REJOICE, AND BE EXCEEDING GLAD: FOR GREAT IS YOUR REWARD IN HEAVEN: FOR SO PERSECUTED THEY THE PROPHETS WHICH WERE BEFORE YOU.

13 YE ARE THE SALT OF THE EARTH: BUT IF THE SALT HAVE LOST HIS SAVOUR, WHEREWITH SHALL IT BE SALTED? IT IS THENCEFORTH GOOD FOR NOTHING, BUT TO BE CAST OUT, AND TO BE TRODDEN UNDER FOOT OF MEN.

14 YE ARE THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD. A CITY THAT IS SET ON AN HILL CANNOT BE HID.

15 NEITHER DO MEN LIGHT A CANDLE, AND PUT IT UNDER A BUSHEL, BUT ON A CANDLESTICK; AND IT GIVETH LIGHT UNTO ALL THAT ARE IN THE HOUSE.

16 LET YOUR LIGHT SO SHINE BEFORE MEN, THAT THEY MAY SEE YOUR GOOD WORKS, AND GLORIFY YOUR FATHER WHICH IS IN HEAVEN.

The Beatitudes describe the essential character of kingdom citizens, and the metaphors of salt and light indicate the citizens' influence for good as they penetrate secular society.

After Jesus finished the Beatitudes, He discussed the Old Testament Law. He spoke about murder, adultery, divorce, swearing, suing others, and loving enemies. He tells how His ministry compliments the Law.

MATTHEW 5:17

17 THINK NOT THAT I AM COME TO DESTROY THE LAW, OR THE PROPHETS: I AM NOT COME TO DESTROY, BUT TO FULFILL.

Then He proceeded to give us information about how we should deal with the people who oppose us.

LUKE 6:27-38

27 BUT I SAY UNTO YOU WHICH HEAR, LOVE YOUR ENEMIES, DO GOOD TO THEM WHICH HATE YOU,

28 BLESS THEM THAT CURSE YOU, AND PRAY FOR THEM WHICH DESPITEFULLY USE YOU.

29 AND UNTO HIM THAT SMITETH THEE ON THE ONE CHEEK OFFER ALSO THE OTHER; AND HIM THAT TAKETH AWAY THY CLOKE FORBID NOT TO TAKE THY COAT ALSO.

30 GIVE TO EVERY MAN THAT ASKETH OF THEE; AND OF HIM THAT TAKETH AWAY THY GOODS ASK THEM NOT AGAIN.

31 AND AS YE WOULD THAT MEN SHOULD DO TO YOU, DO YE ALSO TO THEM LIKEWISE.

32 FOR IF YE LOVE THEM WHICH LOVE YOU, WHAT THANK HAVE YE? FOR SINNERS ALSO LOVE THOSE THAT LOVE THEM.

33 AND IF YE DO GOOD TO THEM WHICH DO GOOD TO YOU, WHAT THANK HAVE YE? FOR SINNERS ALSO DO EVEN THE SAME.

34 AND IF YE LEND TO THEM OF WHOM YE HOPE TO RECEIVE, WHAT THANK HAVE YE? FOR SINNERS ALSO LEND TO SINNERS, TO RECEIVE AS MUCH AGAIN.

35 BUT LOVE YE YOUR ENEMIES, AND DO GOOD, AND LEND, HOPING FOR NOTHING AGAIN; AND YOUR REWARD SHALL BE GREAT, AND YE SHALL BE THE CHILDREN OF THE HIGHEST: FOR HE IS KIND UNTO THE UNTHANKFUL AND TO THE EVIL.

36 BE YE THEREFORE MERCIFUL, AS YOUR FATHER ALSO IS MERCIFUL.

37 JUDGE NOT, AND YE SHALL NOT BE JUDGED: CONDEMN NOT, AND YE SHALL NOT BE CONDEMNED: FORGIVE, AND YE SHALL BE FORGIVEN:

38 GIVE, AND IT SHALL BE GIVEN UNTO YOU; GOOD MEASURE, PRESSED DOWN, AND SHAKEN TOGETHER, AND RUNNING OVER, SHALL MEN GIVE INTO YOUR BOSOM. FOR WITH THE SAME MEASURE THAT YE METE WITHAL IT SHALL BE MEASURED TO YOU AGAIN.

The summary of these verses is that the foundation of Christian life is love. This love is manifested by responding to personal insult and injustice, not with retaliation or even passive endurance. Instead, this God-kind of love is manifested with positive and aggressive acts of goodness designed to redeem the offenders. God's mercy to us is based on the mercy we extend to others.

Jesus continued His instructions.

MATTHEW 6:5-8

5 AND WHEN THOU PRAYEST, THOU SHALT NOT BE AS THE HYPOCRITES ARE: FOR THEY LOVE TO PRAY STANDING IN THE SYNAGOGUES AND IN THE CORNERS OF THE STREETS, THAT THEY MAY BE SEEN OF MEN. VERILY I SAY UNTO YOU, THEY HAVE THEIR REWARD.

6 BUT THOU, WHEN THOU PRAYEST, ENTER INTO THY CLOSET, AND WHEN THOU HAST SHUT THY DOOR, PRAY TO THY FATHER WHICH IS IN SECRET; AND THY FATHER WHICH SEETH IN SECRET SHALL REWARD THEE OPENLY.

7 BUT WHEN YE PRAY, USE NOT VAIN REPETITIONS, AS THE HEATHEN DO: FOR THEY THINK THAT THEY SHALL BE HEARD FOR THEIR MUCH SPEAKING.

8 BE NOT YE THEREFORE LIKE UNTO THEM: FOR YOUR FATHER KNOWETH WHAT THINGS YE HAVE NEED OF, BEFORE YE ASK HIM.

The general principle for Christians is to please God and not to gain praise from others. Among other things, this pertains to public prayer. Jesus, but He does condemn pretentious, ostentatious prayer that attracts attention. He talks about vain repetitions which refers not to repeating a request, but to an empty babbling and long prayers that have no spiritual significance, what-so-ever. Jesus teaches focused prayer which acknowledges God's desire to reign in every facet of our lives and society, in general.

He, then proceeds to teach us how to pray by giving us a model and a form for us to follow.

MATTHEW 6:9

9 AFTER THIS MANNER THEREFORE PRAY YE: OUR FATHER WHICH ART IN HEAVEN, HALLOWED BE THY NAME.

Jesus designed this prayer to show us that a real prayer could be compressed into few words, and still be a prayer. This is a prayer that we can actually pray. It is not just to be something that we quote from rote memory. Jesus begins by stressing that His Father is also our Father, as well. In calling Him "Father" we express a relationship we have all known and felt surrounding us even from our infancy. In calling Him our Father "who art in heaven," we contrast Him with the fathers we all have here below. This raises our souls to that "heaven" where God, our Father, dwells and to the Majesty and Glory which surround Him. The recognition of this relationship creates a brightness and warmth for each of us as we, the praying believers, the children of God, approach our Heavenly Father! The Old Testament had only given glimpses of such a relationship with God—the "back parts" of God. Now we have the "open face" of our Father revealed in Jesus.

At this point, Jesus prays the first petition of the seven petitions. "Hallowed" means to be held in reverence, regarded and treated as Holy. "Hallowed be thy name" is acknowledging that His name means that God of His own volition reveals and manifests Himself to us. God defines the faith, love, reverence and obedience He expects from us as He discloses who He is. The second petition is given in verse 10.

MATTHEW 6:10

10 THY KINGDOM COME. THY WILL BE DONE IN EARTH, AS IT IS IN HEAVEN.

The kingdom of God is that moral and spiritual kingdom which the God of grace is setting up in this fallen world of which Jesus is the glorious Head of this kingdom. This kingdom has existed ever since there were men who “walked with God,” who “waited for His salvation” who were “continually with Him, held by His right hand,” and who, even in the valley of the shadow of death, feared no evil when He was with them. Even so, this kingdom was and still is unknown to this evil world. When Messiah Himself appeared, it was a visible kingdom, yet unseen by many. The death of Jesus laid the deep foundations of this kingdom. His ascension on high was for the “leading captivity captive and receiving gifts for men, yea, for the rebellious, that the Lord God might dwell among them.” Jesus also brought about the Pentecostal effusion of the Spirit into His kingdom. And now the kingdom of the Lord God dwells in the human hearts of thousands upon thousands. The coming of this kingdom was and still is glorious. We must not cease to pray that this kingdom will come into the hearts of mankind so long as one subject remains to be brought in. “Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven”—brings us back to the state of human imperfection. We, all, have a longing, and joyous expectation of a glorious consummation of the kingdom of God as we are empowered to carry out God’s will here on earth—the same way that it is done in heaven.

MATTHEW 6:11

11 GIVE US THIS DAY OUR DAILY BREAD.

This is the fourth petition of the Lord’s Prayer. “Give us this day the bread, that is, the accurate amount which this day’s necessities require—both physically and spiritually. In limiting our petitions to the provision for the day, we must have the spirit of childlike dependence on our Heavenly Father.

Next is the fifth petition.

MATTHEW 6:12

12 AND FORGIVE US OUR DEBTS, AS WE FORGIVE OUR DEBTORS.

Remember, Jesus is teaching this prayer to His disciples. Believers are guilty of committing sin—God forbid, but when we do, we have an advocate with the Father.

Answering to this is the “forgiveness” which removes from our hearts the stain of sin. It is also asking God for the removal of our just dread of His anger toward us for missing the mark. Likewise, it is also asking for the removal from God’s displeasure against us on account of sin. It is asking God to refrain from wiping or crossing out from His “book of remembrance” of all entries that are listed there against us. The prayer continues by stating “as we forgive our debtors.” The same view of sin is as before; only now transferred to the region of offenses given and received between man and man. Our exercise of forgiveness towards our offending fellow men absolutely precedes God’s forgiveness of us. We cannot be the object of divine forgiveness if we deliberately and habitually are unforgiving towards our fellow men. We do receive the daily forgiveness of our shortcomings if we do actually forgive those who sin against us. God sees His own

image reflected in His forgiving children; but to ask God for what we ourselves refuse to give to others is to insult Him.

The sixth petition is a request regarding temptation.

MATTHEW 6:13

13 AND LEAD US NOT INTO TEMPTATION, BUT DELIVER US FROM EVIL: FOR THINE IS THE KINGDOM, AND THE POWER, AND THE GLORY, FOR EVER. AMEN.

He who honestly seeks and has the assurance of forgiveness for past sin, must strive to avoid committing sin in the future. We instinctively are to have a desire not to be introduced to new temptations. Also, included in this thought is that we need support in overcoming the temptation which we are currently facing. As you know, the number seven means wholeness, perfection and completeness.

So, look now at the seventh petition. It is the finishing touch for completing everything that we need physically and spiritually. “But deliver us from evil, that is deliver us from the evil one. This naturally follows close to “lead us not into temptation.” With the above having been petitioned, our prayers are to end with this doxology: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen

For emphasis sake, Jesus reiterated the importance of the forgiveness of others.

MATTHEW 6:14-15

14 FOR IF YE FORGIVE MEN THEIR TRESPASSES, YOUR HEAVENLY FATHER WILL ALSO FORGIVE YOU:

15 BUT IF YE FORGIVE NOT MEN THEIR TRESPASSES, NEITHER WILL YOUR FATHER FORGIVE YOUR TRESPASSES.

Other topics that Jesus discussed in His Sermon on the Mount include information about almsgiving, fasting, treasures, what to do with an evil member of one’s body, serving two masters, dealing with anxiety, judging others, and casting our pearls before swine.

MATTHEW 7:7-11

7 ASK, AND IT SHALL BE GIVEN YOU; SEEK, AND YE SHALL FIND; KNOCK, AND IT SHALL BE OPENED UNTO YOU:

8 FOR EVERY ONE THAT ASKETH RECEIVETH; AND HE THAT SEEKETH FINDETH; AND TO HIM THAT KNOCKETH IT SHALL BE OPENED.

9 OR WHAT MAN IS THERE OF YOU, WHOM IF HIS SON ASK BREAD, WILL HE GIVE HIM A STONE?

10 OR IF HE ASK A FISH, WILL HE GIVE HIM A SERPENT?

11 IF YE THEN, BEING EVIL, KNOW HOW TO GIVE GOOD GIFTS UNTO YOUR CHILDREN, HOW MUCH MORE SHALL YOUR FATHER WHICH IS IN HEAVEN GIVE GOOD THINGS TO THEM THAT ASK HIM?

The Greek imperatives ask, seek and knock are in the present tense, suggesting continued petition—ask and keep on asking, seek and keep on seeking, knock and keep on knocking.

This does not mean that we are to persistently ask for our will and desires to be granted. Instead, it means that we are to persistently pray only the Word of God with full faith and trust in its authenticity—knowing that God will answer our requests with a Bible-based response. God’s answer will be filled with His love for us and will be exactly what we need at that particular time.

JEREMIAH 1:12

12 . . . WILL HASTEN MY WORD TO PERFORM IT.

EPHESIANS 3:20

20 NOW UNTO HIM THAT IS ABLE TO DO EXCEEDING ABUNDANTLY ABOVE ALL THAT WE ASK OR THINK, ACCORDING TO THE POWER THAT WORKETH IN US,

Now at this point in the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus teaches us about what is commonly call the Golden Rule.

MATTHEW 7:12

12 THEREFORE ALL THINGS WHATSOEVER YE WOULD THAT MEN SHOULD DO TO YOU, DO YE EVEN SO TO THEM: FOR THIS IS THE LAW AND THE PROPHETS.

As an expression of the law of love, Jesus summarizes all that is required of us in relation to others. Jesus’ followers were familiar with the negative form of this imperative. It says, “Do not do to others what you yourself dislike.” Jesus’ teaching is a significant change to the rule. You see, in its negative form, the Golden Rule could be satisfied by doing nothing. But the positive form moves us to action on behalf of others. The Golden Rule is a critical call to action—but it can be greatly misunderstood or misused. This is an ethical rule for the Christian—not for the unbeliever. Some have concluded that if I follower this rule, then I am ok.

However, Salvation is through God’s grace. We cannot do anything to earn this gift. This ethical rule are for those who have already placed their trust in Jesus Christ. Even as a believer in Christ, we this rule is difficult and even impossible to follow. We need God’s help. Love for God will lead and empower you for love for others. In view of God’s generosity to us, treating others in the manner we would like ourselves to be treated is the least we can do. A classic example of the Golden Rule is the action taken by the Good Samaritan.

From here, Jesus warns that everybody who claims to be a prophet may or may not be a genuine Christian believer.

MATTHEW 7:15-16

15 BEWARE OF FALSE PROPHETS, WHICH COME TO YOU IN SHEEP'S CLOTHING, BUT INWARDLY THEY ARE RAVENING WOLVES.

16 YE SHALL KNOW THEM BY THEIR FRUITS. DO MEN GATHER GRAPES OF THORNS, OR FIGS OF THISTLES?

The real purpose of such pretenders is selfish and destructive. We must test those claiming to prophesy by their fruit, that is, by their life-style, character, teaching, and influence.

MATTHEW 7:21-23

21 NOT EVERY ONE THAT SAITH UNTO ME, LORD, LORD, SHALL ENTER INTO THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN; BUT HE THAT DOETH THE WILL OF MY FATHER WHICH IS IN HEAVEN.

22 MANY WILL SAY TO ME IN THAT DAY, LORD, LORD, HAVE WE NOT PROPHESED IN THY NAME? AND IN THY NAME HAVE CAST OUT DEVILS? AND IN THY NAME DONE MANY WONDERFUL WORKS?

23 AND THEN WILL I PROFESS UNTO THEM, I NEVER KNEW YOU: DEPART FROM ME, YE THAT WORK INIQUITY.

Jesus warns against self-deception, a mere verbal profession of lordship without obedience to the will of God. It is even possible for a self-deluded person to exercise a spectacular ministry, using the authority of the Scripture and the name of Jesus, without walking in genuine obedient discipleship.

MATTHEW 7:24-27

24 THEREFORE WHOSOEVER HEARETH THESE SAYINGS OF MINE, AND DOETH THEM, I WILL LIKEN HIM UNTO A WISE MAN, WHICH BUILT HIS HOUSE UPON A ROCK:

25 AND THE RAIN DESCENDED, AND THE FLOODS CAME, AND THE WINDS BLEW, AND BEAT UPON THAT HOUSE; AND IT FELL NOT: FOR IT WAS FOUNDED UPON A ROCK.

26 AND EVERY ONE THAT HEARETH THESE SAYINGS OF MINE, AND DOETH THEM NOT, SHALL BE LIKENED UNTO A FOOLISH MAN, WHICH BUILT HIS HOUSE UPON THE SAND:

27 AND THE RAIN DESCENDED, AND THE FLOODS CAME, AND THE WINDS BLEW, AND BEAT UPON THAT HOUSE; AND IT FELL: AND GREAT WAS THE FALL OF IT.

This parable of the wise and the foolish builders both serves as a conclusion to the Sermon on the Mount and illustrates the absolute necessity of doing the will of God, that is, what God has told us to do.

MATTHEW 7:28-29

28 AND IT CAME TO PASS, WHEN JESUS HAD ENDED THESE SAYINGS, THE PEOPLE WERE ASTONISHED AT HIS DOCTRINE:

29 FOR HE TAUGHT THEM AS ONE HAVING AUTHORITY, AND NOT AS THE SCRIBES.

Jesus had spoken in His own name and on His own authority, quiet unlike the usual teachers.

In no way have we covered all of the teachings of Jesus.

All of His teachings are sacred and carry great authority with them. The reason for this authority being so evident was the fact that Jesus only spoke the words given to Him by the Father.

JOHN 7:46

6 THE OFFICERS ANSWERED, NEVER MAN SPAKE LIKE THIS MAN.

The next thing we want to note about the ministry of Jesus is that where ever He went signs and wonders confirmed that what Jesus said was from the Father.

JOHN 8:26

26 I HAVE MANY THINGS TO SAY AND TO JUDGE OF YOU: BUT HE THAT SENT ME IS TRUE; AND I SPEAK TO THE WORLD THOSE THINGS WHICH I HAVE HEARD OF HIM.

JOHN 12:49

49 FOR I HAVE NOT SPOKEN OF MYSELF; BUT THE FATHER WHICH SENT ME, HE GAVE ME A COMMANDMENT, WHAT I SHOULD SAY, AND WHAT I SHOULD SPEAK.

JOHN 14:10

10 BELIEVEST THOU NOT THAT I AM IN THE FATHER, AND THE FATHER IN ME? THE WORDS THAT I SPEAK UNTO YOU I SPEAK NOT OF MYSELF: BUT THE FATHER THAT DWELLETH IN ME, HE DOETH THE WORKS.

The principal purpose of the miracles of Jesus was to confirm the message of the heavenly kingdom. What Jesus taught gave wise instructions. The Old Covenant, according to Jesus, was preparation for the New. He treated the Old Covenant as prophesying His own message.

MATTHEW 5:17

17 THINK NOT THAT I AM COME TO DESTROY THE LAW, OR THE PROPHETS: I AM NOT COME TO DESTROY, BUT TO FULFIL.

LUKE 24:27

27 AND BEGINNING AT MOSES AND ALL THE PROPHETS, HE EXPOUNDED UNTO THEM IN ALL THE SCRIPTURES THE THINGS CONCERNING HIMSELF.

JOHN 5:39

39 SEARCH THE SCRIPTURES; FOR IN THEM YE THINK YE HAVE ETERNAL LIFE: AND THEY ARE THEY WHICH TESTIFY OF ME.

The message of Jesus was an explanation of the Old Testament. Jesus operated under the authority of the Old Testament. It was the Food upon which He nourished Himself. It was the weapon with which He defended Himself. It served as His textbook. It really was His own Word which He interpreted and deepened.

Through His teachings, He redefined nature, human life, and history by creating mental images in the minds of the listeners and by using parables—natural objects used to teach spiritual lessons. Often the teachings of Jesus were defensive and victorious as He silenced His enemies by counter-questioning them. He revealed spiritual mysteries to those eager to learn. His message was terribly severe in its judgment. It called men wicked and an adulterous generation for fleshly piety is an abomination before God.

Jesus with consuming zeal fought against the Pharisees, His enemies, and the chief representatives of the religious world. He called them whitewashed graves, full of dead men's bones, fools, blind, liars, hypocrites, thieves, murderers, ravening wolves, sons of the devil, a brood of serpents and adders. He called the temple a robber's hole. He called Herod a fox. Those who confessed Him falsely were evil doers, or sons of the wicked one; all who rejected Him are worse than Sodom and Gomorrah.

On the other hand, His message was infinitely compassionate in its good news. It is the friend of sinners. It is the physician of the sick. All the miracles of Jesus are miracles of help and thus at the same time deeds that symbolize the purpose of His mission. Even the single miracle of judgment—the cursing of the fig tree—was in truth an act of His love, a symbolic warning to Israel.

The teachings of Jesus were the refresher of the weary and heavy laden. The message of Jesus is the blesser of the children. It was the proclaimer of good tidings to the poor. It was the promiser of paradise to the dying murderer. As Jesus taught, He demanded those who heard Him to respond to His commandments through obedience. His message was a gift and a task at the same time. He required both leading and following. All half-heartedness and lukewarmness was declared to be an abomination to the King. The whole man belongs to Him, in spirit, soul, and body, in all relationships, heavenly and earthly.

To renounce all, to take up the cross, to love Jesus more than earth's dearest, to serve Him alone, to hate one's own self, to lose his life, so as to gain it eternally—this the mind which the King demands. He commanded brotherly love and love to God. Truth and fidelity, lowliness and self-denial, freedom from anxiety with courageous faith, a prayerful spirit and a heavenly hope were the emphasis for those who sat under His ministry. His message declared that all expectations for the hearer were to be born out of the life from above, out of the consciousness of the royal standing of the child born out of divine need.